Student Handbook

South Dakota State University

College of Nursing

Department of Graduate Nursing

Academic Year
2016-2017

October 2016
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PREFACE
Welcome to Graduate Nursing at South Dakota State University! This handbook is a comprehensive document developed for students, academic advisors, and faculty advisors to reflect the mission and philosophy of the College of Nursing as well as information on all of the program options offered (Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Nursing Practice, Masters of Science, and Post-Masters Certificate programs).

Information on coursework requirements, advising, financial aid, professional organizations, and policies and procedures are included. Students will utilize this handbook in conjunction with other SDSU publications (Graduate Catalog, Graduate School website, College of Nursing website, and current coursework schedules) to facilitate progression in their respective program option within the Graduate Nursing program.

Mary Minton, PhD, RN, CNS, CHPN®
Associate Dean for Graduate Nursing
August 2016
Section I: Introduction

About the University
South Dakota State University is the state’s largest, most comprehensive higher-education institution. A public, land-grant institution, SDSU was founded in 1881, authorized by the Dakota Territorial Legislature, and is governed by the South Dakota Board of Regents.

Learn more about South Dakota State University here.

About the Graduate School
The South Dakota State University Graduate School advances post-baccalaureate education to meet the economic, technological and societal needs of South Dakota and beyond, supports graduate student success, and fosters innovation and diversity in graduate education and scholarship.

The Graduate School supports post-baccalaureate education at SDSU by promoting programs for student recruitment, setting and adhering admission standards, and defining and maintaining rigorous academic standards for graduate programs. Administrative support is provided to departments and colleges seeking to improve existing courses as well as development of new programs. The Graduate School seeks academic balance through enhancement of graduate research and scholarly works, promotion of human diversity among the graduate student body and graduate faculty, and engagement with the graduate faculty to achieve the highest level of academic education.

Policies and procedures of the graduate nursing programs have been developed in compliance with the SDSU Graduate School policies. The SDSU Graduate School catalog should be used as the primary reference for information on graduate education as SDSU.

About the College of Nursing

South Dakota State University College of Nursing 1935-2015
The story of the College of Nursing reflects a legacy of leadership, vision and innovation. One of the nation’s first baccalaureate programs for nurses, the college has consistently and relentlessly pursued excellence and expanded its central role in health care delivery. Thousands of nurses have prepared themselves for key roles in hospitals, clinics, communities, government agencies, academia and research. Many graduates moved rapidly into highly influential executive positions. After a humble beginning with six students enrolled in an undergraduate program taught by one faculty member, the college currently boasts enrollment of more than 1,800 students in pre-nursing, undergraduate and graduate programs. In 2015, the college includes online programs and four face-to-face program delivery sites, with locations across the state of South Dakota in the communities of Brookings, Sioux Falls, Aberdeen and Rapid City. Online programs reach students located in more than 40 states. Faculty numbers have grown from 1 to 59. They are leaders who champion nationally accredited programs that offer multiple degree options and clinical specialties. This incredibly talented faculty prepares students to earn the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree, the Master of Science (M.S.) degree, the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), and the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree through many pathways to advanced education. The College of Nursing at South Dakota State University is a nursing education trailblazer.

Leaders of the college have responded quickly to changes in health care, population health and developments within the discipline by creating, expanding or modifying programs and delivering education off-site or via technology. Building such a multifaceted, complex college hinged on several key initiatives: faculty development, procurement of resources, clinical, academic and community partnerships, and a continuous flow of highly qualified and committed students.

As a land-grant institution, South Dakota State is devoted to the interlocking missions of education, scholarship and service. The field of nursing at SDSU has consistently devoted its resources to these three important areas. The College of Nursing was the state’s first program to develop capacity for nursing research. In addition, the college kept its focus on the rural and underserved populations of the state and the region, and emerged as a leader in service through continuing education, program outreach and development of nursing faculty, nursing leaders, nurse practitioners and clinical nurse specialists as well
as nurse scientists. True to the land-grant mission, College of Nursing programs have never been based only on campus. As a practice discipline, nursing students are required to interact with members of the community to gain critical thinking, problem-solving, psychomotor and elder and child care skills to prepare them to enter the workforce upon graduation. Nursing education delivered by SDSU has touched residents of nearly every community in the state of South Dakota and extends beyond the borders to numerous states. Learn more about the history of the College of Nursing here.

**Transforming students into nurses**
The South Dakota State University College of Nursing promotes a combination of lecture and hands-on experiences that teach students to practice nursing with expertise, professionalism, and a passion for helping others. To do this, we base our lecture curriculum on the meta-paradigm of nursing, which includes the concepts of client, health, environment, and nursing.

Students also receive a variety of hands-on learning experiences with our Simulation Labs and clinical requirements. Plus, we have research opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate students. Our program has an 80-year history of delivering a well-rounded, quality nursing education.

**Mission**
The College of Nursing improves human health and quality of life for people in the state of South Dakota, the region, the nation, and the world. The College strives for excellence in undergraduate and graduate education, research, scholarship, and health services to diverse individuals, communities, and populations across the life span.

**Vision**
To be a national leader in accessible and quality undergraduate and graduate nursing education and recognized across health disciplines, and to prospective students, alumni, and nursing leaders as innovative scholars and researchers who improve human health through strategic partnerships and interprofessional collaboration that shapes new delivery models of quality health care and nursing education.

**Core Values**
- Honesty, respect, and integrity
- Excellence in learning, research and service
- Improved health and quality of life
- Academic quality, rigor and student engagement
- Human dignity, altruism, and social justice
- Access to quality nursing education and health care
- Diversity among ourselves and the people we serve
- Innovation in scientific discovery that improves human health outcomes
- Collaboration and partnership development

Approved by the College of Nursing Organization, August, 2014
Philosophy

Education
Education of nurses and other health care professionals is essential to the health and quality of life in the state, region, and nation. Education is a self-directed, yet interactive lifelong process that empowers learners to think critically and grow toward their potential as individuals and contributing members of the profession and society.

The essential components of professional nursing education include liberal education, professional values, clinical reasoning, and role development. The role of faculty is to guide, direct, facilitate and evaluate learning while encouraging curiosity, creativity and independent thinking.

Undergraduate education prepares individuals for basic entry into nursing practice. This education provides the foundation for the development of professional knowledge, critical thinking, ethical decision-making, leadership skills and pursuit of high standards in health care to influence quality health outcomes. The health science minor offers nursing and other professional students knowledge and skills to promote health, prevent disease and protect the environment.

Master’s education prepares nurses for advanced practice in nursing or for specialty areas of nursing practice. The advanced professional nursing role relies on best practices and evidence-based research with a focus on evaluation of health outcomes and process.

Doctoral education prepares the PhD nurse scholar to influence health care through leadership in education, policy, research, nursing theory and nursing knowledge development. Doctoral education prepares the nurse clinician (DNP) for advanced practice in a primary care role and to influence health policy.

Meta-paradigm in Nursing
The nursing curriculum is based upon the meta-paradigm of nursing, which includes the concepts of person, health, environment, and nursing.

Person
Each person is a complex and unique multidimensional being, which includes physical, psychological, sociocultural and spiritual dimensions. Person encompasses the lifespan. The concept of person encompasses individuals within families and communities as well as groups and aggregates within populations.

Health
Health encompasses multidimensional states of developmental, cognitive, physical, psychological, social, cultural, genetic and spiritual balance throughout the lifespan. Health is a dynamic state which is individually defined within the environment.

Environment
Environment consists of dynamic internal and external factors that interact to influence a person’s health. The environment can be altered to positively affect a person’s health by changing or removing unhealthy factors and enhancing or providing health promoting resources. Persons are influenced by and responsive to their environments and can choose to alter their internal and external environments to influence their health.

Nursing
Nursing is a professional way of caring which uses both art and science to respond to and interact with all dimensions of the person and the environment to provide quality health care and promote quality of life in health, illness, and end of life. Nursing is concerned with human experiences and responses to birth, health, illness, and death within the context of individuals, families, groups, and communities (American Nurses Association, 1995). Nurses, individually and in collaboration with other health care professionals, provide optimal health care and comfort of individuals and groups through the systematic application of knowledge from nursing and other disciplines. Implicit in the practice of professional nursing is accountability for professional growth and practice, demonstration of leadership, and commitment to the
development and application of nursing theory, nursing knowledge and research. Life-long learning leads to the optimal development of both the individual practitioner and the discipline of nursing.

Accreditation Status
The baccalaureate degree in nursing, Master of Science (MS) degree in nursing, and the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), and post-graduate APRN certificate programs at South Dakota State University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 530, Washington, DC 20036 (202) 887-6791.

College of Nursing Graduate Programs
The following degree or certificate options (and specializations) are offered by the SDSU Graduate Nursing Program:

1. Master’s Degree in Nursing
   - Clinical Nursing Leadership Specialization with a choice of emphases:
     - Nurse Administrator
     - Clinical Nurse Leader
   - Nurse Educator
   - Family Nurse Practitioner
2. Doctor of Nursing Practice
   - Bachelors (BS) to DNP with a choice of specializations:
     - Family Nurse Practitioner
     - Neonatal Nurse Practitioner *in collaboration with the University of Missouri-Kansas City
     - Family Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner *in collaboration with the University of Missouri-Columbia
     - Pediatric Nurse Practitioner *in collaboration with the University of Missouri-Columbia
     - Pediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist *in collaboration with the University of Missouri-Columbia
   - Post Master’s to DNP
     - For applicants who hold a Master’s degree in Nursing along with current licensure and certification in one of the advanced nursing specialties (nurse practitioner, nurse anesthetist, clinical nurse specialist or nurse midwife).
   - Post Master’s to DNP
     - For applicants who hold a Master’s degree in Nursing in a non-clinical specialty area such as Nursing Administration, Nursing Education, and Clinical Nurse Leader.
3. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
   - 60 Credit Option
     - For applicants who hold a Master’s Degree in Nursing.
   - 90 Credit Option
     - For applicants who hold a Bachelor’s Degree in Nursing.
4. Post Masters Certificate *
   - Family Nurse Practitioner (APRN-C)
   - Clinical Nursing Leadership with an emphasis in Clinical Nurse Leader
   - Nurse Educator
     * For applicants with a previous Master’s Degree in Nursing.

*** Degree / certificate specific information can be found in the designated degree section of this handbook.***
Graduate Nursing Curriculum Plans of Study

- Master’s curriculum plans of study (http://www.sdstate.edu/nursing/graduate-nursing-programs/areas-study)
- Post Masters Certificate curriculum plans of study (http://www.sdstate.edu/nursing/graduate-nursing-programs/areas-study-0)
- DNP curriculum plans of study (http://www.sdstate.edu/nursing/graduate-nursing-programs/areas-study-1)
- PhD curriculum plans of study (http://www.sdstate.edu/nursing/graduate-nursing-programs/areas-study-2)

Admission Information

Admission Requirements / Procedures
Admission information can be found on the SDSU Graduate Nursing Program website. http://www.sdstate.edu/nursing/graduate-nursing-programs and on the SDSU Graduate School website http://catalog.sdstate.edu/index.php.

Conditional Admission Status

Conditional admission may be granted for students enrolled in an accredited U.S. college or university, if the applicant:

1. meets the requirements for admission for the last three semesters but has not completed the last semester of undergraduate study. Admission is conditional until the Bachelor’s degree is granted, OR
2. lacks prerequisite undergraduate courses specified by the major program. Admission is conditional until these courses have been completed to the satisfaction of the program, OR
3. has a grade point average between 2.75 and 3.0 cumulative for the junior and senior years.

A student admitted conditionally must satisfy any conditions within the first semester of enrollment in the graduate program before receiving unconditional status. Performance required to receive unconditional status will be provided to the student in the letter of acceptance. Failure of a student to fulfill the stated conditions may result in dismissal from the program.

Non-degree seeking Student

Students who are not pursuing a degree may register as non-degree seeking student. There is no application fee to apply with the Graduate School as a non-degree seeking student, though the student is responsible for tuition and fees.

Special Students may not receive graduate assistantships, financial aid, or enroll for thesis/dissertation credits. The Dean of the Graduate School will act as an advisor for these students unless otherwise noted.

A Special Student may apply for admission into a graduate program using the normal procedures outlined in this document.

No more than 12 credits acquired under Special Student status may be applied toward a degree.
Readmission

To maintain active status, students must be registered each semester of the academic year (excluding summer). All graduate assistants must register for a minimum of one (1) credit (including summer) in order to receive an assistantship.

Students who are not registered each semester (excluding summer) will be moved to inactive status and may be required to reapply before continuing their graduate studies. (*additional information listed below under Registration and Status)

Students formerly enrolled as graduate students at South Dakota State University and who have not maintained continuous enrollment (excluding summer semesters) must apply for readmission to their program (if they did not complete a formal leave of absence request). Graduate School policies in effect for the term of readmission will apply. Official transcripts must be furnished for graduate work taken at other institutions since last enrolled at South Dakota State University.

Programs may require the student to update supporting documents for the application. Readmitted students are encouraged to contact their graduate advisor prior to registration. Students who are readmitted may be required to change their Advisory Committee, file a new plan of study or resubmit other matriculation documents.

