

MSN GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK



MASTERS OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PROGRAM

*Revised
Summer 2011*

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Letter of Welcome

Dear Graduate Nursing Student:

Welcome to the Masters of Science in Nursing (MSN) Program at Southeast Missouri State University. Upon completion of the graduate nursing program of study, you will be awarded a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree. This degree will prepare you to practice in a select advanced nursing role and is the basis for doctoral study. The MSN Program has full accreditation through the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

The MSN curriculum is designed to promote your professional growth in advanced nursing. In addition to expanding your knowledge base of advanced nursing, you will be challenged to think critically and communicate effectively as you enhance your ability to provide knowledgeable caring. You will participate in community-based experiences that will not only build your advanced knowledge and skills in a select advanced nursing role but also contribute to meeting the health care needs of rural populations.

The faculty and staff hope you will find the MSN Program exciting, thought provoking, and professionally satisfying. Uppermost, is our desire to promote and facilitate your education at the graduate level. We welcome you to our graduate nursing program and look forward to assisting you to achieve your goals in professional nursing.

Sincerely,

Graduate Nursing Faculty

B. Purpose of Handbook

This handbook has been prepared by the graduate nursing faculty to supplement but not replace the *University Graduate Bulletin* and to act as an overall guide to policies, procedures, and other information specific to the Department of Nursing. For general Graduate School matters, the *Graduate Bulletin* is the only official document.

Information in this handbook is as accurate as is realistically possible; however, the contents may change periodically. Due notice will be given all students when changes are made to policies contained in the handbook. If there are questions about any of the information contained in this document, do not hesitate to contact the Nursing Department's Director of Graduate Studies for clarification. Graduate nursing students are responsible for information in this handbook as well as information in the current *University Graduate Bulletin* (<http://www.semo.edu/gradschool/bulletin.htm>).

Southeast Missouri State University supports both in practice and in spirit, the full intent to Titles VI and VII of the Equal Opportunity Act. All personnel concerned with recruitment, hiring, training, assignment, promotion, use of facilities, and privileges are reminded to govern personal actions and procedures within the intent of the Equal Opportunity Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or ethnic origin, and affirmatively seeks to guarantee equal opportunity for all. The Affirmative Action Office monitors the University's policies and assists individuals who have questions or problems related to discrimination.

C. Rosemary Berkel Crisp Hall

The Department of Nursing is located in the Rosemary Berkel Crisp Hall at the top of the hill on Pacific Avenue. The Department of Nursing administrative office is located on the second floor of Crisp Hall (Room 213). The offices of the Director of Graduate Studies and graduate nursing faculty are located on the third floor of Crisp Hall. Classrooms are located on all three floors of Crisp Hall.

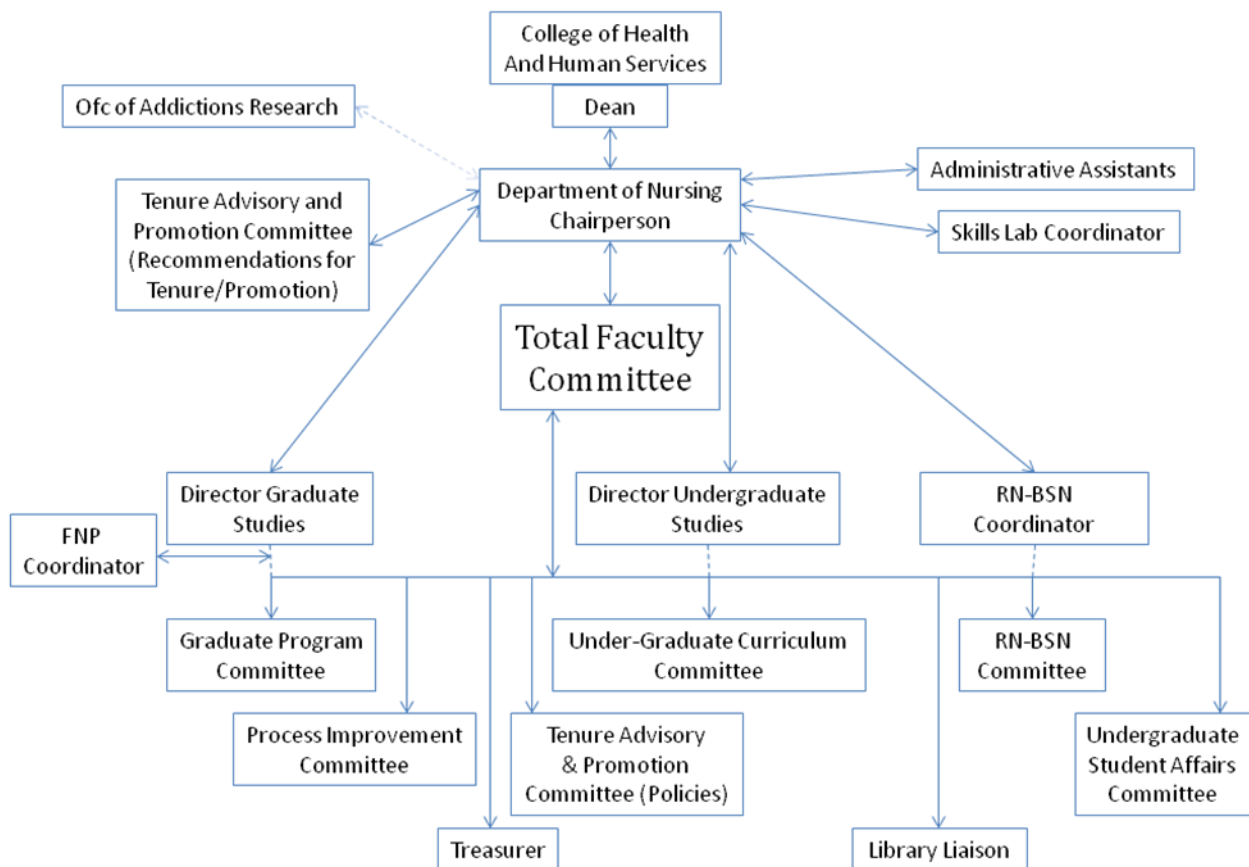
A student lounge, conference room, and two physical assessment rooms are located on the second floor of Crisp Hall. In addition, a small computer lab can be found on the third floor with a large computer lab on the second floor. A large conference room is also located on the third floor.

The telephone number for the main office is (573) 651-2585. The specific telephone number for the office of the Director of Graduate Studies is (573) 651-2871. Support personnel for the MSN Program can be reached by telephone at (573) 986-6413.

D. Departmental Accreditation and Memberships

The MSN Program has full accreditation through the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The Department holds membership in the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) and the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF).

E. Department of Nursing Organizational Chart



F. The Department of Nursing History

Since it was founded as the Missouri Normal School for the Third District in 1873 Southeast Missouri State University has served as the only institution of higher education for the Southeast Missouri region for over a century. After 1919, the University evolved through several name changes. In 1972, the Board of Regents, under the authority of the Missouri Legislature, approved the University's current name.

The University has evolved into a comprehensive University of seven colleges and schools offering more than 150 areas of study. The Department of Nursing resides within the College of Health and Human Services and consists of two programs, the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program and the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Program. The Department of Nursing also offers a RN-BSN program online. Initially, the Department offered an Associate of Arts Degree in Nursing (ADN), but after 40 years of operation, the program was closed in 1998. The BSN Program began in 1973, and the MSN Program was established in 1993.

G. Department of Nursing Mission Statement

Southeast Missouri State University Department of Nursing's mission is to educate baccalaureate and masters graduates to practice nursing within the context of knowledgeable caring. The Department influences the health of the region and beyond by providing graduates who have demonstrated intellectual, personal, and professional growth and can integrate theoretical knowledge, experiential learning, and an interdisciplinary foundation. Faculty encourage graduates to pursue a career of life-long learning.

H. Department of Nursing Philosophy

As part of Southeast Missouri State University, the philosophy and mission statement of the Department of Nursing are consistent with the mission and core values of the University. The philosophy of the Department of Nursing at Southeast Missouri State University addresses the concepts of person, environment, health, nursing, and learning, and reflects the views of the faculty regarding learning, teaching, and specifically nursing education.

The faculty believes that each person is a unique being comprised of body, mind, and spirit that together enable the individual to strive to reach an optimal level of health throughout the lifespan, including death with dignity. The person's spirit is the driving force that guides the pattern of every day living and the attainment of one's full human potential. Therefore, regardless of physical or mental status, all people are worthy of being treated with respect and dignity.

The Department of Nursing strives to serve diverse patient populations that reside in the surrounding community and region. The populations are comprised of individuals, families, and communities and are predominantly rural in nature. Nurses are uniquely positioned to affect the quality and outcome of healthcare. The relationship that evolves between the nurse and the patient has a major influence on the perception and status of health and on access to and use of available resources.

The environment is both external and internal to the patient. The external environment goes beyond surrounding physical parameters to include historical, political, economic, cultural, and spiritual influences. Individual experiences and perceptions form the internal environment. There is a direct relationship between the health of patients and the quality of their environment. Environment is individually perceived and each patient responds and adapts accordingly. Therefore, supporting a healthy environment is an essential element in promoting optimal wellness.

Health is a dynamic, multidimensional phenomenon that exists on a wellness-to-illness continuum and is influenced by a patient's body, mind, and spirit. Wellness and illness are concepts that to a large extent are self-defined, allowing for individualized perceptions of health. Wellness is sought, in part, through the process of healing. Healing is an active process that should not be imposed upon a patient. It is therefore important to recognize the autonomy of patients in the healing process.

Nursing is an art and a science. The integrative articulation of the art and science of nursing is fundamental to the implementation of knowledgeable caring. Nurses use knowledgeable caring to partner with patient(s) for health, healing, or a peaceful, dignified death. Nursing is practiced in a variety of roles and occurs wherever nurses and patients interact.

Knowledgeable caring underlies the diverse nursing roles and settings for nursing practice. It is the ability to competently and creatively practice nursing, with consideration of the covert as well as the overt needs of the patient. Students are encouraged to develop a knowledgeable caring presence that will allow their patients to seek and attain an optimal level of wellness specific to each individual circumstance. Through knowledgeable caring, nurses partner with patients to develop activities and interventions to promote optimal wellness and/or assist the patient to a dignified death.

Learning is a continuous, life-long process that occurs at any developmental level and ideally is evidenced by a consistent change in behavior. Students bring to the learning environment previous life experiences that influence attitudes and motivation to learn. To facilitate learning, faculty serve as teachers, resources, mentors, and professional role models for students. Faculty use a variety of teaching-learning strategies to facilitate the students' practice of professional and advanced nursing.

The goal of nursing education is to assist students to think critically, problem solve creatively, and practice nursing from a caring perspective. This education integrates concepts, principles, and theories from nursing and the related arts, sciences, and humanities. Nursing students are empowered to assist patients to meet their health care needs and accomplish developmental tasks.

