



# Handbook for Master of Science in Nursing

**2025-2026 Academic Year  
Winter 2025**

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Table of Contents

Mission ..... 3

Goals ..... 3

Responsibility..... 3

Accreditation..... 3

Student Learning Outcomes ..... 3

    Essential Competency Requirements of the Nursing Student..... 5

Admissions..... 6

    Admission to the University ..... 6

    Admission to the Nursing Program..... 6

    How to Apply for Program Admission ..... 6

Degree Requirements..... 6

Course Descriptions ..... 7

Course Rotations..... 8

Student Services..... 9

    BOOKSTORE ..... 9

    COUNSELING SERVICES ..... 9

    FINANCIAL AID..... 9

    LIBRARY ..... 9

STUDENTS’ ROLE AND PARTICIPATION IN INSTITUTIONAL DECISION MAKING ..... 10

Student Responsibilities and Policies..... 10

General..... 10

    AI Policies..... 10

    CLINICAL/PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS ..... 11

    Background Checks ..... 11

    Professional Liability Insurance..... 11

    Vaccine Policy ..... 11

        Dress Code for Community Agencies ..... 12

Grading and Evaluations ..... 12

    Grading..... 12

Absence Policy..... 12

EVALUATION OF FACULTY, COURSES, AND PROGRAM ..... 13

Disciplinary Guidelines..... 13

Pinning Ceremony..... 14

Appendix A: Faculty/Student Interaction Form..... 15

## Mission

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program at Texas A&M University Central Texas offers graduate nursing education to the registered nurse who desires to become a change agent, administrator, educator, and innovator in the complex healthcare system. The nurse will receive evidence-based educational preparation to gain the leadership and management skills to lead healthcare professionals and organizations to provide safe and effective care to populations.

Upon graduation, students can advance their nursing career to become leaders in their fields by developing the skills of critical thinking, public speaking, reading comprehension, monitoring, coordination, judgement, and decision making, management of personnel resources, active listening, and professional writing. These skills are needed in the occupational realm.

## Goals

The goals of the nursing program are concurrent with the goals of the university:

1. Graduates who are prepared to be leaders and change agents in their fields.
2. Graduates who practice sound nursing care based on theory and practice guidelines.
3. Graduates who are prepared for doctoral study and nursing certification in desired specialty.
4. Graduates who are prepared to be leaders in their community and professional organizations.
5. Graduates who are prepared to advocate for their profession, patients, and communities.

## Responsibility

Students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the policies and information contained in this handbook. Every effort has been made to make this publication as complete and accurate as possible, but changes may occur at any time.

## Accreditation

*Texas A&M University-Central Texas is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award baccalaureate, master's, and specialist degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of A&M-Central Texas.*

*The baccalaureate degree in nursing at Texas A&M University-Central Texas is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) (<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation>). The MSN program has applied for accreditation.*

## Curriculum Delivery

The MSN program is delivered in a 100% online format. Selected courses contain practicum experiences requiring in-person attendance.

## Program Student Learning Outcomes

1. Leads interprofessional quality improvement initiatives to increase the quality, safety, and efficiency of healthcare related processes.
2. Utilizes theory and research support to identify clinical problems and develop evidence-based solutions.
3. Utilizes evidence-based practice concepts to prevent illness, promote health, and improve the health of patients and populations.
4. Embraces full scope of nursing practice to serve as leaders in the workplace, community, and health/professional organizations locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.
5. Incorporates ethical principles into all aspects of practice and research projects.
6. Collaborates with interprofessional care team members to enhance practice and health outcomes.
7. Incorporates information and technology into practice to promote better communication between patients and colleagues in the healthcare environment.
8. Advocates for the development of policies to better the health of communities and healthcare operations by community involvement and organization engagement.

The curriculum is guided by: American Association of Colleges of Nursing, (2021). [The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Education](https://www.aacnursing.org/Portals/42/AcademicNursing/pdf/Essentials-2021.pdf). Washington, DC. [https://www.aacnursing.org/Portals/42/AcademicNursing/pdf/Essentials-2021.pdf]

The curriculum is also guided by: The Texas Board of Nursing, (2021). [Differentiated Essential Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs](#).

