

TUSCULUM UNIVERSITY

Graduate Nursing Program Student Handbook

2019-2020

The Graduate Nursing Student Handbook (Handbook) provides guidance and direction for students accepted or enrolled in the MSN Graduate Program in the College of Health Sciences. The Handbook is subject to change and the contents herein are not intended and should not be construed to form a contract. The current academic year handbook shall be applied to all students and enrollees should neither revert to the year of admission to the MSN Graduate Program in the College of Health Sciences. The Handbook augments and does not replace the Tusculum University Student Handbook.

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CHAPTER ONE: TUSCULUM UNIVERSITY GRADUATE NURSING PROGRAM GENERAL INFORMATION

In response to Tusculum's mission, the Graduate Nursing Program Nursing was established as a major in 2016 with the MSN Family Nurse Practitioner Concentration. The MSN is the professional degree that is the cornerstone of education for advanced practice, career mobility and professional advancement. Because of the state of the health care system and the growing health care needs of the region, a BSN to MSN and a Registered Nurse (RN) to MSN track was established at the same time. Tusculum's MSN mission is "to prepare qualified registered nurse professionals who enhance the quality of life for individuals, families, groups, and communities". Therefore, the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree was established in 2016 to offer nurses further educational options and provide surrounding communities with advanced practice nurses to meet identified health care needs. A RN to MSN track was established at the same time the MSN was established. The RN to MSN track is a bridge program for the Associate Degree Nurse that meets the University's mission and was established to provide advanced practice nurses as healthcare providers, in order to fill the gap within the community and in surrounding areas for access to quality healthcare. The MSN program is committed to teaching, research and service. For further information on the school's MSN program, please contact the MSN Program Director.

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree prepares graduate advanced practice registered nurses as quality providers to meet healthcare needs of individuals, families and populations in surrounding communities. The MSN is the professional degree that prepares nurse practitioners to meet the dynamic and identified health care needs of local, regional and global societies. Upon completion of the accelerated Masters of Science in Nursing Program, graduates are eligible to sit for certification in the chosen specialty area. Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program currently offers the MSN concentration area of Family Nurse Practitioner. For further information on the MSN program, please contact the MSN Program Director.

The Tusculum University MSN program provides students with the opportunity to provide advanced practice nursing care in a variety of practice settings. The MSN program has experienced faculty that provide mentorship and support to students. The emphasis of the program is on use of evidence-based knowledge and skills to lead the healthcare team, encourage health promotion, diagnose and treat acute and chronic illness and evaluate the plan of care. However, critical thinking and decision-making skills are emphasized and upon completion of the program, the student is prepared for doctoral level study in nursing.

MISSION

The Mission of the Nursing Program is to prepare qualified registered nurse professionals as graduate prepared nurses who enhance the quality of life for individuals, families, groups, and communities.

PURPOSE

The Master of Science in Nursing Program at Tusculum University will prepare individuals to assume professional and advanced practice nursing roles and positions through educational experiences that are built upon previous nursing preparation and knowledge of the arts and

sciences. The program will create an atmosphere in which individuals can develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes consistent with professional values and evidence-based care.

PHILOSOPHY

The Nursing faculty affirms the mission, vision and purpose of Tusculum University. In addition to the University's core values, the graduate faculty holds the following values and beliefs as foundational for educating master's prepared nurses. Further, these beliefs guide interactions with students, patients, colleagues, healthcare professionals, and the public as well as, providing the framework for preparing graduates to practice in the changing and complex social, political, economic and healthcare environments.

Person

A unique individual, possessing dignity and worth, which is in constant interaction with the environment. A person is composed of physical, psychological, socio-cultural, developmental and spiritual dimensions, but when examined as a whole, is more than the sum of the parts. The term "person" incorporates the concepts of learner, self, individual, family, group, community and population.

Health

Health is a dynamic multidimensional state represented by the health-illness continuum and is affected by personal choices, values, and interactions with the environment. The physical, psychological, interpersonal and social aspects of health are inseparable in the individual. The degree of balance between the person and his/her internal and external factors determine the person's level of health. Advanced Practice Nursing promotes an awareness of healthy lifestyles and choices. Nurse Practitioners compassionately assist persons to re-establish health and cope with illness or impending death.

Environment

The environment is the domain in which people exist. It is the collective of all conditions, circumstances, and internal and external forces. The interaction between the environment and people affects health, well-being, growth and development throughout the life cycle.

The diverse and ever-changing environment is affected by internal and external factors. Internal factors include the biological, psychological, and spiritual attributes of the person, while external factors comprise physical, chemical, socio-political, cultural, economic, political, legal, ethical, and organizational elements. The environment is influenced by and responds to dynamic forces including technology, education, values, and economic, geopolitical and population characteristics.

Advanced Practice Nursing

Advanced Practice Nursing is a professional practice discipline, which combines the science of nursing and the art of caring for others. The science of advanced practice nursing is the body of knowledge generated from nursing theory and research as well as knowledge applied from the sciences, liberal arts, and social sciences. It involves knowledge, critical thinking skills, and collaboration with other disciplines to provide high quality, safe, effective patient-centered, holistic care. Advanced Practices Nurses as caregivers, providers, teachers and patient advocates must use evidence-based practice and technology that incorporates ethical, moral and legal standards.

The art of caring is the creative and dynamic application of advanced practice nursing knowledge. Caring emanates from a commitment to preserve and enhance the integrity and dignity of persons. Caring relationships begin with the self and embraces those one touches within the environment.

Professional Values

Professional values and the behaviors they exemplify provide a foundation for the practice of nursing. Exhibiting professional values is the demonstration of high-level personal, ethical and skill behaviors that characterize members of a profession. Advanced Practice Nursing is an accountable, autonomous practice profession that is guided by a body of knowledge and a professional code of ethics. Advanced professional nursing also supports research and education to expand advanced practice nursing knowledge and its use.

Advanced Practice Nursing Education

Advanced practice nursing education is a process that involves the educator and the learner in collaboratively pursuing and sharing knowledge. Learning is a deliberate and dynamic process characterized by the acquisition of knowledge, self-awareness, breadth and depth in critical thinking, and by cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills all of which change the behavior of the learner. Learning occurs best when the learner's rights are respected and when the learner *accepts responsibility for self-direction and his/her own decisions*.

The focus of advanced practice nursing education is critical inquiry that enables the learner to recognize phenomena, take appropriate actions in a variety of situations, and to interactively evaluate outcomes. The reflective process emphasizes creative insight, valuation and self-realization. The goals of liberal and scientific education must be integrated with those of professional development for students to become competent practitioners of advanced nursing care. Thus, the integration of the principles of liberal and scientific studies with the principles of nursing care is essential to the students' discovery of the conceptual knowledge of advanced practice nursing; one that leads to lifelong inquiry and improved patient care outcomes.

The educator enters the learning environment as a facilitator, mentor, resource person, and co-learner who uses multiple methods of instruction. The educator respects and values the knowledge and experiences of students and fosters continuing professional role development. The educator guides students by developing, organizing, and structuring knowledge; by fostering a spirit of inquiry, a sense of discovery, and a desire for life-long learning.

INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

The Institutional Priorities of Tusculum University are:

- To enhance academic quality
- To prepare students for success
- To sustain optimal institutional resources

CORE VALUES

As the Advanced Practice Nursing Program moves forward with its mission, it is guided by the core values of Tusculum University and its own values that are grounded in advanced professional nursing practice while embracing clinical and scholarly excellence. The faculty, staff and students will:

1. Communicate with integrity and act with ethical values and principles.
2. Create an environment of inclusiveness where individual, intellectual and social diversity are valued.
3. Promote and practice life-long learning, inquiry, and critical thinking.
4. Partner with our healthcare communities by creating relationships to promote common interest and shared values.
5. Practice good stewardship through fair and responsible management of gifts and resources.
6. Generate commitment and passion for advanced practice nursing.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Graduates of the Master of Science in Nursing Program will be able to:

1. Synthesize theoretical knowledge from nursing, organizational, social and biological sciences and apply to advanced practice nursing practice.
2. Use holistic health assessment, critical thinking, creative reasoning, and clinical decision-making skills to provide and monitor holistic comprehensive, patient-based, culturally competent advanced practice nursing care.
3. Design and implement advanced practice nursing care in collaborative relationships across disciplines and in partnerships with communities.
4. Incorporate respect for human diversity while providing culturally and spiritually sensitive care across the lifespan in various health care settings.
5. Engage in health promotion, disease prevention and maintenance of function across the health-illness continuum.
6. Analyze and intervene in political and organizational forces in providing quality, cost effective and ethical care advanced practice nursing care to individuals, families, communities and populations.
7. Use leadership skills to promote change and affect healthcare policy.
8. Make a seamless transition to the pursuit of doctoral education.

MSN NURSE PRACTITIONER PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

Critique, Analyze and Apply Scientific Foundations

Students will integrate theoretical and scientific knowledge from nursing, biopsychosocial fields, genetics, public health, quality improvement and organizational sciences for population health care across diverse settings, including:

1. Students will integrate knowledge and critically analyze data to improve advanced nursing practice.
2. Students will demonstrate translation of research to improve practice and develop new practice approaches.

Development of Organizational and Systems Leadership

Students will develop leadership skills that emphasize ethical and critical decision making, effective working relationships, from an organization and systems perspective, including:

1. Students will develop interdisciplinary collaborative leadership skills that use critical and reflective thinking.
2. Students will advocate for high quality care and improved access that is cost effective.
3. Students will participate in professional organizations to influence health care outcomes across the lifespan.
4. Students will demonstrate effective communication skills both orally and in writing.

Demonstrate Quality Improvement and Safety

Students will articulate methods, tools, performance measures and standards related to quality and apply principles within organizations, including:

1. Students will use best evidence available to improve quality of clinical practice.
2. Students will evaluate and apply principles of organizational structure, access, cost, quality, safety to promote a culture of excellence.