An expected outcome of nursing education is the socialization of graduates into professional nursing roles. Undergraduate nursing students are prepared to function as generalists in diverse roles, in a variety of settings, using cultural sensitivity, standards of practice, and professional guidelines. Graduate nursing students build on an undergraduate foundation. Their focus is on developing expertise in advanced nursing roles to meet the health and educational needs of patient(s) and the profession.

Glossary for the Curriculum:

Patient: individuals, families, and/or communities who work in partnership with nurses to seek health and healing. Patients of nursing may also include organizations and agencies.

Creative thinking: “bringing together bits of knowledge or information that may initially seem unrelated, and formulating them into a plan that leads to effective decision making and solves the problem by finding connections between thoughts and concepts” (Catalano, 2006, p. 100).

Critical thinking: a conscious and organized thought process that “underlies independent and interdependent decision making. It includes questioning, analysis, synthesis, interpretation, inference, inductive and deductive reasoning, intuition, application, and creativity” (AACN, 1998, p. 9).

Full human potential: the maximum physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being attainable by a specific individual.

Healing: the process of bringing together the aspects of mind, body, and spirit in ways that lead toward integration and balance, and result in the realization of full human potential and optimal wellness (adapted from Dossey, Keegan, & Guzzetta, 2000, p. 6).

Illness: “the response of the [client] to a disease; it is an abnormal process in which the [patient’s] level of functioning is changed when compared with a previous level. This response is unique for each [patient] and is influenced by self-perceptions, others’ perceptions, the effects of changes in body structure and function, the effects of those changes on roles and relationships, and cultural and spiritual values and beliefs” (Taylor, Lillis, & LeMone, 2008, p. 67).

Knowledgeable Caring: “the nurse’s empathy for and connection with the client, as well as the ability to translate these affective characteristics into compassionate, sensitive, appropriate care” (AACN, 1998, p. 8). At the graduate level, knowledgeable caring enables the nurse in an advanced nursing role to make increasingly complex decisions requiring critical thinking as a prerequisite to providing individualized comprehensive nursing care within today’s complex health care environment.

Learning environment: any location or situation that is conducive to teaching/learning or that promotes an opportunity for change and growth in attitude, knowledge, and/or behavior.

Nursing Roles: a variety of behaviors demonstrated by the professional nurse in response to the patient’s unique needs. These roles exist upon a continuum from basic to advanced levels of practice.

- **Advocate:** supports and encourages clients as they seek information and make health-related choices and decisions
- **Care Provider:** uses theory and research-based knowledge in the direct and indirect delivery of care to patients
- **Collaborator:** seeks the input and participation of the patient, family, and other health care team members in health care decisions and activities
- **Communicator:** communicates effectively with patients, their families, and other members of the health care team through verbal, non-verbal, written and technological means
- **Educator:** develops and implements teaching plans for patient/family instruction, evaluates their effectiveness, and revises them as necessary.
- **Manager/Leader:** A manager organizes activities and resources when caring for multiple patient groups. A leader influences and/or guides/directs others to achieve desired patient outcomes.
- **Researcher:** demonstrates an appreciation for health-related research by applying research appropriately to practice
- The graduate student will be expected to demonstrate the ability to deliver nursing care as well as evaluate issues pertinent to advanced nursing, provide leadership in order to advance the profession, initiate collaborative professional

relationships to promote comprehensive health care delivery, and participate in research activities designed to contribute to nursing science.

Nursing Settings: a variety of clinical and community sites and agencies through which the professional nurse fulfills basic and advanced nursing roles.

Rural: areas of low population density that affect communication and transportation, interactions between friends, family and neighbors, and access to services (Condes, 1985).

Wellness: an “active state oriented toward maximizing the potential of the individual, regardless of his or her state of health” (Taylor, Lillis, & LeMone, 2008, p. 70).

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- American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (1998). *The essentials of baccalaureate education*. Washington, DC: AACN.
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- Condes, S. M. (1985). Biopsychosocial imperatives from the rural perspective. *Social Science Medicine*, 21(12), 1373-1379.
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April 21, 2008

Approved by Total Faculty

I. MSN Program Outcomes

The graduate of the MSN Program at Southeast Missouri State University is able to:

1. Perform in an advanced nursing role based on a synthesis of theories, concepts, and research from nursing, the sciences, and the humanities.
2. Apply leadership strategies, based upon analysis of social, cultural, legal/ethical, and political factors inherent in health care systems, that improve health care delivery and influence health care policy.
3. Implement evidence-based advanced nursing actions within the context of knowledgeable caring.
4. Use scholarly inquiry/research process to guide activities associated with advanced nursing roles

5. Continuously assess learning needs in the development and practice of a life-long pattern of scholarly learning.

Approved by Graduate Program Committee: 5/11/10

Approved by Total Faculty: 5/12/10

J. Overview of the MSN Program

The curricula of the graduate and undergraduate nursing programs are responsive to the evolving health care needs of the external community. Consequently, based upon faculty and student input and major undergraduate curricular revisions, revisions in the MSN Program of study were made in the 2008-2009 academic year. The revised curriculum was implemented Fall 2009.

The MSN curriculum offers two options: a family nurse practitioner (FNP) option (42 credit hours), and a nurse educator option (40 credit hours). A graduate from the FNP option is eligible to sit for national certification by the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) or the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). With the pre-requisite post-graduation faculty experience, the Nurse Educator graduate is eligible to sit for national certification as a Certified Nurse Educator by the National League for Nursing (NLN). Due to low enrollment issues, the nurse educator curriculum may be phased out in the future.

Core Courses

There are ten core courses that all graduate students are required to take: Theoretical Foundations for Nursing Practice (NS600), Advanced Nursing Concepts (NS605), Public Policy and Issues in Health Care (NS610), Nursing Legal and Ethical Issues (NS612), Advanced Nursing Research Methods and Designs (NS620), Advanced Pharmacology (NS625), Advanced Health Assessment (NS628), Advanced Health Assessment Practicum (NS629), Advanced Pathophysiology and Symptom Management (NS 636), and Advanced Roles Seminar (NS642). The core courses account for 28 credit hours in the MSN curriculum. In addition, all graduate nursing students complete a capstone requirement of either a Thesis (NS694/695) OR the combination of a non-thesis scholarly paper and a comprehensive examination.

Theoretical Foundations for Nursing Practice (NS600) explores the theoretical foundation of nursing's metaparadigm and provides students with an overview of prevalent nursing theories as well as complementary theories from other disciplines to understand nursing as a discipline and as a science.

Advanced Nursing Concepts (NS605) focuses on professional skills as well as the theoretical framework provided by knowledgeable caring and family theory. Students are introduced to advanced nursing role strategies and a variety of topics related to seeking, attaining, and implementing a career in an advanced nursing role. Particular emphasis is placed on working with individuals and families in rural communities.

Public Policy and Issues in Health Care (NS610) assists students to analyze the social and political factors that influence the delivery of health care to individuals, families, and communities. Students explore the relationship between the health care system, the development of health policy, and the nurse's role in influencing rural family health through the policy process. An emphasis is political involvement as an expression of knowledgeable caring.

Nursing Legal and Ethical Issues (NS612) assists students to analyze the legal and ethical factors that influence health and health care. Students focus on analyzing common ethical dilemmas experienced by

nurses in advanced roles, discussing conflicts associated with ethical decision making, and exploring legal influences pertinent to advanced nursing roles.

Advanced Nursing Research Methods and Designs (NS620) emphasizes the use of research methods to evaluate outcomes of advanced nursing roles and the use of systematic modes of inquiry to enhance the advanced practice of nursing. Students continue to explore the interrelationships between theory (both deductive and inductive) and research and to develop skill to evaluate evidence-based practices.

Advanced Pharmacology (NS625) assists students in synthesizing pharmacological knowledge with knowledge from nursing and related theories when using knowledgeable caring to guide advanced practice nursing.

Advanced Health Assessment (NS628) builds on basic physical assessment skills, health history, and family dynamics using a systematic approach to health assessment.

Advanced Health Assessment Practicum (NS629) focuses on assessment skills necessary for the advanced practice nurse to perform in an advanced practice role. Clinical experiences are guided and directed by an experienced practitioner. Opportunities focus on integration of theory and practice.

Advanced Pathophysiology and Symptom Management (NS636) guides students in the exploration of the physiologic human responses to illness from a symptom management perspective and assists students in synthesizing knowledge from nursing and related theories when using knowledgeable caring as a guide for advanced practice in nursing. This course also introduces students to basic cellular responses as one aspect of advanced pathophysiology and symptom management.

Advanced Roles Seminar (NS642) presents theoretical content pertinent to the implementation of advanced nursing roles. Emphasis is on skill acquisition, role development, and role implementation. Students are guided in the analysis of professional issues and concerns associated with a particular advanced nursing role.

The capstone requirement of a **Thesis (NS694/695)** OR the **combination of a non-thesis scholarly paper and comprehensive examination** is determined by the student as the option that best fits the student's learning needs. The Thesis (NS694/695) allows students to implement the research process when investigating a nursing problem following existing thesis guidelines. The written thesis is a labor intensive in depth process that assists students to employ a systematic mode of inquiry and to evaluate the outcomes of that inquiry. Students who complete a thesis will also complete the University requirement of GR699 Master's Oral Examination. The scholarly paper will address a practice issue within the student's selected advanced nursing role. The comprehensive examination will cover the core and specialty course content.

In addition to taking the core courses, graduate students are required to take specific courses to complete the MSN degree. The particular sequencing of the additional required courses depends upon what advanced nursing role the graduate student chooses to pursue.

Nurse Educator Curriculum

The Nurse Educator Curriculum builds on the core courses by requiring the graduate student to take 12 additional credit hours of coursework. The required courses are as follows: Advanced Nursing Roles I: Nurse Educator (NS643), Advanced Nursing Roles II Nurse Educator (NS644), an internship (NS641), and a 3-credit hour clinical specialty practicum (NS635Nurse Educator Practicum).

Advanced Nursing Roles I Nurse Educator (NS643) explores implementation of the advanced nursing specialty role of nurse educator in academic and practice settings, emphasis on role related to curriculum development. The course has a laboratory component (90 clock hours) for the in depth exploration and application of class content.

Advanced Nursing Roles II Nurse Educator (NS644) continues exploration of advanced theoretical and empirical knowledge related to nursing education; focuses on development of learning objectives, a variety of learner-centered teaching strategies, and classroom/clinical evaluation techniques for nursing education. Explores a variety of teaching/learning issues influencing the nurse educator role. This course also has a laboratory experience (90 clock hours) for the in depth exploration and application of class content.

Nurse Educator Practicum (NS635) provides for a precepted advanced clinical experience in a selected clinical focus area.