PSLO	Essential	DEC
Leads interprofessional quality improvement initiatives to increase the quality, safety, and efficiency of healthcare related processes.	<b>Domain 5:</b> Quality and Safety <b>Domain 7:</b> Systems Based Practice <b>Domain 10:</b> Personal, Professional. And Leadership Development	Member of the Profession Provider of Patient-Centered Care Patient Safety Advocate Member of the Health Care Team
Utilizes theory and research support to identify clinical problems and develop evidence-based solutions.	<b>Domain 1:</b> Knowledge for Nursing Practice <b>Domain 4:</b> Scholarship for Nursing Discipline <b>Domain 5:</b> Quality and Safety	Member of the Profession Patient Safety Advocate Member of the Health Care Team

Utilizes evidence-based practice concepts to prevent illness, promote health, and improve the health of patients and populations.	<b>Domain 1:</b> Knowledge for Nursing Practice <b>Domain 2:</b> Person-Centered Care <b>Domain 3:</b> Population Health <b>Domain 4:</b> Scholarship for Nursing Discipline <b>Domain 5:</b> Quality and Safety <b>Domain 6:</b> Interprofessional Partnerships <b>Domain 7:</b> Systems Based Practice <b>Domain 10:</b> Personal, Professional. And Leadership Development	Member of the Profession Provider of Patient-Centered Care Patient Safety Advocate Member of the Health Care Team
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Embraces full scope of nursing practice to serve as leaders in the workplace, community, and health/professional organizations locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.	<b>Domain 1:</b> Knowledge for Nursing Practice <b>Domain 2:</b> Person-Centered Care <b>Domain 3:</b> Population Health <b>Domain 4:</b> Scholarship for Nursing Discipline <b>Domain 5:</b> Quality and Safety <b>Domain 6:</b> Interprofessional Partnerships <b>Domain 7:</b> Systems Based Practice <b>Domain 8:</b> Informatics and Healthcare Technologies <b>Domain 9:</b> Professionalism <b>Domain 10:</b> Personal, Professional. And Leadership Development	Member of the Profession Provider of Patient-Centered Care Patient Safety Advocate Member of the Health Care Team
Incorporates ethical principles into all aspects of practice and research projects.	<b>Domain 1:</b> Knowledge for Nursing Practice <b>Domain 2:</b> Person-Centered Care <b>Domain 3:</b> Population Health <b>Domain 4:</b> Scholarship for Nursing Discipline <b>Domain 5:</b> Quality and Safety <b>Domain 9:</b> Professionalism <b>Domain 10:</b> Personal, Professional. And Leadership Development	Member of the Profession Member of the Health Care Team

Collaborates with interprofessional care team members to enhance practice and health outcomes.	<b>Domain 3: Population Health</b> <b>Domain 6: Interprofessional Partnerships</b> <b>Domain 9: Professionalism</b> <b>Domain 10: Personal, Professional. And Leadership Development</b>	Member of the Profession Provider of Patient-Centered Care Patient Safety Advocate Member of the Health Care Team
Incorporates information and technology into practice to promote better communication between patients and colleagues in the healthcare environment.	<b>Domain 5: Quality and Safety</b> <b>Domain 6: Interprofessional Partnerships</b> <b>Domain 7: Systems Based Practice</b> <b>Domain 8: Informatics and Healthcare Technologies</b>	Member of the Profession Provider of Patient-Centered Care Patient Safety Advocate Member of the Health Care Team
Advocates for the development of policies to better the health of communities and healthcare operations by community involvement and organization engagement.	<b>Domain 1: Knowledge for Nursing Practice</b> <b>Domain 2: Person-Centered Care</b> <b>Domain 3: Population Health</b> <b>Domain 4: Scholarship for Nursing Discipline</b> <b>Domain 5: Quality and Safety</b> <b>Domain 6: Interprofessional Partnerships</b> <b>Domain 7: Systems Based Practice</b> <b>Domain 8: Informatics and Healthcare Technologies</b> <b>Domain 9: Professionalism</b> <b>Domain 10: Personal, Professional. And Leadership Development</b>	Member of the Profession Provider of Patient-Centered Care Patient Safety Advocate Member of the Health Care Team

### Essential Competency Requirements of the Nursing Student

**All students accepted into the Nursing Program are expected to have the following six competencies in order to effectively and safely perform the responsibilities of a nursing student.**