New reference letters and transcripts are not required for the Graduate Nursing Program unless the previous student has completed coursework at non-SDSU institutions prior to reapplying for admission. The material will be reviewed by the Graduate Nursing Admissions and Scholastic Standards Committee and a readmission decision to the College of Nursing Graduate Program will be made on a space available basis.

Previous coursework must be current or updated following Graduate School Policies and an updated background check will be required for students inactive for 12 months or longer.

If a previously admitted student has an enrollment lapse of 12 months, a new application must be completed and submitted to both the SDSU Graduate School and the Graduate Nursing Program.

Section II: The Graduate Degree Process

Academic Integrity & Academic Appeals
(SDSU Policy 2:4, SDSU Policy 3:1, and BOR Policy 3:4)

South Dakota State University has taken a strong and clear stand regarding academic dishonesty. Academic integrity embodies ethical principles to act responsibly and take responsibility for one’s actions. Integrity and honor function as forms of a “social contract” where individuals have a duty to follow the rules and norms of academia as well as a duty to ensure their peers also follow such rules and norms.

Undergraduate and graduate students at the University are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic conduct; if violated, the University takes a strong and clear stand regarding academic dishonesty. The consequence of academic dishonesty ranges from disciplinary probation to expulsion.

For additional information on the academic dishonesty and academic appeals process and procedure reference SDSU Policy 2:4, SDSU Policy 3:1 and BOR Policy 3:4.

Please review these documents to assure you are familiar with policy and procedures. It is imperative that students have a clear understanding of what academic dishonesty is and how to avoid it. If you have any questions about academic integrity and dishonesty, contact the course professor.
**Attendance Policy**  
(Graduate Nursing 2016-2017)

The Graduate Nursing Program adheres to the SDSU Attendance Policy (SDSU Policy 2:5).

Specific courses may include additional attendance requirements. Refer to the course syllabus for additional information.

**Courses / Credits**

Graduate study may include required activities on campus in Brookings, or at off-campus locations for degree completion.

**Registration and Status**

To maintain active status (as a graduate student), students must be registered each semester of the academic year (excluding summer). All graduate assistants must register for a minimum of one (1) credit (including summer) in order to receive an assistantship.

Students who are not registered each semester (excluding summer) will be moved to inactive status and may will be required to reapply before continuing their graduate studies.

If the student anticipates / requests an interruption in course registration or program progression, the student must contact the Assistant Director of Nursing Student Services – Graduate Nursing for more information.

**Continual Registration for Dissertation, Thesis, Research/Design Paper** - All graduate students who have completed the dissertation/thesis/research-design paper credits specified on their plan of study are required to do one of the following each semester during the academic year and Summer term until the degree is awarded:

1. Students who have completed the required number of dissertation/thesis/research-design paper credits on the plan of study, but are still involved in research work as part of the degree requirement, must continue to register for one credit for each succeeding semester, including summer.
2. Students who miss the deadline for graduation in a given semester, but successfully complete their final oral exam and all other requirements prior to the start of the next semester, do not have to enroll in that semester in order to graduate.

**Registration in the Graduate Nursing courses will be completed by the Graduate Nursing Program staff. It is the student’s responsibility to register for elective coursework that is not an SDSU course. Prior approval of the elective course must be obtained from the student’s academic or faculty advisor, PRIOR to registration / completion, for inclusion on the student’s Plan of Study.**

**Payment must be made by the appropriate deadline each semester. Failure to register / make payment may delay award of the degree and thereby require additional registrations.**

**Add / Drop Procedure**

1. Dropping or adding courses should be discussed with one’s academic advisor. Courses can be dropped on Web Advisor or in the Registrar’s Office.
2. The drop/add period is the time period during which students may adjust their academic schedule for the term without financial or academic consequences. The last day of the drop/add period for a course is designated as the census date for that course and is the official date for enrollment reporting. The end of the drop and add period for standard and non-standard courses offered in a semester shall be the date the first 10 percent of the term ends or the day following the first class meeting, whichever is later. When calculating 10% of the term, breaks of five or more days are not included when counting the total number of days but Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays are. Student registrations can only be added to courses after the end of the drop and add period by approval of the chief academic officer (or designee) of the university.

Students should not discontinue enrollment in a class without processing discontinuance via the official drop procedure. An “F” will be recorded for an unofficial drop.

**Grades for Dropped Courses**

Graduate students who drop a course shall receive a grade of “W” if that action occurs any time between the day after the census day for that course and the day that corresponds with the completion of 70 percent of the class days for that course.

**Grades for Withdrawals from the Regental System**

(see “Withdrawals” for additional information)

Students who completely withdraw from the Regental system from the first day of a class(es) until the census date of the class(es) will have a pseudo course of WD 101 (Undergraduate) or WD 801 (graduate) with a “W” grade entered on their Transcript. Undergraduate and graduate students who withdraw from the System shall receive a grade of “W” if that action occurs anytime between the day after the census day for that course and the day that corresponds with the completion of 70 percent of the class days for that course.

A notation of the date of withdrawal will be included on the student’s transcript if he/she withdraws from the system. *(Refer to BOR Policy 5:7.2)*

**Last Day to Drop**

For standard classes, the last day to receive a grade of “W” is determined by calculating 70 percent of the class meeting days in the term, counting from the first day of classes in the term and rounding up if the calculation produces a fractional value greater than or equal to 0.5.

For any non-standard course, the last day to receive a grade of “W” is based on the number of class meeting days for the course, using the method described above.

Similar proportional dates would be established by the Registrar’s Office for summer, interim and other courses taught outside of the normal nine-month academic year.

Students may not drop a course or withdraw from the System after the time period specified above. *(Refer to BOR Policy 5:7.2)*

If extenuating circumstances (i.e., illness) have prevented class participation, a petition for an individual drop may be filed.

**Auditing a Course**

Registration as an auditor in a course may be permitted. No credit is given. The audit fee is the established tuition and fee rate. **Registration for audit may be accomplished only after registration day by presenting an Audit/Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory form to the Registrar’s Office, Enrollment Services Center.**
Auditing courses by graduate students will be a matter of record (recorded on their academic transcript). An AU grade is given for Audit. This grade does not calculate into the semester or cumulative grade point average. Audit courses are counted as part of the 19-hour rule for overloads.

**Audit courses are not counted in calculating undergraduate or graduate full-time student status.**

**Cancellation of Courses**

In general, entry level graduate courses (500 or 600 level courses) will not be offered to fewer than seven (7) students and graduate only (700 or 800 level courses) will not be offered to fewer than four (4) students unless there is some special reason for doing so. Instructors will cancel courses with low enrollment or for other reasons only with the approval of the dean of the academic college concerned.

It is the intent of the College of Nursing to offer program courses as adequate enrollment, faculty, and available resources permit. Classes with enrollments below seven (7) are subject to cancellation by the University. Due to conditions beyond the control of South Dakota State University, the College of Nursing reserves the right to modify, consolidate, or cancel courses.

**Repeated Courses**

(BOF Policy 2:8:3D)

All courses taken appear on the student’s academic record, but when a course is repeated, only the most recent grade is calculated into the cumulative GPA. This policy applies to both undergraduate and graduate coursework. Relative to number of repeats allowed:

1. A student may enroll in a graduate course (for which credit is granted only once) no more than two times without permission of the Dean of the Graduate School.
2. A student will be allowed unlimited enrollments in a graduate course for which credit toward graduation may be received more than once. An institution may limit the number of credit hours for courses that may be taken more than once that apply toward the requirements for a major.

**Please notify the Registrar’s Office, Enrollment Services Center, when a course, whether failed or passed, is repeated.**

**Residence Requirements**

A minimum of 60% of all credits on the student’s Plan of Study must be earned at SDSU. Residence credit is given only for graduate credit earned in courses offered by SDSU. SDSU graduate nursing courses offered in Rapid City, Sioux Falls, and by Internet are approved as residence credits.

**Transfer Credits**

Graduate credits earned at other institutions may be applied toward an advanced degree if they were awarded a grade of at least “B” (3.0), if they are approved by the advisor or advisory committee and the Dean of the Graduate School, and if they are not part of a conferred degree. Transfer credit is limited to graduate credit as defined by the institution issuing the transcript.

In order to be accepted by the Graduate School, the offering institution must accept the credits toward their graduate program without restriction. Dual-numbered courses offered primarily for upper-level undergraduate credit are (generally) not transferable as graduate credit.

Requests for transfer of credits are usually made at the time a plan of study is approved and must be supported by an official transcript filed with the Graduate School. A minimum of sixty (60) percent of all credits in the program must be earned at SDSU unless the program is part of an approved joint or
cooperative degree. Credits earned at another institution as a part of an approved joint or cooperative degree program will not count as transfer credits for the purposes of this policy.

The student initiates the transfer process with the advisor and is responsible for providing the Graduate School and the College of Nursing with course descriptions and transcripts. Transfer credits must be approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate Nursing for inclusion in the Plan of Study.

**Undergraduate Students taking Graduate Courses**  
*(SDSU Policy 2:22, SDBOR Policy 2:8.3C)*

Undergraduate students who have completed a minimum of 90 credit hours may request to enroll in 500/600 level. Students will pay graduate tuition and the courses will be recorded on a graduate transcript. A maximum of 12 graduate credits may apply to an undergraduate degree.

SDSU Policy 2:22 Use of Graduate Credit for Undergraduate Degree Requirements designates standards concerning the use of graduate credit to fulfill undergraduate degree requirements as allowed by SDBOR Policy 2:8.

**Grades**  
*(SDSU Graduate School - 2016-2017)*

**Graduate Academic Standards/Grades**

**Cumulative 3.0 (B) Average**

The student must maintain a 3.0 (B) cumulative grade point average for courses in the graduate plan of study. No credit is given toward a graduate degree for any grade below “C” in 500, 600, 700 or 800 level courses. Students must have a cumulative plan of study GPA of 3.0 in order to graduate.

**Dissertation/Thesis/Research or Design Paper Credits**

Graduate students usually register for dissertation/thesis/research or design paper credit during several semesters. A grade of satisfactory (S), unsatisfactory (U), or (NP) normal progress may be assigned during the semester of registration, based on progress made. Credits receiving “U” will not be credited toward the plan of study.

**Seminars**

A letter grade or a grade of Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U) may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

**Incomplete Grades**

When a graduate student is given an Incomplete grade (I) for any course in the student’s plan of study, the instructor may indicate in writing to the student what additional work must be completed and may establish a date at which such work must be completed. If the work is not completed in either the manner or time prescribed, the instructor may change the Incomplete grade to whatever grade is justified as an evaluation of the student’s work or may allow the grade to remain Incomplete. Incomplete grades given without this procedure will remain as Incomplete on the student’s record unless changed because of completion of the remaining work in the course. Incomplete coursework must be completed within one calendar year; extensions may be granted by the Graduate Dean.

**Repeated Courses**

All courses taken appear on the student’s academic record, but when a course is repeated, only the most recent grade is calculated into the cumulative GPA. Students should notify the Registrar’s Office, when a course, whether failed or passed, is repeated.
Academic Performance

Graduate students whose plan of study cumulative grade point average drops to less than 3.0 will be placed on academic probation and a hold will be placed on his/her registration for the subsequent semester. This hold can be removed only after the student and his/her advisor submit a letter to the Dean of the Graduate School indicating how the GPA will be brought up to 3.0 or better. The student must then meet with their advisor to review this work improvement plan. In the semester following the hold, the student must have a GPA of 3.0 or better. If students do not meet the GPA criteria, they may be subject to dismissal from their program or the University. Students must also maintain academic standards as determined by their program.

Grading
(SDBOR Policy 2.10)

Petitions

A petition is a written request for an exception to any university or graduate program regulation, policy, or requirement. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate the petition or appeal using the General Petition Form (Appendix B).

Priority Placement

Full time graduate nursing students have priority in placement in nursing classes that have limited enrollment.

Student Email

E-mail messages sent by SDSU to students through university-assigned, jacks e-mail addresses will constitute an official means of communication even if students also possess an sdstate account. It is the student’s responsibility and obligation to access official university e-mail messages in a timely manner. As other email accounts may be blocked by the SDSU firewall, SDSU is only able to monitor student e-mails coming from university-assigned e-mail accounts.

Student Responsibility

Before a degree is granted, the student must meet all the requirements of the Advisory Committee, the Graduate Program, and the Graduate School. Students should note that graduate studies represent advanced work and research in a discipline or interdisciplinary area and should be more than a compilation of course work.

Students are responsible for conforming to all published academic policies and degree requirements. They are likewise responsible for the regulations concerning the degree they plan to obtain and any special requirements within the program or academic unit.

In addition, it is the student’s responsibility to conform to the University’s and Graduate Nursing Program policies regarding the standard of work necessary to maintain enrollment in the Graduate School and the Graduate Nursing Program.

The University and the Graduate Nursing Program make every effort to provide accurate advising information. However, it is the student’s responsibility to make certain that he/she has fulfilled all graduation requirements.
**Students with Disabilities: ADA Statement**

South Dakota State University (SDSU) reaffirms that it is committed to a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of physical or mental disability/impairment in the offering of all benefits, services, educational and employment opportunities. The Coordinator for Disability Services has been designated the SDSU "Responsible Employee" to coordinate institutional compliance with the non-discrimination requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. In that capacity, the Coordinator is committed to ensuring that SDSU provides an inclusive learning environment.