Internship (NS641) provides students with supervised experience in an advanced nursing role. Students implement a selected advanced nursing role under the direction of a qualified nurse preceptor following an agreed upon plan that includes specific objectives consistent with the course objectives. Opportunities are provided for students to identify strategies, develop rationales for actions, and to expand problem-solving skills.

Nurse Educator Curriculum Sequence

Year I (Fall)	CR	LEC	CLIN
NS600 Theoretical Foundations for Nursing Practice	3	3	
NS612 Nursing Legal and Ethical Issues	2	2	
NS636 Advanced Pathophysiology and Symptom Management	3	3	
Year I (Spring)			
NS605 Advanced Nursing Concepts	3	3	
NS610 Public Policy & Issues in Health Care	3	3	
NS625 Advanced Pharmacology	4	4	
Year I (Summer)			
NS620 Advanced Nursing Research Methods and Designs	4	4	
NS628 Advanced Health Assessment	3.5	3.5	
NS629 Advanced Health Assessment Practicum	0.5		0.5 (45)
Year II (Fall)			
NS642 Advanced Roles Seminar	2	2	
NS643 Advanced Nursing Roles I Nurse Educator	4	3	1 (90)
Year II (Spring)			
NS644 Advanced Nursing Roles II Nurse Educator	4	3	1 (90)
Year II (Summer)			
NS635 Nurse Educator Practicum	3		3 (270)
Year III (Fall)			
NS641 Internship	1		1 (90)
TOTAL	40	33.5	6.5 585 clock hours

Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Curriculum

In the FNP curriculum, students complete Primary Care I Family Health (NS638), Primary Care I Family Health Clinical Practicum (NS639), Primary Care II Adult Health (NS648), Primary Care II Adult Health Clinical Practicum (NS649), and Primary Care III Clinical Role Practicum (NS659). These courses result in 14 additional credit hours to the core curriculum.

Primary Care I Family Health (NS638) prepares students to provide primary health care to families in rural areas with an emphasis on defining needs of the family and using concepts of family and rural health to achieve an optimal level of wellness.

Primary Care I Family Health Clinical Practicum (NS639) focuses on preparation of the FNP as an advanced practice nurse in a family practice setting. Care of children, elders, pregnant women, and individuals with needs related to gender-specific functioning is emphasized. The student's experience is guided and directed by an experienced practitioner and provides the student with opportunities to integrate theory and practice.

Primary Care II Adult Health (NS648) prepares students to provide primary health care to adult clients in rural areas. It emphasizes defining needs of adults with selected acute and chronic problems, using concepts of family and rural health to assist in the achievement of optimal level wellness. Discussions are focused on common etiologies and management plans.

Primary Care II Adult Health Clinical Practicum (NS649) is a clinical that allows the FNP student to implement advanced nursing practice in a family practice setting. The course emphasizes adult health and explores family relationships. The practice experience is guided and directed by an experienced practitioner and allows students opportunities to integrate theory and practice.

Primary Care III Clinical Role Practicum (NS659) focuses on development of the FNP as a primary care provider in a family practice setting. In depth practice is supervised by an experienced practitioner. The practice arena provides students with opportunities to analyze the FNP role and to integrate theory into clinical practice.

Family Nurse Practitioner Curriculum Sequence

YEAR I (Fall)	CR	LEC	CLIN
NS600 Theoretical Foundations for Nursing Practice	3	3	
NS612 Nursing Legal and Ethical Issues	2	2	
NS636 Advanced Pathophysiology and Symptom Management	3	3	
YEAR I (Spring)			
NS605 Advanced Nursing Concepts	3	3	
NS610 Public Policy and Issues in Health Care	3	3	
NS625 Advanced Pharmacology	4	4	
YEAR I (Summer)			
NS620 Advanced Nursing Research Methods and Designs	4	4	
NS628 Advanced Health Assessment	3.5	3.5	
NS629 Advanced Health Assessment Practicum	0.5		0.5 (45)
Year II (Fall)			
NS642 Advanced Roles Seminar	2	2	
NS638 Primary Care I Family Health	3	3	
NS639 Primary Care I Family Health Clinical Practicum	2		2 (180)
Year II (Spring)			
NS648 Primary Care II Adult Health	3	3	
NS649 Primary Care II Adult Health Clinical Practicum	2		2 (180)
NS659 Primary Care III Clinical Role Practicum	4		4 (360)
TOTALS	42	33.5	8.5 765 clock hours

A post-master's FNP certificate curriculum is offered for students who have completed advanced pharmacology, advanced pathophysiology, and advanced health assessment courses with a grade of B or higher. Admission requirements for post-master's students are the same as admission requirements for all students who desire admission to the FNP option. Each post-master's application is reviewed by the FNP

Coordinator, a plan of study is developed and discussed with the applicant. The final admission decision for post-master's FNP applicants is made by members of the Graduate Program Committee taking into account strength of the applicant's academic preparation and seat availability within the FNP option courses.

Post-Masters Family Nurse Practitioner Curriculum Sequence

YEAR I (Summer)	CR	LEC	CLIN
NS628 Advanced Health Assessment*	3.5	3.5	
NS629 Advanced Health Assessment Practicum*	0.5		0.5 (45)
YEAR I (Fall)			
NS638 Primary Care I Family Health	3	3	
NS639 Primary Care I Family Health Clinical Practicum	2		2 (180)
NS642 Advanced Roles Seminar	2	2	
NS663 Independent Study: Family Concepts and Theory in Nursing Practice+	1	1	
YEAR I (Spring)			
NS648 Primary Care II Adult Health	3	3	
NS649 Primary Care II Adult Health Clinical Practicum	2		2 (180)
NS659 Primary Care III Clinical Role Practicum	4		4 (360)
TOTALS	21	12.5	8.5 765 clock hours

*NS625 Advanced Pharmacology and NS636 Advanced Pathophysiology and Symptom Management should be completed prior to NS628 Advanced Health Assessment. +NS663 should be completed prior to or with the first nurse practitioner clinical course.

II. GENERAL POLICIES

A. Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for meeting with the Nursing Department's Director of Graduate Studies to plan their program of study. Students should be familiar with MSN Program policies and review them periodically in order to keep abreast of evolving changes. Additional policies, procedures and regulations pertinent to the MSN Program are found in the University's *Graduate Bulletin* (<http://www.semo.edu/gradschool/bulletin.htm>). All provisions of the *MSN Graduate Student Handbook* are in effect for the year in which the graduate student enters the program. **The Department of Nursing reserves the right to change the regulations and policies in the handbook at any time and to add, modify, or withdraw courses at any time. Program changes may be made during a student's program of study and pre-candidacy students are responsible for following the most recent revisions. Due notice of program changes will be given to all students. After a graduate student is advanced to candidacy, the program of study may not be altered without approval of the original signers.**

Certain behaviors are essential for safe and ethical nursing practice. Students are referred to the *American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses* and the Nurse Practice Act of the state(s) in which they are licensed. Graduate nursing students should sign all clinical documentation as MSNS after their name; for example, J. Doe, RN, MSNS. Violations of such practice are defined below so that each student may be aware of the seriousness of such actions. Unsafe and/or unethical practice may result in a clinical failure and suspension from the program. Unsafe or unethical nursing practice may be evidenced by one or more of the following behaviors:

- Performing activities for which the student is not prepared or which are beyond the capabilities of the student;
- Performing activities which do not fall within the legal realm of advanced professional nursing practice;

- Recording or reporting inaccurate data regarding client assessments, care plans, nursing interventions and/or client evaluations;
- Failing to recognize and/or report and record own errors (incidents) performed in relation to client care;
- Having physical, mental, and/or cognitive limitations which endanger or impair the welfare of the client and/or others;
- Disclosing confidential or private information inappropriately;
- Behaving in a disrespectful manner toward clients, other health team members, and/or faculty;
- Attending clinical experiences while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including prescription medications which may impair performance; and
- Committing or omitting actions which result in violations of laws related to nursing such as negligence, malpractice, libel, slander, etc.

Civility:

“Every student at Southeast is obligated at all times to assume responsibility for his/her actions, to respect constituted authority, to be truthful, and to respect the rights of others, as well as to respect private and public property. In their academic activities, students are expected to maintain high standards of honesty and integrity and abide by the University’s Policy on Academic Honesty. Alleged violations of the Code of Student Conduct are adjudicated in accordance with the established procedures of the judicial system.”

Student Expectations:

The following student expectations apply to all graduate nursing courses:

1. Providing own transportation to and from assigned clinical experiences.
2. Completing a course's required prerequisites prior to enrolling in any course.
3. Adhering to Department standards of nursing practice appropriate to the student's level, and for independent learning activities.
4. Purchasing and maintaining current personal professional nursing liability. Students are strongly encouraged to purchase and maintain personal health and car insurance.
5. Maintaining current cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) professional level certification.
6. Completing annual screening for tuberculosis (TB).
7. Caring for, maintaining, and replacing any departmental materials and equipment used during independent practice.
8. Completing and submitting assignments when due or making alternate arrangement with the instructor **PRIOR** to the due date. Excused late work will not be penalized.
9. Following the current edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* guidelines in preparing written course work.
10. Placing proof of liability insurance and current CPR certification (professional level) on file in the Department of Nursing.
11. Presenting a well groomed and professional image at all times. Department of Nursing identification name pins are to be worn during all clinical experiences. Students will buy their name pins through the University Bookstore prior to the first clinical course.
12. Obtaining seasonal influenza vaccine, if required by the clinical agency prior to or during clinical practice.
13. Submitting to drug screening , if required by the clinical agency prior to or during clinical practice.

B. Clinical Documentation Requirements

Prior to the beginning of any clinical experience, the following information should be current and on file in the Department of Nursing. Failure to do so will prevent students from participating in clinical experiences until documentation is completed.

1. Copy of current CPR certification (the American Heart Association course for “Health Care Providers” or the Red Cross course “CPR for the Professional Rescuer”).
2. Results of a TB skin test taken within the past year (see information concerning history of a positive TB skin test on page 20 [see F7]).
3. Verification of current Missouri RN license.
4. Results of a criminal background check.
5. Yearly documentation of education and testing regarding Blood-borne Pathogens, Fall Prevention, HIPAA Privacy and Security, Patient Rights, Patient Confidentiality, Infection Control, Care of the Restrained Patient, and Fire and Electrical Safety.

C. Student Representation on Departmental Committees

Students in the MSN Program are eligible and encouraged to serve as representatives on the following department committees: Graduate Program, Process Improvement, and Total Faculty. The Graduate Program Committee is responsible for all factors involving the development, implementation, evaluation and revision of the MSN curriculum, for student admission/ readmission to the program, and for selection of award recipients related to the MSN Program. The Total Faculty Committee includes all faculty and involves discussions and issues regarding policies for the Department of Nursing. The Process Improvement Committee engages in self-evaluation of the Department to facilitate continuous improvement.