- A. **Motor Skills:** Candidates should have sufficient motor function so that they are able to execute movements required to provide general care and treatment to patients in all health care settings.
- B. **Sensory/Observation:** A candidate must be able to acquire the information presented through demonstrations and experiences in the basic and nursing sciences. He or she must be able to observe a patient accurately, at a distance and nearby, and observe and appreciate non-verbal communications when performing nursing assessment and intervention or administering medications. The candidate must be capable of perceiving the signs of disease and infection as manifested through physical examination. Such information is derived from visual images of the body surfaces, palpable changes in various organs and tissues, and auditory information (patient voice, heart tones, bowel and lung sounds).
- C. **Communication:** The candidate must communicate effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, patients, family, and other professionals. He or she must express his or her ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrate a willingness and ability to give and receive feedback. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively in oral and written forms.
- D. **Cognitive:** A candidate must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate and synthesize in the context of graduate nursing studies. The candidate must be able to quickly read and comprehend extensive written material. He or she must also be able to evaluate and apply information and engage in critical thinking in the virtual classroom and clinical setting.
- E. **Behavioral/Emotional:** A candidate must possess the emotional health required for the full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, and the prompt completion of all assignments. In addition, s/he must be able to maintain mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, students, faculty, staff and other professionals under all circumstances including highly stressful situations. The candidate must know that his or her values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and experiences affect his or her perceptions and relationships with others. The candidate must be able and willing to examine and change his or her behavior when it interferes with productive individual or group relationships. The candidate must possess skills and experience necessary for effective and

harmonious relationships in diverse academic and working environments.

- F. Professional Conduct: Candidates must possess the ability to reason morally and practice nursing in an ethical manner. Candidates must be willing to learn and abide by professional standards of practice according to the Nurse Practice Act. They must possess attributes that include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, honesty, responsibility and tolerance. Candidates must be able to engage in patient care delivery in all settings and be able to deliver care to all patient populations including but not limited to children, adolescents, adults, developmentally disabled persons, medically compromised patients, and vulnerable adults.

## Admissions

### General Education Course Requirements

Texas A&M University-Central Texas is an upper-level university; therefore, the core curriculum/general education courses and nursing Field of Study prerequisites must be taken at another institution. Core curricula may also be accepted from other institutions. Students may enter the nursing program with up to six (6) semester credit hours of courses remaining.

### Admission to the University

All students must be admitted to the University according to applicable policies at the time of application.

The current graduate school requirements can be found here:

[https://catalog.tamuct.edu/graduate\\_and\\_professional\\_catalog/graduate-information/grad\\_admin\\_cat/](https://catalog.tamuct.edu/graduate_and_professional_catalog/graduate-information/grad_admin_cat/)

### Admission to the Nursing Program

The Masters of Science degree in Nursing has additional entry requirements separate from general admission to the university and graduate school. To be eligible to declare Nursing as a major and begin nursing courses, students must meet the below requirements:

#### **Nursing Program Admission Requirements**

- Meet university admission/graduate school requirements
- Have a current unencumbered Texas Registered Nurse's (RN) license or of a Compact State\*
- Graduate from accredited Bachelor of Nursing degree program
- **Submit online nursing program application**

### Degree Requirements

All students are required to meet graduate school requirements for degree completion requirements. In addition, the Nursing Department has specific requirements designs to meet the Texas Common Core as well as Field of Study for Nursing required by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Students should meet with a Department Advisor to determine Degree Plan that will meet the requirements.

Courses	Credit Hours	Practicum Hours Required
<b>NURS 5300</b>	3	0
<b>NURS 5305</b>	3	0
<b>NURS 5310</b>	3	0
<b>NURS 5315</b>	3	0
<b>NURS 5420</b>	4	45
<b>NURS 5330</b>	3	0
<b>NURS 5432</b>	4	45
<b>NURS 5434</b>	4	45
<b>NUR 5436</b>	4	90
<b>NURS 5538</b>	5	120
<b>Other hours to meet requirements</b>		155
Totals	36	500

### Course Descriptions

#### **NURS 5300 (3SCH) Professional Nursing Science and Theory Application (Core):**

Professional nursing science refers to the scientific foundation of nursing practice and application to practice. Exploration on how nursing theories inform decision-making, guide patient assessments, promote holistic care and contribute to the development of nursing

interventions and evaluations. By integrating scientific knowledge and theoretical frameworks, MSN graduates are better prepared to excel in leadership roles, specialized practice areas, education, and research endeavors within the nursing field.

