

**Kent State University  
College of Nursing**



**Graduate Student Handbook  
AY 2019-2020**

## Table of Contents

Useful Links.....	5
Contact Information .....	6
Programs' Missions, Goals, and Objectives .....	8
College of Nursing Mission .....	8
College of Nursing Goals.....	8
College of Nursing Graduate Programs .....	8
PhD in Nursing Program.....	8
Outcomes .....	8
DNP Program .....	9
Outcomes .....	9
MSN Program.....	9
Clinical Nurse Specialist.....	9
Nurse Practitioner .....	9
Nurse Educator.....	9
Nursing Administration and Systems Leadership.....	9
MSN Outcomes.....	10
Certificate .....	10
Admission Policies and Procedures .....	11
Admission Requirements .....	11
Licensure .....	11
Admission Procedures .....	11
Conditional Admission.....	11
Guest Admission .....	12
Transfer Credits.....	13
Progression Policies and Procedures .....	14
Academic Standing .....	15
Extension of Time Limits.....	16
Leave of Absence .....	16
Reinstatement .....	16
Academic Complaints.....	17
DNP Program Policies .....	18
DNP Scholarly Practice Project Guidelines .....	18

DNP Scholarly Practice Project Team .....	18
Composition of the Project Team .....	18
Criteria for Project Team Membership .....	18
Process for Selecting the Project Team Chair.....	18
Role of Faculty Committee Members .....	19
Scholarly Practice Project Proposal Defense .....	19
PhD Program Policies .....	22
<i>Time Limits</i> .....	22
Candidacy Information.....	22
Purpose .....	22
Eligibility for Examination.....	22
Preparation for the Examination.....	22
Application for Scheduling Candidacy Exam .....	22
The Examination.....	22
The Written Examination.....	23
Oral Examination .....	23
Examination Outcomes.....	23
Pass .....	23
Failure of Candidacy Exam .....	24
Dissertation and Graduation.....	24
Terminology Associated with the Dissertation .....	24
Dissertation Chair: .....	24
Dissertation Committee: .....	25
Termination of Dissertation Chair Relationship:.....	25
Termination of Dissertation Committee Members:.....	25
Dissertation Proposal Defense:.....	25
Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval .....	26
Conducting Research.....	26
Preliminary Approval of Dissertation and Pre-Defense Meeting.....	26
Selection of the Moderator .....	27
Dissertation Oral Defense.....	27
Order of the Defense.....	27
Determination of Success or Failure of Defense .....	27

Report of Dissertation Final Examination Form .....	27
Repeating the Oral Defense.....	28
Submission of Final Dissertation.....	28
Dissertation Submission .....	28
Timeline (Or Sequencing Of) For Dissertation Activities: .....	28
Program Planning and Advising.....	30
Program Plan.....	30
Advising .....	30
The Office of Student Services.....	30
Concentration Coordinators and Program Directors .....	30
Change in Program or Concentration.....	31
Practicum Requirements .....	32
GSN Blackboard Learn Course.....	32
Typhon .....	32
Preceptor/Clinical Agency Selection .....	32
Clinical Compliance Policy.....	33
Student Conduct in Clinical Settings .....	34
Appearance Standards .....	34
Cleanliness.....	34
Attire.....	34
Hair .....	35
Jewelry.....	35
Nails.....	35
Body Art .....	35
Other .....	35
Professional Liability Insurance .....	35
Clinical Incident Reports.....	35
Graduate Student Research and Scholarship.....	32
Student Organizations and College of Nursing Committees .....	37

## Welcome

Welcome to Kent State University (KSU) College of Nursing (CON) graduate programs. KSU's graduate nursing programs have expanded from the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree in 1977, to the Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing (PhD), and finally, to the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) in 2011. The College also offers certificates for graduate-prepared nurses who want to expand their scope of practice and advance their careers.

The material in this handbook supplements information provided in the KSU Catalog, Policy Register, and Division of Graduate Studies. Students are responsible for knowing policies, procedures and academic regulations of the College and the University. A "Guide to Graduate Education" can be accessed from KSU Graduate Studies at <https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/guide-to-graduate-education> and contains the policies and procedures applicable to the University's graduate education community.

On behalf of KSU CON, I wish you much success in your graduate studies.

Sincerely,



Wendy Umberger PhD PMHCNS-BC  
Associate Dean for Graduate Programs

## Useful Links

Blackboard Support Help: <http://help.blackboard.com>

Calendars and Deadlines: <http://www.kent.edu/registrar/calendars-deadlines>  
<https://www.kent.edu/academic-calendar>

Commencement: <http://www.kent.edu/commencement>

Division of Graduate Studies: <https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies>

Kent State University Catalog: <http://catalog.kent.edu/>

Kent State University Policy Register: <https://www.kent.edu/policyreg>

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## **Programs' Missions, Goals, and Objectives**

### **College of Nursing Mission**

The mission of Kent State University (KSU) College of Nursing (CON) is to discover, create, apply and share nursing knowledge, as well as to foster ethical and humanitarian values in addressing health care needs of Ohio and the global community. The CON applies professional nursing standards and competencies across a variety of undergraduate and graduate programs to prepare students to reach their fullest potentials. Students engage in diverse learning environments to foster critical thinking and attain excellence in providing care for diverse populations and advancing knowledge.

### **College of Nursing Goals**

1. Prepare students with a quality education that affords them the opportunity to achieve career success through licensure, certification or other professional distinction;
2. Cultivate an environment of collaboration, excellence, discovery, creativity and for learning, scholarship and professional development;
3. Provide leadership in the community and to the profession;
4. Advance innovation and excellence in teaching to support student success;
5. Promote excellence in research and creative endeavors; and
6. Engage with the world beyond our campuses.

### **College of Nursing Graduate Programs**

KSU CON offers the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Nursing, the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), and certificates. An MSN/Master of Business Administration (MBA) dual degree program is also offered. The PhD in Nursing is offered jointly with the University of Akron (UA) School of Nursing. For listings of program courses and requirements, see the current KSU catalog (<http://catalog.kent.edu/>).

