Greetings from the Chair

Welcome to the Georgia Southern University School of Nursing. We are glad you have chosen our program to advance your professional nursing practice.

Nursing in the 21st century provides practitioners with a variety of practice options to meet the healthcare needs of our community within a rapidly changing healthcare system. Advances in diagnosis and treatment, technology, and care location options provide graduates with exciting employment opportunities.

The School of Nursing is committed to providing you with a high-quality nursing education that will advance your professional nursing career. Whether furthering your education to become a Nurse Practitioner, or specializing in Chronic Care Management or Nursing Education, Georgia Southern will ensure you have the knowledge and skills to be successful in fulfilling your potential.

Prepare for your future now. Engage in every learning experience with enthusiasm; take advantage of every opportunity to be successful. Our faculty members are expert teachers, clinicians and scholars committed to assisting you to reach your professional goals through expert nursing practice, a rigorous program of study, and a variety of learning experiences that promote active learning.

We will ask you to study hard, work hard, and be the best. However, we have every confidence that you are ready for this challenge. We look forward to joining you on your journey.

Sincerely,

Catherine Gilbert, EdD, MSN, RN
Chair, School of Nursing
Welcome to the Georgia Southern University School of Nursing

The faculty and staff of the School of Nursing (SON) are pleased that you have chosen our university for your nursing education to earn a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) or Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP). The School of Nursing is vibrant and on the move. It has been called one of the best in the nation and deserves this kind of recognition. We are certain that over time you will increasingly appreciate the value and quality of the nursing education you receive at Georgia Southern University.

This handbook is provided in order to help you understand and easily find your way through the Graduate Nursing Programs. It is intended to be a guide, giving information about the School of Nursing, and policies that affect you.

Reading this handbook will help you to get oriented and to develop realistic expectations about the school. We would appreciate being advised of additional, beneficial material that you would like to have included.

This handbook will serve as your guide throughout your nursing education experience. A current handbook will be maintained on the School of Nursing website. New policies will be posted until added to the handbook.

Utilization of Student Handbook

Please use this Student Handbook to review the policies which guide your educational experience with us. Any changes or new policies will be added to this handbook. In addition, you will be notified of any updates.

Handbook Disclaimer

The Georgia Southern University Student Handbook for the Graduate Nursing Program is a student resource for informational purposes only. This is not a contract between the School of Nursing and the student. While the provisions of this handbook are as accurate and complete as possible, the School of Nursing reserves the right to change any provision herein without actual notice if circumstances so warrant. Students will be advised of such changes and information about such changes will be available at all times from the faculty. It is the responsibility of each student to become familiar with the provisions of the Graduate Nursing Program Student Handbook and to successfully complete the requirements of the nursing program.

Accreditation Status

The Georgia Southern University School of Nursing is fully accredited by all appropriate national, state, and specialized/professional nursing accrediting agencies. Accrediting agencies assure that programs in nursing education engage in effective educational practices in the preparation of nurses. A determination of accreditation by an accrediting agency is an indication of confidence in the educational institution to offer a program of quality, deserving of public approbation. Note: Universities and colleges in the United States must hold appropriate regional accreditation in order to be recognized to award higher education degrees. All graduate nursing programs must hold approval from their State Board of Nursing. Voluntary program accreditation by one specialized/professional nursing accreditation body is highly desirable, particularly to assure graduates of continued educational and employment mobility.

Georgia Southern University holds the following accreditation:

Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. This regional accreditation grants Georgia Southern University the right to award Bachelor, Master, Specialist, certificates, and Doctorate degrees.
Georgia Southern University holds the following state and specialized/professional nursing accreditations:

1. **Georgia Board of Nursing.** (Required Approval). The Georgia Board of Nursing grants Full Approval to nursing programs who maintain compliance with the Georgia Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations as evidenced by: annual reports submitted by the program, site visit reports, and appropriate passing percentages of first-time writers on the NCLEX-RN examination. Inquiries regarding the accreditation status of the program can be directed to: Georgia Board of Nursing, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, GA 31217-3858. Phone: (912) 207-1640.

2. **Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).** (Voluntary Specialized/Professional Accreditation). The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education is the premier accrediting agency recognizing professional baccalaureate and graduate programs in nursing in the United States. The (baccalaureate degree program in nursing/master’s degree program in nursing/Doctor of Nursing Practice program and/or post-graduate APRN certificate program) at Georgia Southern University is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education ([https://www.aacnnursing.org/CCNE](https://www.aacnnursing.org/CCNE)).

**MISSION, PURPOSE, VISION, PHILOSOPHY, AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

**Mission Statement: Georgia Southern University**

Georgia Southern University is a public comprehensive and Carnegie Doctoral/Research (R2) university offering associate, bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees in nationally accredited programs in the liberal arts, sciences, and professional disciplines.

The University provides transformative learning opportunities to meet the needs of a diverse student population through its legacy of commitment to academic excellence and personal attention. Through the shared resources of its multiple locations, the University creates vibrant learning environments that foster an inclusive, student-centered culture of engagement designed to prepare students for lifelong service as scholars, leaders, and responsible stewards of their communities. The University enhances quality of life and drives economic development in the Coastal Georgia region, the State of Georgia, and beyond by supporting collaborative efforts in technological innovation, scientific advancement, education, health services, artistic creativity, and cultural enrichment. Faculty, staff, and students embrace the values of integrity, civility, kindness, respect, sustainability, citizenship, and social responsibility in every facet of the University.

**Purpose, Mission, Vision, and Values**

The purpose of the School of Nursing is to support the mission, vision, and values of the University:

A. **Mission:**
   The Mission of the School of Nursing is to prepare a diverse student population to become professional nurses through academic excellence to promote health and enhance the quality of life for citizens in the rural and urban communities they serve.

B. **Vision:**
   The School of Nursing aspires to be the premier center for academic excellence in professional nursing education for the Southeastern United States through transformative learning opportunities that promote a culture of caring and a legacy of lifelong scholarship, leadership and responsible community service and stewardship.
C. Values:
The nursing faculty embraces the following core values:
❖ Culture of Caring – respect, civility, kindness, collaboration, diversity
❖ Culture of Scholarship – student engagement, evidence-based practice, life-long learning, competence
❖ Culture of Integrity – ethics, social responsibility, social justice, stewardship
❖ Culture of Service – citizenship, leadership, altruism

Metaparadigm Concepts

Person
The person component focuses on the receiver of care. A person is a holistic being central to nursing, with a unique culture, values, and beliefs. Having certain rights and responsibilities, a person is capable of self-actualization and self-determination. Whether alone or in families, groups, or communities, a person interacts with his or her environment.

Nursing
Professional Nursing Practice is a discipline involving human caring that is concerned with improving quality of life and promoting, maintaining, and restoring health in partnership with persons, families, groups, and communities. The evolving art and science of nursing consists of a unique body of knowledge based on theory, research, and practice in nursing and other disciplines.

Health
"Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (World Health Organization [WHO], 1948). Health promotion and disease prevention at the individual and population level are necessary to improve population health. In partnership with the nurse, health is defined by individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations across the lifespan and across the continuum of healthcare environments.

Environment
The environment aspect focuses on the surroundings that affect the patient. Environment constitutes the internal and external influences that affect or are affected by the person. These influences include, but are not limited to, biological, psychological, and spiritual factors, population density, socioeconomic status, cultural diversity, social values and beliefs, and scientific and technological development.

Curriculum Threads

Nurses, in partnership with persons, families, groups, and communities, engage in the dynamic process of health promotion. While the metaparadigm concepts of person, nursing, health, and environment form the foundation of the school’s framework, the following curriculum threads shape the curriculum.

Human Caring in nursing is a set of interpersonal acts that extend beyond concern, emotion, and benevolent desire. Caring in this context involves values, intent, commitment, knowledge, actions, and outcomes.