The Coordinator will also be responsible for the effective integration of ADA procedures, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Coordinator serves as the personal contact for students seeking information concerning the provisions of the ADA and their respective duties and rights provided therein. The phone number for the Office of Disability Services is 605-688-4504; E-mail: sdsu.disability@sdstate.edu.

**Withdrawal**

Those finding it necessary to withdraw from the University are urged to consult with a faculty advisor to work out the best plan possible and then contact the Registrar's Office, Enrollment Services Center to process a withdrawal. Those who leave the University without processing an official withdrawal will be reported as having failed the semester's work. Grades transcripted are based on the date of application for withdrawal. A student may withdraw from the University until 70% of instruction has been completed (Contact the Registrar's office for date information). After that date, if extenuating circumstances (i.e., illness) have prevented class participation, a petition for withdrawal may be filed through the Office of Academic Affairs.

A student is considered withdrawn during a term if classes have begun and:

1. The student has registered for at least one course and the student has initiated withdrawal from all state-support and self-support courses at all Regental universities in which the student was actively enrolled at the time of withdrawal, including courses in progress as well as those that have not yet begun, or;
2. The Regental home university has completed withdrawal procedures for administrative reasons including, without limitation, non-payment of tuition and fees or disciplinary sanctions.
3. Students enrolled in two or more Regental universities pursuant to financial aid consortia will be eligible for refunds as set forth herein only if they withdraw, drop out or are expelled from all classes at all Regental universities for which they have enrolled.

Students who withdraw or are expelled from the Regental system within the drop/add period receive a 100 percent refund of tuition and per credit hour fees. Students who withdraw or are expelled from the Regental system after the date the first 10 percent of the term ends for the period of enrollment for which they are assessed may be entitled to a prorated refund.

**Workshops**

While any number of credits may be earned in workshops, a maximum of two such credits may be applied toward an advanced degree. Workshop notation on transcripts will be used for application of this limitation.
Section III: Graduate Nursing Policies & Requirements

Academic Advising

At the time of admission, each MS, Post Master’s Certificate and DNP student is assigned to the Assistant Director of Nursing Student Services, Graduate Nursing for academic guidance.

The PhD student is assigned to a major advisor who agrees to advise the student following the admission interview.

The MS and DNP student selects a major advisor during their plan of study according to program guidelines. The major advisor must have Graduate Faculty status. Students are expected to contact their major advisor at least once per semester.

It is the responsibility of the major advisor to:

- advise the student concerning the selection of course work;
- assist in planning and submitting the program of study;
- provide counsel in other matters pertinent to successful completion of graduate study;
- monitor the progress of the student and report as needed to the Associate Dean for Graduate Nursing;
- advise the student with regard to the selection of committee members;
- submit the Graduate School request for appointment of committee members including the graduate faculty representative;
- chair the final oral examination.

Students have the right to petition the Graduate Admissions and Scholastic Standards Committee in writing to change their major advisor.

Major Advisor (Committee Chair) Selection Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Program Option</th>
<th>Selection timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Masters                              | Family Nurse Practitioner  
Clinical Nurse Leader  
Nurse Administrator  
Nurse Educator                      | Enrollment in N670            |
| Post Masters Certificate (includes APRN-C) | APRN-C  
Clinical Nurse Leader  
Nurse Educator                     | First semester of coursework  |
| Doctor of Nursing Practice (Bachelors to DNP) | Family Nurse Practitioner  
Neonatal Nurse Practitioner  
Family Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner  
Pediatic Nurse Practitioner  
Pediatic Clinical Nurse Specialist | Enrollment in N850            |
| Doctor of Nursing Practice (Masters to DNP) |                                                                                | Enrollment in N850  |
| PhD                                  |                                                                                | First semester of coursework |

Advising: Scholarly Project Guidelines

Graduate students in the College of Nursing may complete a scholarly project (portfolio, thesis, project, DNP project, or dissertation) depending on the graduate nursing program, degree option, or specialization. The student will select a major advisor with Graduate Faculty status in the College of Nursing.
The responsibility of the major advisor is to:

1. guide the student on graduate advisory committee formation,
2. work with the student to obtain approval by the applicable IRB(s),
3. assure that data are collected properly and within the guidelines of the applicable IRB(s),
4. ensure adherence to related scholarly project guidelines, and
5. prepare the student for the oral exam.

Refer to specific program handbook under which the student is admitted and see Policy#G4140 – Academic Advising listed above.

Changes in Specialization

MS in Nursing Students:

When students are admitted to the MS in Nursing program, they are admitted to one specialization. Students wishing to change specialization must submit the Student Request for Change of Program or Specialization form (Appendix A) to the Graduate Nursing Admissions & Scholastic Standards Committee. Changes in specialization are available for the Nurse Educator, Clinical Nursing Leadership Specialization (Nurse Administrator Emphasis and Clinical Nurse Leader Emphasis). If approved, a Change of Plan of Study Form must also be completed.

If a current MS in Nursing student requests to change to the Family Nurse Practitioner option, the student will be required to complete a new Graduate Nursing program application (via NursingCAS). Requests to change to the FNP option are only considered during the annual application cycle.

DNP Students:

When students are admitted to the DNP Degree program, they are admitted to one specialization. A change in specialization requires the student to submit the Student Request for Change of Program or Specialization form (Appendix A) to the Admissions & Scholastic Standards Committee.

PhD Students: Not applicable

NOTE: Students who desire to change degree programs are required to complete a new application to that program.

Clinical Information

Clinical Setting Selection

1. Faculty members select student practicum sites and preceptors based on feasibility of achieving specified learning outcomes.
2. Student input into selection of a clinical area or facility may be solicited for some courses.
3. In order to obtain specific clinical experiences to meet course objectives, students may be required to travel to clinical settings in a variety of geographic settings. Students should be aware of the possibility of direct and indirect expenses associated with such travel.
4. In order to maximize learning outcomes, students may be required to travel to distant or out-of-state clinical sites.
5. Student refusal to accept a clinical site may result in the student’s inability to complete the clinical hours requirement which may delay and/or impede progress in the program plan of study.
Specific Requirements for students during Experiences in Facilities

1. Professional apparel
   Professional apparel that meets agency guidelines is expected. Conservative and professional
dress clothing and a lab coat are the norm. No jeans or shorts or running shoes or bare midriff
or low cut clothing are allowed then representing SDSU in an agency as a student.

2. Agency policies / student interaction
   The student will work within the policies of the agency and maintain a constructive relationship
   with the agency.

3. Student health information
   The student is required to supply health information to facilities as requested, including but not
   limited to that required by Veteran's Administration and Indian Health Service facilities.

4. Student Identification
   A. **ALL students** will be required to have the following:
      1) SDSU University Student Photo ID Badge
      2) SDSU College of Nursing Name Pin
         The pin will have a blue background with white letters and the following designation:
         First Name, (Last Initial), RN
         SDSU Graduate Student
   
   B. Family Nurse Practitioner students will also be required to have the following:
      1) SDSU College of Nursing – FNP Student Photo ID Badge

      When in clinical areas, Family Nurse Practitioner students must wear the photo ID badge which
      will identify them as South Dakota State University FNP graduate nursing students.

      The photo ID cards (University Student & FNP Student) are obtained from Card Services
      (located on the Brookings campus) and will be distributed to new students during the on-
campus orientation.

      The graduate student name pin is worn only when the student is participating in or involved in
      experiences related to the graduate student role. The pin is ordered through the Departmental
      Graduate Nursing Secretary and will be distributed to new students during the on-campus
      orientation.

      The initial University Student ID Badge, the FNP Student ID Badge, and the Nursing Pin are
      provided at no charge. Cost for replacements are the responsibility of the student.

5. Student Personal Expenses
   The student is responsible for all personal expenses related to clinical experiences. This includes,
but is not limited to, transportation, hotel lodging, meals, etc.

Additional Student Charges for Faculty Site Visits

Selected courses will require a faculty member visit to the student's practicum site.

- Students whose practicum site(s) are within the state of South Dakota or <200 miles from
  Brookings, Rapid City or Sioux Falls will not be required to pay additional charges.
• Students whose practicum site(s) are outside the state of South Dakota or > 200 miles from Brookings, Rapid City or Sioux Falls will be required to pay for faculty travel to the site(s) for 1 – 3 visits per semester including:
  - airfare or mileage (or both if a rental car is required)
  - motel for the number of nights required
  - rental car fees
  - the student may also choose to travel to Brookings or Sioux Falls to do the “site visit” and pay their own travel expenses to their home campus.

Should a student fail a site visit thus requiring additional follow-up visit(s) by faculty, the student will be responsible for all associated travel expenses for the repeat visit(s).

**Compliance Requirements**

All undergraduate, Master's, PhD and DNP students are required to submit SDSU College of Nursing compliance documents. Documents must be submitted by the stated deadlines for each program.

Non-compliance with document submission (by stated deadlines) will result in the following:

- a hold will be placed on future course registration until the student is in compliance,
- the student will not be allowed to participate in clinical experiences until in compliance, and
- each absence will be considered unexcused.

To better serve our students, the SDSU College of Nursing partners with CastleBranch.com (formerly CertifiedBackground.com) to manage the students' health compliance documents. The management system allows students to meet the requirements of the agencies where they fulfill the clinical requirements of their course work with ease by uploading required documents from their own personal computer or device.

What does this partnership mean for students?

- Secure upload of immunization records and other compliance documents
- Electronic access to your documents 24/7 while in the program, and continuing long after graduation
- Email reminders for those requirements not yet completed or with approaching renewal deadlines
- Easy and comprehensive way to complete background checks and drug screening

Once admitted to your Nursing program, you will be given a package code and instructions to order your Certified Profile through CastleBranch.com.

**Do not send compliance documentation to the College of Nursing.** All compliance records must be uploaded into your online Certified Profile. Records can also be faxed or sent via mail to your Certified Profile.

If you need assistance, please call CastleBranch at 888-914-7279.

The Graduate Compliance Requirements are program specific (see below):

- Master's Students
- BS to DNP Students
- DNP (Post-Master's) Students
- 90 Credit PhD Students
- PhD Students
**Student Responsibility to Report Offenses**

Students in the Graduate Nursing program are required to report offenses, including but not limited to those listed below, to the Director of Nursing Student Services within 48 hours of the offense.

Failure to report may result in disciplinary action and affect student status in the program.

- Convictions, guilty plea, no contest plea, or receipt of a suspended imposition of sentence for a felony or other criminal offense (excluding minor traffic violations).
- Pending criminal prosecution against you which could constitute a felony.
- Treatment (post admission and for duration of nursing program) for abuse/misuse of any alcohol or chemical substance to the extent that your ability to practice as a nurse would be impaired.
- Physical, emotional, or mental condition that has endangered the health and/or safety of persons entrusted in your care.

**Course Expiration**

(Advanced: Pathophysiology, Physical Assessment, Pharmacology for non-certified APRN students)

(Graduate Nursing Policy #G4380)

Guidelines for the expiration of coursework in the “3P” courses (Pathophysiology, Pharmacology, and Physical Assessment) for Graduate Nursing Students who are not currently certified as an APRN.

Students must have current knowledge and skills to be competent in these areas. Students may not enroll in a practicum course if the length of time for each of the three courses listed above exceeds 5 years. Additionally, in accordance with the Consensus Model, each of these three courses must contain a lifespan component.

a. Students who are admitted to the Graduate Nursing Program of study will have a plan of study on file which demonstrates the appropriate timeline for each of these three courses.

b. Students who transfer in coursework from another institution will provide evidence of a Family or Lifespan component for each of the ”3 P” courses. In addition, the coursework needs to be completed no later than 5 years from the enrollment in the 1st practicum course.

c. Students who choose to unenroll from the plan of study will be notified of this policy.

d. If a student exceeds the 5-year statute of limitations for any of the ”3 P” courses, the student will need to repeat the course which has expired prior to enrolling in a practicum course.

**Fees**

**Nursing Delivery and Program Fees**

While enrolled in graduate study within the College of Nursing, the student is required to pay a special Board of Regents approved graduate nursing delivery fee and a nursing program fee per credit registered. The fee is used for a variety of expenses in delivering the graduate courses, e.g., faculty travel to clinical sites within 75 miles of campus, faculty travel to classes in Sioux Falls, special supplies, independent study materials, and special lab equipment. The fee is evaluated annually and will change depending upon the costs of the program. This fee is paid in addition to other regular University fees.
Grades and Degree/Progression Requirements

Students must meet SDSU Graduate School Admission, Progression and Graduate Standards, and are responsible for meeting admission criteria and prerequisite courses required for progression in the Graduate Nursing program. Per the Graduate School catalog, no credit is given toward a graduate degree for any grade below 'C' in 500, 600, 700 or 800 level courses.

A grade of 'B' or higher is required in all nursing and support courses. Students may earn a 'C' in an elective course, but must maintain an overall 'B' average.

To pass a clinical course, a student must earn a grade of 'B' or higher in both the didactic and the clinical portion. If a 'C' or lower is earned in a required course, the course must be repeated in order to progress in the plan of study. Per BOR Policy 2:8:3D: Repeated Courses: A student may enroll in a graduate course (for which credit it granted only once) no more than two times without permission of the Dean of the Graduate School.

A graduate student who needs to retake a course is re-enrolled in the course on a space available basis.