### ***PhD in Nursing Program***

The PhD in Nursing degree prepares nurse scientists to develop knowledge to advance health, health care and the nursing profession. Graduates lead and promote innovative scholarly endeavors within and across disciplines and assume leadership roles in the profession.

The degree program is offered jointly between KSU and the University of Akron (UA), which allows students the opportunity to take advantage of academic study, faculty, and resources at both universities. Diploma and transcripts are issued from the university to which the student was admitted.

### ***Outcomes***

Graduates of the PhD program are prepared to:

1. Generate new knowledge that contributes to the advancement of health, health care, and nursing science;
2. Disseminate advances in scientific knowledge;
3. Use collaborative, interdisciplinary, and innovative approaches to knowledge generation;



4. Assume leadership roles in health care and education as researchers, educators, and advanced clinicians; and
5. Serve as stewards of the body of knowledge for the discipline of nursing.

### ***DNP Program***

The DNP degree prepares advanced practice nurses to become clinical scholars, leaders in healthcare, and experts in advanced nursing practice. Students will develop leadership skills to affect health outcomes for individuals and populations by translating scientific evidence into clinical interventions, managing health care systems, and collaborating with other health care providers. The curriculum incorporates both clinical and didactic content.

### ***Outcomes***

Graduates of the DNP program are prepared to:

1. Develop systems and strategies to promote health and fiscal outcomes across the health care continuum;
2. Provide expert, advanced nursing care to select populations within a variety of settings based on evidence, ethics, theory, professional standards and models of care;
3. Provide leadership and interdisciplinary consultation and collaboration to plan, implement, and evaluate programs of care delivery to improve health outcomes; and
4. Synthesize and translate evidence for implementation and dissemination to improve health care outcomes

### ***MSN Program***

The MSN program prepares nurses for advanced nursing roles. Depending on the MSN concentration, graduates obtain educational eligibility for national certification as clinical nurse specialists (CNS) or nurse practitioners (NP) or are prepared to serve in nurse educator or health care leadership roles. The program provides a foundation for further post-graduate and doctoral-level study in nursing. The following concentrations are offered:

#### ***Clinical Nurse Specialist***

- Adult Gerontology

#### ***Nurse Practitioner***

- Adult Gerontology Acute Care
- Adult Gerontology Primary Care
- Family
- Pediatric Primary Care
- Psychiatric Mental Health
- Women's Health

#### ***Nurse Educator***

- Nurse Educator

#### ***Nursing Administration***

- Nursing Administration and Health Systems Leadership
- MSN/MBA Business Administration

### ***MSN Outcomes***

Graduates of the MSN program are prepared to:

1. Acquire educational eligibility to meet standards for advanced practice certification or other advanced professional distinction;
2. Acquire competencies based on professional standards to assume advanced roles in nursing, and for leadership and career advancement, including doctoral study; and
3. Communicate, integrate and apply advanced nursing knowledge and skills to provide evidence-based, culturally sensitive nursing care and promote quality outcomes in nursing and health care.

### ***Certificate***

The CON offers certificates in all MSN concentrations to allow graduate-prepared nurses to pursue advanced education and additional specialization, and to prepare students to sit for national certification in selected areas. The following certificates are offered:

1. Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) Certificate
  - a. Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Certificate
  - b. Adult Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist Certificate
  - c. Adult Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Certificate
  - d. Family Nurse Practitioner Certificate
  - e. Pediatric Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Certificate
  - f. Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Certificate
  - g. Women's Health Nurse Practitioner Certificate
2. Nurse Educator Certificate
3. Nursing Administration and Health Systems Leadership Certificate

The program of study in each certificate represents concentration-specific coursework related to role and population competencies. After admission into a certificate, a gap analysis is completed for each applicant, whereby the applicant's transcript is compared to the certificate plan. Syllabi of courses to be considered for transfer in the gap analysis are examined carefully to determine equivalency. A course is transferred only if the review of the applicant's transcript and course syllabus indicates that the required course on the certificate plan has already been successfully completed and a "B" or higher was achieved in the course being considered for transfer.

The CON complies with the University policy related to certificates needing 50% course residence (i.e., at least 50% of courses must be taken at Kent State University). The CON also complies with National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF) standard, which stipulates that post-graduate certificate students who are not already nurse practitioners must complete a minimum of 500 supervised direct patient care clinical hours. An exception to this NONPF standard is for post-graduate certificate students who are already PMH Clinical Nurse Specialists and are seeking the PMH Nurse Practitioner certificate; direct patient care practicum experiences for these students should be sufficient to establish/demonstrate competency in the role and population-focused area.

## **Admission Policies and Procedures**

### **Admission Requirements**

#### ***Licensure***

Students enrolled in the MSN and DNP programs or certificates must have an active, unrestricted RN license in the state in which practicum coursework will be completed. Students enrolled in the PhD program must have an active unrestricted Ohio RN license, or for international students, proof of legal ability to practice as a RN in country of origin. Proof of the appropriate licensure must be obtained prior to registering for courses. Students' licensure is verified by the Office of Student Services via the state's board of nursing during the admission process. Renewals are also verified at the appropriate intervals to verify continuing licensure according to the CON Clinical Compliance Policy, which can be found at <http://catalog.kent.edu/colleges/nu/#CCP>. Graduate students must notify the CON of any change in status regarding their license.

The CON is not licensed to conduct business in all states. In order to be compliant with federal and state laws related to online education and consumer protection, as well as state professional licensure/certification regulations, Kent State University may not be able offer online programs to students residing in certain states. In addition, some state laws may impose limitations that could affect a program of study, including inability to offer clinical practicum courses. Since these regulations undergo continuous updates, non-Ohio residents interested in pursuing any CON online program or clinical practicum placement are advised to consult official KSU information on state authorization before applying to this program by contacting the Office of Student Services at 330-672-7911. Also, any student that is planning to move to a different state after being admitted to either the MSN or DNP programs must immediately inform the Office of Student Services at 330-672-7911 to determine whether he/she can continue in the program.