Communication, within the context of nursing, is a dynamic and interpersonal process that requires at least one messenger and one receiver. The process, which includes interprofessional collaboration, can be either verbal (oral or written) or nonverbal and is influenced by a person’s culture, setting, values, beliefs, and perceptions. Undergraduate and graduate students engage in increasingly complex levels of communication skills.
**Ethical Principles**, which include altruism, autonomy, integrity, freedom, veracity, privacy, beneficence, fidelity, human dignity, and social justice, are used to clarify and resolve identified moral problems and ethical dilemmas. The beliefs and values outlined in the Code of Ethics for Nurses (American Nurses Association [ANA], 2015) provide guidelines for ethical nursing practice.

**Critical Thinking** is an active process of analysis exploring relevant phenomena and making judgments to intervene in a therapeutic manner. This reflexive, transferable process involves the ongoing integration and application of a complex set of abilities. The critical thinking process is made public through various modes of communication.

**Empowerment** is an interpersonal process of providing resources, tools, and environment for people to achieve their optimal potential and well-being. Nursing’s role is to support people to actively participate in their healthcare decision-making to improve health care outcomes.

**Cultural Appropriateness** is the skilled delivery of care based on the appreciation for and knowledge of the diversity in backgrounds of persons. The nurse who is culturally competent takes into account the person’s view of the world which is transmitted from generation to generation. The person’s world view, which is manifested in beliefs, practices, likes, dislikes, customs, norms, and rituals, is incorporated within appropriate therapeutic nursing interventions. In addition, ethnic sensitivity takes into account the person’s group affiliation or membership.

**Healthcare Technologies** are utilized and managed by nurses in various settings. Technology may enhance nursing practice in direct and indirect patient care, health-related communication, nursing informatics, and clinical information management. Nurses must therefore maintain the knowledge and skills necessary to provide care that is technologically current while maintaining a caring, interactive approach.

**Leadership** in nursing is an awareness of complex systems, and the impact of power, politics, policy, and regulatory guidelines on these systems. Leadership skills emphasize ethical and critical decision-making, initiating and maintaining effective working relationships, using mutually respectful communication and collaboration, care coordination, delegation, and conflict resolution. The nurse uses leadership skills to promote high quality patient care and patient safety within organizational and community arenas (American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN], 2008).

**Health Policy** is the compilation of decisions made within the government, and sometimes private entities, regarding health and health care. Policies influence health in areas such as access to care, patient care delivery, and financing. It is therefore incumbent upon the nursing profession to consider the impact of health policy on professional nursing practice and to participate in policy development as warranted (Estes, Chapman, Dodd, Hollister, & Harrington, 2012).

**Professional Roles and Responsibilities** include delivering safe care and designing, managing, and coordinating care as a member of the interprofessional team. The professional nurse evaluates one’s own practice as well as contributes to the support and advancement of the profession. The professional nurse focuses on continuous self-evaluation and lifelong learning. The nurse who upholds professional roles and responsibilities advocates for quality health care and functions as a leader in the community and profession (AACN, 2008).

**Research** is the systematic inquiry that uses disciplined methods to answer questions or solve problems (Polit & Beck, 2014). Evidence-based practice involves using best evidence in making patient care decisions (Polit & Beck, 2014) and is based on clinical expertise, patient preferences and values and external evidence (Melnyk & Fineout-Overholt, 2014). External evidence is generated through rigorous investigations to produce new data. The nurse translates evidence, into professional nursing practice. At the undergraduate level, external
Because the School of Nursing’s mission includes the professional development of a diverse group of students, nursing faculty carefully reviewed and chose professional standards and guidelines that represented a broad base for various levels of nursing practice. A variety of professional nursing standards, along with selected specialty area nursing practice standards, representing the most current and developed perspectives of the discipline of nursing were chosen to underpin and develop the mission, philosophy, purposes, goals/objectives of the School of Nursing. All are consistently applied as guidelines for the development of program and curricula materials for the preparation of nursing students. A list of standards are referenced at the end of this document.

**GRADUATE NURSING PROGRAMS**

**ADMISSION AND PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS, AND CURRICULA FOR BSN-DNP, POST-MSN NP CERTIFICATE, POST-MSN DNP, AND MSN PROGRAMS**

The School of Nursing at Georgia Southern University offers graduate program options for a Bachelor of Science to Doctor of Nursing Practice (BSN to DNP) with “Opt Out” option and the Post Master of Science in Nursing Doctor of Nursing Practice (Post-MSN DNP). Also offered are Master of Science in Nursing degrees with a focus on Chronic Care Management or Nursing Education. In addition, a Post-MSN Certificate (nurse practitioner) is available for Adult-Gerontology Acute Care (AG ACNP), Adult-Gerontology Primary Care (AG PCNP), Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP).

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING TO DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE (BSN to DNP) DEGREE AND POST-MSN NP CERTIFICATE**

**BSN to DNP Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Integrate scientific underpinnings, human caring values, ethical principles, and cultural and spiritual competencies into the implementation of the role of Doctor of Nursing Practice.
2. Utilize principles of organizational and systems theory to demonstrate the leadership role in envisioning, designing, evaluating, and managing health organizational systems.
3. Use knowledge from nursing and other sciences to generate, appraise, and synthesize best evidence, to formulate, design and evaluate evidence-based interventions for individuals and populations.
4. Incorporate effective communication and systems technology in demonstrating the ability to effectively participate in transforming health care delivery systems.
5. Demonstrate advanced leadership and advocacy related to health care policy to improve health care delivery and effect change in professional and political realms.
6. Provide leadership in interprofessional collaborations to design, implement, and evaluate individual and system-level interventions that improve health care outcomes of individuals and populations.
7. Synthesize critical thinking, diagnostic, and therapeutic reasoning skills in the Doctor of Nursing Practice role to develop initiatives that promote health, reduce risk, and manage the illness trajectory of individuals and populations.
8. Synthesize and demonstrate advanced practice nursing knowledge and competencies in the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse specialist role

**Program Majors**

The BSN to DNP program offers the following majors:
1. Nurse Practitioner with Concentration in Adult-Gerontology Acute Care (AG ACNP)
2. Nurse Practitioner with Concentration in Adult-Gerontology Primary Care (AG PCNP)
3. Nurse Practitioner with Concentration in Family (FNP)
4. Nurse Practitioner with Concentration in Psychiatric Mental Health (PMHNP)

In addition, a Post-MSN certificate in AG ACNP, AG PCNP, FNP or a PMHNP is offered. Individuals who have completed an accredited graduate degree program in nursing as an APRN (NP, CNS, CRNA, Midwife) are eligible for these certificate options. However, a gap analysis must be performed by the Graduate Program Director to determine an appropriate plan of study. This plan of study is individualized based on the student’s previous coursework and recognized gaps in educational preparation.

Upon completion of any NP track, the graduate is eligible to sit for national certification examinations. If a student “Opts Out” of the BSN to DNP program to receive the MSN-NP degree, they have four years to return to the BSN to DNP program without academic penalty to complete their DNP degree.

**Admission Cycle**

Admission to the BSN-DNP program is competitive. The Georgia Southern University School of Nursing program admits students each Fall semester. The application is available online through the College of Graduate Studies. All admission application materials must be received by March 1st for admission consideration to the Fall cohort.