Translate and Integrate Scholarship into Practice

Students will apply research outcomes within the practice setting, resolve practice problems, work as a change agent and disseminate results, including:

1. Students will translate new knowledge into practice, generate knowledge from clinical practice and apply investigative skills to improve patient outcomes.
2. Students will lead practice inquiry, analyze clinical guidelines and disseminate evidence for application into practice.

Development of Competency in Informatics and Health Care Technologies

Students will use patient-care and communication technologies to deliver, enhance, integrate and coordinate care, including:

1. Students will demonstrate information literacy in complex decision making and evaluation of advance practice nursing care.

Demonstrate Understanding, Analysis, and Advocacy in Contemporary Health Policy

Students will collaborate for policy development and participate in advocacy strategies to influence health care for populations, including:

1. Students will contribute to the development of health policy in order to promote access, equity, quality and contain costs.
2. Students will analyze the implications of health policy across disciplines and evaluate the impact of globalization on health care policy and delivery of care.

Demonstrate Interprofessional Collaboration and Ethical Care for Improving Patient and Population Outcomes

Students will demonstrate skills to collaborate and consult with other health care professionals to manage and coordinate health care for populations, including:

1. Students will apply knowledge of organizational practices to plan develop, and implement public and community health programs.
2. Students will demonstrate relationship building values and principles of team dynamics to perform in different roles to plan and deliver safe, timely, efficient, effective and equitable health care to individuals and populations.
3. Students will integrate and apply sound ethical principles for complex issues related to individuals, populations and systems of care.

Engage in Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Maintenance of Function across the Health Illness Continuum

Students will apply concepts of organizational, patient centered, cultural principles in order to plan, deliver, manage and evaluate evidence-based health promotion, disease prevention and population care to individuals, families, and populations, including:

1. Students will use advanced health assessment skills to diagnose and employ screening and diagnostic strategies to promote wellness, disease prevention and maintenance of function recognizing cultural diversity and the patient/designee as a full partner in decision-making.
2. Students will demonstrate patient centered-care that addresses spirituality, confidentiality, privacy, comfort, emotional support, mutual trust and respect across the lifespan and health illness continuum.

Develop Clinical Competence for Advanced Practice

Students will demonstrate an advanced level of understanding of advanced practice nursing and relevant sciences as well as ability to integrate knowledge into practice, including:

1. Students will include both direct and indirect nursing practice interventions to care for individuals, families and populations.
2. Students will develop clinical proficiency of advanced practice to provide comprehensive care to individuals, families and populations across the lifespan and in various health care settings.
3. Students will demonstrate accountability for professional practice and practice independently in managing diagnosed and undiagnosed patients.
4. Students will demonstrate responsibility for professional development including continuing education and board certification.

MSN NURSE PRACTITIONER STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will use theory, scientific knowledge and evidence-based practice in order to systematically assess, interpret results, form diagnoses and implement treatment plans for patients across the lifespan.
2. Students will develop leadership skills that encompasses ethical and critical decision making in order to develop quality improvement and provide safe practice.
3. Student will be equipped to use collaborative techniques for consultation and advocacy to influence patient care across populations.

ADMISSION/ENROLLMENT/TRANSFER STUDENTS

Requirements

Students desiring to pursue the educational opportunity leading to the MSN degree at Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program will complete all admission requirements, including:

1. Graduation from an accredited associate or baccalaureate nursing program (depending on the track for which student is applying).
2. Earned cumulative university or college level grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 or higher.
3. All applicants must have a basic understanding of statistics and basic computer skills.
4. Completion of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is not required, but is recommended for associate and baccalaureate students with less than a 3.2 GPA.
5. A two to three page letter addressed to the Graduate Nursing Admissions Committee describing the applicant's professional goals.
6. Three recommendation letters from healthcare professionals who can give a reference as to the applicant's potential. Letters should be from professionals who are not family or friends and have supervised the student (a letter from a previous professor is desirable).

7. An unencumbered license to practice as a registered nurse in the state of Tennessee is required for enrollment; clinical practicum experiences may necessitate licensure in surrounding states. Compact licenses accepted.
8. An immunization record, medical profile, and urine drug screen must be completed not more than 30 days prior to enrollment.
9. A criminal background check and drug screen will be completed prior to enrollment and not more than 30 days prior to enrollment.
10. Proof of health insurance will be required at all times when enrolled in the program (all graduate nursing students must have medical insurance that meets the minimum requirements of the Affordable Care Act, while enrolled in the Tusculum MSN Graduate Program. The student must present proof of insurance *on or before* the first day of class beginning the first semester.
11. BLS certification will be required prior to admission into the program. This should be from the American Heart Association (AHA).

Criminal Background Check

The Joint Commission and/or state law requires hospitals, childcare facilities and other agencies to perform criminal background checks on all persons involved in direct patient care, to include employees, medical personnel, volunteers and students. This is to ensure a safe clinical environment for patients. All students are required to complete a criminal background check, including an FBI fingerprint check, at the student's expense through the School's designated agent as noted by the Fair Credit Reporting Act. Refusal to complete a background check will result in the student's non-admission or non-progression in the nursing program. Problematic criminal background and/or FBI results will be reviewed individually by the Director of the MSN Graduate Nursing Program. The review may involve consultation with the Director of Campus Safety, University Counselor and Dean of Student Services. Students readmitted to the MSN Graduate Nursing Program following a leave of absence or withdrawal will be required to repeat the process prior to readmission.

Positive criminal background checks will be reported to the clinical agencies per the clinical contracts with such agencies. Students, at the time of admission, will give permission to the School to share the criminal background check results with clinical affiliates. If a clinical affiliate does not grant the student permission to complete clinical experiences within the facility, the School is under no obligation to provide alternative experiences. Failure to participate in clinical experiences due to positive background checks will result in the student's inability to meet course requirements and subsequently result in dismissal from the program.

MSN Graduate Nursing students should be aware that clinical facilities have the right or responsibility to preclude students with certain criminal histories from the facility. Additionally, the state board of nursing may deny licensure based on a student's criminal history. Even if licensure is granted, certain employers may preclude applicants with certain criminal histories from employment.

Drug Screening

Health care agencies are drug free places of employment and require a satisfactory (negative) urine drug screen of all graduate nursing students that will be in clinical rotations in the facilities. Urine must be collected and processed using National Institute of Drug Abuse approved laboratory protocols and facilities. The drug screen test will be performed through laboratories that can secure a chain of custody drug screen at the student's expense and will be completed prior to final acceptance into the program. Students will not be permitted to matriculate unless the drug screen is negative. In the event of a positive drug screen, the student must provide documented

legitimate use of the identified drug(s). Students who are on psychotropic, opioid, or benzodiazepine type drugs must have a letter from the prescribing provider stating the student is safe for all aspects of clinical practice.

NOTE: Students readmitted following a leave of absence are required to repeat the drug screen prior to attending class.

Students must be free of any chemical dependency condition, including alcohol that may interfere with the student's ability to deliver safe advanced practice nursing. Students may be tested at any time. Unscheduled checks are subject to the mandates of the clinical facility to which a student is assigned and Tusculum University Clinical Faculty. Area health care agencies can require substance abuse screening of students and faculty without cause and without advance notice when such screenings are standard policies for employees of the healthcare agency. Positive screenings will be reported to the MSN Program Director and the Vice President of the College of Health Sciences. Many agencies reserve the right to inform student employers of positive screenings if the student is employed in a health-related area or is a health care provider.

Applicants with prior charges or convictions should speak to the MSN Program Director regarding individual circumstances prior to enrolling in the advanced nursing program. Students who do not disclose prior records may be at risk of loss of eligibility for licensure after graduation or could face dismissal from the program due to a positive criminal background check.

Program Admission Review

Students dismissed from another advanced practice nurse program for reasons associated with academic, clinical, or behavioral grounds are unlikely to be admitted to the Tusculum MSN Graduate Program. However, appeals may be considered by the Dean of the School of Nursing which will consider the totality of circumstances in rendering a final determination.

Students currently or previously enrolled in another MSN (FNP) program who withdrew in good standing must have a letter from the director of the program stating they are or withdrew in good standing. Students in good standing, who meet the admission requirements, will be considered for admission to the Tusculum MSN Graduate Program.

Priority for admission to the MSN Graduate nursing major will be based upon the:

1. Cumulative university/college GPA,
2. Cumulative health and science GPA,
3. GRE scores (if available), and
4. Previous experience.
5. Essay
6. References from 3 sources

Categories of Enrollment in Graduate Nursing Classes

Students are admitted to the graduate program upon completion of all admission requirements as full-time or part-time student in the MSN FNP, post-master's certificate FNP, or the and the RN to MSN FNP tracts. A non-degree option is available and is granted by the MSN Program Director.

Full-Time

The full-time option follows a designated student course load. The full-time option consists of 4 semesters from 10-12 credits per semester for a total of 45 credits. Curriculum plans are given in the Tusculum University MSN Graduate Forms on the MSN website.

Part-Time

The part-time option is recommended to students who must work and cannot attend school full-time. The part-time option is offered on a space available basis. Potential part-time students must contact the MSN Program Director to inquire about availability and to work with an advisor to design a plan of progressive study that is consistent with course prerequisites and course availability. If a student interrupts the plan of study for any reason, a readmission application must be submitted to the University. A sample part-time plan is given in the handbook.

Non-Degree

A non-degree seeking option is available for prospective students. Acceptance into the non-degree seeking option is at the discretion of the MSN Program Director. Students who are offered the non-degree educational opportunity, will be guaranteed admission and matriculation into the MSN program if they are successful in the enrolled course with a grade of “B” or higher. Students who are not successful with a grade of “B” or higher will not be admitted into the Tusculum School of Nursing MSN program.

Transferring

Students who have been enrolled in another advance practice nursing program and are in good standing may transfer to the Tusculum University, College of Health Sciences, Graduate Nursing Program on a seat available basis. The nursing courses to be transferred into Tusculum University will be evaluated for transfer credit on an individual basis. For more information on transferring credits into Tusculum University see the Tusculum University Handbook:

<https://web.tusculum.edu/academics/academic-policies/master-degrees/>.