D. Confidentiality of Student Records

In accordance with federal statutes and regulations, all student records are confidential. Students may have access to their personal student record upon request. Disclosure of any information contained in student records to anyone other than the student will be made only with written permission of the student. A form for release of information is available from the Nursing Department’s Director of Graduate Studies. However, it should be noted that all health information, CPR certification status, professional liability insurance status, and criminal background check results may be released by the Department of Nursing to clinical agencies upon request, as required for clinical practice, and/or to satisfy requirements of accrediting bodies.

E. Professional Liability Insurance

All graduate nursing students must possess personal professional liability insurance. Prior to clinical practice, students must provide evidence of current liability insurance to the Director of Graduate Studies for documentation in department records. In addition, students are responsible for showing evidence of liability insurance renewal on an ongoing basis so that departmental records will reflect current professional liability insurance for all graduate students. Student nurse practitioner professional liability coverage is required of all students enrolling in the FNP option prior to participating in any clinical practice courses. Documentation of such coverage should be on file with the Director of Graduate Studies.

F. Health Requirements

All graduate nursing students must provide evidence of compliance with health requirements of the University, Department of Nursing, and appropriate clinical agencies. The requirements may be met by submission of immunization records to the Director of Graduate Studies. Documentation of immunizations may be from immunization books, medical records, public health records, or elementary/secondary school records. A verbal statement of compliance will not be accepted. The following must be documented:

1. **Diphtheria-Tetanus:** An original series and subsequent boosters every 10 years after the original series. Students are to show evidence of a tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis booster (Tdap) within 10 years of any clinical experience.
2. **Measles:** Two live immunizations after 12 months of age. Exempted are persons born before 1957 and those with healthcare provider's documented proof of having the disease or an adequate titer.
3. **Rubella:** Immunization, healthcare provider's documented proof of having the disease, or an adequate titer.
4. **Polio:** An original series is required.
5. **Mumps:** Immunization or healthcare provider's documented proof of having the disease, or an adequate titer (exempted are those born before 1957).
6. **Varicella (Chicken Pox):** Immunization, healthcare provider's documented history of the illness, or adequate titer. If titer is negative, a student has the option of receiving vaccine. If a student with a negative titer and no vaccine is exposed to chickenpox, the student will be excluded from clinical experiences 10-21 days after exposure.
7. **Yearly TB testing (PPD):** If the test is positive, a chest x-ray must be done and a nurse practitioner or physician's statement concerning the health status must be submitted with the results of the test. Documentation of current TB test status must be submitted prior to any clinical experience.
8. **Hepatitis B Vaccination:** Documentation of an original series of three (3) injections should be placed on file in the Department of Nursing. An adequate titer is encouraged for documentation. A signed "waiver" form will be accepted in place of the series. All students will be required to show evidence of attending a formal presentation concerning the OSHA guidelines regarding Hepatitis B vaccination at the beginning of initial coursework. The presentation may be from a work-related experience. Students will then be required to either make arrangements to receive the vaccine **OR** sign a waiver stating that they have received the information and chosen not to receive the vaccine. The student's decision will become part of the student's permanent record. The clinical settings for nursing practice have Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations regarding possible exposure to Hepatitis B specifying that health care workers must be informed of the availability of the Hepatitis B vaccine by their employer. If the graduate student is employed by a hospital or other health care agency, the vaccine may be obtained at no cost through the employing agency. The vaccine may also be obtained at the Campus Health Clinic (at the student's expense) or from another health care facility. Although not mandatory, the faculty strongly recommend receiving the vaccine because of the serious nature of the Hepatitis B disease.

G. Performance and Competency Standards

Students who wish to qualify for admission and progression in the MSN program must meet both academic requirements and performance standards. Academic requirements are described in Section III Academic Policies of this handbook and in the University *Graduate Bulletin*. Performance standards

include cognitive, sensory, affective, and psychomotor competencies. A student must, **with or without reasonable accommodation**, satisfy the following:

Competencies and Performance Standards	Examples of Necessary Activities (not all inclusive)
Critical/Analytical Thinking/(Cognitive Ability): Critical thinking, (both short and long term memory, and intellectual ability) sufficient to exercise sound clinical judgment.	Identify cause-effect relationships in clinical situations, predict outcomes, and interpret situational contexts. Reasoning skills sufficient to perform deductive/inductive thinking for nursing decisions. (Sufficient math skills to calculate medication dosages. Ability to transcribe data correctly.)
Interpersonal: Interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds.	Establish rapport with patients and colleagues. Work cooperatively on interdisciplinary health team.
Communication: Communication abilities sufficient for interaction with others in both verbal and written English; ability to operate information technology systems.	Explain treatment procedures, initiate health teaching, document and interpret nursing actions, interventions, and patient responses.
Mobility: Physical abilities sufficient to move from room to room, maneuver in small spaces, and to access all clinical sites.	Move about in densely occupied locations, such as patient rooms, workspaces and treatment areas. Ability to administer cardio-pulmonary resuscitation.
Motor Skills: Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective nursing care.	Gross motor skills sufficient to provide full range of safe and effective nursing care activities such as positioning patients, obtaining and processing specimens. Fine motor skills sufficient to perform manual psychomotor skills such as the ability to calibrate instruments and operate equipment, prepare and administer medications.
Physical Endurance: Physical stamina sufficient to perform patient care activities for entire length of work role.	Physical endurance for extended administration of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, assisting with surgery or other procedures which might require standing for long periods of time, working shifts of 12 hours or longer duration or working during late evenings or nighttime hours.
Physical Strength: Physical strength sufficient to perform full range of required patient care activities.	Muscular strength sufficient to transfer patients from bed to chair, etc., support patients during ambulation, and to assist in other activities of daily living.
Hearing: Auditory ability sufficient for accurate observation and assessment necessary in nursing care.	Auditory ability sufficient for physical monitoring and assessment of patient health care needs. Ability to detect alarms, emergency signals, cries for help, and auscultatory sounds.
Visual: Visual ability sufficient for accurate observation and assessment necessary in nursing care.	Read graphs, scales, computer screens, oscilloscopes, use microscopes. Observe patient responses. Prepare and administer medications. Recognize emergency signals.
Tactile: Tactile ability sufficient for physical monitoring and assessment of health care needs.	Perform palpation, detect heat and cold, functions of physical examination and/or those related to therapeutic interventions, e.g., insertion of a catheter, administration of medication.

Competencies and Performance Standards	Examples of Necessary Activities (not all inclusive)
Smell: Olfactory ability sufficient to detect significant environmental patient odors	Ability to detect various breath odors, urine odors, wound odors, ability to detect smoke or chemical odor.
Emotional Stability: Emotional ability sufficient to assume responsibility/accountability for actions.	Ability to manage hostile or emotionally disturbed individuals or those under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, ability to support patients/ families in crisis or to support fellow workers in crisis, and ability to function in a high stress work environment.

Other Essential Behavioral Attributes: The student must have the ability to engage in activities consistent with safe nursing practice without demonstrated behaviors of addiction to, abuse of, or dependence on alcohol or other drugs that may impair judgment. The student must demonstrate responsibility and accountability for actions as a student in the Department of Nursing and as a professional nurse.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the Department of Nursing Graduate Program Committee of any existing disability, either physical or otherwise. Such disclosure is necessary before any accommodations may be made in the learning environment or in the program's procedures. Information about disabilities is handled in a confidential manner. It is the policy of the Department of Nursing to comply with federal guidelines regarding students with disabilities and to provide appropriate academic adjustments to otherwise qualified students with disabilities so they can meet these required performance standards. Whether or not a requested accommodation is reasonable will be determined on an individual basis. Requests for accommodation must be submitted in writing, allowing sufficient time prior to matriculation for action on these requests. Determining what is a reasonable accommodation is an interactive process, which the student should initiate with the Department of Nursing and Disability Support Services. (Reviewed and Revised, Sept. 2004)

A student who has been excused from clinical responsibilities due to medical reasons must furnish a primary care provider's full release for unlimited practice prior to returning to clinical.

H. Students with Disabilities

“Any student who believes that they may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor to arrange an appointment to discuss their individual needs. Instructors rely on Disability Support Services for assistance in verifying the need for academic accommodations and developing accommodation strategies. Students who have not already registered with Disability Support Services as a student with a disability will be encouraged to do so.” In other words, accommodations do not have to be given unless the disability is verified by Disability Support Services (extension 2273).

Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities may be arranged on an individual basis by contacting the instructor of a course.

I. Infection Control in Clinical Settings

1. Students and faculty will treat contact with tissues, blood and other body fluids (e.g., semen, vaginal /rectal secretions, respiratory secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural

fluid, periorbital fluid, peritoneal fluid, amniotic fluid) from ALL patients as potentially infective.

2. Documentation of participation in annual OSHA updates are required of all graduate nursing students in clinical experiences.

Unprotected Exposure

1. Unprotected exposure is defined as being exposed to blood/body fluids through needle stick or other percutaneous or permucosal exposure.
2. If a student or faculty member comes into contact with blood or other body fluid through puncture, cut, splatter, or aerosol, then the student or faculty member will:
 - a. Report the incident immediately to the clinical instructor and/or appropriate employee health representative of the agency or institution where the incident occurred.
 - b. Complete the appropriate health care agency forms if required. The institution's blood/body fluids (Hepatitis B/AIDS) policy should be followed.
3. The faculty member should notify the Department of Nursing Chairperson and the University's Campus Health Clinic. The Clinic staff can arrange for follow-up testing at appropriate intervals.
4. When a student experiences an unprotected exposure to blood/body fluids while in a clinical agency, the student should be made aware that the agency policy will mandate that an incident report be filed. While the University will make very effort to maintain confidentiality, the University cannot be held responsible for actions taken by the clinical agency. The supervising faculty member will follow the procedure for reporting accidental exposure as outlined above.
5. The Department of Nursing **does not** assume responsibility for costs of any resulting health care.
6. The Department of Nursing **strongly recommends** that students carry health insurance.

J. Professional Nurse Traineeships

A limited number of federal professional nurse traineeships are available to students who are enrolled in the MSN Program. Interested persons should contact the Department of Nursing's Director of Graduate Studies.

K. Graduate Assistant Appointments

A limited number of graduate assistant positions are available. The salary and responsibilities depend on the type of position and on the student's previous learning experiences. Applicants must possess a minimum undergraduate grade point average (G.P.A.) of 2.70. The assistantships provide a stipend and fee waiver for approved programs of study. After consultation and under the direction of the Department of Nursing's Director of Graduate Studies, interested students may be considered for graduate assistantships by the School of Graduate Studies. Applicants must carry at least 6 credit hours of coursework per semester during the appointment period. Additional information related to graduate assistantships can be found in the *Graduate Bulletin* and at the School of Graduate Studies' web site.