#### ***Admission Procedures***

Requirements for admission to graduate programs and certificates are outlined in the Kent State University catalog <http://catalog.kent.edu/>. There are two ways to enter the DNP program: applicants with a bachelor's degree in nursing (BSN) or MSN in advanced practice nursing from an accredited program will be considered. For students with an MSN, current, national certification as an APRN is required. Students who hold a BSN will be admitted to both the DNP and MSN programs. This will allow BSN students to complete MSN coursework and enroll in some DNP coursework after successfully completing their first two full-time semesters of graduate study. Students entering the DNP program with a BSN must first complete MSN coursework, earn the MSN degree, and obtain APRN national certification before they can continue with DNP practicum coursework and earn the DNP degree.

For PhD students, the CON will follow the general guidelines for determination of admission from KSU Division of Graduate Studies found at <http://catalog.kent.edu/admission-information/#text>. Based on admission criteria, a face-to-face or phone interview will be required before the final decision for admission is made

#### ***Conditional Admission***

Applicants who do not meet the minimum admission requirements, but whose application contains evidence suggesting strong academic ability, may be considered for conditional admission. The purpose of conditional admission is to provide an opportunity to address any

deficiencies and demonstrate the ability to satisfactorily complete graduate coursework. Students who are granted conditional admission are notified of the conditions and rationale for conditional admission. Table 1 outlines conditions for students in the MSN and DNP programs; Table 2 specifies conditions for certificates. Specific conditions for students who do not meet admission requirements for the PhD program will be determined by the ad hoc PhD admissions group. **Students who do not meet the conditions of their admission are subject to dismissal from the College of Nursing.**

Table 1. Conditional admissions for students in the MSN and DNP programs

<b>Admission Criteria Not Met</b>	<b>Condition</b>
Cumulative undergraduate (MSN) or graduate (DNP) GPA of 3.0 or greater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full-time students must earn a B or higher in each course during their first semester of study.</li> <li>• Part-time students must earn a B or higher in each course during their first 2 semesters of study.</li> </ul>
Statistics course with grade of C or better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An undergraduate or graduate statistics course must be completed during or prior to the first semester of study with a grade of C or better.</li> </ul>
RN license in the state where practicum hours will be completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student must show proof of a RN license in the state where practicum hours will be completed prior to enrollment in the first term.</li> </ul>
BSN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For applicants who have not yet completed their RN-BSN programs, proof of BSN must be given prior to enrollment in the first term.</li> </ul>
APRN Certification (DNP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students who hold an MSN, but do not hold APRN Certification must show proof of APRN certification prior to beginning NURS 70592 DNP Scholarly Project</li> </ul>

Table 2. Conditional admissions for students in certificates

<b>Admission Criteria Not Met</b>	<b>Condition</b>
Completion of graduate-level courses in advanced pathophysiology, advanced health assessment, and advanced pharmacology with a minimum B grade earned in each course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You are required to submit evidence of completion of advanced pathophysiology, advanced health assessment and/or advanced pharmacology with a grade of B or better within the first two semesters of enrollment consistent with established course pre- and co-requisites.</li> </ul>
Minimum 3.000 graduate GPA on a 4.000 scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students must earn a B or higher in each course during their first two semesters of study.</li> </ul>

**Guest Admission**

Individuals with a minimum of a bachelor's degree may apply to take up to 6 credit hours as a guest. Guest students are enrolled on a space available basis. A guest student who wishes to take more credits after the completion of 6 hours must apply for regular admission to a program. The policy on guest admission can be accessed at <http://catalog.kent.edu/admission-information/#text> Time limits for KSU graduate programs stipulate the time required for students to complete coursework after their first graduate course registration (i.e., this includes guest admission) at KSU. The policy on time limits can be accessed at <http://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/time-limits-graduate-degrees/>

### **Transfer Credits**

The Kent State University catalog policy for transfer of graduate credits allows transfer of up to 12 semester credits hours towards a master's or doctoral degree. The CON will evaluate applications for transfer credit according to the KSU catalog policy, which can be accessed at <http://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/transfer-graduate-credit/>

To request transfer of credits from another institution, students must complete the Transfer of Graduate Credit form (<http://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/forms-library>) and submit it to the Office of Student Services. A course syllabus for each transfer course requested must accompany the form. Please note that to be eligible for consideration, the course must have been completed within 6 years of the student's projected graduation date from the MSN program, or 9 years from the PhD or DNP projected graduation date.

The request for transfer of credit will be reviewed by the course coordinator (i.e., core MSN courses, and advanced pathophysiology, advanced health assessment, and advanced pharmacology), the concentration coordinator (i.e., concentration-specific courses), or program director (i.e., PhD or DNP courses). Review will be based on equivalence of the essential learning outcomes between the CON and transfer course(s). The transfer course must demonstrate through course content, student activities, and assessments that it meets or exceeds 70% of the content for the learning outcomes identified in the CON course. Recommendations for transfer must be approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs. Once the transfer credit has been approved, the Office of Student Services will update the student's academic plan.

## Graduate Orientation

The CON is committed to offering quality coursework and access to online resources to help students succeed. An online orientation assists student to transition to graduate school. Students are enrolled in the Black Board Orientation course following admission. There are three distinct Units to orientation, which are **mandatory**.

**Unit 1: Ready** contains three modules. The first module walks students through the registration process, including selecting a program plan and registering for the correct courses. The second module includes information about the Clinical Compliance Policy with instructions for completing Castlebranch and Typhon.

**Unit 2: Set** contains three modules that provide information related to Blackboard essentials, technology information, and resources for how to utilize the KSU library.

**Unit 3: Go!** is a live session. Before the semester begins, students participate in a group session with the concentration coordinator or program director in charge of your academic program. This will either be online using our web conferencing platform or face-to-face in Henderson Hall, the home of the graduate programs in the CON.