**Admission Criteria**

1. Earned Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree or its equivalent from a college accredited by the appropriate accrediting association. BSN program must include a Health Assessment course.
   a. Undergraduate health appraisal/physical assessment course with a grade of C or better
2. Current Georgia RN license. Out-of-state students must obtain a Georgia RN license.
   a. One year of full-time registered nurse (RN) clinical employment prior to entering the advanced health assessment course. Proof of full-time clinical nursing employment is required via a resume or CV with work history noted.
3. If you are applying for the Adult/Gerontology Acute Care NP track, one year of critical care nursing employment is required.
4. Completion of a prerequisite undergraduate statistics course, or a statistically-oriented methodology course, with a grade of C or better.
5. Submission/completion of documentation:
   a. College of Graduate Studies application
   b. Georgia Southern Health Services form
   c. School of Nursing Student Health Appraisal forms
   d. Proof of current malpractice liability insurance
   e. Proof of American Heart Association Level C (2 person-CPR) BLS certification
   f. Three letters of professional recommendations.
   g. A phone interview may be necessary.
6. Must gain Regular Degree-Seeking Status admission to the BSN to DNP program to be eligible to enroll in graduate nursing courses. Non-degree students are not permitted to enroll in graduate nursing courses with the exception of students formally admitted to the Post-MSN Certificate option or with prior approval from the Graduate Program Director. The Graduate Program Director will make an admission decision recommendation following a review of the applicant's credentials. Admission decisions are made on a case by case basis.
7. Must have a minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale).
8. All international applicants and U.S. Citizens whose native language is not English
and/or who do not have an undergraduate degree from a regionally accredited US college or university are required to submit official TOEFL scores taken within the two years immediately preceding the requested semester of admission. An official copy of the test score, sent by the testing agency to the Office of Graduate Admissions is required before any action is taken on an application.

9. Criminal background and/or drug screening may be requested by clinical agencies. Cost and scheduling is the student’s responsibility.

10. All applicants will be required to complete all clinical practicums with a qualified preceptor within the state of Georgia and within 250 miles of the Georgia Southern University Statesboro Campus.

**Progression Policy**

1. Students in DNP coursework must maintain a 3.0 average ("B" or better) in coursework to proceed in the doctoral program and to be eligible to graduate.

2. Grades in all courses applied toward the doctorate must be maintained at a "B" or better. Students will become academically ineligible when any of the following occur in coursework of an approved program of study:
   1. a grade of "D", "F", or "WF" in any course;
   2. a grade of "C" in any three courses; or
   3. the minimum 3.0 GPA is not achieved within the minimum number of credit hours required for the degree.

3. To progress within the graduate nursing program, a grade of "A" or "B" must be earned in all courses with the following exceptions:
   a. If a "C" is earned in any course, the course must be repeated.
   b. A student may petition one time to repeat a course in which a "C" is earned. A grade of "A" or "B" must be earned in the course being repeated to continue in the program.

4. Students must also meet the College of Graduate Studies progression policies.

5. Withdrawal - Any student who wishes to drop a course or withdraw from the graduate program is instructed to contact the Graduate Program Director before taking such action. Either action may result in the student being unable to return to the program due to the student allocation limitations. Faculty who have students failing or who recognize progression risks will discuss the situation with the Graduate Program Director before advising the student to withdraw or drop a course.

6. Clinical Course Progression: If a student earns a grade of "C" in any MSN Clinical course dyad with didactic and clinical hours as concurrent components the student will be required to repeat both components of the course dyad to progress in the program.

7. Once students begin the Advanced Practice Core as described above, all clinicals must be completed in the state of Georgia within a 250 miles radius of the Georgia Southern University Statesboro campus.

8. Readmission into the BSN to DNP Program: Any student who withholds from a course or program must meet with the Graduate Program Director to determine their revised program of study. The student may be required to successfully complete a one-hour independent study (didactic or clinical) or repeat a previous course(s), to be determined by the Graduate Program Director. Any student desiring reinstatement, after withdrawal from the BSN to DNP program, who has successfully completed any of the NP specialty core courses will be required to successfully complete a 1 credit hour Independent Study with 90 clinical hours in a clinical focus, determined by the Graduate Program Director before being allowed to return to the next clinical dyad course in the curriculum sequence.

**Other Program Requirements**

- A student admitted in Non-degree status to the Post-MSN Certificate options must meet the same academic standards and regulations for progression and retention as a
Degree-seeking student.

- Students in the BSN-DNP program are eligible to sit for the certification after completion of all NP program didactic and clinical courses; however, the certifying body will not release the certification until the date the degree is conferred, and the official transcript is received. Students desiring certification upon the completion of the NP courses should “opt-out” for the MSN degree and take the certification exam at the time of completion. If the student does not “opt-out” for the MSN degree, their degree will not be conferred until completion of the DNP degree.

- Students who complete the graduate core, advanced practice nursing core, and specialty core and are “Opting Out” to obtain their MSN degree from Georgia Southern University have four years from the date of the MSN final transcript to re-apply to the DNP program to obtain the doctoral degree without penalty. These courses would meet the requirements of the DNP program and would not need to be repeated.

**Curriculum Requirements**

**Program of Study**

Upon admission to the graduate program, a program of study will be provided to the graduate student. Any changes in the program of study must be approved by the Graduate Program Director. Five credit hours per semester is considered full-time.

The Program of study for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing to Doctor of Nursing Practice (BSN to DNP) degree can be found on the School of Nursing website. [https://chp.georgiasouthern.edu/nursing/programs/bsn-dnp/](https://chp.georgiasouthern.edu/nursing/programs/bsn-dnp/)

The Programs of study for the Post-MSN NP Certificates can be found on the School of Nursing website. [https://chp.georgiasouthern.edu/nursing/programs/msn-and-post-msn-certificate/](https://chp.georgiasouthern.edu/nursing/programs/msn-and-post-msn-certificate/)

**DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE (DNP) PROGRAM**

The Post-MSN DNP degree is designed to build upon the foundation of the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) role. The DNP program is directed toward advanced practice registered nurses and closely associated specialty areas (i.e. NP, CNS, CRNA, and CNM preparation), and other specialty areas reviewed on an individualized basis. All applicant’s prior course work will be reviewed and individual DNP programs of study will be developed.

**DNP Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Integrate scientific underpinnings, human caring values, ethical principles, and cultural and spiritual competencies into the implementation of the role of Doctor of Nursing Practice.
2. Utilize principles of organizational and systems theory to demonstrate the leadership role in envisioning, designing, evaluating, and managing health organizational systems.
3. Use knowledge from nursing and other sciences to generate, appraise, and synthesize best evidence, to formulate, design and evaluate evidence-based interventions for individuals and populations.
4. Incorporate effective communication and systems technology in demonstrating the ability to effectively participate in transforming health care delivery systems.
5. Demonstrate advanced leadership and advocacy related to health care policy to improve health care delivery and effect change in professional and political realms.
6. Provide leadership in interprofessional collaborations to design, implement, and evaluate individual and system-level interventions that improve health care outcomes of individuals and populations.
7. Synthesize critical thinking, diagnostic, and therapeutic reasoning skills in the Doctor of Nursing Practice role to develop initiatives that promote health, reduce risk, and manage
the illness trajectory of individuals and populations.
8. Synthesize and demonstrate advanced practice nursing knowledge and competencies in the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse specialist role.

**Admission Criteria**

1. Earned a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree from an accredited institution with an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse focus
2. Minimum undergraduate or graduate GPA of 3.0 (on 4.0 scale)
3. International students and U.S. Citizens whose native language is not English must demonstrate English proficiency:
   a. All U.S. and international applicants, including resident and non-resident aliens, whose native language is not English and who do not have an undergraduate degree from a regionally accredited US college or university are required to submit official TOEFL scores taken within the year immediately preceding the requested semester of admission. A minimum total score of 83, and minimum scores of 20 for each of the skills evaluated by the TOEFL: Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing. An original copy of the test score, sent by the testing agency to the Office of Graduate Admissions is required before any action is taken on an application. The copy of the score provided to the student and subsequently forwarded is not acceptable.
4. Evidence of:
   a. Current registered nursing (RN) licensure
   • For Post-MSN DNP, licensure in state of residence where clinical hours will be completed
   b. American Heart Association Level C (2 person-CPR) BLS certification
   c. Three letters of recommendation from professional colleagues who can attest to academic and clinical acumen
5. Complete submission of documentation:
   a. College of Graduate Studies application and fee
6. Prerequisite-Statistics. Program requires a prerequisite in Introductory Statistics with a C or better.