A student who fails a course due to unsafe practice in a clinical experience will not be eligible for readmission to the nursing practicum courses unless evidence is submitted that the unsafe behaviors have been corrected.

All undergraduate and graduate nursing students are expected to adhere to the tenets and principles of the current edition of the Code of Ethics for Nurses from the American Nurses Association. The Code of Ethics for Nurses communicates a standard of professional behavior expected throughout the total program and in each individual nursing course. Therefore, in addition to dismissal for academic failure, the faculty and administration of the Departments of Undergraduate Nursing and of Graduate Nursing reserve the right to dismiss any student enrolled in either the undergraduate or graduate program for unethical, dishonest, illegal, or other conduct that is inconsistent with the Code of Ethics for Nurses.

Participation in Faculty Research by Graduate Students

Faculty members are encouraged to make learning opportunities in research or projects available to students outside of class. Students may work with faculty members conducting research as:

- employed research assistants on a grant
- enrollment in graduate research practicum, graduate thesis, graduate dissertation, graduate project, special topics, or independent study credits
- volunteer subjects

In order for students to be involved in research, the following must be observed:

1. Faculty members may not award course credit or waive any course assignments in exchange for students serving to advance any part of the faculty member’s research which is unrelated to the course objectives.
2. When students are involved in research, and are enrolled for academic credit, a contract or syllabus between the student and the faculty member needs to be negotiated. A copy of the contract must be forwarded to the respective department’s Associate Dean prior to course registration.
3. Research involving nursing students as subjects requires approval of the College of Nursing Research Committee and the University Human Subjects Committee. The principal investigator (faculty or non-SDSU faculty) must submit a research proposal to the College of Nursing Research Committee and after approval, must submit to the SDSU Human Subjects Committee.
Prerequisite Courses

1. An approved statistics course (completed within 5 years of admission to the program) is prerequisite to NURS 626: Research Methods for Advanced Practice Nursing.
2. NURS 615: Advanced Practice Nursing: Introduction to Roles and Issues is prerequisite or concurrent to all other nursing courses.
3. NURS 623: Pathophysiology Applied to Advanced Practice Nursing, if required in the chosen specialization, is prerequisite to NURS 631: Advanced Assessment Across the Lifespan.
4. NURS 631: Advanced Assessment Across the Lifespan, if required in the chosen specialization, must be completed prior to any practicum course.
5. All core courses (NURS 615, NURS 626, NURS 670, NURS 675, NURS 760) must be completed prior to the practicum courses.

Progression (#G4280 - under review)

Readmission (#G4390)

New reference letters and transcripts are not required for the Graduate Nursing Program unless the previously enrolled student has completed coursework at non-SDSU institutions prior to reapplying for admission. The material will be reviewed by the Graduate Nursing Admissions and Scholastic Standards Committee and a readmission decision to the College of Nursing Graduate Program will be made on a space available basis. Previous coursework must be current or updated following Graduate School Policies and updated specific program compliance requirements will be required for students inactive for 12 months or greater. If a previously enrolled student has an enrollment lapse of 12 months or greater, a new application must be completed and submitted to both the SDSU Graduate School and the Graduate Nursing Program.

Specialization Coordinator

The SDSU Graduate Nursing program provides for both a Master’s and DNP Specialization Coordinator. These coordinators will function as the primary contact person for students within their selected specializations e.g. Nurse Educator, Nurse Administrator, Clinical Nurse Leader, Family Nurse Practitioner (Master’s) or DNP (BSN-DNP/FNP, MSN-DNP, DNP/Neonatal NP, DNP/Psychiatric Mental Health NP, DNP/Pediatric NP, and DNP/Pediatric CNS).

Coordinator information is posted in D2L, Nurs 114.

Student Behavior in a Course

Classroom / Lab

If a student’s behavior in a course is considered to be unsafe or disruptive by the faculty member, it is the responsibility of the faculty member to inform the student of the unsafe or disruptive behavior as soon as possible and provide guidance and direction for improvement. Should a student’s behavior continue to be unsafe or disruptive, the faculty member has the right to remove the student from the course. The student must be informed of why she or he is being removed, and must be presented with a written learning contract within two working days.

The written learning contract must include:
1) a description of the unsafe behavior;
2) the criteria that must be met for return to the classroom / lab area;
3) the date by which the criteria must be met;
4) the consequences of not meeting the criteria or the date.

The written learning contract is signed by the faculty member and the student and a copy is forwarded to the Associate Dean for Graduate Nursing. The student is accountable for the terms of the contract.

Unsafe or Unacceptable Behavior during Clinical Courses

If a student’s behavior is considered to be unsafe in the clinical setting, it is the responsibility of the faculty to talk with the student about the behavior and to provide guidance and direction for improvement. The guidance may include a Learning Contract.

The following are examples of unsafe or unacceptable performance. However, this is not an inclusive list, and the final determination of unsafe behavior is based on the faculty member’s professional judgment:

- Inability to complete care within the established time frame
- Inappropriate or untimely communication
- Evidence of behaviors that reflect an impaired state
- Evidence of inadequate preparation for clinical activities
- Incorrect or inadequate assessment/intervention
- Failure to follow dress code guidelines
- Dishonesty

In consideration of faculty guidance, should a student’s behavior continue to be unsafe in a clinical course and the student has chosen not to drop the course, the faculty member can choose to remove the student from the clinical area. The faculty should advise the student a failing grade will be given, but the student has ultimate responsibility to drop the course.

Travel

(Graduate Nursing Policy #G4340)

Students are responsible for their own transportation to class, labs and practicums. Unique assignments that involve group arrangements and motor pool vehicles may be negotiated with the faculty member of record. Travel time does not count as practicum time.

Graduate students in selected courses of the DNP program, Family Nurse Practitioner specialization, will require faculty member visits to the student’s practicum site. For sites distant from the student’s home campus, the student will be responsible for faculty travel expenses.

Use of Equipment by Graduate Students

Some of the equipment in the College of Nursing is available for check out by DNP students. It is the student’s responsibility to check out the equipment properly, take reasonable care of it, and return the equipment in the allotted time. The student is responsible for the condition of the equipment while the equipment is checked out in their name. A deposit for using this equipment is required and is returned to the student when the equipment is returned in good condition.

Use of Social Media

The College of Nursing recognizes that social medial websites such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube are important means of communication and learning. However, students who use these web sites and applications must be aware of the critical importance of who has access to these sites. Additionally, students must recognize that posting certain information may be illegal.

Students should review the South Dakota State University Social Media Policy prior to utilizing these sites.
and applications. Students are also encouraged to review the [American Nurses Association Social Media Fact Sheet](#) and the [National Council of State Boards of Nursing white paper](#) on the use of social media.

**Visitors and Auditors in Class**

It is a violation of state and university policy for anyone, including children and infants, to attend courses without being registered for credit, audit, or as visitors. There are legal liabilities associated with unauthorized individuals attending class. Faculty members may grant special permission in certain limited circumstances which have been negotiated in advance of the class.

Students from on and off campus may register as auditors. They must apply for admission, register, and pay the regular tuition and fees. A transcript will be generated showing that they have audited the course (graded AUP or AUF).

Registration as an auditor is enrollment for informational instruction only. Regular attendance at class or classes is customary without other participation and without credit. The cost to audit a course is the established BOR approved tuition and fee rate. Registration for audit may be limited by space or permission of the instructor.

Courses audited by graduate or undergraduate students will be recorded on the academic transcript. A transcript notation of AU will be given in each course audited. Audited courses are counted as part of the 19-hour rule for overloads. Audit courses are not counted in calculating undergraduate or graduate full-time student status or for the purposes of financial aid.

Audit courses cannot be used as a basis for testing out of a course for a letter grade or as prerequisites.

**Section IV: Graduation Policies & Procedures**

**Graduation**

The [Graduate School Bulletin](#) for each academic year contains the deadlines which must be met to insure graduation in the Fall, Spring, or Summer session. The student must check with the Graduate School early in the semester as dates listed may be subject to change. If a student has completed all classes and has successfully defended the thesis, dissertation or project but missed the deadline to graduate in one semester, then that student must apply for graduation in the following semester. Students are not allowed to participate in commencement unless the deadline for defense has been met.

**Section V: Resource / Miscellaneous Information for Students**

**Photocopying Services**

Students are responsible for expenses of photocopying related to class presentations and other course assignments.

**Forms Used by Graduate Students**

Common forms used by Graduate students can be found on the [Graduate School home page](#)
Library Services

The Hilton M. Briggs Library on the SDSU campus is available on campus and via Internet for off campus students.

Students may also utilize the Wegner Health Science Information Center located on the Sanford/USD Medical Center campus and via Internet.

Student Health

On campus students pay a required University Activity Fee each semester. Payment of this fee enables students to receive health care at the Student Health Clinic. The required University Fee provides certain health care services including: unlimited outpatient visits with professional health care providers, human sexuality services, contraceptive consultation, health education programs and other services at a reduced cost.

Off campus students do not pay the University Activity Fee and are not eligible to receive medical care at the Student Health and Counseling Service.

For further information, call the Health Information Line at 605-688-4157.

On Campus Housing

Although the University provides limited residence hall accommodations for single graduate students and family housing for married students, most graduate students live off campus. Prospective students should inquire about housing from the Director of Student Housing. Contact information can be found on the Residential Life webpage at http://www.sdstate.edu/reslife/.

Counseling Center

Students with educational, vocational or personal difficulties can receive special assistance through the Counseling Center. For further information, call 605-688-6146.

Honor Societies

Phi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau Inc. (the international honor society of nursing) was chartered at SDSU in 1962. Membership is by invitation and is conferred upon students who have demonstrated superior scholastic achievement, shown evidence of professional leadership potential, and/or marked achievement in the field of nursing. The purposes of Sigma Theta Tau are to:

1. Recognize superior achievement.
2. Recognize the development of leadership qualities.
3. Foster high professional standards.
4. Encourage creative work.
5. Strengthen commitment to the ideals and purposes of the profession.

Pursuant to STTI bylaws changes approved in November 2013, graduate students may now be inducted as a nurse leader. Phi Chapter invites nominations for nurse leaders to include graduate students who may be early in their program of study. Interested students who meet the membership criteria are encouraged to submit to the Phi Chapter president a brief bio-sketch stating why they would like to become a Phi Chapter member (<250 words); the board will review and approve these statements prior to the annual induction ceremony. Additionally, for graduate students who do not fulfill the criteria as a nurse leader, the criteria for membership is
as follows. A full-time graduate student is eligible for nomination upon the completion of at least one grading period of his/her academic program. A part-time graduate student may be eligible upon the completion of one-half of his/her academic program. Information about scholarships and awards are available from the chapter president.

The South Dakota State University chapter of Phi Kappa Phi, a national honor society, was established in 1949. Phi Kappa Phi’s primary objectives are the recognition and encouragement of superior scholarship in all academic disciplines. Membership is by invitation only with the number of graduate students elected limited to 10 percent of those qualifying for degrees. Because of the high standards of scholarship and character required for membership, election to Phi Kappa Phi is one of the highest honors a student can receive at South Dakota State University or any other university. Initiation occurs twice a year with the Spring ceremony preceding the annual Phi Kappa Phi banquet. After graduation, members may maintain active membership by paying dues and maintaining an association with the Society, or they may become inactive members.

Opportunities for Student Participation in Decision Making

There are a number of ways the graduate student in nursing can participate in the decision-making related to the University and the master's program in nursing. For example, graduate nursing students are appointed to serve on the Graduate Curriculum Committee.

Students are asked to take an active role in the evaluation of the Graduate Nursing Program. Student input is vital to the maintenance of a quality program. Students will be asked to evaluate courses and instructors each semester during the program. Each graduating student is invited to participate in an exit interview with the Associate Dean for Graduate Nursing. Following graduation, graduates are asked periodically to evaluate the program and their preparation for graduate nursing practice. This feedback is utilized by faculty in ongoing curriculum development and revision.

Financial Assistance

The SDSU Financial Aid Office address is Administration 106, Brookings, SD 57007-2201. The phone number is 605-688-4695. Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except the office is closed on scheduled holidays.

Scholarship / Loan Repayment Opportunities

The Graduate Nursing Department may have funding available through grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:
1. Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP)
2. Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship (AENT)

Information about these opportunities in addition to other possible external funding options can be found on the Graduate Nursing website.

Section VI: Course Descriptions

See the SDSU Graduate School Bulletin link for current course descriptions at: http://catalog.sdstate.edu/content.php?catoid=28&navoid=3185
Section VII: Master of Science (MS) in Nursing Degree
Specific Program Option Information

Program Purpose

Established in 1979, the MS in Nursing at South Dakota State University prepares nurses for advanced practice in nursing administration, leadership, clinical practice, or education.

Program Outcomes

To prepare Nurse Administrators, Clinical Nurse Leaders, Family Nurse Practitioners, and Nurse Educators who:

1. apply knowledge of evidence-based practice,
2. engage in life-long learning,
3. serve South Dakota, the region, the nation, and the world in urban, rural, and frontier health care settings, and
4. function in leadership roles.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Incorporate knowledge and theories from nursing and other supportive disciplines.
2. Display competence within the legal scope of practice for the chosen specialization.
3. Evaluate and utilize research.
4. Integrate cultural learning into nursing practice to effectively tailor health care to the diverse life ways of clients.
5. Seek to decrease health disparities among populations by addressing socioeconomic-political-cultural determinants of health.
6. Use leadership, administration, and teaching strategies to improve nursing practice and health care delivery.
7. Assume accountability to influence health policy, improve healthcare delivery, address the diversity of health care needs, and advance the nursing profession.