L. Financial Assistance for Graduate Research

The Graduate Assistance Research Fund provides limited monetary resources to assist graduate students who incur extraordinary expenses completing research projects. Application guidelines are available in the Office of Graduate Studies. In addition, funding for addictions research is available through the Nursing Department's Office of Addictions Research from the Margaret Woods Allen Addictions Research Endowment. Lambda Theta Tau, the local chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, also has a Research Award with monies available to qualified graduate nursing student applicants.

M. Inclement Weather

Southeast Missouri State University recognizes that transportation problems result from inclement weather and hazardous road conditions. When conditions dictate, decisions to close the campus will be made by appropriate University officials and communicated through the appropriate media channels as soon as possible.

III. ACADEMIC POLICIES

A. Admission

The University and the Department of Nursing are committed to the principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunity for all persons. Students are evaluated and admitted to the University and the MSN Program without regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, or national origin.

The Department of Nursing offers a Master of Science Degree Program in Nursing accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. Admission to the MSN Program occurs once a year in the fall semester. Information about admission to the MSN Program may be obtained online by accessing the Nursing Department webpage (<http://www.semo.edu/nursing/>) or by contacting the Nursing Department by telephone (573-986-6413). The MSN admission application may be found at: <http://www.semo.edu/nursing/msn/index.htm>

Application to the University School of Graduate Studies should occur in conjunction with submission of an application to the MSN Program. A University application form and information concerning the University entrance requirements can be obtained online by accessing the School of Graduate Studies webpage (<http://www.semo.edu/gradschool/>) or telephoning the Graduate Office (573-651-2192). Completion and submission of the University Graduate School application can be conducted online.

Completed MSN admission applications should be mailed to the address on the application. Admission to the MSN Program is competitive and based upon a review of the total pool of applicants submitting completed application packets by the designated deadline of April 1. For applicants not meeting regular admission criteria, requests for probationary or provisional admission consideration should be made in writing by the applicant prior to the designated submission deadline. MSN admission applications are reviewed by graduate nursing faculty, and the most qualified applicants are admitted until all seats are filled. Written notification of acceptance or non-acceptance into the MSN Program occurs as soon as possible after the application submission deadline.

Applicants to the MSN Program must meet all admission requirements of the University's School of Graduate Studies as outlined in the current *Graduate Bulletin* as well MSN admission criteria. Students not meeting MSN admission requirements will be evaluated individually and may be considered for

provisional or probationary admission. At Southeast Missouri State University, graduate students may be admitted in only one of three categories: regular, provisional, and probationary.

1. Regular admission status is for applicants who fully meet all MSN Program admission requirements.
 - a. A baccalaureate degree with an upper division major in nursing from a program accredited by the National League for Nursing or the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.
 - b. A minimum grade point average (G.P.A.) of 3.25 on a 4.0 scale.
 - c. A current Missouri license as a registered professional nurse.
 - d. Evidence of professional liability insurance of \$1,000,000/\$3,000,000 coverage.
 - e. A course in health assessment or demonstrated proficiency in health assessment which includes physical examination and history taking with a grade B or higher.
 - f. An introductory course in statistics (graduate or undergraduate) with a grade B or higher.
 - g. Current CPR (professional level) certification.
 - h. Statement of academic goals and objectives for graduate study/advanced practice.
 - i. Clinical experience as a registered nurse prior to admission is strongly recommended.
2. Provisional admission is for applicants who do not meet all of the MSN Program's pre-requisites. In order to remove a provisional admission status, a student must meet the recommendations of the Department of Nursing Graduate Program Committee as stated in writing to the student upon provisional acceptance into the MSN Program. (Normally, provisional admission will be granted for one semester only so that the applicant may meet regular admission criteria.)
3. Probationary admission is for applicants who have a grade point average (G.P.A.) (on a 4-point scale) between 2.90 and 3.24 with a G.P.A. of 3.25 during the last 60 hours of undergraduate work. In order to remove a probationary admission status, students must achieve a grade of "B" or better for the first 9 credit hours in the MSN Program. Students not meeting the coursework grade requirement are subject to dismissal.

Applicants who are denied admission may appeal to the Department of Nursing, Graduate Program Committee.

Upon admission to the MSN Program, students will meet with their assigned advisor to establish an individualized plan of study within the declared option (family nurse practitioner or nurse educator). Unsatisfactory academic conditions that may increase time in the student's program of study can be discussed at that time. In addition, admission to specific courses will be subject to seat availability with preference being given to those students following their original plan of study.

B. Progression and Retention

As per University standards, to be retained in the MSN Program, students must maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of at least 3.0. If a student receives a grade of 'F' in a graduate course, the student is placed on academic probation and may not continue in the MSN Program without approval from the Department of Nursing's Graduate Program Committee and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. Removal from academic probation is based upon successfully retaking the failed course with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher. A student who accumulates 6 hours of graduate credit with a grade of 'C' is also

placed on academic probation may not continue in the MSN Program without approval from the Department of Nursing's Graduate Program Committee and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. To be removed from this academic probation, the student must achieve a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher. A student who receives a grade below a "B" is encouraged to repeat the course. Completion of a Repeat Card and permission from the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies are necessary to repeat a course. Only courses taken at Southeast University may be repeated. Students are referred to the current *Graduate Bulletin* for the process to be followed if a grade of 'C' occurs during their graduate program of study.

If a student is found to be convicted of a serious crime (e.g., felonies or substance abuse), continuation in the MSN Program will be reviewed by the Department of Nursing's Graduate Program Committee. Suspension from the nursing program may occur.

C. Transfer of Credits into the MSN Program

No more than 9 hours transfer credit may be applied to the MSN Program with approval of the Nursing Department's Director of Graduate Studies. Only 6 credit hours taken prior to admission to the MSN Program may be considered for transfer. Transfer courses **DO NOT** count toward meeting the residence or 600-level requirements. Transfer credit is applied to the student's transcript at Candidacy. Only coursework with a grade of "B" or better earned from an accredited institution will be accepted as transfer credit. Please note that the four (4)-year time limit on coursework includes transfer courses.

D. Candidacy

The student is responsible for initiating the process for advancement to candidacy by completing the **Application for Candidacy** and placing it on file in the Graduate Office at least halfway through the degree (completion of 19 credit hours in nursing) or at least one semester prior to degree completion. No matter the timing, a minimum of 16 semester hours must be completed after candidacy is achieved. Candidacy requires at least 9 semester hours in residence with a 3.0 or higher cumulative g.p.a. and that all admission requirements be met. Advancement to candidacy in the Department of Nursing precedes approval of the thesis or completion of the capstone requirement.

During the program of study:

1. Prepare for Application for Candidacy (filed by halfway point of program of study) (end of 19 semester credit hours) and at least one semester prior to semester of graduation. Complete Capstone Requirement Memorandum of Understanding first summer semester (Appendix A).
2. Complete coursework degree requirements and thesis or capstone requirement.
3. File Graduation Intent Form (**NO** later than the first day of classes of the graduating semester).
4. Enroll in **GR699 Master's Oral Examination** or **GR698 Master's Final Comprehensive Examination** (as appropriate) for the graduating semester. If not enrolled in regular coursework, a minimum enrollment fee must be paid.
5. Complete examination (written final comprehensive examination or oral examination),

6. Submit completed thesis to the School of Graduate Studies or complete the capstone requirement as outlined in the current *Graduate Bulletin* and Department of Nursing criteria.

E. Capstone Requirement Process (Appendix B)

1. Non-Thesis Scholarly Paper (Appendix C)

Students will be given information about the non-thesis scholarly paper during NS620 Advanced Nursing Research Methods and Designs. The paper will be written and graded during the first course in the specialty option. For FNP students that course would be NS638 Primary Care I: Family Health. For nurse educator students that course would be NS643 Advanced Nursing Roles I Nurse Educator.

2. Final Comprehensive Examination (GR698) (Appendixes D & E)

Students will be given information about the MSN final comprehensive examination during NS620 Advanced Nursing Research Methods and Designs. The examination will be completed and graded during the final semester of the student's program of study (either a fall or spring semester; MSN final comprehensive examinations are not scheduled in the summer semester),

F. Graduation

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree is conferred by Southeast Missouri State University following completion of criteria outlined in the current *Graduate Bulletin*. All academic requirements for the MSN degree must be completed within a four (4) year period. **This time period includes any transfer courses counted toward the degree.** Under extenuating circumstances, students may apply in writing to the Department of Nursing's Graduate Program Committee to extend the program of study (approved 4/09).

One half of the hours toward the degree must be in courses numbered 600 or above and completed at Southeast Missouri State University. The graduate nursing student must complete a thesis or the capstone requirement for achievement of all degree requirements.

The Department of Nursing sponsors a Graduate Recognition Ceremony twice a year – in December and in May. Any student is eligible to participate in the ceremony if that student is within 3 months of graduation and in good academic standing with the Department of Nursing.

G. Semester Load

Full-time graduate students are those enrolled in at least 9 credit hours during a regular semester. Enrollment in fewer credits than 9 during a regular semester constitutes part-time study.

H. Grades

Southeast Missouri State University is on a 4.0 grade point system. Graduate courses are graded A, B, C, and F. There is no D at the graduate level. The following grading scale for the MSN Program is:

90%-100%	A
80%-89%	B
70%-79%	C
69% and below.....	F

I. Absences

Students are expected to be diligent in the pursuit of their studies and regular in their class and clinical attendance. Absence in any course may require that the student repeat the course. Students have the responsibility of making arrangements satisfactory to the instructor regarding all absences. Such arrangements should be made prior to the absence if possible. Policies of making up work missed as a result of absence are at the discretion of the instructor, and students should inquire at the beginning of each semester concerning the policies of their instructors. The Department of Nursing in consultation with the faculty member(s) involved reserves the right to withdraw a student from a course because of excessive absences that interfere with attainment of course objectives.

Clinical learning experiences represent a commitment and responsibility to clients as well as essential application of knowledge. Satisfactory demonstration of course requirements and clinical competency are necessary for successful completion of the course. Should absences occur, it is the student's responsibility to consult with the instructor about the effect upon course progression. An unsatisfactory grade or withdrawal from the course may be necessary.

J. Incomplete (I) Grades

An incomplete grade may be given when students are unable to meet course requirements due to circumstances beyond their control, not for unsatisfactory/substandard work. Incomplete grade forms are available from the Director of Graduate Studies or the Department of Nursing administrative office. The forms are to be completed and copied to the student, faculty member, department, and School of Graduate Studies. A deadline for completing course requirements must be included. In all cases, the "I" grade does not remain after one year unless an extension is granted by the faculty member with approval of the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, otherwise the "I" reverts to an "F" grade. Once coursework is satisfactorily completed, faculty will generate a grade change request, and the course grade change will be reflected on the student's transcript of grades.