**Upon acceptance the following is required:**

1. Current malpractice liability insurance
2. Certification in a specialty area for all NPs. For all others, appropriate certification in specialty area, if available.

**Admission Cycle**

All admission application materials must be received by March 1st for admission consideration to the Fall cohort. The application is available online through the College of Graduate Studies.

**Curriculum Requirements**

**Program of Study**

Upon admission to the graduate program, a program of study (POS) will be provided to the graduate student. Any changes in the POS must be approved by the Graduate Program Director. Five credit hours a semester is considered full-time.

The Program of study for the Post-MSN to Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree can be found on the School of Nursing website.
https://chp.georgiasouthern.edu/nursing/programs/doctor-of-nursing-practice-dnp/
Progression

Students in DNP coursework must maintain a 3.0 average ("B" or better) in course work to proceed in the doctoral program and to be eligible to graduate. Grades in all courses applied toward the doctorate must be "B" or better. Students will become academically ineligible when any of the following occur in course work of an approved program of study:

1. a grade of "D", "F", or "WF" in any course;
2. a grade of "C" in any three courses;
3. the minimum 3.0 average is not achieved within the minimum number of credit hours required for the degree.

Transfer Credit

A maximum of 6 credit hours of doctoral level nursing credits and 9 credit hours of graduate level electives may be applied toward the DNP upon approval by the Graduate Program Director. Transfer credit hours must also satisfy the same requirements as course taught for doctoral education within the School of Nursing Graduate Program (e.g., minimum grade of "B"), be consistent with the student’s approved program of study, and have been received from a regionally accredited college or university. Thesis and dissertation credit hours cannot be transferred. The student must provide documentation in support of equivalence, such as a course syllabus, transcript, term paper, and/or instructor testimony. Equivalence is determined by the Graduate Program Director.

Course Time Limits

All requirements for the DNP must be completed within seven academic years from the date of the first enrollment for study following admission to the doctoral coursework. For transfer students, the seven year time limit commences with the semester during which the credit being transferred was earned at another institution.

Clinical Project

Doctoral students are required to complete a clinical project at an advanced level. A dissertation is not required. The clinical project may take diverse forms (e.g., identification of a healthcare problem, development of an intervention and analysis of outcomes; an investigation of a health issue with development of health policy strategies to address the health problem; or the development of a complex programmatic strategy within a healthcare system to address a significant issue). Upon completion of the clinical project the student must present the project to faculty and peers in an appropriate venue determined by the faculty. Submission of the project to a refereed professional organization for presentation or peer reviewed journal for publication is required. It is hoped that a minimum of one peer reviewed presentation or peer reviewed publication will be achieved on DNP-related content prior to completion of course work.

Students must select a committee to oversee their project. The committee selected by the student is subject to approval by the Graduate Program Faculty.

Each student will complete a clinical project within the three courses allotted for the project. If a student does not complete the project within each of the three sequenced courses, they will not be allowed to continue in their scheduled Program of Study. The student will be required to retake courses in this sequence at the discretion of the Graduate Program Director. Incomplete grades will be given only due to extreme circumstances.
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PROGRAMS

This MSN programs prepare nurses for advanced nursing practice and build upon the foundation of the baccalaureate generalist nurse role. The MSN programs offers two options: Chronic Care Management (CCM) and Nursing Education (NE).

**MSN Student Outcomes**

1. Develop advanced practice expertise to affect positive healthcare outcomes with individuals, families, populations, and systems, particularly underserved population in rural and underserved areas.
2. Evaluate theory and research for the application of evidence-based practice to resolve healthcare problems and effect change.
3. Employ critical thinking and complex reasoning skills in the application of advanced nursing knowledge to promote professional practice.
4. Employ therapeutic communication, technology and informatics within an inter-professional collaborative context of advanced nursing practice.
5. Demonstrate advanced leadership, advocacy, consultation and citizenship activities to improve healthcare delivery and effect change in professional and political realms.
6. Incorporate human caring values, ethical principles, and cultural and spiritual sensitivity in all aspects of the advanced nursing practice role.
7. Demonstrate role responsibility and accountability in all professional endeavors within the scope of the advanced nursing practice role.

**Admission Criteria**

1. Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree or its equivalent from a college accredited by the appropriate accrediting association.
2. Minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 (on 4.0 scale)
3. Prerequisite-Statistics. Program requires a prerequisite in Introductory Statistics with a C or better.
4. The MAT or GRE is not required for admission.
5. Unrestricted and current single state Georgia RN license or a multi-state compact license that includes Georgia.
6. One year of full-time clinical nursing experience.
7. Submission/completion of all of the following materials:
   a. Complete College of Graduate Studies online application with payment of required fee.
   b. Three letters of recommendation. Forms in the online application are acceptable, or you can attach 3 recommendation letters to the application.
   c. Proof of American Heart Association Level C (2 person-CPR) BLS certification.
   d. Proof of RN licensure from GBON licensure verification website.
8. Upon acceptance:
   a. Georgia Southern University Health Services Form (must be completed before first-semester entry and updated each semester afterward)
   b. School of Nursing Student Health forms (required before the first day of the first semester)
   c. Proof of current RN malpractice liability insurance (policy cover page) with name, dates of coverage, amount.

**Admission Cycle**

All admission application materials must be received by March 1st for admission consideration to the Fall cohort. The application is available online through the College of Graduate Studies.
**Progression Policy**

Students must meet the progression policies of College of Graduate Studies and the MSN Program. All courses must be completed with a minimum grade of “B.”

**CHRONIC CARE MANAGEMENT CONCENTRATION**

**Curriculum Requirements**

**Program of Study**

Upon admission to the graduate program, a program of study will be provided to the graduate student. Any changes in the program of study must be approved by the Graduate Program Director. Five credit hours a semester is considered full-time.

The Program of study for the Master of Science in Nursing degree - Chronic Care Management (MSN CCM) can be found on the School of Nursing website. [https://chp.georgiasouthern.edu/nursing/programs/masters-of-science-in-nursing-chronic-care-management/](https://chp.georgiasouthern.edu/nursing/programs/masters-of-science-in-nursing-chronic-care-management/)

**NURSING EDUCATION CONCENTRATION**

**Curriculum Requirements**

**Program of Study**

Upon admission to the graduate program, a program of study will be provided to the graduate student. Any changes in the program of study must be approved by the Graduate Program Director. Five credit hours a semester is considered full-time.

The Program of study for the Master of Science in Nursing degree – Nursing Education (MSN NE) can be found on the School of Nursing website. [https://chp.georgiasouthern.edu/nursing/programs/master-of-science-in-nursing-nurse-education/](https://chp.georgiasouthern.edu/nursing/programs/master-of-science-in-nursing-nurse-education/)

**SCHOOL OF NURSING POLICIES**

This Student Handbook provides information regarding policies for students in the nursing programs. Additional sources of information related to student policies are published on the Georgia Southern University website at [www.georgiasouthern.edu](http://www.georgiasouthern.edu) in the catalog, Code of Student Conduct, and this handbook. Students are expected to be familiar with these policies and procedures. Policies specific to the School of Nursing are included here.

Course-specific policies may be found in each individual course syllabus. Students must be familiar with and follow any additional policies noted in each course syllabus.

**Academic Integrity**

All students of Georgia Southern University are required to comply with the standards of conduct published in the Georgia Southern University Academic Dishonesty Policy. The policy can be found at: [https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/conduct/resources/faculty/academic-dishonesty/](https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/conduct/resources/faculty/academic-dishonesty/).