Transferred courses must have been taken for graduate credit. All transferred course work must carry a grade of “B” or higher. Advanced pharmacology must be taken within one year prior to the beginning of the initial clinical practicum in the concentration. ***No credit will be given for advanced pharmacology taken at another institution.*** No credit will be given for advanced pathophysiology or advanced health assessment courses that are greater than five (5) years old at the time of admission.

If the student proposes to replace a required nursing course with transferred credit, the student must submit a course syllabus and provide transcript evidence of having attained a grade of “B” or higher in the course. Course equivalency will be evaluated by the MSN Program Director. All transfer credit into the MSN program must be approved by the MSN Program Director or the Dean of the School of Nursing.

Applicants will receive written notification of admission status. Applicants who are accepted for admission must complete and pass a background check, drug screening, and immunization and health status assessments before being fully admitted. Applicants who are not accepted into the Graduate Nursing Program and who desire to be considered for the next class must reapply.

Financial Aid

Tusculum University recognizes the difficulty that constantly increasing educational costs presents for students and thus offers a program of financial aid to help students pay for education. The University makes every effort to ensure that qualified students are not denied the opportunity to attend Tusculum University due to their limited financial resources. Each applicant for financial aid must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). After the student submits

the necessary application forms, the Financial Aid Office will determine the student's eligibility for financial assistance.

Students with Disabilities Policy

Every effort is made to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities at Tusculum University. Tusculum University does not discriminate, for the purposes of admission or access to Tusculum Universities' programs or activities, on the basis of disability. If a student with a disability has any issue or question about his/her disability, the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA) or Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* (Section 504) he/she should contact the ADA Coordinator in the Office of Student Services.

For further information on requesting accommodations, documentation guidelines, and the process to request and receive reasonable accommodations, contact the Academic Resource Center (ARC) on the first floor of the Niswonger, room 416 or call (423) 636-7300 ext. 7480.

Significant Medical or Psychiatric Event

The student is required to provide a release from a health care provider to attend class and/or clinical if a significant medical or psychiatric event occurs during the semester. The statement must be a full medical release stating the student can perform the student essential functions without restrictions. Students who become pregnant and deliver during the program, must have a written release from the attending provider stating they are cleared for clinical/course work and can perform the student essential functions without restrictions.

Discontinued Enrollment in the Nursing Program

Enrollment in the Nursing Program may be terminated at any time if, upon review of student performance and behavior in accordance with University procedures outlined herein, the student is unsafe, engaged in academic dishonesty, has violated patient confidentiality or safety, is convicted or pled guilty or nolo contendere, or received a deferred or other qualified adjudication.

Medical Withdrawal

The didactic portions of classes provide the theoretical basis for evidence-based nursing practices applied in a clinical setting. The practical application of academic theory in a clinical setting reinforces the theoretical knowledge base needed to make evidence-based clinical decisions. In order to master the academic theory and the clinical competencies that are the learning outcomes for a particular class, students must take the clinical and the didactic courses concurrently.

If at any time during the term a student is unable to perform all of the Student Essential Functions listed in the Tusculum University Graduate Nursing handbook for a period exceeding two weeks, the appropriate course of action is to withdraw from the class. As an alternative to a withdrawal, a medical withdrawal within two weeks of becoming unable to perform the essential student functions may be an appropriate course of action. A student must provide documentation from a medical provider that the student is able to perform all of the Student Essential Functions listed in the Tusculum University Graduate Nursing handbook in order to secure a medical withdrawal.

Withdrawal from the University

"Withdrawal from the University" refers to the process in which the student withdraws from ALL classes, from the residence hall (if applicable), and from any current student relationship with the University. The student initiates the process by obtaining a *Withdrawal Form* in the Office of the Registrar. The student must fill out the form and obtain the required signatures.

The student then contacts the MSN Program Director. The form requires several administrative signatures: Dean of the School of Nursing, MSN Program Director, Advisor, Office of the Registrar, and Financial Aid (if applicable).

The student must return his/her student identification card and parking sticker to the Office of Student Services when withdrawing from the University.

Courses for which the student is registered will appear on the transcript with a notation of 'WD'. The official date of withdrawal will appear with the courses. The notation of WD does not calculate into the GPA. Any student who ceases attending classes (in effect, leaves the University) prior to the end of the semester or summer term without completing official withdrawal from the University automatically receives the grade of "F" for the course(s), so noted on the student's academic transcript. Withdrawal from the University does not affect the cumulative GPA of the student if processed by the close of "Last day to drop without F," as announced in the Academic Calendar. The financial status of the student is affected by withdrawal from Tusculum University.

Any withdrawing student who has received a student loan must have an exit interview with a Financial Aid Counselor.

Repeating Graduate Nursing Courses

Graduate nursing students must maintain a "B" (3.0) cumulative grade point average (GPA). Students must attain a "B" in each course in the MSN program. Each course syllabus clearly outlines the criteria for successful course completion. Graduate nursing students in the Family Nurse Practitioner concentration may repeat a maximum of one nursing course, if a grade of "C" was earned for the course. Students may not repeat a course if a grade lower than "C" was earned in the course. Courses that may be repeated are NURS 501, NURS 502, NURS 503, NURS 504, NURS 520, NURS 530 and NURS 540.

Repeating a course requires an advisement session and a revised plan of study for the student by the academic advisor with approval of the change from the MSN Program Director. Students must present a plan for success as part of the advisement session. Students must repeat the course for which a grade of "C" was earned and earn a minimum grade of "B" for the second attempt. A student may repeat one course only one time. Students must attain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 to remain in good academic standing.

The following courses require a "B" or higher grade, and cannot be repeated for the FNP program tracks: NURS 551, NURS 552, NURS 561, NURS 562, NURS 571, NURS 572, NURS 581, and NURS 592. Achieving a course grade of less than a "B" will result in the student being dismissed or withdrawn from the program as the course is not eligible to be repeated.

Dismissal from the graduate nursing program is a serious action and results when two (2) grades of C or below are earned in any graduate level nursing course, or when a failure in a clinical course or identified non-repeatable courses occurs, regardless of the cumulative grade point average. A student who has been dismissed from the graduate program is not eligible to be readmitted.

COMMUNICATION

Faculty members make every attempt to be available to students. Office hours are posted on each faculty member's course syllabus. Students are encouraged to make an appointment in advance, whether the

appointment is in person, by email or telephone. As part of professional development, students are responsible for problem-solving and using appropriate communication channels when faced with issues. Contact information is available on the Nursing Program website www.tusculum.edu.

Faculty will only use a student's university email address for email communication.

Student Email Policy

Every student is issued an email account. Tusculum University expects that email communications will be received and read in a timely manner. Students are expected to check email on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University and faculty related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. Inappropriate emails are prohibited. Anyone receiving an email considered inappropriate should immediately contact the Tusculum University Helpdesk.

Material that is fraudulent, harassing, profane, obscene, intimidating, defamatory, or otherwise unlawful or inappropriate may not be sent by email or other forms of electronic communications. If a student engages in this type of behavior it will be considered a violation of the policy and will result in disciplinary action.

PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS ON COMMITTEES

Opportunities to participate on selected College of Health Sciences and School of Nursing committees are presented to graduate nursing students. Invitations are extended to students on an annual basis. Students may have voting privileges and responsibilities with the exception of activities which would breach ethical standards (e.g. the review of faculty or student records which implicate confidentiality standards).

CHANGES IN PUBLISHED COURSE OFFERINGS

Schedules or classes, labs and clinical rotations may vary from the published schedule. Classes for the graduate nursing program will be presented one day a week, however when students begin clinical rotations, it will require that students devote two to three days a week to the program. Tusculum University and College of Health Sciences School of Nursing tries to ensure students receive the most meaningful and valuable lab and clinical experiences that can be secured. In order to provide unique lab experiences, students may have to attend lab experiences in addition to other than the one day a week class day (i.e. standardized patient experiences or gynecological teaching experiences [GTE]). These experiences will be announced at least 2 weeks prior to occurrence, and will be announced via email and during class meetings. The standardized patient and GTE cannot be repeated due to the nature of the visits. If a student misses an offered health assessment experience it could adversely affect the grade.

Clinical rotations are usually agreed upon between students and preceptors in each of the clinical sites. *Students should not plan to work during the program, as it is a full-time rigorous program which requires a significant time commitment.*

PERSONAL ILLNESSES, INJURIES AND/OR ACCIDENTS

In the event of illness or exposure to a disease or injury, neither Tusculum University, its Board of Trustees, officers, employees nor agents are responsible for providing and/or covering the cost of the medical care. If a student becomes ill, injured or exposed to a disease while in a clinical facility, the student will comply with the facilities' policy regarding medical care and will be financially responsible

for the care rendered. If the student declines medical care, the student will be responsible for any adverse effects for not receiving medical care.

Health care facility policies will be followed in the event of an injury or exposure to a disease. The financial responsibility for medical treatment provided to a student will be assumed by the student.

Pregnant students are responsible for their own health care. Pregnant students are required to inform the Graduate Nursing Program of the pregnancy and to obtain a physician's verification of the ability to continue in the Graduate Nursing Program and to perform the Core and Graduate Student Nursing Essentials. Pregnant students will not be discriminated against in any manner. A student who is pregnant and delivers during the program will be required to have a signed letter from the provider stating the student is cleared to return to class and to clinical, and can perform all of the student essential functions.

CORE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND GRADUATE STUDENT ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

In addition to the above admission requirements, Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program sets forth essential eligibility requirements for the nursing program by citing the core performance standards. The standards set forth cognitive, sensory, affective and psychomotor performance requirements for every nursing student and nurse. Each core performance standard is accompanied by examples of activities nursing students and nurses are required to perform while executing nursing care. The standards are used to assist applicants and students in the determination of need for ADA related accommodations and medications. The core performance standards are intended to constitute an objective measure of:

- A qualified applicant's or student's ability with or without accommodations to meet the program performance requirements;
- Accommodations required by a matriculated student who seeks accommodations under the ADA; and
- Applicants and students with disabilities seeking accommodations under the ADA, as amended, should be referred to the Department of Education Office for Civil Rights document titled, *Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities* (US Department of Education. September 2011).