**NURS 5305 (3SCH) Principles of Nursing Research (Core):**

Nursing research is a required component of advanced practice nursing as it equips nurses with the knowledge and skills to critically analyze and apply research findings in a clinical setting. Graduates will explore theoretical and ethical issues in translating evidence into practice and explore opportunities for innovation and changes in practice.

**NURS 5310 (3SCH) Application of Evidence-Based Practice (Core), pre-req NURS 5305:**

Application of evidence-based nursing is a critical component for the nurse leader. This course empowers the graduate nurse that applies skills to contribute to evidence-based care, improve patient outcomes, and advance the nursing profession. The advanced nurse will be able to advance the scholarship of nursing by integrating evidence into practice by promoting the ethical conduct of scholarly activities applied to a clinical issue.

**NURS 5315 (3SCH) Informatics (Core):**

Nursing informatics is a developing science made up of the skills to integrate nursing science with information and analytical science. Nursing informatics identifies, defines, manages, communicates data and knowledge in nursing practice. Nursing informatics utilizes and develops technologies and innovates processes to obtain, strategize, and analyze data to increase patient safety and enhance medical economics.

**NURS 5420 (4SCH) Population Health (Core)-45 Hour Practicum Experience**

Population health examines significant health concerns to populations of people and the resources for prevention, treatment, and health promotion within a given population. Population health spans the healthcare delivery continuum while collaborating with individuals and organizations toward health equity and improved health for all. Focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and ethics are supported for a diverse population to achieve appropriate population outcomes.

**NURS 5330 (3SCH) Nursing and Organizational Management Theory**

This course explores the management and organizational theories and structure that guides the management of the nursing services and health organizations.

**NURS 5432 (4SCH) Financial Management-3-hour course (45 hours of clinical experience)**

This course will analyze strategic planning and financial management of healthcare organizations. The relationship between strategic and financial planning, budgeting, and reimbursement systems in healthcare will be explored.

**NURS 5434 (4SCH) Nursing and Healthcare Environment Leadership-3-hour course (45 hours of clinical experience)**

This course explores the leadership strategies for today's and tomorrow's healthcare environment. Workforce and workplace challenges, leadership, and evidence-based solutions to challenges will be explored.

**NURS 5436 (4SCH) The Role of the Nurse Administrator-4-hour course (90 Hours Clinical Practicum)**

In this course, the roles of the nursing and healthcare administrator will be explored and implemented. The responsibilities of the nurse administrator in accreditation and licensure of the healthcare organization and programs will also be explored.

**NURS 5538 (5SCH) Nurse Administrator Seminar (120-hour clinical practicum with capstone project) \*16-week Course\***

This course will synthesize the role of the nurse administrator. The skills learned in previous experiences will be used to develop a capstone project focused on the nurse administrator's skill. In addition, the experience should include implementation of administrative and managerial roles in the health care organization. This course will include a 120-hour practicum experience with an experienced nurse administrator. Please note, NURS 5538 will require a minimum grade of a B to pass the course

In addition, per AACN Essentials, students need 500 contact/practicum hours to be a competent practitioner. Additional hours will be required but the students will choose those experiences-with faculty approval.

**Planned Course Rotations (Note rotations may change with unexpected needs.)**

Course Rotation (Full-Time)

Fall Start

Fall-1 <sup>st</sup> Year	Spring-1 <sup>st</sup> Year	Summer-1 <sup>st</sup> Year
NURS 5300-Professional Nursing Science and Theory Application (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5420-Population Health (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5432-Financial Management (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 week course)
NURS 5305-Principles of Nursing Research (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5330-Nursing and Organizational Management Theory (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5434-Nursing and Healthcare Environment Leadership (2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks)
NURS 5310-Application of Evidence-Based Practice (2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5436-Role of the Nurse Administrator (2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks)	
Fall 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year		
NURS 5315-Informatics (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)		
NURS 5538-Nurse Administrator Seminar-(full semester)		

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### Course Rotation (Full-Time)