Academic Advisor

All students admitted to the Master’s program are assigned an academic advisor. The student and advisor should meet (in person, by telephone, or by e-mail) at least once each semester.

Faculty Advisor

A faculty advisor (separate from the academic advisor) is required for all Master’s students who choose either Option A (thesis), B (project or C (coursework only). The faculty advisor is selected by the student no later than the completion of NURS 670.

The faculty advisor will assist the student with the thesis or project and oral exam process. The advisor will also assist those students who choose the coursework only option in the portfolio/synthesis and oral exam process.

Change of Advisor

Students may change their thesis or project advisor submitting a written request to the Associate Dean
of Graduate Nursing.

**Challenge Exams**

The College of Nursing does not offer challenge exams for graduate nursing courses.

**Program Options and Graduation Requirements**

**Program of Study Options / Course Requirements**

The MS in Nursing program requires completion of 31-58 graduate credits. The number of actual credits will vary based on the chosen specialization.

Up to 40% of the credits can be transferred in from other universities with the approval of the Associate Dean of Graduate Nursing.

**Program Length / Time Limitation**

Master’s programs with a major in nursing are usually completed in 2-4 years depending on credit load and if the student chooses full-time or part-time study.

If the requirements for the Master’s Degree are not completed within six (6) years from the program start date, a form to request an extension of the graduate program must be submitted to the Graduate School. The request will be reviewed and a decision as to whether the student may continue in the program will be made by the Graduate School Dean.

**Plan of Study Requirements**

At the time of admission, the nursing graduate student is assigned an academic advisor. The student should make an appointment to meet the academic advisor in order to become acquainted and to discuss the student’s plan of study.

The Plan of Study (templates located in D2L, NURS 114) should be submitted to the College of Nursing Graduate Admissions and Scholastic Standards Committee at the start of the second year of the program. After approval by College of Nursing Graduate Admissions and Scholastic Standards Committee, the Plan of Study is sent to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval.

Students who have filed an official Plan of Study with the SDSU Graduate School are bound by the approved plan. Any changes to the Plan of Study must be approved. If a student has not filed a Plan of Study and changes are made to the specialization curriculum plan, the student must file a Plan of Study that adheres to the new requirements. Students who have already filed a Plan of Study may choose to adhere to the existing approved Plan of Study or may choose to file a Change of Plan of Study to the existing approved plan.

**Plan of Study Changes**

Changes in the student’s official Plan of Study must be approved by the Graduate School. Changes are initiated by the student in consultation with the academic advisor. The student and the academic advisor will fill out the Change of Plan of Study Form and submit the form to the Graduate Admissions and Scholastic Standards Committee. The Committee will review the request prior to forwarding it to the Graduate School. Changes in the plan are required for any and all changes, including course substitutions and course numbering changes.

**Obsolete Coursework**
Courses on the Plan of Study taken more than 6 years prior to the completion of the master's degree are considered obsolete. Such courses may be used in the Master's Degree if validated. Validation is allowed at the discretion of the major/faculty advisor with approval of the Graduate School. Validation of obsolete coursework cannot exceed fifty (50) percent of the total coursework listed on the plan of study and must be certified by the major/faculty advisor on the appropriate form.

Course validation may be subject to a processing fee.

Forms for validating courses are available from the department secretary or the Academic Advisor.

NOTE: Only courses taken at South Dakota State University may be validated. Therefore, if a course taken at another institution was originally approved at the time of admission to the program and outdates prior to completion of the student's program, the SDSU course equivalent will need to be completed since courses from other institutions are not eligible for validation.

**Procedure for Updating / Validating Outdated Course Work**

The following guidelines are designed to assist the student, advisor, and instructor in completing the update process:

1. During the semester preceding the semester of the update, the student initiates the process with her or his academic advisor. The advisor will notify the current instructor of the course needing updating of the student's request.

2. The advisor will notify the student of the name of the instructor who has agreed to complete the update. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor. The student must complete arrangements the semester preceding the update. Delay in arrangements may result in delaying the updating process, as the agreement is based on time and faculty assignment in that particular semester.

It is the responsibility of the instructor to determine the requirements for a successful update, based on the current course requirements. Copies of updated exams are filed with the Graduate School.

In consideration of faculty guidance, should a student's behavior continue to be unsafe in a clinical course and the student has chosen not to drop the course, the faculty member can choose to remove the student from the clinical area. The faculty should advise the student that they will fail the course; however, the student has ultimate responsibility to drop the course.

Payment of a fee is required by the Graduate School and additional documentation may also be required.

The Graduate School sets guidelines (http://www.sdstate.edu/graduate/current/important-dates.cfm) for graduation each semester. Consult with the Graduate Nursing Program for other program specific requirements and deadlines.

**Portfolio**  
(Graduate Nursing Policy #G4245)

*Portfolio policy (G4245) is only applicable for the Option C - Coursework Only Option.*

The Master's portfolio comprises selected course artifacts and program synthesis which prepare the student for the oral exam. A current curriculum vita is included. The portfolio serves as a potential employment dossier upon program completion. Portfolio components are delineated as follows:

...
1. **All MS in Nursing students**, i.e., *Nurse Educator, Nurse Administrator, Clinical Nurse Leader, and Nurse Practitioner*, will complete one final synthesis paper demonstrating knowledge related to each of the seven student learning outcomes.

   - One page is expected per outcome.
   - A reference page is expected.
   - The final synthesis paper is submitted (electronically) to the student’s graduate advisory committee chair.

The Student Learning Outcomes are as follows:

1. Incorporate knowledge and theories from nursing and other supportive disciplines into advanced nursing practice.
2. Display competence within the legal scope of practice for the chosen specialization.
3. Evaluate, conduct, and utilize research within advanced practice nursing.
4. Integrate cultural learning into nursing practice to effectively tailor health care to the diverse lifeways of clients.
5. Seek to decrease health disparities among populations by addressing socio-economic political-cultural determinants of health.
6. Use leadership, administration, and teaching strategies to improve nursing practice and health care delivery.
7. Assume accountability to influence health policy, improve health care delivery, address the diversity of health care needs, and advance the nursing profession.

2. Additional artifacts for Nurse Educator, Nurse Administrator, Clinical Nurse Leader:
   - One reflection paper (2 pages) following completion of each graduate course demonstrating student mastery of course outcomes including reflection and insights and dated with instructor initials.
   - One unmarked artifact for each course.

3. Additional artifacts for the **Nurse Practitioner**: 
   - Final copy of clinical electronic logs.
   - Two additional documents which demonstrate clinical excellence, leadership, scholarly work, or innovative health care delivery that improves health and quality of life across diverse populations. Students will work with their advisor to determine the two additional documents.
     Suggestions include but are not limited to:
     1. A history and physical from a patient encounter in the clinical setting.
     2. Evidence-based practice paper.
     3. Practicum Problem-Based Learning (PBL) assignment.

4. If any document reflects the work of persons other than the student, co-authors must be credited using APA format.

**Thesis, Project or Coursework Only**

The Master’s program specializations include three options. Refer to the curriculum plans appended to this handbook. Each Option has different curriculum and credit requirements for graduation:

1. Option A (Thesis) which includes a minimum of 5 credits of NURS 798 Thesis. The thesis is an original research study of limited scope completed under the direction of a thesis advisor. The thesis is defended at the oral exam but must be accepted and approved by the Graduate School before the student is allowed to graduate.
2. Option B (Project) which includes a minimum of 2 credits of NURS 788 Problems in Nursing
Research. The project is a scholarly work of limited scope in which the student develops and presents in-depth knowledge in a defined subject area of interest relevant to the student’s specialty and educational focus. The project is completed under the direction of a project advisor. The project is defended at the oral exam but does not require approval by the Graduate School before the student is allowed to graduate.

3. Option C (Coursework Only) in which a thesis or project is not required.

Current students may access the project and thesis guidelines by utilizing the Desire2Learn (D2L) platform under NURS 114. A thesis or project must also comply with Graduate School requirements as shown in “Instructions for Thesis” available from InsideState (faculty) and MyState Online (students).

College of Nursing master’s degree specializations do not require a written examination. Master’s Options A and B require inclusion of a scholarly paper or project as determined by the faculty to be presented and discussed at the final oral exam.

For all master’s degree specializations and Options A, B, and C, Graduate School rules for graduation require a final oral examination before a committee comprising a minimum of two faculty members with Graduate Faculty status from the College of Nursing and one university Graduate Faculty representative appointed by the Graduate School. A list of College of Nursing Graduate Faculty can be found in D2L course NURS 114.

It is expected that the student will work closely with the academic, thesis or project, and faculty advisors in order to meet all of the requirements for graduation. Please refer to NURS 114 in D2L for specific information and instructions about projects and theses, development of the Portfolio (see above) and oral exams.

**Thesis and Project Planning Checklist**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement / Procedure</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designation of Major (Faculty) Advisor</td>
<td>Upon completion of 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; core course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet with Major advisor to discuss thesis / project idea and tentative timeline.</td>
<td>To be determined following discussion between student and Major Advisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborate with Major advisor to select committee members.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit request for Graduate School representative member of the committee.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop thesis / project proposal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defend thesis / project proposal to committee.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement thesis / project proposal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare final thesis / project paper.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defend thesis / project during final Oral Exam.</td>
<td>During final semester by deadline *determined by the SDSU Graduate School.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis Formal Check (Option A Only)</td>
<td>After successful completion of final Oral Exam, by deadline. *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Submission of Thesis (Option A Only)</td>
<td>Must complete formal check first. Final submission due by deadline. * Signed acceptance page &amp; library fee must also be submitted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Final Submission of Research/Design (Project) Paper
(Option B Only)
Submitted directly to the Graduate Nursing Department by specified deadline.

* The Graduate School sets deadlines for graduation (http://www.sdstate.edu/graduate/current/important-dates.cfm) each semester.

Grading Thesis and Project Credits

The appropriate grading for NURS 788 (project) and NURS 798 (thesis) is “S” (Satisfactory) or “U” (Unsatisfactory) at the completion of credits each semester. The “IP” (In Progress) designation is inappropriate for grading thesis and project credits.

Human Subjects Protection

The project or thesis advisor will determine with the student whether the student’s research does or does not involve human subjects. A download copy of the form for approval from the SDSU Human Subjects Committee can be found on the SDSU Research Compliance Webpage. The thesis or project advisor will also help the student determine whether or not other approvals are necessary before data collection begins.

If human subjects are involved in the thesis or project, the form must be sent to the SDSU Human Subjects Committee for approval. Data collection using human subjects cannot be initiated until approval from the compliance officer has been received in writing.

Final Oral Exam

All students seeking the Master’s Degree in Nursing (Nurse Educator, Clinical Nursing Leadership – Nurse AD or CNL, Family Nurse Practitioner) are required to complete a final Oral Exam.

Section VIII: Post Master’s Certificate Specific Program Option Information

Program Purpose

The purpose of the Post Master’s Certificate Option is to prepare nurses for advanced practice in leadership, education, and clinical practice (APRN-C).

Program Outcomes

1. Apply knowledge of evidence-based practice,
2. Engage in life-long learning, and
3. Serve South Dakota, the region, the nation, and the world in urban, rural and frontier health care settings.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Display competence within the legal scope of practice for chosen specialization.
2. Evaluate and utilize research within advanced nursing practice.
3. Integrate cultural learning into nursing practice to effectively tailor health care to the diverse lifeways of clients.
Academic Advisor
All students admitted to the Master’s program are assigned an academic advisor. The student and advisor should meet (in person, by telephone, or by e-mail) at least once each semester.

Faculty Advisor
A faculty advisor (separate from the academic advisor) is required for all Post Master’s Certificate students. The faculty advisor is selected by the student no later than the completion of the first program course. The faculty advisor will assist the student with the oral exam process.

Challenge Exams
The College of Nursing does not offer challenge exams for graduate nursing courses.

Program Options and Graduation Requirements
The Post Master’s Certificate specializations include three options, Clinical Nurse Leader, Nurse Educator and Family Nurse Practitioner (APRN-C).

Requirements for each specialization differ – contact your Academic Advisor for more information.

Program Length and Course Requirements
Post Master’s Certificate programs are usually completed in 2-3 years depending on credit load.

For Clinical Nurse Leader and Nurse Educator Certificate applicants:
Pre-requisite coursework or equivalent courses (NURS 631/L - Advanced Physical Assessment, NURS 623 - Advanced Pathophysiology and PHA 645 - Advanced Pharmacology) must have been completed within 5 years prior to admission to the program or the applicant will be required to complete prior to beginning the certificate program coursework.

For Family Nurse Practitioner Certificate applicants:
Students who have not previously completed either NURS 623 (Pathophysiology-Lifespan), PHA 645 (Pharmacotherapeutics - Lifespan), or NURS 631 (Advanced Assessment - Lifespan) OR have completed equivalent coursework greater than 5 years from the first practicum course (NURS 765), will be required to complete those courses as part of this program (Graduate Nursing policy G4380).