Additionally, in the Department of Nursing, should a graduate student receive an incomplete grade in a course, the course instructor will be responsible for determining the time period allotted for completion of course requirements. A written contract between the course instructor and the student will indicate the reason for the incomplete, the work that must be completed, the deadline for completing the work, and signatures of both parties. A copy of the contract will be maintained by the instructor and the student and placed in the student's file (approved 11/08).

K. Auditing of Courses

This option is available only with the course instructor's permission. No credit hours toward the MSN degree will be awarded for auditing courses.

L. Withdrawals

Withdrawals must be made through the School of Graduate Studies or a failing grade(s) will be recorded. Deadlines for withdrawal are provided on the School of Graduate Studies web site.

M. Dismissal from the MSN Program Policy

The graduate nursing faculty reserves the right to review a student at any stage of the student's program of study. A review process will automatically be triggered by an grade less than a "B". This review has the potential to result in the dismissal of the student from the MSN program.

Dismissal from the MSN program may occur due to:

1. Loss of registered nurse license
2. A grade of "F" in any course in the MSN program
3. An overall GPA of less than 3.00 at anytime in the program of study
4. An incomplete grade that is not converted to at least a grade of "B" within the designated contractual period
5. Failure to complete the degree in a four-year period. (approved 4/09)

N. Re-Admission to MSN Program Policy

Under extenuating circumstances, students who are dismissed from the MSN Program may apply in writing to the Graduate Program Committee for consideration of re-admission to the program. All requests for re-admission will be considered on an individual basis. It is the student's responsibility to make the case for re-admission (approved 11/08).

O. Physical Assessment Credit

1. If NS628 Advanced Health Assessment or a compatible advanced assessment course from another institution was completed prior to the summer semester immediately preceding enrollment into NS638 Primary Care I: Family; the student must complete a faculty supervised, comprehensive health and physical assessment; according to NS628 evaluation criteria. It is recommended that this requirement be completed prior to the beginning of the fall semester, but must be completed by the end of the first week of the fall semester and must be completed with 80% accuracy. Failure to complete the above will prohibit the student from progressing into NS638 Primary Care I: Family Health (Approved 3/10/10).
2. If a grade of less than "B" was obtained in an undergraduate assessment course or no discrete undergraduate assessment course is present on the transcript, the prospective graduate student must complete a faculty supervised health and physical assessment; according to the NS372 Health Assessment evaluative rubric. This criterion must be completed prior to admission to the MSN Program in the Department of Nursing and must be completed with at least 80% accuracy. Failure to complete the above will prohibit the student from being admitted to the MSN Program within the Department of Nursing (Approved 3/10/10).

P. Academic Advising

Advisement of all students upon admission to the MSN Program is performed by the Nursing Department's Director of Graduate Studies who will continue to provide academic advising to students as they progress through their program of study. University advising guidelines and deadlines are followed throughout this process.

Q. Confidentiality and Privacy in Practice

The student is expected to adhere to the American Nurses Association's *ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses* and act in accordance with the *Patient's Bill of Rights*. Confidentiality is the protection of a patient's privacy through careful use of oral and written communications and by judicious protection of confidential information. The student is expected to protect patient information according to the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)* of 1996.

An individual can withhold any personal information desired. Nursing students must be especially careful regarding the invasion of the patient's privacy. Students should use only the **INITIALS** of the patient when completing history forms, care plans, and any other documents that are a part of their educational experience. Care should be taken when in public places so that conversations are not overheard and any clinical documents are maintained confidential.

Under no circumstances may a student copy chart documents or remove chart documents from the clinical agency.

The graduate student must be particularly concerned with the process of informed consent in the implementation of research during completion of a thesis. The actual procedure used in obtaining informed consent and the basis for the Thesis Committee's determination that the procedures followed by the student are adequate and appropriate shall be fully documented.

R. Academic Honesty

Students are expected to maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their academic activities. Receiving and/or giving unauthorized assistance in a testing situation (or related to a test) or passing off as one's own the work of another (plagiarism) is totally unacceptable. A student is expected to maintain the professional standards of the nursing discipline (see Academic Honesty Policy in current *Graduate Bulletin*).

The policy established by the College of Health & Human Services is as follows:

1. The faculty member may:
 - a. Stop the dishonest activity with no penalty.
 - b. Stop the dishonest activity and assign the material a grade of "F" or "0".
 - c. Stop the dishonest activity and suspend the person from the course with or without the option of dropping the course.
 - d. Stop the dishonest activity, and with the approval of the Department Chairperson, suspend the person from the program.
2. Faculty members should exercise care to obtain and record clear evidence of academic dishonesty.

3. A student may appeal the decision of the faculty member. He/she must first discuss the incident in question with the faculty member(s) involved. The student must submit a written request to meet with the faculty member(s) within five (5) working days after the incident has occurred. The faculty member(s) must then schedule a time for the meeting within five (5) working days after the student(s) request has been received.
4. A student may appeal the decision of the faculty member to the faculty member's Department Chairperson. The appeal must be in writing and specify whether the appeal relates to the charge or to the penalty imposed. This written appeal must be made within five (5) working days after the meeting with the faculty member(s). The Chairperson will, within five (5) working days, consult with the student, the faculty member involved, and any other relevant parties, and make a decision based on the conclusiveness of the evidence and the appropriateness of the penalty. The Chairperson will in writing inform the student and the faculty member(s) of his/her decision.
5. A student or faculty member may appeal the decision of the Chairperson to the Dean within five (5) working days using the same procedures outlined above in #4. The Dean will consult with the chair, the faculty member, the student and any other relevant parties and reach a decision. The Dean will in writing inform the student, the faculty member, and the Chairperson of his decision. The Dean's decision may be appealed to the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Any student(s) enrolled in the MSN Program has the right to contest the decision of a faculty member(s) regarding a grade, academic dishonesty and/or misconduct or unsafe and/or unethical practice. In such instances, the aforementioned procedure must be followed as established by the College of Health and Human Services. It is ultimately the student's responsibility to follow the grievance procedure as written. Failure to do so or to meet deadlines as stipulated can result in failure of the grievance or further consideration of the grievance.

S. Grade Appeal Procedures

Students are responsible for meeting the standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled. Establishment of the criteria for grades and the evaluation of student academic performance are responsibilities of each course instructor.

Should a student believe that grading practices and procedures were not consistently and accurately followed in the determination of a final course grade, then the student has the right to appeal; first with the faculty member teaching the course, then the department chairperson, and finally a committee of faculty members. It should be noted that grade appeals are not for a review of faculty evaluation of the student's academic performance but for instances in which the student believes that the grade was assigned on the basis of criteria other than performance in the course, the particular student was held to a more stringent standard than other students in the course, or assignment of the grade was based upon criteria that greatly differed from the evaluative criteria announced at the beginning of the course. It is the obligation of the student to prove the inconsistent or inaccurate grading. Detailed processes are in place for students to follow when appealing a grade and failure to follow the process can result in nullification of the student's appeal. The Grade Appeal Procedure can be found at:

<http://www.semo.edu/provost/handbook/html/Chapter 3/FHIII-3.htm>

T. Sexual Harassment Policy

The University is committed to providing an environment free of sexual harassment, intimidation, or abuse. Students who believe themselves to be victims of such behavior should consult the *Code of Student Conduct* found in the *Student Day Planner*. The student may also contact the Associate Provost/Dean of Students or the Assistant to the President for Equity and Diversity Issues for assistance.

U. Criminal Background Checks

Criminal background checks for the state of Missouri are required for all graduate students prior to clinical practica. The process for completing the criminal background check will be explained to students upon admission to the program and may be conducted online at <http://www.dhss.mo.gov/fcsr/index.html>. Results of the criminal background check are to be filed in the Department of Nursing. Since it can take several weeks to obtain results, students must begin the process upon admission to the program. Failure to submit the required background check will jeopardize the student's participation in clinical practica. The fee for the background check is the responsibility of the student.

V. Substance Abuse

Southeast Missouri State University seeks to maintain an environment free from the effects of intoxicants or other substances that may alter behavior. The use of illegal/designer drugs or the abuse of alcohol, prescription drugs, or over-the-counter drugs may pose serious safety and health risks not only to the user, but also to all people coming in contact with the user.

Students are permitted to take legally prescribed and/or over-the-counter medications consistent with appropriate medical treatment plans. However, when such prescribed or over-the-counter medications interfere with the student's mental or physical performance, the student may be required to take an excused absence from clinical experience to preserve the safety of others.

For the purposes of this policy, a **chemically impaired person** is one who is under the influence of a substance that interferes with mood, perception, or consciousness resulting in physiological and/or behavioral characteristics. This impairment affects the individual's ability to meet standards of performance, computing, and safety in clinical settings, skills labs, classrooms, and office settings. *Students of the Department of Nursing are expected to refrain from using any substances that would prevent them from performing safely and effectively in all department and clinical settings.*

"For Cause" Testing

1. If a student exhibits behavior that in the opinion of the faculty member, is considered to be consistent with the use of drugs and/or alcohol, the student will be required to submit to a urine, blood, or breath analysis test.
2. The faculty member will remove the student to a private area, and will discuss the observed behaviors with the student. The student will be allowed to provide a verbal explanation of the suspicious behavior. This discussion will be conducted in the presence of a third person: either another professional who has reason to be made aware of the situation, or one who is aware of the significance of chemical impairment to the student and those with whom the student interacts.
3. The faculty member will request immediate drug testing if deemed appropriate. Failure to cooperate or to provide a timely sample upon request will result in disciplinary action, up to dismissal from the program. The cost of the testing will be the responsibility of the student.

4. The student will be dismissed from the classroom or clinical site after testing is completed and until the results are available. Prior to such dismissal, the faculty member will supervise the student in making arrangements for someone else to drive the student home. If possible, the student should also arrange to have someone stay with them until they are at less risk for further drug use and/or for other self-destructive behavior, as people are more prone to suicide after experiencing such a confrontation.
5. The results will be reported to the appropriate Director and Department Chairperson.
6. Students who present positive results (other than for properly administered prescription or over-the-counter medications) will not be allowed to continue in the program. They will be notified in writing. In addition, those students will be immediately referred to appropriate professional counseling. Students may apply for readmission at a later date, but must provide documentation regarding treatment and counseling received, and record of attendance at appropriate support group meetings.

Handling of Test Results

1. All student test results will be maintained by the Department Chairperson in locked files until the student has completed degree requirements.
2. Any action taken as a result of the above policy may be appealed according to policy stated in the *Statement of Student Rights and Code of Student Conduct* for Southeast Missouri State University. This document may be obtained from the Office of Judicial Affairs.
3. In accordance with the nursing licensing regulations of the State of Missouri, students found to be convicted of serious crimes (felonies or substance abuse) will be reviewed by the Graduate Program Committee and may be suspended from the nursing program.