#### Spring Start

Spring-1 <sup>st</sup> Year	Summer 1 <sup>st</sup> Year	Fall 1 <sup>st</sup> Year
NURS 5300-Professional Nursing Science and Theory Application (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5432-Financial Management (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 week course)	NURS 5420-Population Health (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)
NURS 5305-Principles of Nursing Research (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5434-Nursing and Healthcare Environment Leadership (2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5330-Nursing and Organizational Management Theory (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)
NURS 5310-Application of Evidence-Based Practice (2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks)		NURS 5436-Role of the Nurse Administrator (2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks)
Spring 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year		
NURS 5315-Informatics (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)		
NURS 5538-Nurse Administrator Seminar-(full semester)		

### Course Rotation (Part-Time)

#### Fall Start

Fall 1 <sup>st</sup> Year	Spring 1 <sup>st</sup> Year	Summer 1 <sup>st</sup> Year
NURS 5305-Principles of Nursing Research (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5300-Professional Nursing Science and Theory Application (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5432-Financial Management (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 week course)
NURS 5310-Application of Evidence-Based Practice (2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5436-Role of the Nurse Administrator (2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5434-Nursing and Healthcare Environment Leadership (2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks)
Fall 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	Spring 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	
NURS 5420-Population Health (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5315-Informatics (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	
NURS 5330-Nursing and Organizational Management Theory (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5538-Nurse Administrator Seminar-(full semester)	

#### Spring Start

Spring 1 <sup>st</sup> Year	Summer 1 <sup>st</sup> Year or 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	Fall 1 <sup>st</sup> Year
NURS 5305-Principles of Nursing Research (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5432-Financial Management (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 week course)	NURS 5300-Professional Nursing Science and Theory Application (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)
NURS 5310-Application of Evidence-Based Practice (2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5434-Nursing and Healthcare Environment Leadership (2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5436-Role of the Nurse Administrator (2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks)
Spring 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	Fall 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	
NURS 5420-Population Health (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5315-Informatics (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	
NURS 5330-Nursing and Organizational Management Theory (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	NURS 5538-Nurse Administrator Seminar-(full semester)	

### Student Services

All student services available through Texas A&M University-Central Texas are available to nursing students. These can be found in the [2026-2027 University Catalog](#). The following list is not all-inclusive.

### BOOKSTORE

The main entrance of Founder's Hall locates the bookstore.

- Phone: (254) 200-1447.
- Email: [tamuct@bkstr.com](mailto:tamuct@bkstr.com).
- <https://www.bkstr.com/tamuctstore/home/>

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## COUNSELING SERVICES

- Warrior Hall Room 207L
- Phone: (254) 501-5956 (Monday-Thursday 8 am - 5 pm)
- Fax: (254) 519-8703

Many employees and students encounter a variety of personal, social, and academic issues that may call for assistance beyond advice provided by friends and family. The Counseling Center provides confidential counseling and education to all A&M-Central Texas employees and currently enrolled students at no additional cost, in order to facilitate the retention, adjustment, and development of members of the university community. Counseling can assist in achieving personal and educational goals and provide an opportunity to have a professional counselor listen empathically, help clarify ideas and concerns toward resolving new or long-standing problem situations, as well as provide useful learning and self-management skills, and improve relationships. Services include individual, group, and relationship counseling, crisis and consultative sessions, and informational presentations about health issues. There are no additional fees for employees and currently enrolled students. The Counseling Center also serves the campus community through consultation and outreach services. Counseling is also available to family members of students and employees as well as community members through the counseling services practicum-training clinic, The Community Counseling and Family Therapy Center. The practicum clinic offers low sliding-scale fees for counseling offered by graduate-level practicum students who are supervised by licensed faculty members. Please contact counseling services for further information regarding this clinic.

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## FINANCIAL AID

A&M-Central Texas University offers student financial aid in the form of loans, grants, work opportunities, and scholarships. For more information regarding financial assistance, please contact our Financial Aid staff.

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## LIBRARY

- Warrior Hall 1001 Leadership Place, Killeen, TX 76549
- Phone: (254) 519-5798
- Website: <http://tamuct.libguides.com/index>

Professional librarians and staff are available to assist students with the use of library resources and services.