Students found to be in violation of this policy may receive a reduction in course letter grade; receive a grade of F in the course; and/or may be referred to the Provost’s Office for adjudication.
Accident/Injury

An accident/injury is defined as an undesirable and unexpected event which results in potential or personal harm during clinical or classroom time. In addition, an accident/injury includes occupational exposure to blood and body fluids and airborne pathogens during clinical/classroom labs. Occupational exposure may be described as a percutaneous (needle stick, cut, or puncture) or mucous membrane (splash to the eyes, nasal mucosa, or mouth) exposure to body fluids (blood or other infectious material), a cutaneous exposure when chapped or abraded skin or otherwise non-intact skin is contaminated with infectious materials, or exposure to infectious airborne agents by way of inhalation or contact.

Students are to report such accidents or injuries which occur in the clinical setting or classroom labs to their faculty member immediately. In addition, the student must complete a School of Nursing accident/injury report and/or agency incident report and seek appropriate medical follow-up according to clinical agency’s policy and Georgia Southern University School of Nursing. Students are responsible for the costs of any tests or treatments due to accident/injuries that occur during clinical/classroom experiences.

When students have an occupational exposure to blood or body fluids, the individual source of exposure should be informed of the incident and tested for serologic evidence of HIV antibodies and Hepatitis B antigen after consent is obtained. If the source individual has AIDS, is positive for HIV antibody, is positive for Hepatitis B antigen or refuses the test, the student should be counseled regarding the risk of infection and evaluated clinically and serologically for evidence of HIV or HBV infection as soon as possible after the exposure. Students with seronegative results for HIV should be retested in 6 weeks, 12 weeks, and 6 months post-exposure (Centers for Disease Control [CDC,] 2006). The student should be advised to report and seek medical evaluation for any acute febrile illness that occurs within 12 weeks after the exposure. An illness characterized by fever, rash, or lymphadenopathy may be indicative of recent HIV infection.

When students are exposed to TB disease, the student should be referred to his or her family physician or health school to begin follow up and appropriate therapy. Baseline testing should be performed as soon as possible post-exposure. The student must be cleared by a physician or health care provider prior to return to clinical. Students who sustain other accidents/injuries while in the classroom or clinical setting should be referred to their private physician or health care provider, Georgia Southern University Student Health Services, or the local emergency facility.

Attendance Verification

Faculty must verify student attendance even in an online class environment. Therefore students must interact within the Folio environment via discussion posting within the first three days of class.

Chemical Impairment of Nursing Students

The University policy pertaining to alcoholic beverages and drugs can be found in the Code of Student Conduct. Because nursing students are responsible for the direct care of patients in vulnerable situations, students who are under the influence of prescription or over the counter substances that directly impact his or her ability to provide safe and appropriate patient care are included under this policy. In accordance with university policies, the School of Nursing has adopted the following policy for nursing students in the clinical setting.

a. A student reporting to clinical under the adverse influence of any substance, will not be allowed to remain in the clinical setting that day and the matter will be referred to the School of Nursing Chair or Graduate Program Director for further evaluation. The student will receive an Unsatisfactory for the clinical day which could result in a clinical failure. A drug and/or alcohol screen may be required at the student’s expense if
probable suspicion of impairment exists. If the student is under the influence of prescription or over the counter substances, the student will be required to provide a written statement from their primary healthcare provider stating that the substance(s) the student is taking does not influence his or her ability to provide safe, appropriate care to patients in the clinical setting.

b. The course coordinator in conjunction with the School of Nursing Chair, Associate Chair, or Graduate Program Director will inform the student when return to clinical is permitted, if the student has been asked to leave the clinical setting due to being under the adverse influence of any substance.

c. A detailed description of the incident will be documented by the clinical instructor and signed by the student, indicating that the description has been read by the student. The documentation will be placed in the student's folder.

d. The Graduate Program Director and the School of Nursing Chair will determine what further action is necessary based on a review of the student’s case. Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with clinical agencies include a statement that the SON will follow all facility policies. If suspected chemical impairment occurs in the clinical setting, faculty are to follow facility policy. If suspected chemical impairment occurs on campus, faculty are to follow university policy by reporting the event to the Dean of Students Office at the following link https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/dean/report-an-incident/

Children on Campus

Georgia Southern University policy prohibits the presence of children during class. This includes, but is not limited to, classroom, lab, simulation, and clinical sites. Children may not be left unattended on school grounds.

Clinical Equipment

1. A stethoscope is required. Since you will be using this equipment throughout your nursing program and during your career, we recommend you purchase good quality instruments. The stethoscope you purchase must have a diaphragm and a bell. Stethoscopes with shorter tubing have better quality of sound.

2. A watch with a second hand is required and must be worn during all clinical experiences.

3. Handheld Devices. Beginning with the Advanced Health Assessment course and with all subsequent primary care courses, students are required to have their own individual handheld device (i.e., smartphone) that can download internet resources for use in the clinical setting. You will be required to subscribe to software approved by the School of Nursing for Advanced Practice Nurses to research medications, drug treatment regimens, and information regarding prevention and treatment of major disease processes at the point of care.

4. Ophthalmic/otoscope. Prior to entering the Advanced Health Assessment course, all students must purchase a SON approved ophthalmic/otoscope for use during ALL clinical rotations throughout the program.

Clinical Hours

Clinical Hours during Holidays, Breaks, and Weekends

Nursing students are permitted in the clinical area anytime during the semester including holidays, breaks, weekends and off hours provided the following are met:

1. It is within the normal hours of operation of the clinical agency

2. The student's preceptor or faculty member is onsite

3. The student has malpractice insurance
Clinical Hours between Semesters

Due to liability issues no clinical hours may be completed between semesters for application to a future course. Since there is no course credit between semesters, there can be no liability incurred by Georgia Southern University in a clinical setting. If a student wants to spend time in a clinical setting between semesters, it must be done as an individual and not as a Georgia Southern University student.

Clinical Hours for NP Specialty Courses

Each clinical course (excluding Advanced Health Assessment that requires 90 clinical hours), requires 180 clinical hours per semester. A minimum of 172 hours must be completed providing care to patients in a clinical setting or in specialty clinics approved by course faculty. Up to 8 hours may be earned in continuing education credits (e.g., conference, on-line) with copy of CE certificate turned in to faculty or documentation of attendance at nurse practitioner professional meetings. Only 1 offering is allowed per semester unless approved by the Graduate Program Director.

Continuance Materials

Continuance materials include BLS, malpractice liability, and annual health renewal to include PPD test. These must be kept current. Clinical experiences may not take place if materials are beyond the expiration date.

School of Nursing requirements for RN licensure, BLS certification, professional liability insurance, health insurance, health status, PPD, and immunizations must be turned in to the Nursing office prior to attending the first day of clinical and must be current through the last day of clinical for the semester enrolled. It is the student’s responsibility to keep materials current. If the expiration date occurs during the semester, then the student must provide evidence of update prior to the next scheduled clinical day. If clinical course requirements are not met by the deadline, the student will not be allowed to attend clinical which could result in a course failure.

The Graduate Program Director has the authority to notify students that they may not proceed in course work if they do not adhere to the submission policy for credentials and required materials (i.e. current RN licensure, BLS, liability insurance, health status, etc). Students not in compliance may be locked out of Folio course access until materials are current.

All students must submit evidence of the following in order to be admitted to a clinical course:

1. Health status
   a. A completed health history form and a physical examination by a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician’s assistant.
      i. The physical examination is completed once prior to the student attending nursing courses. The health history form must be updated annually. Any condition that is deemed by the faculty to jeopardize the quality of nursing care or the safety of clients will be discussed with the student by the Graduate Program Director and appropriate action will be taken. Key problems will be identified and appropriate faculty notified.
   b. Yearly Tuberculosis (TB) Screening
      i. Two-step TB testing, Quantiferon test, or a T-Spot is required for incoming students. The two-step TB skin testing procedure and Quantiferon Test is described on the health form. The two-step TB skin test, Quantiferon, or T-Spot results are required to be submitted by the designated deadline. Throughout the program, students are required to obtain an annual 1-step TB test or Quantiferon test.
      ii. Students with a negative skin test will be required to complete an
annual PPD skin test screening prior to engaging in any clinical experiences. If the student has a positive skin test with either the first or the second step of the TB skin testing procedure, the student will be required to complete the annual TB exposure questionnaire, obtain a chest x-ray and follow the directions provided to them through the health department and/or and Georgia Southern University Student Health Services. Students must provide documentation to the nursing program of compliance with the recommendations of these agencies.