In addition to the CON's orientation program, Graduate Studies hosts a university-wide Graduate Student Orientation.

## Grading Policies and Procedures

Grading policies and procedures are described in the University Catalog, which can be accessed at <http://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/grading-policies-procedures/>. Grades below C are not counted toward completion of requirements for any graduate degree, but are counted in the graduate GPA. If a graduate student fails a course (i.e., receives a grade lower than C), he/she can repeat the course if he/she has less than 5 credit hours below a C and has a current grade point average of 3.000 or higher. If a student falls below a grade point average of 3.000 or receives 5 or more credit hours of grades below C, he/she is subject to dismissal from the program. The link to this policy is <http://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/academic-standing-graduate-student/>. Grading policies are more stringent for students in the PhD in Nursing and DNP programs. Students who receive a grade lower than a B in any doctoral course must repeat the course and achieve a grade of B or higher before enrolling in any further doctoral coursework.

To be eligible for an incomplete mark (IN) for a course that was not completed due to extenuating circumstances, graduate students must be earning a minimum C grade in the course at the time of the request. Appropriate documentation is required to support the extenuating circumstance(s). The student must request the IN mark from the instructor of the course, and it is the responsibility of the student to arrange to make up the incomplete work with the course instructor. This will be documented by the instructor in an "Incomplete Mark Contract" by the instructor and will be sent to the student electronically. When the work is completed, an appropriate grade will be assigned based on the instructor's evaluation of the work submitted and

a new grade point average computed. If the student does not complete and receive a grade, or is not granted an extension, the student's IN mark for the course automatically will lapse to the default grade designated on the Incomplete Mark Contract at the end of three consecutive semesters. Under extenuating circumstances, students may ask for an extension of the IN mark.

## Progression Policies and Procedures

### Academic Standing

The CON adheres to the University Catalog policy on Academic Standing-Graduate Student (<http://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/academic-standing-graduate-student/>). **All CON graduate students should review this policy thoroughly.** The MSN program and certificates adhere to the minimum grade and GPA policies in the University Catalog. The PhD and DNP programs' policies require a student to earn a minimum grade of B (3.0) for a course to satisfy prerequisite and graduation requirements. If a PhD or DNP student retakes the course and does not earn a B or higher, he/she may be dismissed from the program.

Enforcement of the Academic Standing policy in the CON is carried out at the conclusion of each academic term (i.e., Fall, Spring, and Summer) by the Office of Student Services. Each student's academic record is reviewed for progression towards degree completion, compliance with degree completion time limits, and achievement of grade requirements. Students with noted deficiencies may be issued a semester warning, placed on academic probation, or subject to academic dismissal. The Office of Student Services will make recommendations to the Associate Dean for a semester warning, academic probation, or academic dismissal based upon the criteria stated below.

A **Semester Warning** is a warning from the College to the student that their academic standing is in jeopardy. A Semester Warning shall be issued to any MSN or certificate student who:

- Receives a course grade less than B (3.0) in a single semester (see **Note** for exception regarding PhD and DNP students below);
- Receives a semester grade point average of less than a 3.0; or
- Is in danger of exceeding their time limit to degree.

(**NOTE:** A grade lower than B (3.0) is not sufficient to meet graduation or pre-requisite requirements in the PhD and DNP programs. Refer to the University Catalog for the complete policy.)

A student is placed on **Academic Probation** as a result of accumulating:

- Five (5) or more credit hours of coursework with a grade lower than B (3.0); or
- Two (2) credit hours of coursework with a grade lower than C (2.0).

A student who receives a semester warning will be required to meet with an advisor in Student Services and concentration coordinator prior to registering for courses for the subsequent term.

Consistent with the University Catalog Policy concerning academic dismissal, graduate students are expected to maintain a minimum 3.000 grade point average (GPA). A graduate student who receives more than 8 credit hours of grades lower than B (3.000) is subject to dismissal. A graduate student who receives more than 4 credit hours of grades lower than C (2.000) is also subject to dismissal. Additional dismissal policies for students in the DNP and

PhD programs related to failure to pass candidacy, proposal defense, or scholarly project and dissertation defenses can be found under “DNP Program Policies” and “PhD Program Policies” in this handbook. A dismissed student has the right to appeal the dismissal. Information about the appeal process can be accessed in the university catalog at:

<http://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/academic-standing-graduate-student/>

### **Extension of Time Limits**

Graduate students must complete their programs in the time specified in the University Catalog Policy (<http://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/time-limits-graduate-degrees/>). If extension of the time limit is necessary and appropriate, the student and advisor may request an extension by filing the Application for Extension of Time Limits in the Office of Student Services (<http://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/forms-library>). The request will be reviewed by concentration coordinator or program director, and then the Graduate Curriculum Committee. Extensions of longer than one year must be approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs. The student, advisor, and concentration coordinator or director are advised of the decision in writing.

### **Leave of Absence**

A leave of absence is granted for degree-seeking graduate students in active status who must be away from their studies for one or more semesters for personal, family, financial or other compelling reasons. There are several exceptions and exclusions to a Leave of Absence. Students should consult the University Catalog policy “Leave of Absence for Graduate Students” for a full description of the policy

<http://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/leave-absence-graduate-students/>

Students eligible for a leave of absence must complete the Request for Leave of Absence form (<http://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/forms-library>) and submit the form to the Office of Student Services no later than the last day of classes for the term in which a leave of absence is requested. At the conclusion of the leave of absence, the student is required to complete the Application for Graduate Re-Enrollment (<http://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/forms-library>) before he/she can register for classes.

### **Reinstatement**

In accordance with University Policy <http://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/academic-standing-graduate-student/>, a student who has been dismissed from a graduate program normally may not be reinstated in the student’s former program, or readmitted in any other program or coursework. However, after one year as a dismissed student, application for reinstatement or readmission may be made based upon evidence that former academic weaknesses have been appropriately addressed. The application follows the usual Graduate Studies admission process for a new admission, with the following additions:

- A letter addressing how previous academic weaknesses have been addressed;
- A statement of the student’s career goals;
- An updated CV;
- Three new letters of recommendation; and
- Supporting documentation should be provided in the case in which personal, financial, family, or other compelling reasons for poor academic performance are cited.