W. Evaluation by Students:

1. Evaluation of Courses, Clinical Facilities, and Instructors.
 - a. Students are given the opportunity to complete evaluation forms for courses, clinical facilities, preceptors, and instructors at the end of each semester in the MSN Program as appropriate.
2. At the end of their program of study, students will be asked to complete an evaluation of the MSN Program.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

A. Campus Health Clinic

All health services are available to students enrolled for one or more hours at the University in the Campus Health Clinic. The Campus Health Clinic is located on the first floor of the Rosemary Berkel Crisp Hall of Nursing. For the Clinic's fee structure and hours, students should refer to the Campus Health Clinic website at <http://www.southeastmissourihospital.com/content/campushealthclinic.htm>

B. Career Counseling/Career Development

The Career Planning and Placement Office is located in the University Center. Individual counseling and small group workshops are available concerning job search techniques, resume preparation, interview strategies and videotaped mock interviews. There is no fee for these services.

C. Scholarships and Honors

Students are encouraged to discuss scholarship possibilities with the Financial Aids Office in Academic Hall. Scholarship information is also available on the Department web site.

1. Academic Distinction

Students who attain a cumulative g.p.a. of 3.9 or better on all coursework in the MSN Program from admission to the semester of graduation attain the designation as "Graduating with Academic Distinction."

2. Honor Societies

a. Sigma Theta Tau International

Sigma Theta Tau is the International Honor Society of Nursing to which eligible graduate students may be invited for membership. It is committed to fostering excellence, scholarship, and leadership in nursing to improve health care worldwide. Invitations are extended in the Spring semester for each academic year. A 3.5 g.p.a. with completion of at least 9 credit hours in the MSN Program is necessary for eligibility for membership in Sigma Theta Tau and the local chapter of Lambda Theta.

b. Phi Kappa Phi

Phi Kappa Phi is a national honor society founded in 1897 to recognize and encourage superior scholarship in all fields of study. Members are elected to the Society for not only superior academic achievement but also character. Members are elected from all curricula of the University environment. The Society funds numerous fellowships and awards for graduate study and publish a national newsletter and journal.

D. Writing Center

The Writing Center is available to all graduate students who think they might benefit from an experienced tutor's advising regarding writing. For more information, visit the Writing Center's web site at <http://ustudies.semo.edu/writing/>

E. Information Technology (IT) Help Desk

1. Contact Help Desk for assistance with any concerns related to online and Internet technologies connected to the University. Contact information can be accessed at: <http://www6.semo.edu/infotech/> Or by telephoning 573-651-4357

2. Refer to the following when checking and setting up a home computer to prepare to take an online course:

Recommended system requirements: <http://online.semo.edu/help/requirements.asp>

Other helpful downloads: <http://cstl.semo.edu/cstl/resources/downloads/index.asp>

V. GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN MATERIALS

A. General Information:

1. Students should retain a copy of all coursework to protect against loss or inadvertent damage.
2. At the instructor's discretion a paper which does not meet the criteria of form style and/or neatness may be returned to the student for correction before review by the instructor. If time does not permit corrections to be made and submitted by the required deadline, it will be considered a late paper.
3. Use nonsexist language, e.g., avoid "she" for the nurse and "he" for the physician.

B. Criteria

1. Professional Format
 - a. Papers must be written according to the current **Publications Manual of the American Psychology Association**. Use of subheadings where appropriate is encouraged.
 - b. Correct grammar, sentence structure, spelling and punctuation are expected.
 - c. Writing should be smooth, clear, concise, and well organized.
 - d. All papers must be typed and present a neat appearance.
2. Documentation of Sources (Evidence)
 - a. Very careful citation of materials quoted or paraphrased is essential.
 - b. Adequate number of references appropriate for the assigned course paper.
 - c. Quality of references (e.g., relevant to subject, recent or continued validity of older publication established).
 - d. Current references.
 - e. Variety of references (e.g., nursing, medical, periodicals, texts, documents, etc.) as appropriate.
3. Content
 - a. Ideas are relevant and valid to subject. Focus is clearly identified.
 - b. A degree of creativity is evidenced.
 - c. Adequacy and completeness of thought development are evident.
 - d. Depth and breadth appropriate to needs of topic; limitations are clearly specified.
 - e. Conclusions must be clearly supported by content.
 - f. Recommendations, if any, are appropriate in scope to the subject.

APPENDIX B

Cap Stone Requirement: Non-Thesis Paper and Comprehensive Examination Policy

GOAL AND PURPOSE:

- The *goal* of the Cap Stone Project is to allow the student the opportunity to demonstrate student mastery of analyzing, synthesizing, and applying advanced nursing concepts/ theories acquired throughout the **MSN** program.
- This process is designed to reflect the student's ability to integrate theoretical concepts, research, and practice.
- The student's responses must reflect comprehension of the subject matter and critical and independent thinking. As noted in the current *Graduate Bulletin* (p. 15):

“Instead of a thesis, a student may elect to write a comprehensive scholarly paper in the area of concentration. **NO CREDIT IS ALLOWED FOR THE PAPER.** Students electing this option will be required to take a comprehensive examination.

1. The student obtains approval from his/her advisor and the instructor for whom the paper will be written prior to beginning work on the paper.
2. Non-theses may only be written under the direction of a regular member of the graduate faculty.
3. The supervising instructor and advisor will be responsible for certifying the completion of each paper by filing one copy of the acceptance sheet with the School of Graduate Studies no later than the deadline specified in the semester class schedule.
4. **In all cases, the paper must be approved and the acceptance sheet filed with the School of Graduate Studies prior to taking the comprehensive examination.**
5. The paper must follow the style guide appropriate to the discipline in which it is written.”

NON-THESIS PAPER

1. Graduate nursing students at Southeast Missouri State University electing the Non-Thesis paper will address an *evidence-based practice issue* within their individual option: family nurse practitioner (FNP) or nurse educator (NE) AND complete a written comprehensive examination.
2. The Non-Thesis paper, to be completed concurrently with the first specialty course in each option (NS 643 or NS 638), is a part of the course grade for the first specialty course and will not receive separate credit.
3. All coursework from previous semesters must be completed prior to the semester of the first specialty course. If the student has an outstanding grade of “Incomplete” from a prior semester, the student must complete the coursework and produce written faculty confirmation of a passing grade prior to taking the first specialty course.
4. The due date for the paper will be determined by the faculty member of record within the first specialty course and specified in the syllabus of the first specialty course.

5. The Non-Thesis paper will be evaluated by two faculty members: a faculty member assigned to the specialty course and a second graduate faculty member designated by the Department Chairperson. At least two (2) weeks will be allowed for evaluation.
6. Evaluation of the Non-Thesis paper will be completed, using the 9-criteria rubric developed and approved by the Department of Nursing, Graduate Program Committee (see Appendix). The student must meet or exceed expectations for each of the nine criteria to successfully complete the Non-Thesis paper. If the paper does not meet or exceed all nine identified criteria, the student will be given one opportunity to revise the paper. Failure to meet/exceed each of the nine criteria after the revision will result in failure of the course (NS643 or NS638) and dismissal from the program.
7. If the two reviewers disagree regarding the grade for the Non-Thesis paper, a third member of the graduate faculty designated by the Department Chairperson will review the Non-Thesis paper and determine the final grade. The third reader will evaluate the paper using the approved evaluation rubric; however, only those items/criteria lacking consensus of the first two readers will be considered in the evaluation.
8. The Non Thesis paper must be successfully completed before progressing to the second specialty course (NS644 or NS648).

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

1. Students must enroll in GR698: Master's Final Comprehensive Examination during the final semester of their program of study. (If not enrolled in regular coursework a minimum enrollment fee must be paid.)
2. The Comprehensive Examination may include content from any course taken in the student's program of MSN studies. There will be at least one question addressing the student's major clinical and functional role and one question addressing theory, research, healthcare policy, or other content germane to the student's program of study.
3. An orientation to the Comprehensive Examination will be held no later than the 3rd week of the semester by Department of Nursing graduate faculty and its Director of Graduate Studies.
4. The Comprehensive Examination will be scheduled during the fifth week of the semester.
5. The exact date of the examination will be announced within the first two weeks of the semester.
6. All students must take the exam at the date and time announced/posted by the Director of Graduate Studies. If a student is unable to take the exam for legitimate reasons (illness, death of an immediate family member, etc.), this reason must be documented and will be addressed on an individual basis by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chairperson.
7. If the exam date is interrupted by a disaster, the faculty reserves the right to reschedule the exam. This decision and date will be communicated with the student.
8. Two (2), eight (8) hour days will be allotted for Comprehensive Examination completion.
9. The Comprehensive Examination will be administered via Microsoft Word. Instructions will be provided regarding the method to electronically forward the examination to the course contact person.
10. Students will have access to the World Wide Web during the examination. No notes, textbooks, PDAs, or cell phones will be permitted during the Comprehensive Examination.
11. A minimum of two (2) graduate faculty evaluators will read the Comprehensive Examination. All faculty readers will be blinded to the student's identity. Faculty Evaluators will be identified/assigned by the Chairperson of the Department of Nursing. Examinations are graded as satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

12. If the two reviewers disagree regarding the grade for the Comprehensive Examination, a third member of the graduate faculty as appointed by the Chairperson of the Department of Nursing, will review the Comprehensive Examination. The third reader will evaluate the examination using the evaluation rubric; however, only those items/criteria lacking consensus of the first two readers will be considered in determining satisfactory/unsatisfactory performance.
13. In order to receive a COURSE grade of “credit”, all evaluative criteria for each test question must receive a score of satisfactory. A student who does not achieve satisfactory will be given a second opportunity to sit the Comprehensive Examination during week 10 of the semester.
14. The student must achieve a score of satisfactory for all evaluative criteria for each question, during the second attempt in order to receive a course grade of credit and successfully complete the course/program. If the student receives an unsatisfactory on the second attempt, the student will not receive a course grade for the spring (FNP) or fall (nurse educator) semester. The student will be allowed to retake the comprehensive examination the next semester (fall or spring). The Department of Nursing will provide remediation prior to the examination retake. The FNP student will continue to attend NS648. The FNP student is to cease clinical hours and complete them in the semester of successful completion of the comprehensive examination, in order that the last clinical hours are close to graduation and the national certification examination. The student will graduate in the semester that the examination is successfully completed, clinical hours are completed, and all courses are completed successfully. The student will be allowed one test/retest opportunity per semester.
15. Results of the Comprehensive Examination will be reported to the Graduate School in the same manner as other course grades. Students will be notified of the Comprehensive Examination grade in a timely manner.