2. **Immunizations**

Students must maintain current immunization status for clinical courses. In today’s environment, we are faced with new and emerging threats to public health and safety. Due to these threats and for the protection of the School of Nursing students and patients, many clinical agencies require nursing students and faculty to undergo mandatory vaccinations. If a clinical agency requires a mandatory vaccination, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain the required vaccinations prior to clinical placement. The School of Nursing will not attempt to find alternative clinical placements for students refusing to comply with a clinical agency’s mandatory vaccination policy. The student is also responsible for all costs associated with the mandatory vaccination. If the student chooses not to be vaccinated, the student must follow the agency requirements for vaccine refusal. Refusal of immunization may affect ability to complete program requirements.

a. Immunity to measles and rubella may be demonstrated by:
   i. Compliance with University admissions requirements with evidence of 2 doses of MMR vaccine (date must be after 1970); one dose at 12 months of age or later and a second dose at least 30 days after the first dose.
   ii. or laboratory evidence of immunity.

b. Immunity to Hepatitis B is evidenced by
   i. a completed series of three injections of vaccine
   ii. a positive antibody titer
      1. (or a signed refusal or waiver form)
   iii. Student may show evidence of initiating Hepatitis B series while the series is in progress.

c. Tetanus, Diptheria, and Pertussis vaccination (Td and Tdap) may be demonstrated by
   i. Evidence of current tetanus immunization. Boosters are required every 10 years for healthcare providers, following the initial completion of the primary three dose series.
   ii. Students lacking written documentation of a primary series consisting of at least three doses of tetanus and diphtheria toxoid-containing vaccine should complete the primary series with Td. If the student has no documentation of receiving a Tdap, he/she is required to obtain based on CDC recommendations (CDC, 2018).

d. Varicella (chicken pox) may be demonstrated by
   i. evidence of vaccination of two doses
   ii. positive titer
   iii. documentation of history of chicken pox

e. If a clinical site requires medical or immunization information from students, such as proof of the influenza vaccine, please note the following:
   i. GS Health Services does not release medical records without a signed consent form completed by the patient/student.
   ii. GS Health Services has access to the Georgia Registry of Immunization Transactions and Services (GRITS) and will be happy to print student records after completion of a consent form.
1. GS Health Services may require up to 24 hours to complete a request for medical records.

2. Students must have identification to obtain a copy of medical records.

3. Students may access their own records by going to the GS Health Services portal.

   a. Current certification is required which extends through the last day of clinical for the semester enrolled. A copy of the card showing month and year of expiration must be provided by the deadline established by the School of Nursing.

4. **Professional liability insurance**
   a. **RN Liability Insurance**: All graduate students are required to purchase individual professional liability insurance for the RN and to furnish a copy of the certificate of insurance or letter of confirmation from the insurance agent with effective dates and amount of coverage. Professional liability must be current through the last day of clinical for the semester enrolled.
   b. **Student Liability Insurance**: While in the role of a GS graduate nursing student, students are required to purchase individual student liability insurance and furnish a copy of the certificate of insurance or letter or confirmation from the insurance agent with effective dates and amount of coverage. Students have the option to purchase student liability insurance through the GS Marketplace for a nominal fee. The GS student liability insurance policy provides coverage for students for one academic year (August 1-July 31). **The policy only provides coverage for the academic year in which it is purchased.** A copy of the purchase receipt must be submitted to the SON as proof of coverage by the deadline.

5. **Professional Licensure**
   a. Copy of current Georgia RN license.

6. **Health Insurance**
   a. Coverage is required as specified by the University System of Georgia Student Health Insurance Policy. Those with insurance from an outside source must apply for a waiver every semester using the identified website. [https://auxiliary.georgiasouthern.edu/healthservices/insurance/](https://auxiliary.georgiasouthern.edu/healthservices/insurance/)

7. **Applied Learning Experiences**
   a. All preceptor(s) and planned learning experiences must have faculty approval. Students must provide faculty with their schedules (dates and times with preceptor) before starting the practicum and according to individual course policies. Once an active MOU is in place signed copies of identified forms are needed for nursing students to participate in applied learning experiences in hospitals and other clinical agencies. The forms include Educational Training Program Agreement, Authorization for Release of Records and Information, and a Preceptor Agreement Form or off-campus Student Participation Agreement.

8. **Release of Continuance Course Requirements to Clinical Agencies**
   a. Individual student continuance materials may be released to clinical agencies upon request, when deemed necessary by the agency, with the signed permission of the student.
9. **Agency Orientation Requirements**
   
a. Every semester, all students must complete any required clinical paperwork specific for the agency to which they will be participating in clinical experiences. Students will not be able to attend clinical until the paperwork by the agency is completed. These requirements are subject to change based on University and School of Nursing policy and clinical agencies’ requirements. All students will be notified as soon as possible when requirements change.

Student noncompliance with the university, SON, and clinical agency policy/requirements will result in students being unable to participate in clinical experiences until the health and agency requirements are met and could result in course failure.

**Copyright**

Syllabi, lectures, notes, and all materials distributed and presented by faculty during this course are protected by copyright law. You are authorized to take notes in this class but that authorization extends only to making one set of notes for your own personal use and no other use. You are not authorized to sell, license, commercially publish, distribute, transmit, display, or record notes from this class unless you have written consent by the faculty to do so.

**Dress Code**

The purpose of the graduate student dress code policy is to promote safety, provide a means of identifying the student, and to support the milieu of the clinical environment. These guidelines apply only to the graduate student while in the student role:

1. Students are expected to maintain professional appearance and behavior in all clinical settings.
2. Students are expected to maintain appropriate levels of appearance and good personal hygiene including cleanliness and neatness of dress and shoes.
3. Clothing of appropriate length, style, fit, and professional design must be worn as designated by the School of Nursing.
4. If clinical agency requirements are more restrictive, graduate nursing students are required to adhere to both the School of Nursing and agency requirements. Additional clinical dress expectations may be required in specific courses.
5. A student who reports to clinical and is not in compliance with dress code policy may be dismissed from clinical for the day at the discretion of the preceptor or instructor.

**Name Badge:**
Name badges must be clearly visible at all times when participating in clinical activities. The GSU- Name badge is to be placed over the right upper chest area of the lab coat. Name badge must be purchased through at a nominal fee through the approved vendor. The name badge will have the following information for graduate students: first line: Name (First, Middle Initial, and Last) and second line: MSN Student OR BSN-DNP Student

**Clinical Attire:**
Professional business casual attire should be worn when working in a clinical area or agency unless the clinical agency required another type of uniform. Attire of appropriate length, style, and fit is required. No cleavage of any type should be visible with lifting, bending, etc. Jeans (or any denim fabric clothing), leggings, tight pants, shorts, cutoff’s, Capri pants, midriffs, tank-tops, sweats, athletic clothes, fatigues, battledress, or evening wear are not permitted. Students are not allowed to wear their personal work uniforms.

**Undergarments:**
Full coverage undergarments should be neutral color or skin tone so as not to be visible through
clothing. No visible undergarments are allowed. If the undergarments are visible through the clothing, the clothing is not appropriate for clinical. Students may wear a neutral color or skin tone camisole or undershirt.

Lab Coat:
A white lab coat is required over appropriate professional business casual clothing when entering the clinical area. Some agencies prefer that you forgo the white lab coat, such as in pediatrics, and in this case, wear your name tag over your professional clinical attire.