## **Academic Complaints**

The University policy for academic complaints is outlined in the University Policy Register, Section 4-02.3 (<https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-and-procedure-student-academic-complaints>). As described in the policy, the student should first attempt to resolve the issue with the course faculty. If this attempt is not successful, the student should contact the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs. It is also recommended that the student reach out to the ombudsman for assistance; information about this can be accessed at <https://www.kent.edu/studentaffairs/student-ombuds-2>. If the student wishes to lodge a formal complaint after discussing the matter with the Associate Dean, a written formal complaint can be filed according to the procedures and timelines outlined in the university policy.

## **DNP Program Policies**

### **DNP Scholarly Practice Project Guidelines**

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing requires that the DNP graduate complete a project that demonstrates ability to synthesize and apply the concepts learned throughout the DNP program. DNP graduates are change agents and experts in evidence-based practice implementation. The DNP scholarly practice project is a rigorous, theoretically based initiative that is geared toward applying existing research to practice and ultimately changing practice and improving patient, population, community, or organizational outcomes. In completing the scholarly practice project, the student must become an expert on a specific problem or topic and enact a change that is sustainable. The scholarly practice project must:

1. Enhance health outcomes, practice outcomes, or health care policy;
2. Reflect a culmination of practice inquiry;
3. Require partnerships or interdisciplinary collaboration to implement the project;
4. Utilize evidence-based practice as its foundation;
5. Involve evaluation of a practice change, or health care, practice, or policy outcome; and
6. Demonstrate achievement of the eight DNP Essentials for Doctoral Education.

### **DNP Scholarly Practice Project Team**

#### ***Composition of the Project Team***

1. The project team shall be comprised of three members - the advisor and two other members.
2. The student may request to have a content expert or faculty mentor serve on the project team; however, all project team members must be doctoral-prepared and have graduate faculty status to be able to vote on project team decisions related to the project. Content experts or faculty mentors who are doctoral-prepared and wish to be a committee member must first be awarded temporary graduate faculty status at KSU.

#### ***Criteria for Project Team Membership***

1. The advisor must hold a doctorate and be a CON faculty member.
2. All team members must have a doctorate and KSU graduate faculty status.
3. At least one of the two project team members must be from the CON; one member may be from outside the CON.

#### ***Process for Selecting the Project Team Advisor***

1. During the first semester DNP seminar course (NURS 70620) the student will declare his/her area of interest and proposed project focus. Based on this information, the DNP program director will make a recommendation for the project team advisor. If needed, the DNP program director may consult with the Graduate Faculty Committee.
2. Students may request a specific faculty member to serve as the advisor of the project team, but the request must be approved by the DNP program director.
  - a. The director of the DNP program will contact the person identified as the potential project team advisor to determine willingness/ability to serve in that capacity for the student.
  - b. The student and advisor will meet during the first semester of study to begin planning and outline a timeline for processes related to the scholarly project.

3. The director of the DNP program will notify the student of the assigned project team advisor.
4. The student will have the option of selecting two other members for their project team. The student will independently talk with potential team members and make requests of them to serve as members on the project team. Alternatively, the members may be assigned by the DNP program director or Graduate Faculty Committee.

### ***Role of Faculty Committee Members***

1. The team advisor will:
  - Be the faculty of record for the scholarly practice project proposal development and implementation in NURS 70592 DNP Practicum;
  - Guide the student through the Institutional Review Board process;
  - Be responsible for the review of the final scholarly practice project manuscript before it is distributed to other members of the team; and
  - Make a determination regarding the student's readiness to defend his/her proposal and for his/her final defense of the scholarly project.
2. Team advising members will:
  - Serve as content or methods experts for the scholarly practice project;
  - Serve as a resource for the student as they design and/or implement the scholarly project;
  - Read, critique, and/or edit the project document as requested by the team advisor; and
  - Attend and vote on the outcome of the defense of proposal and final defense of the scholarly project.

### ***Scholarly Practice Project Proposal Defense***

The development and process of completing the scholarly project are as follows:

1. Student identifies clinical issue of interest, performs a thorough review of the literature, and develops a PICOT question, if appropriate;
2. Student develops a proposal outlining an intervention or practice or systems change to address a current problem;
3. The student works with the advisor to refine a proposal paper; once approved by the advisor, the proposal paper is disseminated to the other committee members for approval prior to scheduling the proposal defense;
4. Once the proposal is approved by the committee, he/she will defend the proposal to the project team; this usually occurs at the end of spring semester in the first year of study after the student has completed 150 practicum hours (or a total of 2 credit hours of NURS 70592 DNP Practicum);
5. The student may not progress in the program until s/he has successfully defended his/her project proposal;
6. After defense is successful, the student proceeds with obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval; and
7. Once IRB approval is obtained, the student may begin the implementation phase of the project.
8. During the process of implementing the DNP project, students should be in frequent contact with their advisors and committee members as needed. The schedules of all committee members, including the content expert, shall be considered when selecting a

time for committee meetings.

If the student's defense of proposal is not successful, the project team may, at their discretion, recommend that the student have one additional opportunity to defend the proposal incorporating recommendations from the project team. The project team is not obligated to provide an additional opportunity to defend the proposal.

1. The team advisor and committee members, in consultation with the DNP program director and student, develop a written plan of action for the student that addresses any deficiencies. The plan, which must be submitted to the student no later than two weeks following the proposal defense, includes specific actions, time frames, and outcomes for remedial work (e.g., additional course work or repeat of specified courses).
  - a. The written plan is placed in the student's academic file. The advisor reviews the written plan with the student and a second defense of proposal is scheduled. The second defense proposal follows the guidelines described above.
  - b. Failure of the second proposal defense results in dismissal from the DNP program.