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## STUDENTS' ROLE AND PARTICIPATION IN INSTITUTIONAL DECISION MAKING

Students provide input into the decision-making process through the Student Government Association. Student representatives may serve on standing university committees. Various advisory groups and committees, many of which include students, are formed to address specific issues. In addition, the university encourages students not serving on formal bodies to express their ideas and suggestions so that they may be considered in the making of policy decisions. Contact the Department of Student Affairs to join the Student Government Association. Student representatives will be appointed or elected to serve on university committees.

Nursing student representatives are nominated by faculty and elected by the student body each fall for a one-year term to represent the nursing students. They attend a portion of faculty meetings and are given an opportunity to offer suggestions. They are also involved with pinning ceremonies.

Requirements for serving as a nursing student representative align with the university student government requirements:

- Actively registered student
- Undergraduates must maintain at least a cumulative 2.0; graduate students must maintain a cumulative 3.0
- Good standing with institution (though includes GPA, also includes conduct/behavioral)
- Represent the university in a professional and ethical manner
- Serve on one SGA or university committee
- Active participation and attendance

## Student Responsibilities and Policies

When providing care to clients, students are held to professional standards for registered nurses. This includes but is not limited to adherence to the Texas Nurse Practice Act (NPA), university and agency policies, and the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics.

### General

- Students are responsible for adhering to all the requirements in both the Texas A&M University-Central Texas Student Handbook and in the Texas A&M University-Central Texas Nursing Student Handbook.
- Students must remain in good standing with the Board of Nursing sufficient to maintain licensure as a Registered Nurse in Texas or a Compact state for the duration of their time in the program.
- Students are responsible for reading the syllabi and guidelines for each nursing course and seeking clarification from the course instructor. Students are responsible for following course guidelines.
- Students are expected to be prompt for any synchronous online meetings and are responsible for all material presented and assigned.
- Assignments will be posted on the date due unless prior arrangements are made with the appropriate instructor. If a paper is submitted late, points will be deducted from the grade of the paper. If a paper is deemed incomplete by the instructor, the paper may be returned to the student to correct; late points will be deducted as indicated.
- It is the student's responsibility to discuss questions concerning grades on written assignments or examinations with the appropriate instructor.
- Each student is responsible for having a personal computer that meets university technical standards and reliable internet access.
- Each student is responsible for information posted on Canvas. Communication from course instructors, and other students may be posted at any time and should be checked daily. All assignments will be submitted via canvas in the appropriate assignment unless otherwise instructed by the instructor.
- Students are held to the university's expectations of Academic Integrity.

### Department Policy on Artificial Intelligence

The ethical utilization of AI is permitted unless notified by the course instructor. While original thinking must originate from students, AI may be utilized to enrich ideas and facilitate critical evaluation of AI-generated outcomes. Assignments may be provided to assess accuracy in response to specific prompts. AI tools will be employed to augment some learning objectives.

The following general guidelines should be followed to ensure fair and transparent use of AI tools such as ChatGPT. By following these guidelines, students can ethically and responsibly use AI tools in their writing and ensure that their work reflects their own intellectual efforts and ideas.

- AI tools may be used as aid in the writing process, but not as a substitute of your original work. Always clearly acknowledge the source of any information or text generated by the tool.
- Refrain from plagiarizing or presenting AI-generated text as original work, even if it has been modified or edited.
- Protect personal information and privacy when using AI tools. Be aware of the data being shared and the potential for this information to be used or shared in ways that may not align with personal values or beliefs.
- Take accountability for the content generated by AI tools, including the accuracy and bias of the information. It is important to critically evaluate the output and make any necessary corrections or adjustments before using it in written work.

(Adapted from ChatGPT information)

### Specific Requirements for Use of AI in Course Activities and Assessments

- Review assignment instructions carefully. Assignments will vary in regard to whether and to what extent the use of AI tools is allowed. Allowable proportions of AI-generated content vs. original work will be clearly specified in the instructions for each individual assignment.
- If you utilize an AI tool for an assignment, you must:
  - Cite the program utilized
  - Specify the date it was accessed
  - Include the prompt that was used
  - Clearly indicate which portions of the work were generated using AI

- Optional (?): provide a brief reflection on how the tool was used and the way you have modified or enhanced the AI-generated text
- The student responsible for any errors in AI-generated work and points may be deducted accordingly.