All previous coursework taken at SDSU or non-SDSU institutions will be reviewed and evaluated for equivalency by the Graduate Nursing Program in accordance with the SDSU Graduate School and Graduate Nursing Program guidelines/policies. Only courses approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate Nursing will be allowed on the student's Plan of Study.

Plan of Study Requirements
The nursing graduate student will work with the Academic Advisor to review and complete the Plan of Study. The Post Master’s Certificate Plan of Study will be individualized based on the student’s prior Master’s Degree program completion.

The Plan of Study should be submitted to the College of Nursing Graduate Admissions and Scholastic Standards Committee at the start of the second year of the program. After approval by College of Nursing
Graduate Admissions and Scholastic Standards Committee, the Plan of Study is sent to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval.

Students who have filed an official Plan of Study with the SDSU Graduate School are bound by the approved plan. Any changes to the Plan of Study must be approved. If a student has not filed a Plan of Study and changes are made to the specialization curriculum plan, the student must file a Plan of Study that adheres to the new requirements. Students who have already filed a Plan of Study may choose to adhere to the existing approved Plan of Study or may choose to file a Change of Plan of Study to the existing approved plan.

Plan of Study Changes

Changes in the student’s official Plan of Study must be approved by the Graduate School. Changes are initiated by the student in consultation with the academic advisor. The student and the academic advisor will fill out the Change of Plan of Study Form and submit the form to the Graduate Admissions and Scholastic Standards Committee. The Committee will review the request prior to forwarding it to the Graduate School. Changes in the plan are required for any and all changes, including course substitutions and course numbering changes.

Obsolete Coursework

Courses on the Plan of Study taken more than 6 years prior to the completion of the certificate program are considered obsolete. Such courses may be used if validated. Validation is allowed at the discretion of the major/faculty advisor with approval of the Graduate School. Validation of obsolete coursework cannot exceed fifty (50) percent of the total coursework listed on the plan of study and must be certified by the major/faculty advisor on the appropriate form.

Course validation may be subject to a processing fee.

NOTE: Only courses taken at South Dakota State University may be validated. Therefore, if a course taken at another institution was originally approved at the time of admission to the program and outdates prior to completion of the student’s program, the SDSU course equivalent will need to be completed since courses from other institutions are not eligible for validation.

Forms for validating courses are available from the department secretary or the Academic Advisor.

Procedure for Updating / Validating Outdated Course Work

The following guidelines are designed to assist the student, advisor, and instructor in completing the update process:

1. During the semester preceding the semester of the update, the student initiates the process with her or his academic advisor. The advisor will notify the current instructor of the course needing updating of the student's request.

2. The advisor will notify the student of the name of the instructor who has agreed to complete the update. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor. The student must complete arrangements the semester preceding the update. Delay in arrangements may result in delaying the updating process, as the agreement is based on time and faculty assignment in that particular semester.

It is the responsibility of the instructor to determine the requirements for a successful update, based on the current course requirements. Copies of updated exams are filed with the Graduate School.

In consideration of faculty guidance, should a student’s behavior continue to be unsafe in a clinical course and the student has chosen not to drop the course, the faculty member can choose to remove the student
from the clinical area. The faculty should advise the student that they will fail the course; however, the student has ultimate responsibility to drop the course.

Payment of a fee is required by the Graduate School and additional documentation may also be required.

**Section VIX: Certification**

Students who complete the Nurse Educator, the Clinical Nursing Leadership (Nurse Administrator Emphasis or Clinical Nurse Leader Emphasis), or Family Nurse Practitioner specializations are eligible to take the National Certification Exam for their respective specialization (see below).

*Note: Additional requirements may be required by the certifying body, e.g. nursing experience, experience in specific employment setting/role, etc.*

### Nurse Educator Specialization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Certification Eligibility</th>
<th>Certifying Body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certified Nurse Educator</td>
<td>National League for Nursing (NLN) <a href="http://www.nln.org/professional-development-programs/Certification-for-Nurse-Educators">http://www.nln.org/professional-development-programs/Certification-for-Nurse-Educators</a></td>
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### Clinical Nursing Leadership Specialization – Nurse Administrator Emphasis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Certification Eligibility</th>
<th>Certifying Body</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nurse Executive – Board Certified (NE-BC)</td>
<td>American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) <a href="http://www.nursecredentialing.org/NurseExecutive">http://www.nursecredentialing.org/NurseExecutive</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse Executive-Advanced Board Certified (NEA-BC)</td>
<td>American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) <a href="http://www.nursecredentialing.org/NurseExecutive-Advanced">http://www.nursecredentialing.org/NurseExecutive-Advanced</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified Nurse Manager and Leader (CNML)</td>
<td>American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) <a href="http://www.aone.org/education/CNML.shtml">http://www.aone.org/education/CNML.shtml</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified in Executive Nursing Practice (CENP)</td>
<td>American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) <a href="http://www.aone.org/education/CENP.shtml">http://www.aone.org/education/CENP.shtml</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Clinical Nursing Leadership Specialization – Clinical Nurse Leader Emphasis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Certification Eligibility</th>
<th>Certifying Body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL)</td>
<td>Commission on Nurse Certification (CNC) <a href="http://www.aacn.nche.edu/cnl/certification">http://www.aacn.nche.edu/cnl/certification</a></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Family Nurse Practitioner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Certification Eligibility</th>
<th>Certifying Body</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Nurses Credentialing Center</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Section X: Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree Specific Program Option Information

Program Purpose

The DNP program was established in 2009. The program was developed in response to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Position Statement on the Practice Doctorate in Nursing. The position statement supported moving the preparation of advanced practice nurses from the MS in Nursing to the Doctoral level by the year 2015.

The purpose of the DNP program is to prepare Advanced Practice Nurses (APRNs) to transform clinical practice as expert clinicians and leaders with a special focus on rural and underserved populations.

In addition to delivering evidence-based direct patient care at an advanced practice level to individuals across the lifespan in primary care settings, graduates of the DNP program will learn skills needed to produce and implement valuable evidence to guide practice and are prepared to work collaboratively with rural communities in an effort to reduce health disparities.

Program Outcomes

1. To prepare graduates as clinicians and leaders with a special focus on rural and underserved populations.
2. To prepare graduates to deliver evidence-based direct patient care to individuals across the lifespan in primary care settings.
3. To prepare graduates to produce and implement scientific evidence to guide practice.
4. To prepare graduates to work collaboratively with frontier, urban, and rural communities in an effort to reduce health disparities.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the program, the graduate will successfully demonstrate the following outcomes:

1. Analyze significant practice issues with the theoretical and scientific underpinnings of knowledge-based practice.
2. Employ advanced clinical judgment to assess, design, deliver, and evaluate evidence-based care of individuals in complex health and illness situations.
3. Apply a broad system perspective to design, implement, and evaluate culturally congruent policies and practices to improve care for a diverse population.
4. Lead health care inter-professional and intra-professional teams to transform care.
5. Initiate ethically sound practice changes to address complex interwoven organization, population, fiscal, and policy trends.
6. Demonstrate proficiency in the use of information technology to improve health care within systems.
7. Implement evidence-based clinical prevention and health promotion activities to improve the health of population

Academic Advising

At the time of admission, the nursing graduate student is assigned an academic advisor. The DNP student will meet with their assigned academic advisor who will serve as the academic advisor throughout their program of study.
Faculty Advising

The faculty and the Advisory Committee will be chosen by the student for the purposes of assisting with the proposal and defense of the DNP Project. The student will be required to complete the selection of the faculty advisor prior to the completion of NURS 850.

Change of Advisor

Students may request to change the faculty advisor by submitting a written request to the Associate Dean of Graduate Nursing.

Challenge Exams

The College of Nursing does not offer challenge exams for graduate nursing courses

Program Options and Graduation Requirements

Program of Study Options / Course Requirements

The Bachelors to DNP program requires completion of 74–84.5 graduate credits. The number of actual credits will vary based on the chosen specialization.

The Post-Master’s DNP program requires 28-66 graduate credits beyond the Master’s degree. The number of actual credits will vary based on the Master’s degree specialty completed prior to start of the DNP program.

Up to 40% of the credits can be transferred in from other universities with approval of the Associate Dean of Graduate Nursing.

Program Length / Time Limitations

Once admitted, DNP students have eight (8) years in which to complete the program from the program start date. If the DNP degree is not completed during that timeframe, a form to request an extension of the graduate program must be submitted to the Graduate School. The request will be reviewed and a decision as to whether the student may continue in the program will be made by the Graduate School Dean.

Plan of Study Requirements

The academic advisor and the student will develop an initial Plan of Study. The Plan of Study will be approved by the Graduate Admissions and Scholastic Standards Committee and then filed with the Graduate School for the Graduate Dean approval.

Students who have filed an official Plan of Study with the SDSU Graduate School are bound by the approved plan. If a student has not filed a Plan of Study and the Nursing Graduate Faculty approve changes to the specialization, the student must file a Plan of Study that adheres to the new requirements. Students who have already filed a Plan of Study may choose to adhere to the previously approved Plan of Study or may choose to file a Change of Plan of Study in order to take advantage of the new requirements.
Plan of Study Changes

Any change in an approved Plan of Study is to be initiated by the student in consultation with the academic advisor. The student and the academic advisor will fill out the Change of Plan of Study Form and submit the form to the Graduate Nursing Admissions and Scholastic Standards Committee. The Committee will review the form prior to forwarding it to the Graduate School. Changes in the Plan of Study must be filed when the student and the advisor request any changes whatsoever to the Plan as it was originally approved. This includes substitution of courses due to low enrollment or when the course number has changed.

Obsolete Coursework

Courses taken more than eight (8) years before completion of the doctorate are regarded as obsolete coursework. Obsolete courses may be used in the doctoral degree program if validated. Validation is allowed at the discretion of the advisory committee and department involved and can be accomplished by passing validation requirements in the subject matter area. Validated obsolete coursework cannot exceed fifty (50) percent of the total coursework (excluding dissertation credits) listed on the plan of study and must be certified by the advisory committee on a form provided by the Graduate School.

Course validation may be subject to a processing fee.

Forms for validating courses are available from the department secretary or the Academic Advisor.

NOTE: Only courses taken at South Dakota State University may be validated. Therefore, if a course taken at another institution was originally approved at the time of admission to the program and outdates prior to completion of the student’s program, the SDSU course equivalent will need to be completed since courses from other institutions are not eligible for validation.

Procedure for Updating / Validating Outdated Course Work

The following guidelines are designed to assist the student, advisor, and instructor in completing the update process:

1. During the semester preceding the semester of the update, the student initiates the process with her or his academic advisor. The advisor will notify the current instructor of the course needing updating of the student's request.

2. The advisor will notify the student of the name of the instructor who has agreed to complete the update. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor. The student must complete arrangements the semester preceding the update. Delay in arrangements may result in delaying the updating process, as the agreement is based on time and faculty assignment in that particular semester.

3. It is the responsibility of the instructor to determine the requirements for a successful update, based on the current course requirements. Copies of updated exams are filed with the Graduate School.

In consideration of faculty guidance, should a student’s behavior continue to be unsafe in a clinical course and the student has chosen not to drop the course, the faculty member can choose to remove the student from the clinical area. The faculty should advise the student that they will fail the course; however, the student has ultimate responsibility to drop the course.

Payment of a fee is required by the Graduate School and additional documentation may also be required.
DNP Project

The Doctor of Nursing Practice options require the completion of a DNP Project (NURS 880). Additional information on this process can be found in the separate Thesis / Project / Dissertation Handbook in D2L, Nurs 114.

DNP Project Committee & Committee Chair Guidelines

DNP Committee

Each DNP student will have a committee to guide and evaluate the DNP Project. The committee will include the Major Advisor (chair), 2 South Dakota State University (SDSU) College of Nursing Faculty members who hold graduate faculty status, and a SDSU graduate representative.

- BS-DNP students or Post-Master’s FNP students who do not have Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) certification must have one committee member with APRN certification in the specialty in which the student is seeking a degree.

- Post-Master’s-DNP students who are certified as an APRN (CNP, CNM, CRNA, or CNS) do not need to have a faculty member on the committee with the same APRN certification as the student.

- BS-DNP students who are in the specialization programs in collaboration with University of Missouri-Columbia (U of MO-Columbia) or University of Missouri-Kansas City (U of Mo-KC) will need a committee member representing the APRN specialization from U of MO-Columbia or U of MO-KC. This committee member can serve only if they hold a doctorate degree and may not serve as committee chair. This committee member is in addition to the 3 SDSU CON committee members.

- The SDSU Graduate School will assign a graduate representative to ensure the quality and fairness of the DNP Project process including the final oral exam.

- The DNP student will identify a stakeholder in the clinical setting who will serve as an expert in the DNP Project topic area. The stakeholder will guide project implementation in the clinical setting. The stakeholder is encouraged to participate in DNP proposal and defense, but is not required to attend the proposal and defense.

DNP Major Advisor

Each DNP student will select a Major Advisor based on the following guidelines

- The DNP student is guided to select a Major Advisor who holds a terminal degree, a practice focus, and associated APRN certification or educational background (e.g., CNP, CNS, CNM, or CRNA). This guideline is based on standards set by the Graduate School (policy XXXXX), the 2015 American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) DNP White Paper, and the CON Standards (2014) for Clinical Track Faculty.