### ***Scholarly Practice Project Final Defense***

1. When data collection is complete and analyzed, the student completes a manuscript describing the literature review (evidence), the project methods (intervention and evaluation of outcomes) and findings/recommendations for practice.
2. When the project team agrees that the manuscript is satisfactory, the student presents a final project defense to the project team and other interested faculty and students. This usually occurs at the end of spring semester in the second year of study after the student has completed 525 practicum hours (or a total of 7 credit hours of NURS 70592 DNP Practicum). If the student is unable to complete his/her scholarly project after being enrolled continuously for 7 credit hours of NURS 70592 DNP Practicum, he/she will continuously register for 1 credit hour of NURS 70592 DNP Practicum each semester, including summer, until the DNP scholarly project is successfully defended.
3. A meeting will be scheduled for the student's oral defense of the scholarly project. The meeting date should be scheduled in line with University deadlines for defense of doctoral projects (<https://www.kent.edu/academic-calendar>). The advisor will designate the time of the final oral defense and notify all members of project team. The defense should be scheduled to allow at least ten working days for team members to review the manuscript. The candidate should be prepared to make further revisions after the oral defense.
4. The Division of Graduate Studies encourages all doctoral defenses to be publicized well in advance and open to all faculty and students. Copies of the scholarly project abstract are distributed by the candidate, with the approval of the advisor, to CON faculty and students and posted at least five days prior to the defense itself to familiarize members of the faculty and other students with the methods and findings of the scholarly project. The abstract usually contains a short biography (200 words) of the DNP student candidate and a short abstract (250 words) of the scholarly project.
5. The project team advisor moderates the project defense. At the conclusion of the student's presentation, the project team may ask the student questions about his/her project. Faculty members in attendance who hold Full Graduate Faculty Status may ask

questions at the conclusion of the project team questioning. The candidate will be evaluated on the quality of the project and presentation of findings.

6. Following the presentation and defense, the student and all other attendees except the project team are excused and the project team confers to make a decision regarding pass or fail. The student passes if there is no more than one dissenting vote cast by the project team.
7. Once the student passes the final project defense, she/he must inform the Office of Student Services in the CON in order to be cleared for graduation. Students are required to follow deadlines for application for graduation and submission of the final scholarly project manuscript that have been established for PhD students at KSU. This information can be found at: <https://www.kent.edu/academic-calendar>
8. Upon successfully passing the final project defense, the student must submit a final copy of the DNP scholarly project manuscript in APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition format to the Electronic Theses Dissertation (ETD). Refer to University guidelines for instructions on submitting to ETD, which can be accessed at <http://www.library.kent.edu/about/departments/technical-services/electronic-theses-dissertations>
9. If the student's defense is not successful, she/he will have one additional opportunity to defend the project at the discretion of the project team. The project team is not obligated to provide an additional opportunity for defense.
  - a. The project team, along with the student, will develop a written plan of action for the student to address deficiencies. The plan, which must be submitted to the student no later than two weeks following the defense, will include specific actions, time frames, and outcomes.
  - b. Failure of the second defense will result in dismissal from the DNP program.

## **PhD Program Policies**

### ***Time Limits***

Students in the PhD program have up to 4 years from initial PhD course enrollment to pass the candidacy examination. After successful completion of the candidacy exam, the student has 5 years to complete the dissertation (i.e., final oral defense and submission of document). A student may petition the joint PhD Admission Progression and Graduation Committee to extend the timeline adhering to the Graduate School policies, which can be accessed at <http://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/time-limits-graduate-degrees/> The Application for Extension of Time Limits form can be accessed at <http://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/forms-library>

### **Candidacy Information**

#### ***Purpose***

The purpose of the candidacy examination is to evaluate the student's breadth and depth of all course content and synthesis through a focused area of research. The examination provides the basis for evaluation of the student's readiness for completing the next phase of doctoral studies, the dissertation.

#### ***Eligibility for Examination***

Students are eligible to take the candidacy examination when they have completed all required course work. The last cognate may be concurrent with the candidacy examination (i.e., taken in the same semester). The candidacy examination must be completed within one calendar year following completion of coursework.

#### ***Preparation for the Examination***

With oversight by the student's advisor if needed, the student will review all coursework in preparation for the examination including a potential focused area of research. A variety of potential questions may be asked during the written exam, which are developed from PhD course content and the student's focused area of research. The student's advisor works with the PhD program director to appoint two other CON PhD prepared faculty to the exam committee. The advisor works with the student and exam committee to select the exam dates (i.e., written and oral).

#### ***Application for Scheduling Candidacy Exam***

The student should consult with his/her advisor during the last semester of their coursework about planning the date for the examination. The advisor then notifies the PhD director no later than two weeks after the beginning of the semester in which the examination will be taken, who confirms the student's completion of necessary coursework and appoints the remaining two committee members.

#### ***The Examination***

The candidacy examination is a two-part process involving both written and oral portions. The advisor develops examination questions in consultation with the other committee members. The advisor is also responsible for scheduling and discussing the process of the examination with the student, coordinating the review and grading of the examination.

### ***The Written Examination***

The first part of the examination is a written examination given at a location designated by the PhD director. Up to eight hours will be provided for completion of the written exam. The number of examination questions and choice of examination content are determined by the student's advisor in consultation with the members of the candidacy committee. Students cannot bring written resources or electronic storage devices (e.g., computer disks or portable memory drives) into the examination room. The examination is completed on a computer that is provided to the student. Upon completion of the examination, it will be saved electronically by the person administering the exam; a printed out a copy for the student to proofread is provided. The student may make editorial and formatting corrections to the file upon reviewing the proof copy. The student does not receive a copy of the exam questions or final proofed exam.

At the completion of the written examination, copies of the student's responses are distributed to the members of the candidacy committee. The candidacy committee advisor arranges for committee members to review and provide feedback of the student's written exam and prepares a summary of the committee's evaluation of the student's performance. The committee members achieve consensus on the summary, which is then shared in writing with the student no later than two weeks following completion of the written examination.