Core Performance Standards for Nursing Students*

Ability	Standard	Activity Examples
Critical Thinking	Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment	Identify cause and effect relationships in clinical situations Use scientific method in development of diagnosis and plan of care. Evaluate effectiveness of nursing interventions
Professional Relationships	Abilities sufficient to establish interaction with a diverse population, individuals, families and groups	Establish rapport with patients and colleagues Ability to engage in conflict resolution Demonstrate peer accountability

Ability	Standard	Activity Examples
Communication	Ability for professional interactions with others in verbal and written form	Explain treatment procedures, initiate health teaching, and document. Interpret nursing actions and client responses
Movement	Physical abilities sufficient to move from room to room and maneuver in small spaces	Move around in patient rooms, work spaces and treatment areas Administer rescue operations- cardiopulmonary resuscitation
Motor Skills	Gross and fine motor skills sufficient to provide safe and effective nursing care	Calibration and use of equipment Positioning of patients on exam table and in mobilization assisted devices.
Hearing	Auditory ability sufficient to assess and provide safe and effective nursing care	Ability to hear monitoring device alarms and other emergency signals Ability to discern and auscultate sounds, heart sounds and cries for help
Visual	Ability sufficient for observation and assessment in nursing care	Ability to observe patient condition and responses to treatment Ability to discern colors
Tactile	Ability sufficient for physical assessment	Ability to palpate in physical assessment and in various therapeutic procedures

*Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing

Graduate Student Essential Functions

Advanced Practice Nursing requires essential functional abilities beyond the Core Performance in order to be successful in the Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Programs. *All students are required to meet the graduate student essential functions, including the ability to perform a variety of interventions that impact patient care and safety and interactions in the clinical and classroom settings.* Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program accommodates students with documented disabilities for reasonable accommodations that allow students to perform essential functions without undue burden. Graduate Student Essential Functions include:

Physical and Psychomotor Functions

The student must be able to:

- Possess visual abilities to accurately inspect the skin, facial expression, anatomical structures, postures and movement of others, and color differentiation of skin and fluids;
- Possess the ability to see, hear, touch, smell and distinguish colors;
- Use depth perception, peripheral vision or compensate with central vision;
- Distinguish color and color intensity;
- Hear faint and normal speaking level sounds;
- Hear faint body sounds such as auscultated blood pressure, heart sounds, lung sounds, and bowel sounds;

- Hear in situation when unable to see lips move, such as with masks and auditory alarms;
- Demonstrate tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment (e.g., palpation, auscultation, percussion, and functions of physical assessment) and skills related to therapeutic intervention;
- Assess pulses, tremors, skin conditions, muscle and tendon activity, and joint and limb movements;
- Detect odors from clients, others, smoke, gases or noxious smells;
- Accurately and consistently read and/or manipulate equipment dials and monitors without extraneous movement, contamination or destruction;
- Exhibit sufficient manual dexterity to manipulate small equipment such as syringes for intravenous injections, common tools for screening tests such as otoscope and ophthalmoscope; provide support and resistances as needed through complex exercise movements; perform CPR to adults, children, and infants; and treat acutely ill patients without disturbing sensitive monitoring instruments and lines;
- Negotiate level surfaces, ramps and stairs to assist patients/classmates appropriately;
- Gross motor skills that allow the student maintain balance from any position and to move quickly within confined spaces;
- React effectively and respond quickly to sudden or unexpected movements of patients/classmates;
- Sustain repetitive movements;
- Lead patients through a variety of examinations and treatments, typically requiring sitting, standing, squatting and kneeling on the floor or treatment table;
- Transport self/patients from one room to another, from one floor to another;
- Manipulate another person's body in transfers, gait, positioning, exercise and other treatment or diagnostic techniques;
- Lift at least 30 pounds on a regular basis and, on occasion, move real/simulated patients generating lifting forces of up to 75 pounds; and
- Maintain patient care activities, and other essential functions, throughout an eight (8) hour work day.

Communication, Reading, and Writing

The student must be able to:

- Attend selectively and in a controlled and respectful manner to various types of communication, including the spoken and written word and non-verbal communication;
- Relay information in oral and written form effectively, accurately, reliably, thoroughly and intelligibly to individuals, professionals, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds, using the English language;
- Discern and interpret nonverbal communication;
- Read and comprehend English (typed and hand-written in a minimum of 12 font size) and read graphs and digital printouts pertinent to advanced practice nursing; and
- Obtain communications from a computer.

Cognitive/Critical Thinking/Psychological/Affective Functions

The student must be able to:

- Recall, interpret, collect, analyze and evaluate relevant data from a variety of sources (i.e. reading material, lecture, discussion, and patient evaluation/assessment);
- Distinguish facts from assumptions, personal opinions, and personal beliefs;
- Demonstrate emotional maturity, stability, and flexibility needed to perform advanced nursing care functions, engage in therapeutic communications, provide patient education, and function effectively in stressful clinical situations;
- Adapt to changing situations;

- Consistently and dependably engage in the process of critical thinking in order to formulate and implement safe and ethical nursing decisions in a variety of health care settings;
- Organize, prioritize, and assume responsibility for one's work;
- Accept persons whose appearance, behaviors and values may be in conflict with his/her own. Nursing care must be provided regardless of the patient's race, ethnicity, culture, age, gender, religious preference or sexual orientation;
- Establish professional, trusting, empathetic relationships with individuals, families and communities;
- Effectively engage in teamwork;
- Meet externally established deadlines; and
- Satisfactorily achieve the program objectives.

Professional Behaviors

The student must be able to:

- Always maintain a level of consciousness and alertness that ensures patient safety: refrain from the use of illegal drugs at any time while enrolled as a student; refrain from performing clinical duties while impaired by alcohol, legally prescribed medications, or excessive fatigue which affect your ability to safely perform these functions;
- Convey caring, respect, sensitivity, tact, compassion, empathy, tolerance and a healthy attitude toward others;
- Communicate in a professional, positive, tactful manner with patients, physicians, nurses, other staff, faculty, clinical supervisors, and fellow students;
- Report promptly to the clinical site and seek supervision/consultation in a timely manner;
- Demonstrate ethical behavior in the performance of nursing responsibilities including: maintaining patient confidentiality, exercising ethical judgment, and exhibiting integrity, honesty, dependability, and accountability in the performance of one's responsibilities and in connection with one's behavior and attitude at all times;
- Project a well-groomed, neat appearance at all times to include cleanliness, modesty, and neatness in appearance;
- Exhibit a teachable attitude, a willingness to learn, acceptance of instruction and openness to constructive feedback with appropriate respect for those in authority;
- Treat all persons with respect and dignity and not engage in profanity or obscene gestures at any time; and
- Examine and modify one's own behavior when it interferes with the provision of care or learning.

CHAPTER 2: PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

The Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program reserves the right to discipline a student who does not demonstrate professional conduct up to and including dismissal from Graduate Nursing programs (please note that the same conduct may subject the student to removal from the institution through the Code of Student Conduct allegation resolution process administered through the Office of the Dean of Students).

UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Unprofessional conduct may include, but is not limited to:

1. Physical, verbal or sexual harassment or abuse as well as the use of obscene language that may be perceived as threatening the safety of patients, faculty, students and healthcare providers.
2. Physical or emotional problems that do not respond to appropriate treatment in a reasonable period of time.
3. Exceeding the scope of graduate nursing student practice.
4. Behavior that conflicts with safe graduate nursing practice.
5. Violating patient confidentiality or HIPPA guidelines.
6. Use of drugs/substances that may impair judgement and safe nursing practice.
7. Behavior that results in removal from the clinical area by the agency.
8. Violation of accepted standards of practice within the agency.
9. Omission of essential components of patient care.
10. Providing unsafe advanced practice nursing care that places the patient at risk for injury.
11. Repeated failure to recognize and promptly treat or report significant patient data.
12. Failure to understand ones own limitations in practice and seek appropriate guidance.
13. Falsification of school or agency reports.
14. Theft or damage of property.
15. Possession of dangerous weapons on University or agency property.
16. Conviction of a felony.
17. Cheating, plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty.
18. Other violations of Tusculum University Code of Student Conduct (including alcohol and substance abuse and other policies).

STANDARDS FOR PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY CONDUCT

Authority, scope and jurisdiction for non-academic student conduct are delegated to the Dean of Students who exercises authority through Student Affairs staff. A detailed explanation may be found in the *Tusculum University Student Handbook*. All Tusculum University students and students enrolled in the nursing major are held accountable for observing the Code of Student Conduct. The code addresses general behavioral expectations, abuse, alcohol and controlled substances, disruptive behavior, computer usage, facilities and property, health and safety, and academic dishonesty.

PRINCIPLES

In addition to the standards defined herein, Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program students are subject to the Tusculum University Student Handbook, including the “Code of Student Conduct” and are expected to adhere to the following principles:

Respect and uphold the rights of patients/clients, family members, peers and other individuals by:

- treating individuals with respect and dignity;

- maintaining appropriate levels of confidentiality;
- safeguarding privacy rights and personal property; and
- performing own work and giving appropriate credit to the work of others.

Respect and uphold the rights of all patients/clients by providing services and care with respect for human dignity and uniqueness regardless of the patient/client's social or economic status, personal attributes or unique health problems.

Protect the patient/client from incompetent, unsafe, unethical, or illegal practices by:

- providing high quality of advanced nursing care;
- participating in efforts to improve the standards of advanced nursing practice;
- being free from substances, which interfere with judgment and/or motor coordination; and
- reporting incompetent, unsafe and/or unethical advanced nursing practice to the appropriate individual.

Assume responsibility and accountability for individual actions at all times including classroom, clinical behavior, and individual nursing judgments and actions.