Shoes:
Clean, impermeable, shoes are required. Shoes cannot have holes or other openings on the top, toe, or sides of the shoes. No clogs or other similar styles of shoes are allowed. Shoes are expected to be clean and polished. High heeled, platform, gym, sandals, or open toe shoes are not permitted.

Hairstyle:
The hair policy includes natural hair, wigs, and weaves. Hair must be neat and well-groomed. If hair is longer than shoulder-length, hair must be pulled back and off the collar. Hair accessories must be limited and same color as hair. Hair must be kept out of the face regardless of the length. Hair that is dyed must be a naturally occurring hair color.

Facial Hair:
Fully developed beard must be neatly trimmed, clean, and present a well-groomed appearance. Facial hair cannot be longer than 1 inch in length.

Personal Grooming:
1. Nails should be clean and neatly trimmed and should not extend beyond ¼ inch from the fingertip. Nail enhancement is not allowed. Anything applied to natural nails is considered an enhancement. This includes, but is not limited to, polish, gels, artificial nails, tips, wraps, appliqués, and acrylics applied to the nail surface.
2. Make-up should not be excessive.
3. Tattoos must be completely covered while in the clinical setting.
4. Perfume/cologne/aftershave is prohibited.
5. Attire must be clean and wrinkle free.
6. No gum is to be chewed while in the clinical setting.

Jewelry:
1. Earrings: One pair of small post earrings, 3mm or less. Only one earring per ear is permitted in lower lobe. Earrings which are permanently implanted in the ear must be covered.
2. Body piercing jewelry in visible areas other than ears is not permitted. A clear spacer is not allowed in lieu of jewelry.
3. Only an analog watch with a second hand (as part of your clinical equipment) is permitted. Smart Watches are not permitted.
4. Necklaces must not be visible.
5. Do not wear bracelets in the clinical setting.
6. If a ring is worn, it must be a plain band only.

Drug Screening

Many clinical agencies require drug screening as a condition of student participation at their sites. The School of Nursing complies with these requirements. Students are responsible for all costs associated with the drug screening. Results of the drug screening will be provided directly to the clinical agencies.
All students will use a designated laboratory testing facility to secure student drug screens. The student is responsible for completing a drug screen at the designated agency and for all costs associated with these tests. Each clinical affiliate will independently review students’ drug screens and make the final decision, based on its own criteria, as to whether each student will be allowed to participate in clinical activities at the affiliate clinical site.

Decisions as to whether a student is eligible for placement at a particular clinical site based on the results of the drug screen are those of the clinical site alone. However, if a student is refused clinical placement due to the results of the drug screening that student’s ability to continue in the nursing program may be affected. The Student Affairs Committee along with the Graduate Program Director and Chair of the School of Nursing will determine if the student will be allowed to continue in the nursing program.

A student who refuses to undergo the mandatory drug screening will not be admitted to the nursing program or will not be allowed to continue in the nursing program.

Editors and Statisticians Use

All assignments, written and oral, with the exception of group projects, are to be completed by the individual DNP student. However, just as all manuscripts need to be read by at least one other person for clarity and typographical errors, it is acceptable to seek editorial assistance with papers and projects for those purposes. Additionally, any student who is aware of major deficiencies in professional writing skills is encouraged to seek assistance prior to writing the first formal paper in the program. DNP students are expected to understand, apply, and analyze statistics. The use of statistics consultants is acceptable for clarification if needed.

Electronic Communications and Social Media Usage

The use of electronic communication is essential for nursing students in the School of Nursing. Georgia Southern University provides an email account to each student. Students are expected to check their university email accounts on a regular basis. In addition, the Georgia Southern University learning management system (Folio) used by faculty members as an essential part of the course learning activities provides students with an effective means to communicate in a secure environment with faculty and students enrolled in a course. Faculty may require students to transmit documentation or information related to their clinical experiences via their online course email or other course tools. This documentation and information related to clinical experiences is considered confidential and should not contain any private health information which would result in a violation of HIPAA regulations. Nursing faculty may also use other web-based tools to enhance student learning.

Responsibilities of Students related to Electronic Communications:
In addition to the authorized use of online courses, web-based course tools, and assigned university email accounts, many nursing students choose to engage in other activities via the internet. Nursing faculty and university staff do not routinely monitor these student communications. Nursing students must understand that some of these activities may result in violation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the Student Code of Conduct, the ANA Code for Nurses, and the Patient’s Bill of Rights. Any violation of these standards can result in significant consequences for the student including possible civil and legal penalties and dismissal from the School of Nursing and the University.

Nursing students have an obligation to understand the nature, benefits, and consequences of participating in social networking of all types. Online content and behavior has the potential to either enhance or undermine not only the individual’s career, but also the nursing profession. Do not present yourself as a representative of the School of Nursing, Georgia Southern University, or any clinical agency without their written permission to do so.
ANA’s Principles for Social Networking
1. Nurses must not transmit or place online individually identifiable patient information.
2. Nurses must observe ethically prescribed professional patient/nurse boundaries.
3. Nurses should understand that patients, colleagues, institutions, and employers may view postings.
4. Nurses should take advantage of privacy settings and seek to separate personal and professional information online.
5. Nurses should bring content that could harm a patient’s privacy, rights, or welfare to the attention of appropriate authorities.
6. Nurses should participate in developing institutional policies governing online conduct.
   (Fowler, 2015)

6 Tips to Avoid Problems
1. Remember that standards of professionalism are the same online as in any other circumstance.
2. Do not share or post information or photos gained through the nurse/patient relationship.
3. Maintain professional boundaries in the use of electronic media. Online contact with patients blurs this boundary.
4. Do not make disparaging remarks about patients, employers or co-workers, even if they are not identified.
5. Do not take photos or videos of patients on personal devices, including cell phones.
6. Promptly report a breach of confidentiality or privacy. (NCSBN, 2011)

Students should be aware that information and communications they post to the internet via social media and social networking sites are public in nature. Where information and communications posted violate the Code of Student Conduct or provide information documenting a violation of the Student Conduct Code, such information or communications may be used in judiciary proceedings. In particular, communications that violate the Code of Student Conduct, such as threats and harassment, are violations whether they are transmitted in person, by phone, over the internet, or by any other means. Students should consider that any form of electronic communication is subject to this policy. Nursing students will be held responsible for the posting of any content that violates the ANA standards on their personal social networking sites even if the person posting the message is not the student. HIPAA regulations require that we maintain the privacy and confidentiality of the people we encounter in clinical settings. Therefore, the transmission of any images, names, or personally identifiable health information related to people encountered in the clinical setting is forbidden. Students are not allowed to discuss any information they learn as a result of being present in a clinical environment including information related to the clinical agency or site, clinical agency staff, nursing faculty and staff, the School of Nursing, and Georgia Southern University via electronic communication unless authorized by nursing faculty and within the University email account or password-protected online course.

Students are also not allowed to post pictures, images, or other content related to a specific clinical agency or obtained from the clinical agency’s website electronically in any format unless expressly authorized in writing to do so by the clinical agency and the nursing faculty member supervising the student. Any communication electronically between students, students and faculty, and persons outside of the School of Nursing should be considered in the context of the standards and codes outlined above.

As with all parties described above, the nursing faculty is individually and collectively entitled to privacy and confidentiality, inside and outside of the classroom. Students are prohibited from recording (audio, video, still photo) or posting images of faculty to social media through the use of any electronic communication device without the written consent of the faculty member. Permission from one individual faculty member does not represent blanket consent for any other faculty member. Recording audio or video of faculty-developed course content can be construed
as a violation of the intellectual property of that faculty member or a violation of that person’s copyright should the course material be under copyright.