## **CLINICAL/PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS**

### **Background Checks**

Because health care providers are entrusted with the health, safety and welfare of patients, have access to controlled substances and confidential information, and operate in settings that require the exercise of good judgment and ethical behavior, criminal background checks are required.

The Texas Board of Nursing (BON) has initiated a process for nursing school applicants to complete background check requirements for licensure. Verification of licensure by the school is conducted as a condition of admission. An additional background check conducted by university may be required for certain clinical agencies. Students will be notified in writing at the start of the semester in which a background check is required. Background check results will be kept in the student's confidential department file, not with academic records. The cost of background checks is the responsibility of the student.

### **Professional Liability Insurance**

All nursing majors in clinical settings must be covered by Professional Liability insurance. Professional liability limits should include occurrence-based professional liability insurance, in amounts of at least \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 aggregate. Students are responsible for purchase and providing proof of professional liability insurance by the end of the first semester of attendance, and maintaining coverage throughout practicum experiences.

### **Vaccine Policy**

Affiliated clinical agencies may require proof of immunizations prior to completing educational activities within their organization. Students are expected to comply with and provide proof of immunizations to the department of nursing upon request. Students will be notified in writing of clinical agency requirements

## Dress Code for Community Agencies

There may be times when you interact with members of the community in order to complete class projects. During these times, business casual professional dress is required. Examples include:

Blouses/shirts without messages (no T-shirts or tank tops),

Dresses or long pants/slacks (no shorts, short skirts)

May wear scrubs, if appropriate for clinical site

Closed toed shoes (no flip-flops)

Nursing Program Name Tag

## Grading and Evaluations

### Grading

A four-point (4.0) grading system is utilized in Nursing. The grading scale is as follows:

- A: Excellent, Four grade points per credit hour 90 - 100
- B: Good, Three grade points per credit hour 80 - 89
- C: Fair, Two grade points per credit hour 70 - 79
- D\*: Poor, One grade point per credit hour 60 - 69
- F\*: Failure, No grade points Below 60
- I: Incomplete, No grade points
- NR: Not Reported
- W: Withdrawn

\* There will be no rounding of final grades to the next letter grade.

\* Minimum academic requirements for retention in the program are a grade of “C” in all nursing courses. A grade of “D” is considered a failing grade in the Nursing Program. Graduate students must maintain a 3.0 or higher GPA to avoid academic probation or suspension. Refer to the graduate school policies for questions regarding grades, progression, readmission, and graduation.

### Use of Standardized Testing

The Department of Nursing may utilize computerized exams throughout the program as a component of course grades and for program evaluation. Remote proctoring through the learning management system allows students to take exams off campus. Students are expected to comply with the requirements and standards of the remote proctoring service regarding exam security. Violations of security as reported by remote proctoring services will be investigated by course faculty and submitted to student conduct if warranted.

### Absence Policy

Class attendance, whether online or face to face, is an important factor for academic success and each student should accept the responsibility for regular attendance. Texas A&M University-Central Texas recognizes each student as an adult with adult attitudes and responsibilities and further recognizes the unique relationship between faculty and students and the responsibility each has toward the other.

The following guidelines have been structured for implementation of Texas A&M University-Central Texas’s student absence policy:

Student absences are considered by the university to be a matter strictly between the individual student and faculty member. The faculty member has the responsibility and authority to determine if make-up work can be done due to absences. Students may request make-up consideration for valid and verifiable reasons such as illness, death in the immediate family, legal proceedings or participation in sponsored university activities. It is the responsibility of students who participate in university-sponsored activities to obtain a written explanation for their absence from the faculty/staff member responsible for the activity.

## EVALUATION OF FACULTY, COURSES, AND PROGRAM

- Student participation in faculty, course, and program evaluations is both the student's right and responsibility. The process of evaluation is viewed as the student's opportunity for input into curriculum development and the assessment of faculty effectiveness and student learning needs. Students are therefore encouraged to participate in all evaluations which will be completed at the end of each semester.
- The evaluations are anonymous.

### Disciplinary Guidelines

Any of the following disciplinary actions may be utilized with students in an effort to correct academic deficiencies and/or unprofessional conduct. Professional conduct is marked by honesty and ethical behavior, accountability, confidentiality, professional conduct and courtesy, safety, responsibility within the academic institution and clinical agency, and competency and growth. The disciplinary actions which are invoked will depend on the severity of the infraction (an act of omission or commission) and potential result of the student's actions(s). The disciplinary action taken will also depend on whether there is a pattern of behavior demonstrated.