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY AND HONESTY

High standards of integrity and honesty are expected of all graduate nursing students in all classes and professional practices within the clinical settings. Integrity and honesty within a holistic framework of care requires that the student demonstrates respect for oneself and others. As reflected in our philosophy, faculty and students in Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program regard advanced nursing as a scientific discipline, rooted in a code of ethics, standards of care, and professional performance in practice. It is believed that all of the above are necessary for the provision of holistic, effective, quality advanced nursing care. Therefore, high standards of conduct are expected and must be adhered to by those associated with Tusculum University Graduate Nursing program. The standards must relate to all areas of activity, including academic and clinical experiences, relationships between faculty and other students and maintenance of conduct, which reflects upon graduate nursing and Tusculum University.

It is the aim of the Tusculum University, Graduate Nursing Program, and the faculty to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of any student to present work as his/her own that he/she has not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a very serious offense and renders the offender liable to severe consequences and possible suspension.

Code of Ethics Violations

Violations of the Code of Ethics include plagiarism, cheating and falsification of data or clinical logs. Ethical students will not commit any of these offenses and will not knowingly assist anyone else to do so. *In addition, any student who has knowledge of violations is obligated to report the information to an appropriate faculty member.*

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism occurs when an author uses another's original work without acknowledgement. Whether intentional or unintentional, plagiarism is a violation of Tusculum University's Academic Integrity policy. As scholars, students have an absolute obligation to provide accurate information regarding origin of ideas, information, graphics or images presented in all formats. The obligation of acknowledgement applies to all scholarly products including, but not limited to, papers, presentations, slides, and posters.

Citations within a scholarly work are the means by which credit is given to original sources. Citations allow an interested reader to seek out the original source of material. In the process of

writing a paper, students are expected to synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources creating new ideas and sources. The process may require paraphrasing rather than quoting an original source. Direct quotations should be reserved for those cases where paraphrasing will lose the uniqueness of a particular source. While not plagiarism, a paper written with a series of quotations does not meet the standard for university-level work.

Using work of others without acknowledgement is the most serious form of plagiarism. Errors in proper acknowledgement include but are not limited to formatting or style errors, to more serious issues with inadequate paraphrasing or patterns. The plagiarism policy of the Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program allows faculty members at the classroom level to recommend penalties for plagiarism. Penalties may include revisions of the work, changes of topic, loss of points, penalty grade reductions for the assignment, or failure of the course. If failure of the course is recommended by the faculty, the MSN Program Director will make a recommendation to the Dean of the School of Nursing.

Falsifying Logs and Data

Clinical courses require accurate and extensive documentation. Materials used to document clinical hours, lab experiences, or research data are expected to reflect an honest and accurate account of time spent, activities performed and outcomes obtained. Nursing is a profession that expects the highest level of personal integrity. Any student that misrepresents clinical hours, patient data, activities performed or related outcomes is guilty of falsifying data. Falsifying data is a serious offense. Students must submit clinical logs weekly through the Typhon Tracking System.

Social Media Policy and HIPPA

The student shall be compliant with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA) Privacy and Security Rules. Information can be accessed at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/index.html>.

Students will comply with the guidelines regarding social media both at Tusculum University and in the clinical arena. The following links are guidelines developed by the American Nurses Association for use of social media:

https://www.ncsbn.org/Social_Media.pdf; and <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/>

In compliance with these expectations, students will:

- Sign a confidentiality statement for Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Programs and may be required to sign a confidentiality statement by the preceptor or agency where the clinical rotation is completed;
- Provide information and not impede access to witnesses, written communications, or access to electronic or social media to aid in the investigation of possible offenses;
- Not copy written or digital materials from a clinical site. The student may make notes for a course project or report with all patient identifiers removed;
- Not be allowed to photograph a patient, family member, cadaver, staff member, standardized patient, student in Sims lab, or any physical structure during the student's clinical rotation or program without prior authorization from the MSN Program Director;
- Not remove materials from a campus facility or clinical site without permission from the clinical director or the MSN Program Director; and

- Not present themselves as representatives of Tusculum University at any event without the written consent of the MSN Program Director.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Tusculum University complies with the provisions of the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 1974 (FERPA)*, as amended. The FERPA law maintains that the institution will provide for the confidentiality of student education records. Please see the Tusculum University Catalog for more information.

CHAPTER 3: UNIVERSITY SERVICES AND RESOURCES

TUSCULUM UNIVERSITY STUDENT HANDBOOK AND GENERAL POLICIES

As previously noted, students in the Graduate Nursing Program are expected to be familiar with the University's Student Handbook. Students are expected to abide by the policies contained within the Tusculum University Student Handbook.

Inclement Weather Policy

The main sources of information regarding cancellation/delay of classes due to weather-related emergencies are on the Tusculum University Website. Every effort will be made to have morning or daytime cancellation/delay notices posted by 6 am and notices for evening classes (those beginning 6 pm or later) posted by 4:30 pm.

Health and Wellness Services

Health education programming and wellness referral services/support are available through Student Affairs. Students are responsible for charges related to off-site medical care. Counseling/Life coaching services are also provided for enrolled students at no cost. Counseling is designed to help students deal successfully with common stressors encountered in university settings. Counselors can refer students to other resources as appropriate if additional assistance is necessary. Students are responsible for incurred charges.

Spiritual Health

Tusculum University is a Judeo-Christian University with Presbyterian roots. Students may refresh the spirit with fellowship each Wednesday during the Chapel Service held at 11:45 am in the Chalmers Conference Center, or attend performances hosted by the International Society. The University Chaplain is available 24 hours a day for pastoral care and counseling. His office is in Niswonger 228. The University Chaplain is a member of the Campus Life Staff and can be reached at extension 7316 or 638-6637.

Sexual and Other Discriminatory Harassment

Tusculum University is committed to maintaining study and work environments that are free from discriminatory harassment based on sex, race, color, national origin, religion, pregnancy, age, military status, disability or any other protected discriminatory factor. Sexual or other discriminatory harassment of its students is strictly prohibited, whether by non-employees (such as contactors or vendors), other students, or by its employees, and Tusculum University will take immediate and appropriate action to prevent and to correct behavior that violates the discriminatory harassment policy. Likewise, students are strictly prohibited from engaging in harassing behavior directly at Tusculum University's employees, its visitors, vendors, and contractors. All students must comply with the policy and take appropriate measures to create an atmosphere free of harassment and discrimination.

Alcohol & Drug Policy

In compliance with Section 1213 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as added by Section 22 of the Drug Free Schools and Communities Amendments of 1989 (Public Law 101-226), Tusculum offers a drug prevention programs and referrals through Student Affairs. The program emphasizes the University's policy on illicit drugs and alcohol, legal and University sanctions for illicit use, and a description of health risks associated with the use of illicit drugs and alcohol, counseling and treatment available to the campus community.

The Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program enforces the Tusculum University Alcohol and Drug Policy. In addition, the graduate nursing program believes that in order to maintain a safe effective learning environment for students; and for the safe and effective care of patients while students are in the clinical area:

- A student must be alcohol and drug free at all times.
- Students must adhere to the following policies and procedures:
- Have a chain of custody drug screen performed within 30 days of the start of the nursing program and will be at the student's expense. A positive screen will result in dismissal from the program.
- If, during the course of the program, the student appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs or is functioning in an impaired manner, the faculty shall have the responsibility for dismissing that student from the clinical experience and/or class that day and the student will be required to submit to a drug screen.
- A student's consent to submit to a drug screen, if requested by the MSN Program Director, or faculty at any time during the program, is required as a condition of acceptance into/continuation in the nursing program. The cost of the screen will be the responsibility of the student. The facility for conducting the screen will be designated by Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program representatives. A student's refusal to submit to such tests may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program. A positive drug test is grounds for dismissal. A "positive" will be defined as:
 - Screen results indicating use of illegal drugs/non-prescribed drugs
 - Screen results indicating presence of .02 or greater blood alcohol level.
 - An affiliate/clinical agency used for student clinical experience can require screening without cause if such screenings are in the policy for employees of that affiliate.
 - Positive results of screen testing on students can be reported by the affiliate to the School of Nursing. Positive results can be shared by the School of Nursing with employers of students.

Employment

Because the MSN program is intense and rigorous, students are advised to refrain from seeking or maintaining employment during the MSN program. If the student decides to work during the program, it is expected that employment will not interfere or impede student academic responsibilities. Academic responsibilities include, but are not limited to, attendance to lectures, examinations, clinical labs, clinical rotations, and fulfillment of assignments. Students will be required to be available for classes and clinical rotations Monday through Friday.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information technology services are provided by the Department of Information Systems (IS). Information Systems is responsible for the infrastructure that provides all voice and data services and support to students. A central information technology Help Desk is available to assist students in accessing all information technology resources. Requests for assistance can be made by calling the help Desk at 423-636-7346 or stopping by the Help Desk in Niswonger Commons.

Computer Requirements

Tusculum University graduate nursing students are required to have a laptop computer that meets University specifications. Students will need to communicate via computer with faculty, preceptors, students and others. Student computers will be used in the class and clinical settings as a resource and with the use of digital text books.

A laptop, or tablet that is Wi-Fi and Internet capable with the ability to run Microsoft Office 2013 or above or Microsoft Office 365 is required. The laptop must be capable of running the online applications Moodle LMS and Microsoft.com. Any operating system can be used as long as it supports the requirements. Mobile devices are required for classroom and clinical use.

Hardware requirements: Multimedia capable computer with Internet connection. Fast Internet connection such as broadband Internet (DSL, cable modem, etc.) is recommended. Minimum recommendations are:

Windows: Windows XP, Vista, or Windows 7; Microsoft .NET Framework 3.0; 3.0GHz Pentium 4 processor; 1GB RAM or more

Mac: Mac OS X 10.4.11, or 10.5.5 or later; QuickTime 7.5.5 or later; 2GHz Intel Core 2 Duo processor; 2GB RAM or more

Software requirements: Adobe Acrobat Reader (free, PC, MAC, Linux); Flash (free; PC, MAC, Linux) RealPlayer (free; PC, MAC, Linux), Web browsing software (e.g., Internet explorer, Google Chrome, Firefox/Mozilla); Word processing software (student's choice).