- DNP students are provided with a table of information for chair selection that includes eligible faculty, faculty practice expertise, terminal degree, clinical project interests, and APRN certification. This table represents the first tier for Major Advisor selection.

- A DNP student may request a Major Advisor who is not APRN certified or educated but who holds a terminal degree and whose practice or content expertise aligns with the DNP student’s project topic. In this case, the DNP student must ensure APRN specialty representation by one or two of the other committee members.
The DNP Project Major Advisor process begins in NURS 850. The APRN Curriculum Coordinator explains the process verbally during class and in a follow-up email.

Section XI: (DNP) - Degree Specific Program Option Information
University of Missouri Partnership

In addition to the above listed information on the Doctor of Nursing Practice, the following applies to the students admitted to the specialization options offered in partnership with the University of Missouri.

Program Purpose

South Dakota State University Graduate Nursing Program is committed to providing educational experiences in order to prepare graduates who are well equipped to meet the needs of high demand specialty areas.

In partnership with the University of Missouri – Columbia, SDSU offers the DNP in the following specialty areas:

- Family Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
- Pediatric Nurse Practitioner
- Pediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist

In addition, via a partnership with the University of Missouri – Kansas City, SDSU offers the DNP in the following specialty area:

- Neonatal Nurse Practitioner

Students will take didactic coursework from SDSU along with clinical coursework from the University of Missouri. Upon completion of all coursework outlined in SDSU Curriculum plan for the chosen specialty, the student will make application for graduation from South Dakota State University. The DNP degree will be granted by the SDSU Graduate School.

Students will work with their assigned Academic Advisor to develop a Plan of Study that reflects coursework from both institutions. The student is required to make contact with the University of Missouri during the first semester of SDSU coursework to notify them of an approximate timeframe that the student will begin coursework with the University of Missouri. The Academic Advisor will assist the student in this process.

The student is responsible for working with the University of Missouri personnel to complete the admission requirements, course registration, etc. that the University of Missouri requires. Information specific to each program is listed below – students will be expected to adhere to the University of Missouri processes, policies and procedures while enrolled in their coursework.

Students will be required to adhere to On-Campus Requirements set by the University of Missouri – Columbia. The specific dates, etc. can be found on their web pages (hyperlinked below).
University of Missouri – Columbia

Robin C. Harris, DNP, RN  Director, DNP Program  430 Sinclair School of Nursing Columbia, MO 65211  (573) 882-7969  harrisrc@missouri.edu

Family Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role / Position</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jane Bostick, PhD, RN, PMHCNS, BC</td>
<td>Coordinator Adult &amp; Family PMHNP Area of Study</td>
<td>S407 Sinclair School of Nursing Columbia, MO 65211  (573) 882-0255  <a href="mailto:bostickj@missouri.edu">bostickj@missouri.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leslie McPeak</td>
<td>Office Support Assistant – PhD &amp; DNP Program</td>
<td>(573) 882-0200  <a href="mailto:mcpeakl@missouri.edu">mcpeakl@missouri.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pediatric Nurse Practitioner

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role / Position</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laura L. Kuensting, DNP, APRN, PCNS-BC, CPNP, CPEN</td>
<td>Coordinator PNP Area of Study</td>
<td>S443 Sinclair School of Nursing Columbia, MO 65203  (573) 884-7295  (314) 882-2220  <a href="mailto:kuenstingl@missouri.edu">kuenstingl@missouri.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leslie McPeak</td>
<td>Office Support Assistant – PhD &amp; DNP Program</td>
<td>(573) 882-0200  <a href="mailto:mcpeakl@missouri.edu">mcpeakl@missouri.edu</a></td>
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</table>

Pediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role / Position</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carolyn Crumley, DNP, RN, ACNS-BS, CWOCN</td>
<td>Coordinator CNS Area of Study</td>
<td><a href="mailto:crumleyc@missouri.edu">crumleyc@missouri.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leslie McPeak</td>
<td>Office Support Assistant – PhD &amp; DNP Program</td>
<td>(573) 882-0200  <a href="mailto:mcpeakl@missouri.edu">mcpeakl@missouri.edu</a></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Important web links:

Graduate Nursing Handbook (2015-2016)

DNP Information  http://nursing.missouri.edu/academics/dnp/index.php

Clinical Practica Information  http://nursing.missouri.edu/academics/clinical-practica/index.php

University of Missouri – Kansas City

Neonatal Nurse Practitioner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role / Position</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Susan J. Kimble, DNP, RN, ANP-BC</td>
<td>MSN &amp; DNP Program Director</td>
<td>UMKC School of Nursing &amp; Health Sciences 2464 Charlotte Kansas City, MO 64108  (816) 235-5962  <a href="mailto:kimbles@umkc.edu">kimbles@umkc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DNP Project Committee & Committee Chair Guidelines

**DNP Committee**

Each DNP student will have a committee to guide and evaluate the DNP Project. The University of Missouri student committee will include:

1. Major Advisor (chair) *SDSU College of Nursing Faculty member*
2. Two (2) South Dakota State University (SDSU) College of Nursing Faculty members who hold graduate faculty status,
3. A University of Missouri faculty who hold the same degree / specialty the student is pursuing*, and
4. A SDSU graduate faculty representative.

* BS-DNP students who are in the specialization programs in collaboration with University of Missouri-Columbia (U of MO-Columbia) or University of Missouri-Kansas City (U of Mo-KC) will need a committee member representing the APRN specialization from U of MO-Columbia or U of MO-KC. This committee member can serve only if they hold a doctorate degree and may not serve as committee chair. This committee member is in addition to the 3 SDSU CON committee members.
• The SDSU Graduate School will assign a graduate representative to ensure the quality and fairness of the DNP Project process including the final oral exam.

• The DNP student will identify a stakeholder in the clinical setting who will serve as an expert in the DNP Project topic area. The stakeholder will guide project implementation in the clinical setting. The stakeholder is encouraged to participate in DNP proposal and defense, but is not required to attend the proposal and defense.

DNP Major Advisor

Each DNP student will select a Major Advisor based on the following guidelines

• The DNP student is guided to select a Major Advisor who holds a terminal degree, a practice focus, and associated APRN certification or educational background (e.g., CNP, CNS, CNM, or CRNA). This guideline is based on standards set by the Graduate School (policy XXXXX), the 2015 American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) DNP White Paper, and the CON Standards (2014) for Clinical Track Faculty.

• DNP students are provided with a table of information for chair selection that includes eligible faculty, faculty practice expertise, terminal degree, clinical project interests, and APRN certification. This table represents the first tier for Major Advisor selection.

• A DNP student may request a Major Advisor who is not APRN certified or educated but who holds a terminal degree and whose practice or content expertise aligns with the DNP student’s project topic. In this case, the DNP student must ensure APRN specialty representation by one or two of the other committee members.

• The DNP Project Major Advisor process begins in NURS 850. The APRN Curriculum Coordinator explains the process verbally during class and in a follow-up email.

Section XII: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree Specific Program Option Information

Introduction

The South Dakota State University Doctoral Program’s inaugural year was fall 2005. The purpose of the PhD in Nursing is to prepare nurse scientists who will serve as researchers, faculty members, and health care administrators with an emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention in underserved and rural populations, health outcomes, and nursing education. The PhD program is based on the belief that nursing science can make a significant and original contributions to nursing knowledge and practice. The programs outcomes are as follows:

Nurse scientists will demonstrate the following competencies:
1. Discover and disseminate knowledge relevant to the discipline of nursing with a focus on health promotion and disease prevention in underserved and rural populations, health outcomes, and nursing education.
2. Provide leadership for increasingly complex roles in nursing research, practice, and education and/or healthcare organizations.
3. Develop theoretical frameworks of phenomena related to nursing science.
4. Provide leadership for the analysis and resolution of ethical health care issues in an interdisciplinary context.
5. Integrate cultural learning into nursing practice to effectively tailor health care to the diverse lifeways of clients.
6. Seek to decrease health disparities among populations by addressing socioeconomic-political-cultural determinants of health.

**Academic (Major) Advisor / Advisory Committee**

As part of the admission process, the doctoral student will select a graduate faculty member who will serve as the major advisor or dissertation chair. The student and the dissertation chair will discuss the selection of the student's Advisory Committee. This process, the makeup of the committee, and the role of the Advisory Committee are described in the South Dakota State University Graduate Catalog.

**Plan of Study**

The major advisor and the student will develop an initial Plan of Study. Once the Advisory Committee is formed, the Plan of Study will be approved by the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee and student must meet at least once a year or more frequently as needed.

**Plan of Study Course Requirements**

**Total Credits Required**

**60 Credit Plan of Study**

A minimum of 60 credits is required for a doctorate beyond the master’s degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan of Study Component</th>
<th>Credit Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Core</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics *</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Practicum</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>12-15*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*must include one additional statistics or research methods course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>19-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL MINIMUM CREDITS</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Forty (40) credits required for the degree must be earned in the program. Dissertation and transfer credits may apply. Not all courses need to be in a single department or area, but all courses should be closely related to the program area.

The Advisory Committee may require more credits than the minimum listed previously if it believes the extra requirements are in the best interest of the student.

*Statistics courses that have been approved to meet the minimum 6 credit statistics requirement for the PhD in Nursing Plan of Study are as follows:
HSC 631 – Biostatistics I (SDSU)
HSC 731 – Biostatistics II (SDSU)

Statistics courses other than HSC 631 and HSC 731 on a student’s Plan of Study must be approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate Nursing to be eligible to meet the statistics requirement.

**90 Credit Plan of Study**

A minimum of 90 credits is required for a doctorate beyond the bachelor’s degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan of Study Component</th>
<th>Credit Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Core</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics / Research Methods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Practicum</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>27-30*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*must include one additional statistics or research methods course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>19-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL MINIMUM CREDITS</strong></td>
<td><strong>90</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sixty (60) credits required for the degree must be earned in the program. Dissertation and transfer credits may apply. Not all courses need to be in a single department or area, but all courses should be closely related to the program area.

*Statistics courses that have been approved to meet the minimum 6 credit statistics requirement for the PhD in Nursing Plan of Study are as follows:
HSC 631 – Biostatistics I (SDSU)
HSC 731 – Biostatistics II (SDSU)

Statistics courses other than HSC 631 and HSC 731 on a student’s Plan of Study must be approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate Nursing to be eligible to meet the statistics requirement.

Minor or Supporting Courses (if required)
Few programs require a minor. Please see departmental requirements for specific minors.

Graduate Credit Requirement
Credit applied toward graduate credentials should be at the 500-level and above. At least fifty (50) percent of the credits on a plan of study must be in courses 600-series or above.

Please refer to the Graduate Credit Requirements Policy for more information http://www.sdstate.edu/policies/upload/Credit-Requirements-for-Graduate-Degree-Programs.pdf

Language Requirement
There is no general language requirement for the Doctoral degree. However, individual departments may require a speaking or reading knowledge of a modern language other than English.

Research Practicum (variable 1-3 credits / student required to complete 3 credits)
The purpose of the research practicum is to immerse the student in actual ongoing research. This experience will increase the student’s knowledge in the methodology and with the phenomenon that the student has chosen to study. The following are examples of potential research practicum experiences:

- Independent study linking the student to an institute that offers study in a particular methodology;
- Preceptored research projects;
- Work on ongoing research with an experienced researcher in the student’s chosen field of study.

The student has a major responsibility in setting up the practicum in collaboration with the Major Advisor. A contract needs to be completed by the Research Mentor, the Advisor, Associate Dean for Graduate Nursing and the doctoral student. (Appendix A--Research Practicum Student Contract).

Costs associated with an external mentor are the responsibility of the student. An example of an external mentor would be an external methodology expert.

PhD Grading Policy
PhD students in nursing must receive a B or above in all courses in the graduate plan of study. If a grade of C or below is received, the student is required to repeat the course to continue in the program.

Doctoral Student Participation in Faculty Research
Faculty members are encouraged to make learning opportunities in research available to graduate students who are highly encouraged to work with them conducting research to meet degree requirements. Graduate students may be employed as graduate research assistants, or contract for practicum or independent study credit. When graduate students are involved in research and are enrolled for academic credit through research practicum or independent study, a tailored syllabus and/or contract between
student and faculty member must be negotiated and signed by both faculty member and student with a copy forwarded to the Associate Dean for Graduate Nursing prior to course registration. Faculty members may not award course credit or derive any course assignments in exchange for students serving to advance any part of the faculty member’s research which is unrelated to course objectives.

**Doctoral Student Professional Development**

Attendance at the annual conference of the Midwest Nursing Research Society (MNRS) is required a minimum of two times (first attendance occurs during NURS 820) to encourage doctoral students to network with researchers and nurse scientists. During the third year of the program, doctoral students are required to submit an abstract to either MNRS or a professional conference of their choice to continue their professional development in the nurse scientist role.

**Examinations**

**Interim Evaluation**

Upon completion of approximately half of the coursework on the Plan of Study, the major advisor and student will meet to evaluate the progress of the student, provide advice and counsel, recommend continuance or termination of the student’s enrollment in the program and complete the Interim Evaluation Form. The Interim Evaluation Form is located in D2L, Nurs 114.