**Grade Appeal Process**

See link for full information about the University’s graduate student academic appeal process. [https://cogs.georgiasouthern.edu/students/forms/graduate-student-academic-appeal/](https://cogs.georgiasouthern.edu/students/forms/graduate-student-academic-appeal/)

**Grading**

The following grading scale applies to all programs in the School of Nursing:

90-100 = A  
80-89.99 = B  
75-79.99 = C  
70-74.99 = D  
<70 = F

**Health Status Change**

Students who enter the nursing program are expected to complete all assigned academic and clinical activities. If a student develops a change in health status (including, but not limited to pregnancy and illness) which requires restrictions on his/her academic or clinical activities, the student must notify the Graduate Program Director. The student must notify the course faculty and provide the Graduate Program Director with written confirmation of the restrictions from the healthcare provider. The restrictions must include the duration and the specific restrictions. If the restrictions affect the ability of the student to meet program or course outcomes, the Graduate Program Director, in consultation with the appropriate faculty, will determine whether to assign a grade of incomplete or to support an administrative withdrawal. A release form from the healthcare provider responsible for the ongoing care of the student is required when the restrictions are no longer necessary and the student can return to full participation.

**Plagiarism**

[https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/conduct/resources/faculty/academic-dishonesty/](https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/conduct/resources/faculty/academic-dishonesty/)

From the Academic Dishonesty Policy: Plagiarism is the offering of the words, ideas, computer data programs, or graphics of others as one’s own in any academic exercise. Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to: a) the offering of another's work, whether verbatim or paraphrased, as original material without identifying the source in an academic paper, b) directly quoting the words of others without using quotation marks or indented format to identify them, c) self-plagiarism: re-submitting work previously submitted without appropriate or accurate citation or credit and/or without explicit approval from the instructor, d) use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

**Scholarships and Financial Assistance**

The Georgia Southern University Foundation provides a variety of scholarships eligible to students through the Georgia Southern University online scholarship application portal. Through this portal, students can easily search, review requirements, apply and accept awards for available scholarships.

**Student Concerns with Faculty**

It is the expectation that students will be assertive in meeting their learning needs. A student who perceives a problem or concern with a course faculty member is expected to contact that faculty member first to discuss and attempt resolution of the perceived issue. If no resolution is forthcoming, then the Graduate Program Director may be contacted.

**Student Records**

Student folders are maintained as permanent records in the School of Nursing office. Students
may have access to their own records upon request. Students may read or review anything in their record under the Sunshine Law. The records are the property of the School of Nursing. The student may not remove anything from the record and must read it in the presence of faculty or staff of the School of Nursing. Admission application, references, transcripts, Registrar's Office evaluation of records, grade slips, conference notes, advisement schedules, correspondence, memos, and written performance evaluations are all part of the student’s record.

Any hard copies of student test answer sheets and selected student learning activities and papers will be kept by the course coordinator until three months after student’s graduation. Electronic submissions of student tests, learning activities and papers will be archived in Folio. Due to the agreement between the Board of Regents and the Georgia Hospital Association, student files may be accessed on request by the clinical agencies. The student must sign a form stating they are aware that these records may be accessed if deemed necessary. These forms must be signed in order for nursing students to be able to participate in applied learning experiences in hospitals and other clinical agencies. The two forms are signed one time only when the student begins the nursing program of study.

Syllabus Addendum

While the provisions of a syllabus are as accurate and complete as possible, the faculty reserve the right to change any provision herein if circumstances so warrant. Faculty will notify students of such changes. Information about changes will be available at all times from the faculty.

Technology

All students in the Graduate Programs are required to have a webcam for use in all online courses.

Testing

To compute a final course grade, the test average will be computed first:

1. All objective measures (i.e. unit tests/exams, final exam, quizzes, etc.) will be averaged. If the average from the objective measures is less than 75, that numerical value will be used to assign the final course grade of D or F. If the average from the objective measures is 75 or greater, grades from other course assignments (i.e. presentations, case studies, papers, etc.) will be used with the test grades to compute the final course grade.

2. If less than a “B” grade is earned in the course, the student must follow the Progression Policy for the SON.

3. All tests (Folio) will be taken without the use of assistance (e.g., notes, textbooks, calculators, Internet sources, cell phones, other persons, etc.) unless otherwise directed by course faculty in writing. Exams may not be printed, copied or photographed. Students found cheating on a test will be given a zero on the test without the opportunity of a make-up assignment. A zero on a test may result in course failure.

Withdrawal for Medical Reasons

The medical withdrawal at Georgia Southern University exists for the purposes of allowing students who have been diagnosed with a medical condition (physiological or psychological) that has significantly impaired their performance within a given semester, to request to be withdrawn for that semester. As such, the process is predicated on the basis that a diagnosis of this severity would cause impairment in all academic functioning; that the condition would not discriminate between subjects. Medical withdrawal applications are made to the University’s Medical Withdrawal committee. See link for full information about the medical withdrawal process: https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/medical-withdrawal/
A student who experiences medical conditions that require him or her to withdraw from a nursing course is required to withdraw from all nursing courses for that semester, including nursing courses that do not have a clinical component. Upon petition for return to the nursing program, the student is required to provide a statement from his or her licensed healthcare provider, including physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, nurse practitioners, and/or physician assistants, indicating that the student is able to meet the mental and physical demands of the nursing program. The student must follow the guidelines outlined in this handbook for progression.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

College of Graduate Studies

Please access The College of Graduate Studies (COGS) website at https://cogs.georgiasouthern.edu/ for additional information on graduation requirements, travel grants and conference presentation grants.

Graduation Fee

A graduation application processing fee is required of all graduate degree seeking students payable to the Registrar's Office. Application for graduation should be completed 2 semesters before completion of the program.

National Certification Examination

National certification as a nurse practitioner is required to practice in Georgia and all other states. Students who complete the BSN to DNP with the Opt Out option or post-MSN certificate level are eligible to sit for the certification examination. Always keep copies of all materials submitted to the certification agencies.

NURSING STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Nursing Student Representation on School of Nursing Committees

The faculty of the School of Nursing are concerned about students' perceptions, ideas, and viewpoints regarding their experiences in the School’s nursing programs. In order to create a meaningful exchange of ideas between faculty and students related to the School’s programs, students are asked to elect members from their nursing class/program each year to serve in an advisory capacity to selected standing School committees. Student representatives will be asked to meet with the faculty throughout the course of the year to exchange information and ideas related to the work of the School's standing committees and the ongoing evaluation of the School of Nursing. Nursing student representatives are encouraged to use these vehicles to communicate student ideas and issues from their class/program peers to the School of Nursing faculty.

Sigma Theta Tau Rho Psi

Sigma Theta Tau is an international nursing honor society that fosters scholarship and leadership in nursing. Membership in the Georgia Southern University Rho Psi Chapter is competitive and is based on GPA and leadership qualities. Qualified students receive an invitation to join after completion of at least 25% of the graduate nursing curriculum with a minimum GPA of 3.5 or above. Information on Sigma Theta Tau is available at www.sigmanursing.org
United Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (UAPRN)

UAPRN of GA represents APRNs and other interested nurses to promote APRN legislation and practice issues and to support the advancement of the APRN roles. UAPRN is organized for the following purposes:

• To become a collective voice for APRNs in Georgia
• To educate the public regarding advanced nursing practice
• To address legislative and political issues related to healthcare and barriers to advanced nursing practice in Georgia
• To advocate for and provide accessible, quality healthcare for all Georgians
• To promote collaboration and unification of all APRNs in Georgia
• To provide professional role identification and mentorship to nursing colleagues, students, and new APRNs
• To promote, support and perform nursing research to include practice, management and legislative issues

The UAPRN website is https://uaprn.enpnetwork.com/. UAPRN is a group member of AANP.

American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)

AANP is a professional organization which promotes the role of the nurse practitioner in the national venue related to legislation, health policy issues, and clinical information. The mission of AANP is to empower all nurse practitioners (NPs) to advance quality healthcare through practice, education, advocacy, research and leadership. Information is available on the respective websites for these organizations. https://www.aanp.org/.

References


ANA NursesBooks.