Technical Support

Tusculum University has a dedicated webmaster to support the database and web interface of the learning management system. A systems engineer manages the server hardware as it relates to backups and updates. The Webmaster has a Bachelor of Arts degree in English with a Minor in Philosophy from East Tennessee State University, and a Master of Science in Information Technology, with a concentration in Network Architecture from Capella University. The Systems Administrator has an Associate of Science degree in Business from Walter State Community College, and is a Microsoft Certified IT Professional, MS Certified Solutions Associate, MS Certified Technology Specialist and a Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer.

Technical Requirements for Online Classes

Basic information and computer literacy are required in one of the computer formats (Windows, or Macintosh). Students must have a Tusculum email account and be able to use Moodle learning platform. Students must also be able to:

- Choose appropriate library and other scholarly sources of information;
- Search for and find relevant scholarly information effectively;
- Use and share relevant information without plagiarizing; and
- Navigate the Typhon tracking system.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Tusculum University has library facilities on the main campus and at the Knoxville Regional Center site. The Thomas J. Garland Library is located on the main campus and contains multiple reference collections, books, periodicals and other print media. Study rooms are available for students as well as a work area that offers 16 computer work stations. The Tusculum University Library at the Knoxville Regional Center offers multiple reference materials for each program offered. Students in all programs may access all electronic resources and obtain materials from the main campus.

Tusculum University participates in several library consortia, most notably, Tenn Share, the Bowen Central Library available through the Appalachian Colleges Association, and Lyrasis (For invoices from Tenn Share and Lyrasis, see Appendix K). Tenn Share is a state-wide consortium of over 600 libraries, museums, archives and information agencies that assists libraries to deliver effective services through group purchasing power and resource sharing projects. These consortia agreements promote joint purchasing and provide professional development opportunities for all library staff so that they remain

current in information literacy techniques and best practices for managing information for students in the School of Business.

Multiple learning resources related to nursing and allied health are available to candidates in the University libraries and online. Links to online resources can be found under **Journals and Databases** on the TC Library Website. Accessible are full-text periodical databases provided through *Infotrac*, *EbSCOhost ProQuest*, *Lexis Nexis Academic Universe*, and *Project Muse*. Print and electronic reference resources, such as the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, *Gale Virtual Reference Library*, *CREDO Reference*, *Literature Resource Center*, & *Biography Resource Center*, are also available, as well as access to full text electronic books from EbSCO, EBooks and Greenwood Publishing Group.

For the nursing programs, the library has acquired ProQuest, a full-text data base of healthcare related resources similar to CINAHL, Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews and Medline. Other valuable resources, subject guides, and database tutorials can also be accessed via the **GUIDES** page on the Library website. All members of the Tusculum University community may access online resources from any of the University campuses, or, with passwords, from home or elsewhere.

Students in the program will have access to all library and electronic resources. Electronic resources are available to patrons with access 24 hours a day, seven days per week. Physical hours of the library include approximately 76 hours per week in Greeneville and 50 hours per week in Knoxville. The posted hours are reviewed regularly according to use statistics and demand, and any changes in operating hours are communicated via the *Reel 'n Page* newsletter, a mass e-mail to faculty, staff and students and by posting on the library website. The needs of students taking courses at approved sites receive special consideration with staffing availability during the residential university breaks and in the evenings and on weekends at both the Greeneville and Knoxville locations. After-hours use of the library facilities can be arranged with prior approval by the Director of the Library.

Online Library Orientation

On the Online Library Orientation page (located under the Guides heading of the library's home page) are several modules for learning to use the library's resources, including how to access the catalog and how to access the databases. These online orientations tools are developed for anyone who wishes to learn how to utilize the library's resources and can be modified by the student to meet his needs in any specific class.

Online Resources

Our online catalog provides access to our entire collection of e-books. Students may search for, view and/or download e-books from any location. For a guide on how to access the catalog, see our Accessing & Searching the Catalog guide on the Online Library Orientation Page. The Thomas J. Garland library also offers a number of databases accessible from any location. Databases are organized from A-Z and by subject. We have three cross-disciplinary, comprehensive databases: ProQuest Central, InfoTrac I and EBSCOhost Web. Our Subject Guides provide links to web resources on a variety of topics.

Online Reference Service

Students may contact the library to speak with a librarian during normal library hours, make an appointment to speak with a librarian, or send a message via email. Students may also contact a librarian for assistance via email or the Ask Us form on the library's website. The library staff works with faculty in creating and presenting modules for information literacy, library orientation, and resource use.

Interlibrary Loan Services

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) services provided by TU Thomas J. Garland Library enable students, faculty, and staff of Tusculum University the opportunity to borrow books and obtain photocopies of journal articles from other institutions when the material is not available at the TC Library. Garland Library staff will make every effort to ensure that notification of the receipt of requested materials are made to borrowers as soon as possible.

- **Books** may be picked up at either the Greeneville or Knoxville library locations unless other arrangements are made. For alternative delivery options please call 1-800-729-0256 ext. 5124. All borrowed books must be returned to Garland Library Greeneville or Knoxville by the indicated due date.
- **Articles** may be picked up at the library locations above, sent via U.S. Postal mail, or emailed to the patron upon request. Any photocopy and lender fees must be paid upon receipt of the materials by the requestor.

Additional Assistance

The library's website also hosts a number of guides and tutorials to assist students and others in their research. The Library Research Guides page has information ranging from how to decipher an assignment to evaluating sources. Also found under the Guides heading are plagiarism tutorials, style manual guidelines, and database guides. The library blog also spotlights library-related issues and library resources. Students are encouraged to contact the library with any questions or concerns they may have.

CHAPTER 4: GRADUATE NURSING PROGRAM ACADEMIC STANDARDS

ATTENDANCE

Class participation in the MSN Program is mandatory. The instructional work of Graduate Nursing Program is designed for regular attendance and participation. Students who are not present for participation activities in each class will lose points from the point's distribution in each class. Point reduction is for a missed participation assignment, is voted on by the faculty, and plainly presented in each class syllabus.

In the case of a missed examination, the following procedures apply:

- Students who miss a scheduled exam due to illness or a serious problem on the day of the exam must notify the faculty member prior to the exam time. Failure to notify the faculty member prior to the exam will result in the student earning a grade of zero.
- Students who are ill or have a serious problem that prevents them from taking an exam at the scheduled time and have notified the faculty member prior to the exam will have the opportunity to take a makeup exam at the faculty's convenience on an arranged day and time. All makeup exams will consist of different questions covering the same material;
- No make-up opportunities will be permitted for unannounced quizzes. A zero will be recorded.

Participation at all **laboratory and clinical experiences is a mandatory requirement for a grade.**

Laboratory experiences are scheduled by the graduate faculty and cannot be made up due to the nature of the experiences. Lab absences are detrimental to the student's ability to meet lab learning objectives and skills attainment. Students should not schedule outside appointments during lab class times.

Clinical schedules are set by the student and the preceptor. On time arrival at the clinical site is a professional behavior and an expectation for all students. *Students are responsible for uploading clinical schedules into Typhon tracking system.* Should a student miss a clinical day, the student must call the clinical site and notify the preceptor of the absence before scheduled patients are to be seen. The student must also notify the clinical faculty member and record the revised clinical schedule into Typhon.

Clinical absences must be made up before a grade will be assigned.

Clinical logs must be entered into Typhon weekly. Any student who does not enter weekly logs will not be allowed to attend clinical until the logs are entered into the Typhon tracking system. If the student is not attend clinical the clinical schedule must be updated or the student cannot attend clinical until the clinical schedule is accurate. Any clinical that the student attends, and the above guidelines are not followed, will not be allowed to count those clinical hours as part of the required clinical hours.

GRADUATE NURSING ADVISEMENT

Once admitted to the graduate nursing major, a graduate nursing faculty advisor will be assigned to the student. Each student is expected to make an appointment with the advisor during each class registration period to validate progression. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with advisors, particularly in the case of unusual circumstances, special needs, or issues.

Orientation

Graduate nursing students are required to attend the mandatory new student orientation. Generally, this orientation is an all-day event the week before classes begin. The orientation session provides

students with critical information regarding program progression, advisors, and clinical requirements.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Exam Policies

Exam policies can be found above in academic standards and can be found in each course syllabi.

Student Permission to Record Lecture

Audio or visual recording of lectures is a privilege which may be granted at the discretion of the individual faculty member. It is up to students who wish to record lectures to ask faculty permission, and not assume permission. Students should ask for permission at the beginning of the semester with individual faculty members. Faculty members reserve the right to discuss with students the desire to record lectures and what benefit it will have for the student. Recording of visual images of a student or a faculty member whether in lecture or the laboratory setting is prohibited without permission from the MSN Program Director.

Cell Phone and Other Electronics Use

Cell phone use for personal reasons is NOT permitted in the classroom or clinical sites. This includes, but is not limited to, talking on the phone, checking messages, and text messaging. However, students may use cell phones in the clinical and classroom areas as a resource, if Epocrates or other resources are downloaded on the student phone. If students must have a cell phone in class because of a possible family emergency, the phone should be set on vibrate and the student should leave the class room to speak on the phone. If an emergency arises unexpectedly, every attempt will be made to locate the student.

Students may use computers to take course notes but are not to use computers or other electronic devices to engage in activities including checking email, engaging in computer games, texting, and social media or surfing the internet. A violation of computer use in the classroom may result in the loss of privileges. Students may use computers in the clinical area as a resource and for e-textbooks unless the clinical site requests otherwise.

MAINTENANCE OF ACADEMIC STANDING AND GRADING POLICIES

The faculty of the Graduate Nursing Program has the academic, legal and ethical responsibility to protect the public and the healthcare community from unsafe or unprofessional graduate nursing conduct or practice. The Graduate Nursing Program follows a consistent grading policy for all nursing courses. Mastery of didactic content is evaluated by a combination of in-class exams, on-line exams, application of content in graded case studies, oral and web-based presentations, as well as written papers and protocols. From course to course evaluative methods will vary but are clearly explained in each course syllabus.