### ***Oral Examination***

The second part of the examination is a two-hour, face-to-face closed oral examination session that is presided over by the candidacy advisor. The oral examination is scheduled at least two weeks, but no more than four weeks, following the student's receipt of feedback on the written examination. The student, but not the committee, may elect to schedule the oral examination for a shorter interval than two weeks following the student's receipt of feedback. The purpose of the oral examination is to give the student the opportunity to respond to the committee's feedback regarding areas of strength and areas of concern in the students' responses to questions in the written examination.

### ***Examination Outcomes***

At the completion of the oral examination, the committee dismisses the student to evaluate the student's demonstration of breadth and depth of knowledge and ability to respond to questions, both orally and in writing. Following discussion, each member casts a vote of "pass" or "fail." The majority vote is recorded on the Report of Doctoral Candidacy Examination: Written and Oral, which can be accessed at <http://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/graduate-studies-forms-2>

### ***Pass***

The student becomes a candidate (i.e., PhDc) upon successful completion of the written and oral examinations as judged by a majority of candidacy committee members. The student is now qualified to register for Dissertation I. Students must register for Dissertation I in the semester directly following successful completion of the candidacy exam.

### ***Failure of Candidacy Exam***

If a student is judged by a majority of the committee to have not demonstrated enough breadth, depth, and synthesis of course content, the student fails the examination.

In the event of candidacy examination failure, the advisor and committee, in consultation with the PhD director and student, develop a written plan of action for the student to address these deficiencies. The plan, which must be submitted to the student no later than two weeks following the committee's decision of failure, includes specific actions, time frames, and outcomes for remedial work (e.g., additional course work or repeat of specified courses). This written plan is placed in the student's academic file. The advisor reviews the written plan with the student and a repeat examination, which will follow the guidelines described above, is scheduled. Failure of the second candidacy examination will result in dismissal from the PhD program.

### **Dissertation and Graduation**

The guidelines for dissertations can be accessed at:

<https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/guide-to-graduate-education/section-7.3>

Deadlines for applying for graduation can be found at <https://www.kent.edu/academic-calendar>

A dissertation is required of every PhD student before graduation. The dissertation topic, for which a proposal is submitted, must be approved by the doctoral dissertation committee. The dissertation proposal and the dissertation are described in the next sections.

The dissertation is an original investigation and demonstrates mature scholarship and critical judgment in the theoretical and methodological approaches to development of nursing knowledge. The dissertation is expected to be the first step in the development of a program of research and scholarly activity. A minimum of 30 credit hours of dissertation (Dissertation I) are required and these are taken the two semesters following successful passing of the candidacy exam. If additional time is needed for the dissertation, the student registers for 15 credit hours of dissertation (Dissertation II) each semester continuously until the dissertation is successfully completed and within the time limits set by the University. Defense of the dissertation must be completed in accord with university deadlines for graduation.

### **Terminology Associated with the Dissertation**

#### ***Dissertation Chair:***

The chair for the dissertation must be from the KSU CON, possess a PhD, and have Full Level 4 graduate faculty status. A searchable list of eligible nursing faculty can be found at <http://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/graduate-faculty-roster>. The dissertation chair should be either a content or methods expert for the dissertation topic and be willing to work with the student. It is strongly advised that the student interview the potential faculty member on admission to the program or before the end of the first semester of enrollment. Once the chair is selected, the student can begin to refine ideas.



***Dissertation Committee:***

The committee will consist of a minimum of four (4) members: the chair, two members from the CON who meet University guidelines, and one faculty member from a discipline outside of the nursing program at KSU who also meets university guidelines. It is highly recommended that the student work with his/her chair to identify the other members of the committee.

When the student is ready to defend his/her dissertation, a Graduate Faculty Representative is appointed by the Associate Dean in collaboration with dissertation chair or PhD director. The Graduate Faculty Representative most often comes from outside the student's department but may be a member of PhD in Nursing faculty but outside the candidate's area of research. The Graduate Faculty Representative represents the graduate faculty by noting whether the nature of the questioning and the responses meet highly respectable scholarly standards. If s(he) has some reservation regarding this, the reservations are presented immediately to the Dean or Associate Dean. The Graduate Faculty Representative is expected to question the candidate and to vote on the passing of the final examination. For further information see Kent State University guidelines for dissertation final examination, <https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/guide-to-graduate-education/section-7.3>.

***Termination of Dissertation Chair Relationship:***

When either the candidate or the faculty dissertation chair believes that they can no longer continue in the dissertation chair relationship, they both should consult with the KSU CON PhD program director. Beyond the first semester of the dissertation chair relationship, which should be considered a trial period, the investment of effort and resources by both parties indicates that termination is a step that should not be taken lightly. If after consultation with the PhD director, the candidate or dissertation chair still believes the relationship must be terminated, it is his/her right to do so.

***Termination of Dissertation Committee Members:***

When the candidate believes s/he can no longer work with a committee member, the candidate should meet with the chair to discuss the issues. The dissertation chair can meet independently or in conjunction with the candidate and committee member to resolve the issue. Any changes to the committee membership after initial approval by the Division of Graduate Studies shall be forwarded to the Division of Graduate Studies by the chair for ratification and approval. Requests for changes in committee membership should include a reason for such changes.

***Dissertation Proposal Defense:***

The dissertation proposal is a written document using APA format that includes an outline of the parameters of the projected dissertation topic with a rationale and statement of the problem to be researched, a preliminary review of the literature substantiating the need for the study, the methodology and design of the study, and the principle sources of information for the dissertation. The proposal is often the first three chapters of the dissertation: Chapter 1, Introduction and Statement of the Problem, Chapter 2, Review of Literature, and Chapter 3, Methods. A proposal defense meeting of the dissertation committee is required for approval. This meeting is confined to the candidate and dissertation committee members only. Approval of the proposal permits the candidate to proceed with the actual dissertation research. The Proposal Defense Form titled "[Approved Dissertation Topic and Proposal Form](#)" is completed

once the proposal is successfully defended. This form is completed by the doctoral candidate, signed by members of the dissertation committee, and submitted to the PhD director who submits it to the Division of Graduate Studies. Students must be compliant with the clinical compliance policy before the dissertation proposal defense can be held (<http://catalog.kent.edu/colleges/nu/#CCP>).