**Comprehensive Written**

The purpose of the Comprehensive Written Examination is to assess the doctoral student’s mastery of research processes, test the breadth of knowledge attained through doctoral coursework and evaluate his or her ability to integrate knowledge commensurate with expectations of the PhD degree and Graduate School requirements.

All coursework in the doctoral student’s Plan of Study must be successfully completed before the comprehensive written examination is scheduled. The doctoral student will work with the major advisor and Advisory Committee to schedule the written examination the semester following completion of coursework, including the summer term.

The student must be enrolled in at least 1 credit of NURS 898 Dissertation during this semester.

Graduate School guidelines for timelines, scheduling and form submission will be followed.

Prior to scheduling the written examination, the doctoral student will submit to the major advisor and Advisory Committee, a list of all courses completed, a 1-2-page abstract of the dissertation research topic and proposed methodology, and a brief summary of 3 research proposal ideas different from but related to the dissertation topic. These should NOT be excerpts from previously written papers submitted for required coursework. Then, the student schedules a start and end date for the written examination not to exceed three months.

The major advisor and Advisory Committee members select the topic for the written exam from the three research ideas from the student. On the written examination start date, the major advisor informs the student of the written examination topic selected from the 3 ideas submitted.

The student will then proceed to write a research proposal according to National Institutes of Health guidelines found at [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/grants_process.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/grants_process.htm).

The written examination is an open book exploration of professional literature with citations. The student is solely responsible for producing the grant proposal without assistance. The written examination is to be submitted in written or electronic form by the designated due date. Committee members will have at least 10 working days to review the examination, then designating a Pass or Fail. A Pass requires...
approval of Grad Faculty Representative and all but one other Advisory Committee member. The major advisor will submit official request to schedule the examination, collate results, notify doctoral student of the decision, provide Advisory Committee feedback to the doctoral student and submit required Advisory Committee decision paperwork according to Graduate School policy. A copy of the written examination is filed in the doctoral student’s permanent record in the Graduate Nursing office. Doctoral students who fail the written examination are allowed one additional attempt.

The Comprehensive Written Examination Checklist, Guidelines, and Rubric are located in D2L, Nurs 114.

**Comprehensive Oral Examination**

Upon successful completion of the Comprehensive Written Examination, the doctoral student will work with the major advisor and Advisory Committee to schedule the comprehensive oral examination, which should also occur during the semester following completion of doctoral coursework. The interval between completion of the written examination and oral examination should be no less than three weeks. If the student is unsuccessful in the written examination, the scheduled oral examination will be cancelled.

The doctoral student will meet with the Advisory Committee for two hours during which questions about the written examination document and required coursework will guide the discussion. Distance technology may be used providing the student is present with at least one College of Nursing committee member. The Advisory Committee will designate either a Pass or Fail. Passing requires the approval of the Graduate Faculty Representative and all but one other committee member. Comments are required to support a Fail. The major advisor will submit required committee decision paperwork using Graduate School policies.

Upon satisfactory completion of the Comprehensive Written and Oral Examinations, the student is formally admitted to candidacy for the PhD degree. The College of Nursing does not allow use of "PhD (c)" for doctoral candidates, with preference for Doctoral Candidate.

The dissertation proposal defense may be scheduled any time after the comprehensive oral examination is successfully passed.

The PhD Comprehensive Oral Exam Checklist and the Comprehensive Exam rubric are located in D2L, Nurs 114.

**Dissertation Process**

Coursework should focus on the dissertation topic building a core of work in theory, statistics, research methods and literature review that will be used in the dissertation. According to the Graduate Catalog, "The dissertation should advance or modify knowledge in the discipline and demonstrate the candidate’s mastery of the subject" (2014-2015). The dissertation may involve original research or secondary analysis of existing data from a credible source. The stipulation for any secondary analysis research is that the student develops original research questions, uses a conceptual model or framework, completes a Human Subjects Review application and develops a detailed analysis plan.

**Dissertation Proposal Review by Advisory Committee**

Upon successful completion of the **Written Examination**, the student will schedule a **Dissertation Proposal**. This examination will cover the completed Dissertation Proposal to include Human Subjects forms and an oral defense of the research proposal. This proposal meeting may be scheduled in close proximity to the Comprehensive Oral Examination if the student is ready to proceed with the Advisory Committee. The **PhD Dissertation Proposal Checklist** is found in Appendix H. The **Rubric for Dissertation Proposal grading** is located in D2L, Nurs 114.
Dissertation Research Proposal Review Meeting

The purpose of the dissertation research proposal review meeting is to assure the research questions are worthy of doctoral research, the literature supports the contentions of the study and the methodology is scientifically sound, feasible and suited to the research questions. Once the major advisor has authorized the proposal, the student will distribute the dissertation proposal to the Advisory Committee ten working days ahead of the proposal review meeting.

- The student will present 20 minutes on the dissertation proposal including a detailed timeline for implementation of the study.
- The proposal may include chapters 1, 2 and 3 or an alternate form as the Advisory Committee directs. The proposal may also include the SDSU Human Subjects application.
- Proposal will include drafts of supportive documents needed for Human Subjects Committee authorization such as consent forms, letters, protocols, risk/benefit analysis and Human Subjects Committee forms.
- Authorization will not be sought from the Human Subjects Committee until the Advisory Committee has approved the study methodology and provided feedback on the supportive documents needed for Human Subjects Committee submission.
- Proposal will include correspondence authorizing use and or modification of tools if such published tools are proposed.
- The committee will ask questions related to the research proposal.
- At the close of the discussion, the Advisory Committee may approve or require changes before submitting to the SDSU Human Subjects Committee for authorization to proceed with the study.

Advisory Committee members will ask questions and engage in dialogue about the feasibility and merit of the methodology.

If the committee decision is approval, the student may proceed with the methodology as outlined in the proposal under the direction of the Major Advisor. This record will be filed in the Graduate School and the College of Nursing. **Candidacy will be granted by the Graduate School upon successful defense of the Comprehensive Written and Oral Exams.**

During the defense, the Major Advisor takes notes and then assists the student to make revisions. Proposal revisions must be approved by the Advisory Committee before the student progresses to Institutional Review Board and data collection. All student researchers proposing to do human subjects research are required to take training in the protection of human research participants found at [www.citiprogram.org](http://www.citiprogram.org)

After the dissertation proposal has been approved and Human Subjects Committee approval is secured, the student may begin data collection. NOTE: Any student collecting data with human subjects must have current CPR certification and must carry malpractice insurance. Additional Human Subjects Approvals may be needed from agencies where data collection is completed.

Students have the option of substituting some of the traditional chapters of the dissertation with publishable manuscripts. The Advisory Committee and doctoral student will mutually decide format of the written manuscript. These manuscripts should come from the implementation of the research methodology or the theoretical framework supported with findings from the research.

**Final Examination/Dissertation Defense**

A two-hour oral examination is conducted by the Advisory Committee. The major focus is on the dissertation defense and the student’s ability to defend the research. Questions to test the student’s general knowledge, judgment, and critical thinking are usually asked.

A memo is submitted from the Major Advisor to the Graduate School requesting final oral examination ten working days prior to the Final Examination/Dissertation Defense. The Final Examination/Dissertation Defense must occur prior to the deadline for that semester as specified by the Graduate School on its calendar web-page. The dissertation is due to the Advisory Committee including the Graduate Representative 10 working days prior to the final defense. The student and the Major Advisor arrange the
date, time (two hours) and location that is agreed upon by the Advisory Committee. The graduate program senior secretary will assist with the location and audio-visual requirements.

The Final Examination/Dissertation Defense focus is on the dissertation and the student’s ability to defend the research. Initially, the student gives a twenty to thirty-minute oral summary of the research. Following the presentation, the Advisory Committee questions the student about aspects of the dissertation research. Questions on general knowledge, judgment and critical thinking will follow the dissertation questioning (D2L, Nurs 114 - Dissertation Defense Rubric). The student is then dismissed and the committee makes its decision. The Major Advisor verbally informs the student of the committee’s decision. Refer to the Graduate Catalog for requirements on final submission of the dissertation to the library.

**Time Limit**

The PhD must be completed within eight years from admission to the program. Should the completion be delayed beyond this time, initial coursework will be outdated and need to be updated to count toward degree completion.

**Research Funding**

Students are encouraged to apply for funding to support their research or program of study. There are numerous grants and traineeships available from the Federal government, professional organizations, and philanthropic programs. Please discuss possible funding sources with an advisor and contact the Office of Nursing Research for additional ideas and support. The research office contact information is available on the SDSU website
Appendix A

SDSU College of Nursing
Department of Graduate Nursing
Student Request for Change of Program or Specialization

Background
Admission to College of Nursing graduate programs is competitive and based on specific admission requirements for each program. Enrollment may be limited by space in selected courses, availability of faculty, and access to clinical sites. These limitations mean that qualified applicants are sometimes denied admission. Therefore, upon acceptance and matriculation, the student is expected to remain committed to the chosen program option and specialization until graduation. Submission of a program option or specialization change request does not guarantee approval.

Guidelines
1. Complete and submit this form to request a change in program or program option, a change in length of program, or a change in specialization.
2. Requests to change from master’s to DNP or DNP to master’s in any specialization requires submission of a new application and payment of associated fees. All NP and CNS applicants must be interviewed.
3. All requests are submitted through the academic advisor to the Graduate Nursing Admissions and Scholastic Standards Committee. Requests are approved or denied by the Associate Dean for Graduate Nursing based on committee recommendations.
4. Requests to change cohort or specialization into NP and CNS specialties will be considered only during the annual spring admission cycle. Other program changes may be considered and reviewed during the calendar year.

Student Information
Name: __________________________________________ ID: ____________________________

Current Program: _____ Master's (Specialization_______________________________________)

_____ DNP (Specialization_______________________________________)

Current Approved Program Length: _______________________

Change Requested (Describe; be specific): __________________________________________________

Rationale/Justification (include supporting documentation):

Signature: __________________________ Date: __________________________

For Graduate Admissions and Scholastic Standards Committee Use Only:

9/29/14
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY
GENERAL PETITION FORM

Name:  
Mailing Address: 
Email Address: 
Phone: 
Undergraduate:  
Major/Program: 
Graduate:  College of Nursing  
Major/Program:  Nursing

For office use only: Request Category (check one) – see attached guide
Drop/Add Appeal__________ Academic Appeal___________ Graduation Related Appeal___________
Refund/Reduced Tuition Appeal___________

I. Student request and justification  (Note: All information must be provided before petition will be processed.  (Note: Requests for readmission following suspension use the separate “Readmit Following Suspension” petition form.)

A. State your specific request: (student must complete) (For individual course requests include course prefix, number, title, semester and year enrolled.  For example: ENGL 101, Composition I, Fall, 2004).

B. Provide your Justification/Explanation for this request: (student must complete) Attach the necessary documentation, which should include a letter from the appropriate professional if you cite physical or mental health or personal or family emergencies as your justification.
## II. Administrative Review/Decision

All Petitions begin in Registrar’s office where required decision process is identified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Check the Individual(s) who need to sign off on or review for a decision</th>
<th>Decision / Recommendation</th>
<th>Reason for Decision/Recommendation</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registrar (AD 310)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructor (If applicable)</td>
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<td>Academic Advisor (If applicable)</td>
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<td>Financial Aid (If applicable) (AD 106)</td>
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<td>Department Head of Course (If applicable)</td>
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<td>Dean of Course’s College (If applicable)</td>
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<td>Dean of Student’s College (If applicable)</td>
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<td>Dean of Graduate School (If applicable) (AD 130)</td>
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<td>V.P./Assoc.V.P for Academic Affairs (AD 230) (If applicable)</td>
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A copy of every completed petition, whether approved or denied, must be forwarded to the Registrar’s Office in AD 310, for academic record processing.

(5/27/05)
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF NURSING
GRADUATE NURSING PROGRAM
APPLICATION FOR PROGRAM READMISSION

Student Name: _______________________________________________     ID# __________________________

Program Option (at the time of interruption):                ____ Master’s                ____ DNP                  ____ PhD

Specialization (at the time of interruption, if applicable):    __________________________________________________

I, _______________________________________________, request readmission to the Graduate Nursing Program at South Dakota State University.

I am requesting readmission as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester * (check one)</th>
<th>Year (enter Year)</th>
<th>Site (check one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>___ Fall</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>___ Brookings</td>
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<tr>
<td>___ Spring</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>___ Rapid City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___ Summer</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>___ Sioux Falls</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Interruption of continuous registration (excluding summer semester) will also require completion of a new online admission application through the SDSU Graduate School.

I would be willing to attend an alternate site if space is available.       _____Yes      _____No

Please provide information regarding the reason(s) for the current or anticipated interruption (non-progression) in the nursing program. If failure of a course(s) occurred, specify course(s) and grade(s).

Please provide a description on how you plan to be successful in the future.  
If non-progression is result of Academic performance, a completed Academic Improvement Plan is required.

Student Signature_____________________________________________   Date:______________

Please return this form along with a letter requesting Readmission to:
Graduate Nursing Program
College of Nursing
South Dakota State University
SWG 217, Box 2275
Brookings, SD  57007
ATTN:  Associate Dean, Graduate Nursing

For Graduate Nursing Program Use Only:
Request reviewed by: ___________________________________   Date: ________________

Approved   ______  (with additional criteria identified in letter to student)
Denied   ______  (rationale identified in letter to student)