Incompletes

In **extenuating circumstances** an Incomplete ("I") may be given if the student is in good academic standing and the majority of the coursework has been completed. If a grade of "I" is awarded, the course must be completed by the end of six weeks into the next semester. The students and the course instructor must negotiate the time line, requirements for completion of the course (including clinical hours), and submit the form for documentation of the incomplete.

It is the student's responsibility to follow up on all completed assignments and to arrange for make-up assignments, exams, labs, or clinical hours. The student must follow the policy to have the "I" grade resubmitted by the instructor as a letter grade to the registrar. If a grade change request has not been submitted by the required date, the "I" grade will be recorded as an "F" on the student transcript.

In general, an "I" grade in any sequential nursing course must be removed by the end of the first six weeks of the next semester in order for the student to continue enrollment in the next nursing course in the sequence. If the student has had a catastrophic illness or injury, an alternative may be a medical withdrawal. In this case, the MSN Program Director will require a statement from the treating physician regarding reasonable expectation that the student will be able to continue in the nursing program at a reasonable time.

Grading Scale for Nursing Courses

A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	86-89%
B	83-85%
B-	80-82%
C	75-79%
F	Below 75%

* Partial points that are .5 or above will be rounded to the nearest full point.

Clinical Evaluation Methods

Students, faculty, and preceptors will maintain an ongoing rapport and dialog regarding clinical experiences and clinical performance. Formal clinical evaluations will be completed by the faculty and by the preceptor for each student using the Clinical Evaluation tool found in Forms section of the handbook. Clinical evaluation tools (student version, faculty version, and preceptor version) are used to report the formal evaluations. Clinical courses may require written assignments that are based on the focused population and clinical cases in which the student has been involved.

Students will receive timely feedback related to development of diagnostic reasoning skills and clinical management.

Clinical Failure

Clinical performance is graded by the faculty and the preceptor. A student who fails a clinical class will be dismissed from the program. The instructor will seek input on clinical performance from the clinical preceptor; however final responsibility for the student's grade is retained by the Tusculum University Graduate Nursing faculty.

Course and Program Evaluation

Ongoing evaluations in both courses and program designs have been incorporated per the University and Graduate Nursing Program. Course and program evaluations are consistent with faculty commitment to the development of current, innovative, and quality courses that are responsive to student's needs and perceptions.

Course Evaluations

Students complete course evaluations and have an opportunity to provide open-ended feedback anonymously. Students complete preceptor and clinical placement evaluation forms that are consistently reviewed and reported by faculty. This information will be used by the school of nursing faculty to determine if courses or placements should be modified. Faculty review evaluation data and student performances on written assignments to determine if assignments are

consistent with the course objectives. The MSN faculty will meet to review and assess the evaluative data.

Program Evaluation

Nursing faculty review the evaluative data described above to determine if courses are meeting the stated objectives. Exit interviews and surveys provide data regarding student satisfaction. Preceptors complete surveys regarding satisfaction with student preparation and program support. Students complete preceptor and clinical site evaluations. Pass rates on national certification exams are monitored to evaluate program outcomes. Graduate employers are surveyed to determine if graduates demonstrate the core competencies consistent with the advanced practice nurse role.

MSN Comprehensive Examination

The MSN program is a non-thesis master's degree. Graduate nursing students, including Post-Master's Certificate students, must pass a Comprehensive Examination as part of program degree/certificate requirements. This exam is given in the Integrative Practicum course during the last semester. The student must obtain a score of 80% to pass the comprehensive examination and the Integrative Practicum. Should the student fail the Comprehensive Exam, they will be required to retake the exam at the discretion of the MSN Program Director. The exam may be repeated 3 times. Students and faculty will decide on the remediation plan for each individual student in conjunction with exam statistics. If the student is unsuccessful after three attempts to pass the comprehensive exam, a second review course will be recommended to the student by the MSN Program Director. A student who has not passed the comprehensive exam by the end of the last semester will not be able to graduate from the program and will be required to take an "Incomplete" in the Integrative Practicum course until the comprehensive exam is passed. If the student is unsuccessful after 4 attempts (total), the student will be dismissed from the program.

Student Appeals Process

Students have the right to appeal a grade or a dismissal from the Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program. The student is required to follow the chain of command and the timeframe in the appeal process. The involved student has the right to appeal to the Dean of the School of Nursing as outlined below.

Graduate Nursing Grievance Policy

Students have the right to appeal a grade or dismissal from the Tusculum Graduate Nursing Program. Grade and dismissal appeals follow the *Tusculum University Student Handbook*. All other grievance issues will follow the graduate nursing procedures as follows:

1. The student should first discuss the perceived offense, orally or in writing, with the instructor most closely responsible. If no results the student should then consult with the relevant program director or department chair. Every effort should be made to resolve the issue at this informal level, without the complaint attaining the status of a formal grievance.
2. If informal means of resolution prove inadequate, the student should within two weeks of meeting with the program director or department chair, set forth in writing the substance of the alleged offense, using the Grievance Submission Form in the *Graduate Student Handbook Appendices/Forms*. The grievance should state the complaint on which the student is basing the complaint and the efforts to date to resolve the matter; the document should be submitted to the Assistant Dean for the School of Nursing. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, within 1

week the document should be submitted to the Dean of the School of Nursing for adjudication. It is at this level the grievance becomes a formal grievance.*

3. Upon submission of the student's written grievance, the Dean of the School of Nursing will initiate a timely and independent investigation into the matter. The investigation will be completed within fifteen class days**. The Dean of the School of Nursing may request a written response to the issue raised in the grievance from the involved faculty, staff member, or program director or department chair. Upon completion of the investigation, the Dean of the School of Nursing will prepare and send to both the grievant and the involved personnel, including the MSN Program Director written findings and dispositive recommendations.

4. If the grievant or the faculty disagree with the Dean of the School of Nursing's recommendations, either on substantive or procedural grounds an appeal may be submitted in writing to the Vice President of the College of Health Sciences. The appeal must be made on grounds other than general dissatisfaction with the recommended disposition by the Dean of the School of Nursing, must be directed to the issues under consideration and not to new issues. No more than thirty days should elapse between receipt of the recommendations submitted by the Dean of the School of Nursing and the written appeal to the Vice President of the College of Health Sciences.

* In pursuing a formal grievance, students must take note of the necessary timeline for pursuing a formal grievance.

**Class days exclude Saturday, Sunday, holidays and days in which the University is not in session. All time lines refer to the first regular semester after the incident.

Graduation Requirements

The following requirements must be met for earning the degree:

1. Completion of the 46 credit hours specified in the approved Program of Study;
2. Completion of a minimum of 660 clinical hours for BSN to MSN and PMC, and 795 clinical hours for RN to MSN;
3. A minimum cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 (B); and
4. Fulfillment of all university requirements.

CHAPTER 5: STUDENT CLINICAL REQUIREMENTS

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Faculty evaluate students in the clinical settings using the Clinical Evaluation tool. The Clinical preceptor gives in depth input through the Clinical Evaluation Tool. Students must evaluate their performance at the end of the semester with the Clinical Evaluation Tool. Students must demonstrate successful achievement of the critical elements identified in each core competency. Performance will be evaluated with an assigned grade. The clinical faculty has full responsibility for assigning the clinical grade. Progression in the clinical sequence of courses can be denied for unprofessional behavior, unsafe clinical practice, or unsatisfactory academic or clinical performance.

CLINICAL POLICIES

Students are expected to comply with all requirements and policies in the *Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Student Handbook* and in the course syllabi regarding clinical requirements.

Under **extenuating circumstances**, an Incomplete “I” grade may be given to allow completion of required clinical hours with the provision that deficiency in clinical hours will be removed before the next clinical course begins. **Students may not enroll in subsequent clinical classes until the “I” is removed. Please review the incomplete policy in this handbook.**

SELECTION AND EXPECTATIONS OF CLINICAL PRECEPTORS

Nurse Practitioner clinical preceptors are selected for and expected to:

- Maintain a current license to practice as an advanced practice nurse, medical doctor, or doctor of osteopathic medicine in state of practice;
- Complete and sign the preceptor agreement provided by the student;
- Conduct a joint review with the student of the learning objectives for the advanced practice nursing experience. Should problems arise meeting the course objectives during the semester, the preceptor will inform the student and contact the faculty preceptor;
- Provide adequate facility/clinical space to facilitate student’s interaction with a variety of patients necessary for appropriate learning experiences;
- Provide an expanding scope of responsibility and accountability as the student progresses toward meeting and/or exceeding course objectives;
- Be experienced health care providers (greater than one year of practice);
- Supportive of the Tusculum University Graduate Nursing program;
- Allow authorities responsible for accreditation of Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program curriculum to inspect the facility as necessary;
- Be a Certified Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, Medical Doctor, or a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine.
- Participate with the faculty member in evaluating student's knowledge base and clinical management skills through:
 - Direct supervision, observation, and teaching of students; and
 - Discussion of and critique of written documentation as well as verbal presentation of cases;
- Provide written evaluation using the advanced practice nursing evaluation tool at end of the semester. Advanced practice nursing evaluation tool will be provided by faculty and/or student; and
- Support students in maintaining their advanced practice nursing logs and journals.

CLINICAL FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

The agencies and institutions for advanced practice nursing experiences in the graduate program are selected according to the following criteria:

- The health care philosophy and objectives of the agency or institution are compatible with those of the Graduate Nursing Program and learning needs of the students;
- The accreditation status of the agency is satisfactory;
- The demographics of clients and advanced nursing situations are adequate to fulfill course objectives and advanced practice nursing expectations;
- The educational preparation and experience of the preceptors meets the required criteria for a specific course;
- The location of the agency/institution is safe and accessible;
- The facility is in compliance with all federal, state, and municipal laws, advice, rules, and regulations, which are applicable to the performance of responsibilities, which shall include, but not limited to: Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) standards, facility policies, and regulatory standards or requirements of third-party payers;
- Members of the clinical site are supportive of Tusculum University Graduate Nursing program; and
- Use of the agency by other nursing programs does not create negative learning opportunities for students.