STUDENT SUGGESTIONS:

- The Comprehensive Examination is an opportunity to assimilate all you have learned during your graduate study—a rewarding opportunity to demonstrate new knowledge gained over the last several semesters!!
- Begin studying several months prior to the examination.
- Acknowledge your learning style.
- Create a timeline.
- Get organized.

Approved :
Graduate Program Committee 1/27/10; rev 12/10
Total Faculty 2/17/10; rev 3/11

APPENDIX C

DEPARTMENT OF NURSING Master's Degree in Nursing Guidelines for Scholarly Paper

Each graduate of a master's nursing education program must possess strong critical thinking and decision making skills. The ability to critically and accurately assess, plan, intervene, and evaluate the health and illness experiences of clients (individuals, families, and communities) should be a primary goal of master's nursing education. Skills of this level are mandatory in order to improve health care delivery and outcomes of patient care. The ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, is also essential to transmit the outcomes of these processes. During the program, every student should acquire the ability to analyze, synthesize, and use knowledge. This may be accomplished through a variety of experiences including formal courses, seminars, clinical experiences, and independent study (*The Essentials of Master's Education, AACN, 1996, p. 6*).

Graduate students in Nursing at Southeast Missouri State University will complete a scholarly paper addressing an evidence-based practice issue within their individual options (FNP or NE). The paper, to be completed concurrently with the first specialty course in each option, will not receive separate credit. It will be evaluated by the faculty member assigned to the specialty course and a second designated graduate faculty member, and must be successfully completed before progressing to the second specialty course. Evaluation of the paper will be completed, using the standard rubric developed and approved by the Department of Nursing Graduate Program Committee.

Approved Total Faculty: 9/16/09
Approved GPC: 9/9/09; rev 5/11/11

SCHOLARLY PAPER GUIDELINES

1. Select an issue that is relevant to your choice of nursing option, and obtain approval of your course professor.
2. Review AACN's *The Essentials of Master' Education* (latest version) to familiarize yourself with the seven major essentials and their expanded explanations.
3. Although no one method of organization of the paper is required, the following is a suggested framework:
 - a. Opening paragraph(s)—Define/describe the issue, and establish its relevance to your nursing option (nurse educator, nurse practitioner).
 - b. Throughout the paper, your choice of theoretical basis and your literature review should be integrated, providing evidence-based support for your writing.
 - c. Body of paper—Address the issue's reciprocal effects with:
 - 1) Health Care Policy/Funding
 - 2) Ethics

- 3) Professional Roles
 - 4) Societal Effects
 - 5) Health Promotion/Disease Prevention
- d. Concluding paragraph(s)—Summarize evidence-based solutions/resolutions for the issue in terms of areas in items b. 1-5. Also, explain the potential effects that the issue and its solutions will have on your nursing practice within your choice of nursing option.
4. Demonstration of a high level of critical thinking and professional knowledge is expected throughout the paper.
 5. Evaluation of the paper will be completed according to the attached rubric. Carefully read the “Exceeds Expectations” column, and strive to achieve those criteria.
 6. A minimum of at least two weeks will be required for evaluation of the paper.

Approved Total Faculty: 9/16/09
Approved GPC: 9/9/09; rev 5/11/11

RUBRIC FOR EVALUATION OF SCHOLARLY PAPER

Criteria	2*	1*	0*	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
1. Critical Thinking				Comprehensive analysis of selected issue in the context of individual nursing option, balanced discussion of multiple perspectives and opinions, and a variety of evidence-based solutions	Acceptable analysis of selected issue in the context of individual nursing option, discussing at least two perspectives, providing evidence base for offered solutions	Superficial analysis, overtly biased presentation, multiple perspectives not included
2. Communication				Well organized, clear and concise, current APA format, correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate use of direct quotations, appropriate word choice	Logical flow with acceptable transitions, correct grammar, and punctuation with 2-4 exceptions, a few words inappropriate	Poorly organized, hard to follow, multiple errors in grammar and punctuation, poor word choices
3. Research/ Evidence Base				Completion of thorough literature review, selection of current/hallmark literature relevant to issue, identification of gaps in reviewed literature, comprehensive use of literature to support discussion of all other aspects of the issue	Completion of thorough literature review, selection of literature relevant to issue, no gaps identified, supports most discussion of issue with appropriate literature	Incomplete literature review, obvious omissions from resource list, no evaluation of literature, little or no connections made between literature and contents of paper
4. Theoretical Basis				Choice and summary of appropriate nursing/related theory to use as framework for issue analysis, obvious use of that theory throughout analysis	Choice and summary of appropriate nursing/related theory to use as framework for issue analysis, some use of that theory in sections of analysis	Choice of theory inappropriate or missing, no consistent use of any theory as framework for issue analysis
5. Health Care Policy/Funding				Analysis of positive and negative effects of issue on current health care policy and funding, and the effects of policy and funding on the issue, within the context of individual nursing option	Analysis of some effects of issue on current health care policy and funding, and vice versa, context not always clear	Brief or no mention of effects on and of health care policy and funding, or topic completely omitted from discussion
6. Ethics				Direct discussion of ethical theories and principles relevant to issue, with potential effects of ethical choices addressed	Identification of ethical dilemmas presented by issue, some discussion of potential ethical choices, minimal discussion of effects	Brief or no mention of ethical dilemmas or questions raised by issue, no discussion of choices or effects
7. Professional Role				Thorough discussion of issue's relevance to professional expectations in individual nursing option	Some discussion of professional responses to issue, and its effects on the individual nursing option	Brief or no discussion of issue's impact on the individual nursing option
8. Societal Effects				Analysis of effects of issue and potential solutions on the population groups served by the individual nursing option	Some discussion of effects of issue and solutions on population groups served by the nursing option	Brief or no identification of effects of issue on population groups, no focus on nursing option
9. Health Promotion/ Disease Prevention				Discussion of strategies to address issue in the context of health promotion and disease prevention in relevant population groups	Identification of issue's impact on health promotion and disease prevention in relevant population groups	Little or no discussion of issue's impact on health promotion and disease prevention in any population group

*Scoring guide: 2=Exceeds expectations, 1=Meets expectations, 0=Does not meet expectations

Approved Total Faculty: 9/16/09
 Approved GPC: 9/9/09; rev 5/11/11

APPENDIX D

2011 REVISIONS DRAFT Instructions for Comprehensive Written Examination

CURRENTLY BEING REVISED BY GRADUATE PROGRAM COMMITTEE FALL 2011
DRAFT SHARED WITH STUDENTS SUMMER 2011

I. PRACTICE QUESTION:

Based on the case study:

1. Create a PICO question (i.e. population, intervention, comparison, outcome).
2. Critically analyze the literature relative to the PICO question.
3. Apply research findings and relevant evidence to the case study.
4. Develop a strategy for implementation of the evidence, including quality improvement and safety.
5. Summarize the legal, ethical, political, socio-cultural, and economic issues relevant to the question.
6. Discuss opportunities for interprofessional collaboration and how this collaboration could improve outcomes.
7. Use a theory to guide at least one area of criteria development (example: If the plan requires a behavioral change, then change theory might be appropriate for either patient or health care provider behavioral change).
8. In reference to the case study:
 - a. NP/CNS students: Demonstrate advanced clinical decision-making that incorporates at least two of the following:
 - Pharmacology
 - Pathophysiology
 - Advanced Assessment
 - b. Nurse Educator: Address at least two areas of relevance to the nurse educator role:
 - Teaching strategies
 - Learning principles
 - Curricular foundations
 - Academic standards and practices

II. PROFESSIONAL ISSUE QUESTION:

For the assigned issue, in the context of your advanced nursing role:

1. Critically analyze the literature related to the issue
2. Apply research findings and evidence appropriate to the issue
3. Discuss legal, ethical, political, economic, and socio-cultural factors that should be considered when addressing the issue
4. Use a theory to guide the development of your responses to the issue
5. Develop evidence-based interventions
6. Analyze the potential influence of interventions on relevant populations

APPENDIX E

**2011 REVISIONS DRAFT
Question I Evaluation Rubric**

CURRENTLY BEING REVISED BY GRADUATE PROGRAM COMMITTEE FALL 2011
DRAFT SHARED WITH STUDENTS SUMMER 2011

Student Name			
Graduate Comprehensive Examination Scoring: * 2 = Exceeds expectations, 1 = Meets expectations, 0 = Does not meet expectations	2*	1*	0*
CONTENT			
1. Identified appropriate PICO question.			
2. Demonstrated critical appraisal of literature.			
3. Applied evidence appropriate to case study.			
4. Developed strategy for implementation of evidence-based practice.			
5. Incorporated strategies for quality improvement and safety in advanced nursing role.			
6. Summarized legal, ethical, political, sociocultural, and economic issues relevant to the question.			
7. Discussed plan for interprofessional collaboration to improve health outcomes.			
8. Used a theory to guide at least one area of criteria development.			
NP/CNS Students: Demonstrated advanced clinical decision making by the inclusion of at least two of the following:			
• Pharmacology			
• Pathophysiology			
• Physical Assessment			
Nurse Educator: Integrated into each case study discussion at least two of the following:			
• Teaching strategies			
• Learning strategies			
• Curricular foundations			
• Academic standards and practices			
ANALYSIS/SYNTHESIS			
1. Demonstrated thoroughness of responses.			
2. Used concise, factual information.			

3. Demonstrated synthesis of knowledge from the core courses.			
QUALITY OF WRITING	2*	1*	0*
1. Demonstrated thorough development, clear statements, and logical progression of Ideas.			
2. Demonstrated accurate citation (APA format).			
3. Used correct grammar and spelling.			

Date Faculty

Date Faculty

**2011 REVISIONS DRAFT
Question II Evaluation Rubric**

CURRENTLY BEING REVISED BY GRADUATE PROGRAM COMMITTEE FALL 2011
DRAFT SHARED WITH STUDENTS SUMMER 2011

Student

Graduate Comprehensive Examination Scoring: * 2 = Exceeds expectations, 1 = Meets expectations, 0 = Does not meet expectations	2*	1*	0*
CONTENT			
1. Critically analyzed the literature related to the issues.			
2. Applied research findings and evidence appropriate to the issue.			
3. Discussed legal, ethical, political, economic, and socio-cultural factors that should be considered when addressing the issue.			
4. Used a theory to guide the development of responses to the issue.			
5. Developed evidence-based interventions.			
6. Analyzed the potential influence of interventions on relevant populations.			
ANALYSIS/SYNTHESIS			
1. Demonstrated thoroughness of responses.			
2. Used concise, factual information.			
3. Demonstrated synthesis of knowledge from the core courses.			
QUALITY OF WRITING			
1. Demonstrated thorough development, clear statements, and logical progression of ideas.			
2. Demonstrated accurate citation (APA format).			
3. Used correct grammar and spelling.			

Date

Faculty

Date

Faculty