Students in the nursing program are subject to the student code of conduct and to disciplinary action as described in the graduate student handbook. In addition, students who engage in conduct which is unprofessional or violates the student code of conduct may be dismissed from the nursing program.

The nurse practice act also has statements referring to professional conduct (**§213.27. Good Professional Character.**) and affirmative duty to report unprofessional conduct. All sources will be used in evaluating instances of student misconduct. Information from the nurse practice includes:

### **§213.27. Good Professional Character.**

(a) Good professional character is the integrated pattern of personal, academic and occupational behaviors which, in the judgment of the Board, indicates that an individual is able to consistently conform his or her conduct to the requirements of the

Nursing Practice Act, the Board's rules and regulations, and generally accepted standards of nursing practice including, but not limited to, behaviors indicating honesty, accountability, trustworthiness, reliability, and integrity.

(b) Factors to be used in evaluating good professional character in eligibility and disciplinary matters are:

(1) Good professional character is determined through the evaluation of behaviors demonstrated by an individual in his or her personal, academic and occupational history. An individual's education, and experience necessarily affect the nature and extent of behavioral history and, therefore, shall be considered in each evaluation.

(2) A person who seeks to obtain or retain a license to practice professional or vocational nursing shall provide evidence of good professional character which, in the judgment of the Board, is sufficient to insure that the individual can consistently act in the best interest of patients/clients and the public in any practice setting. Such evidence shall establish that the person:

(A) is able to distinguish right from wrong;

(B) is able to think and act rationally;

(C) is able to keep promises and honor obligations;

(D) is accountable for his or her own behavior;

(E) is able to practice nursing in an autonomous role with patients/clients, their families, significant others, and members of the public who are or who may become physically, emotionally, or financially vulnerable;

(F) is able to recognize and honor the interpersonal boundaries appropriate to any therapeutic relationship or health care setting; and

(G) is able to promptly and fully self-disclose facts, circumstances, events, errors, and omissions when such disclosure could enhance the health status of patients/clients or the public or could protect patients/clients or the public from unnecessary risk of harm.

*Adapted from Texas Board of Nursing: Rules and Regulations*

In addition, the nurse must conduct themselves with civility, kindness, and respect for colleagues, co-workers, employees, students, and others.

*Adopted from the American Nurse's Association Code of Ethics for Nurses.*

### Written Warning

A faculty member will meet with the student to discuss an area of concern. The concern and corrective action, if needed, is documented and signed on a Faculty/Student Interaction Form (Appendix A).

- The original of the interaction form is kept in the student's file. A copy will be given to the student and the faculty member. The Nursing Program Director and course leader will be notified of the written warning.

### Contract

- When a corrective action is indicated, a written contract will be formulated.
- The contract will include a description of the concern and a plan of action to correct the problem(s) and/or requirements to be met, as well as the expected time period/limit for the plan of action.
- The contract will also state the consequences for failure to meet the stipulations and/or further violation of professional standards, which may include course failure and inability to progress in the program.
- Follow-up will take place at the end of the period specified on the contract. The faculty member and student will meet to evaluate the disciplinary action. The results will be stated in writing on the interaction form.

### Student Academic and Student Affairs

Disciplinary Action is addressed in the TAMUCT Student Affairs policies and procedures and is to be followed by students in the Nursing Program. For the latest guidelines regarding student affairs policies and procedures please access here:

<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/>

### Pinning/Recognition Ceremony

The pinning ceremony is a traditional part of the rite of passage in the nursing profession.

- The details of the pinning ceremony will be decided by student representatives and a designated faculty member.
- Special recognition and awards may also be delivered at this time.
- The pins are purchased much like a class ring and are made available for the ceremony.

The ceremony time and date will be announced approximately 60 days prior to the event.

### Note:

If a topic is not addressed in this handbook, please refer to the University Graduate School Catalog for guidance.

Appendix A: Faculty/Student Interaction Form

Texas A&M University-Central Texas  
Nursing Department  
Faculty/Student Interaction Form

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Concern:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Contract: \_\_\_N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

By Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Member Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Director**