Advanced practice nursing sites vary in size, services offered, and locations. Some students may have experiences at more distant sites based on individual student requirements. Sites may be located up to 2-3 hours from the student home.

FACULTY CLINICAL SITE VISIT AND CLINICAL PERFORMANCE

It is mandatory that a student will receive a clinical site visit from a clinical faculty from the Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program during each clinical rotation. Additional site visits may be slated at the faculty's discretion. Students must perform satisfactorily during the site visit. If a student's performance, behavior, punctuality, or professionalism is found to be unsatisfactory during a site visit, the student can receive a failing grade and/or overall failure in the clinical course. A site visit may be an announced or unannounced visit.

If any portion of the student's clinical performance is unsatisfactory at any time during the semester, the faculty reserves the right to record an "F" as a grade for the class. An "F" recorded for an FNP clinical course will result in dismissal from the program.

The faculty may visit a site or talk to the preceptor by phone at any time during the semester to assess the student's punctuality or performance. The faculty may remove the student from the assigned clinical site and may restrict the student from attending clinical anytime the student:

- Displays unsatisfactory performance, punctuality, professionalism, or behavior.
- Engages in unsafe behavior;
- Fails to maintain patient confidentiality;
- Does not maintain a registered nurse license or current health requirements;
- Has a significant medical or psychiatric event which potentially interferes with performance;
- Engages in criminal activities (or is found to have done so in the past); and
- Is found to be inappropriate or unacceptable by a clinical preceptor.

Clinical Schedule and Punctuality

In the event of an unexpected emergency and the student is late or absent for the scheduled clinical experience, the student must communicate the change in the schedule to the preceptor, the assigned site visitor, and the faculty as soon as possible. Failure to appropriately inform the preceptor, the assigned site visitor or the faculty may result in a disciplinary action and/or a grade of “F” for the course.

Clinical schedules will be developed with the preceptor at the beginning of the semester and approved by the clinical faculty instructor. *The approved schedule must be uploaded into Typhon.* If changes in the schedule occur, the instructor and site visitor must be notified immediately. The student must also submit the revised preceptor approved schedule (which will reflect make-up time) no later than one week after the first missed day.

In the event the student experiences illness, injury, or emergency which constitutes changes in the clinical schedule, the student must notify the instructor, site visitor, and preceptor as soon as possible. The student will be required to provide a doctor’s excuse or other documentation that indicates the need for a change in the clinical schedule.

The clinical faculty reserves the right to approve or deny changes in the clinical schedule.

Clinical Documentation

Students will keep accurate clinical documents throughout the semester as required by each class. The student maintains accurate clinical information in Typhon during the semester.

Students must keep accurate clinical logs via approved electronic clinical tracking software. The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) and American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) each require documentation of clinical hours as part of the eligibility criteria to sit for the certification examination. Some State Boards of Nursing require documentation of clinical hours. Evaluation of the types of clinical experiences which a student has had can help determine what types of clinical experiences would be best for subsequent placements. The tracking system used at Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program is the Typhon tracking system. All required clinical information must be submitted on a weekly basis.

The student will submit accurate and timely clinical documents, such as clinical logs and written assignments, as scheduled or the student may receive a zero for the documents. A zero may adversely affect the overall clinical grade and require the student receive an “F” for the course.

Clinical Health Requirements

Clinical health requirements include a current Medical profile, drug screen, unrestricted RN license, BLS, CPR, (American Heart Association) and proof of immunizations per the latest guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for health professionals (www.cdc.gov), and personal health insurance. **There are no exceptions. Students will not be allowed to begin clinical rotations until faculty have noted that the requirements have been completed.** Throughout the semester, the requirements **must remain current.** If any of the clinical health requirements expire, the student will not be allowed to attend clinical rotations until the health requirement are in compliance. Clinical hours completed while a health requirement was expired will be voided and will not count toward the required hours. It is required that the student maintain a current, unrestricted RN license during the program. If the student lives out of state and wishes to participate in a clinical experience in the home state, an unrestricted RN license for the state in which the student performs the clinical is required. **All health requirements must be uploaded into the Typhon program before the start of the clinical rotation.**

Additional clinical health requirements may be required by the clinical agency where the student is placed. The student will be required to fulfill the health requirements of each clinical agency.

Other Clinical Requirements:

Some agencies require an orientation before a student may attend a clinical rotation at the facility or associated facility. The student is responsible for meeting orientation requirements of an assigned agency.

The MSN faculty strongly recommend that every student complete a minimum of one clinical rotation with and advanced practice nurse (APN) in the specialty for which they are enrolled. With MSN faculty approval, a student may use one clinical site for a maximum of two semesters. Clinical hours for which a student is compensated shall not be counted toward required clinical hours.

Students shall not use places of direct employment as a site for clinical experience (Students can use the same facility but not on the unit or area in which they work. Students cannot do clinical in a clinic in which they work with a different provider than the one that supervises them). Students shall not select an employee or employer, family member (direct or by marriage) as a preceptor for a clinical experience. A student who fails to disclose a relationship as described above with a preceptor, will be assigned a grade of “F” for the course.

Prior to each semester the student is responsible for securing a clinical placement in cooperation with the MSN Program Director. If a student is unable to locate a clinical placement site, faculty will assist in placing the student. The MSN Program Director and the faculty will determine the appropriateness of the site for accomplishment of the course objectives. Students may have to drive up to 2-3 hours to secure a clinical placement site if one cannot be secured by the student.

Once a clinical site is approved by the MSN Program Director, the student is responsible for attaining the Preceptor Form with the required signature.

The completed Preceptor Form needs to be submitted to the MSN Program Director each semester for each clinical preceptor and each clinical site before the student begins the clinical placement. Students must have a signed preceptor agreement for a site with a current agency affiliation agreement prior to beginning the clinical placement. Students must obtain a current CV (See Preceptor CV Short Form in the Forms and Appendices Document), from the Clinical Preceptor at the time the Preceptor Form is secured.

All graduate nursing students must have medical insurance while enrolled in any of the Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program. Proof of current health insurance must be presented to the MSN Program Director.

Masters of Science in Nursing students must balance academic and employment responsibilities. Successful completion of the program requires the student to give priority to academic and clinical requirements. Students who choose to work during the program, must understand that the same expectations apply to them as those who do not work.

Standard Precautions

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Hospital Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee has established standard precautions and transmission-based precautions to prevent the transmission of microorganisms in the clinical setting. Students are

required to follow the policies of the clinical facility regarding preventing transmission of infectious diseases. Students receive instruction on the use of the standard precautions and are expected to adhere to standard precautions while caring for all patients. Any student who has an exposure of blood or body fluids to mucous membranes or broken skin shall follow the guidelines of the facility where the incident occurs. The student's is required to report the occurrence to the clinical instructor and complete the **Post Occurrence/Exposure Report Form** found in the Graduate Nursing Student Handbook.

Travel

Students are responsible for individual transportation to and from the University and the clinical sites beginning the first semester of enrollment in the nursing program. Tusculum University, the Nursing Program, the School of Nursing, and College of Health Sciences are not responsible for injuries sustained for student travel to and from the clinical agencies, while at the clinical agency or for the diagnosis and/or treatment of any illness or injury contracted while the student is in the clinical agency for clinical experiences.

Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program Graduate Student Handbook Review Confirmation

By affixing my initials and signature to this document, I affirm that I have read and agree to abide by and be subject to accountability for all of the policies and procedures outlined within and referenced by the Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program Student Handbook. Further, my signature represents my understanding that I may be held accountable through outcomes up to and including permanent dismissal from the Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program. I acknowledge that said policies and procedures include, but are not necessarily limited to information on:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Mission, Purpose and Philosophy of the TC Nursing Programs;
<input type="checkbox"/>	Institutional Priorities, Core Values, Program and Student Learning Outcomes;
<input type="checkbox"/>	Admission Requirements and Related Policies (including Criminal History Check, Drug Screen, Admission Review Standards, Student Status Categories, Financial Aid, Disabilities, and Discontinued Enrollment);
<input type="checkbox"/>	University Communications, Participation on Committees, Changes to Published Course Offerings, and Addressing Illness or Injury;
<input type="checkbox"/>	Core Performance Standards and Graduate Students Essential Functions;
<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional Conduct Expectations/Standards and Community Conduct;
<input type="checkbox"/>	Academic and Professional Integrity and Honesty (including Code of Ethics Violation, Plagiarism, and Log and Data Falsification);
<input type="checkbox"/>	University Services and Policies (including Health and Wellness, Harassment, Alcohol and Drugs);
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technology Issues and Requirements;
<input type="checkbox"/>	Library Resources and Support; and
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nursing Program Advisement, Classroom, Academic Standards/Grading and Clinical Operations

Additionally, I affirm I have received appendices to the Tusculum University Graduate Nursing Program Student Handbook which includes both general program forms (Appeal Request, Medical Records Release Consent, GAP Analysis, Consent Form, Removal of an Incomplete, Post Occurrence/Exposure Report Form, NURS Special Topics Form, Student Medical Profile, Immunization Information, Confidentiality Agreement, Simulation Lab and Standardized Patient Confidentiality Agreement); as well as the following forms related to the Family Nurse Practitioner program (Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Concentration, FNP Curriculum Plan, Full Time Curriculum Plan Accelerated Program 4 Semesters BSN to MSN, Part Time Curriculum Plan 7 Semesters, Post Master's Certificate, Family Nurse Practitioner, Associate Degree RN to MSN – Full Time Curriculum Plan, Advisement Worksheet for Full-Time MSN FNP Students, Student Preceptor Agreement, Faculty Clinical Site Evaluation, Post-Exposure Incident, Preparation for the Practicum, Student Clinical Portfolio, Student Clinical Objectives, Student Self Evaluation of Clinical Skills, Graduate Requirement, and Student Evaluation of Clinical Preceptor).

Student's Name (Print)

Student's Signature

Student ID Number: _____

Date: _____

MSN Concentration ☐ FNP

MSN Campus

☐ Greeneville ☐ Knoxville ☐ Morristown