### ***Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval***

Any research that involves human subjects must have approval from a Human Subjects Review Board before recruitment and data collection begins. Simultaneous approval may be sought from the KSU IRB and/or clinical agency review board. The candidate works with the dissertation chair to develop an IRB application. A copy of the IRB approval letter must be retained by the chair and student. In addition, the IRB date of approval and number should be entered onto the “Approved Dissertation Topic and Proposal Form” and resubmitted to the PhD Director, who will forward it to the CON Office of Admissions for retention in the student’s file. Discerning the need to obtain IRB approvals from other agencies (e.g., hospitals and nursing homes) is the responsibility of the candidate working under the guidance of the dissertation chair.

### ***Conducting Research***

During the process of conducting dissertation research, candidates should be in frequent contact with their dissertation chairs, and committee members as needed. The schedules of all committee members, including the outside members, shall be considered when selecting a time for committee meetings.

### ***Preliminary Approval of Dissertation and Pre-Defense Meeting***

When the dissertation chair thinks that the dissertation is ready to defend, it will be distributed among the members of the dissertation committee. The chair allows at least a ten working day period for reading the dissertation and then convenes the dissertation committee without the candidate for the purpose of an initial evaluation of the dissertation. The Graduate Faculty Representative is notified of this meeting and invited to attend. The purpose of the pre-defense meeting determines the state of readiness of the manuscript for the final oral defense. The following are possible committee decisions:

- Unanimous agreement that the dissertation is ready for the oral defense and any suggestions for changes do not need to be seen before the oral defense;
- One or more committee members request that minor changes be made and wish to see the revisions before determining readiness to defend; and
- Committee members determine that major revisions are needed, thus necessitating postponement of the oral defense. If possible, a tentative timeframe for completing changes, in collaboration with the doctoral candidate and committee, are identified and a potential date for the next pre-defense committee meeting is set.

Recommended revisions are noted by the chair and communicated to the candidate. When, in the opinion of the chair and the candidate the appropriate revisions have been made, the chair will inform the PhD director that the final oral defense may be scheduled.

### ***Selection of the Moderator***

Normally, the moderator will not be a faculty member in the department of the candidate's major. The role of the moderator is to preside and moderate the oral defense. The Graduate Faculty Representative may serve as the moderator and query the student and vote.

### ***Dissertation Oral Defense***

When the dissertation is complete, a meeting will be scheduled for the candidate's oral defense of the dissertation. The meeting date should be scheduled in line with University deadlines for dissertation defense. The dissertation chair will designate the time and place of the final oral defense and notify all members of the examining committee. The defense should be scheduled to allow at least ten days for the examining committee to review the dissertation. The candidate should be prepared to make further revisions after the oral defense.

The graduate school encourages all dissertation defenses to be publicized well in advanced and to be open to all faculty and students. An email and public announcement will be made at least two weeks before the scheduled final oral defense.

Copies of the abstract of the dissertation should be available the CON prior to the defense and at the defense itself, to familiarize other members of the faculty with the methodology and findings.

### ***Order of the Defense***

The scheduled defense is typically two hours in length. The candidate will open the defense with a brief (i.e., 15-20 minute) presentation of his or her findings, after which the members of the examining committee will question the candidate in an order to be determined by the moderator. The candidate is expected to respond to substantive and methodological questions related to the dissertation. When, in the opinion of the moderator, members of the examining committee have had an adequate opportunity to question the candidate, the moderator may open the examination to appropriate questions from faculty members with full graduate faculty status. Once the questioning has been completed, the moderator will adjourn the defense and clear the room of everyone except the members of the examining committee.

### ***Determination of Success or Failure of Defense***

The candidate is evaluated on the quality and significance of the dissertation and the oral defense of the findings. All committee members will be polled for their votes (i.e., pass or fail) on the dissertation and defense. The candidate passes if there is no more than one dissenting vote cast by the examining committee. All members of the examining committee will affix their signature to a single form signifying their vote.

### ***Report of Dissertation Final Examination Form***

Report of examination results must be filed by the chair through the appropriate office. The form will be sent to the KSU Registrar as the single form indicating that the defense has been held, and that the student has passed or failed. This form must be on file in the Registrar's Office at the time the dissertation is officially submitted. The Report of Dissertation Final Exam can be accessed at

[https://du1ux2871uqvuc.cloudfront.net/sites/default/files/file/Report%20of%20Dissertation%20Final%20Examination\\_0.pdf](https://du1ux2871uqvuc.cloudfront.net/sites/default/files/file/Report%20of%20Dissertation%20Final%20Examination_0.pdf)

***Repeating the Oral Defense***

If the doctoral candidate fails the oral defense of the dissertation, the dissertation committee may consider conditions for another oral defense of the dissertation. The dissertation committee is not obligated to provide a second opportunity to defend the dissertation; however, the candidate may be granted one additional opportunity to defend the dissertation. Failure to defend the dissertation successfully means that the candidate must reapply for graduation according to the established deadlines for the term in which the next defense will be scheduled.

***Completion of Final Dissertation***

All comments and questions by the committee are to be addressed by the candidate in the final version of the dissertation. The final version of the dissertation will be in current APA format. See university requirements for specific requirements, which can be accessed at <https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/guide-to-graduate-education/section-7.3>

***Dissertation Submission***

Refer to University guidelines for instructions on submitting your dissertation, which can be accessed at <http://www.library.kent.edu/about/departments/technical-services/electronic-theses-dissertations>

***Suggested Timeline (Or Sequencing) For Dissertation Activities:***

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Typical Semester/year</b>
Select dissertation chair.	On admission or first semester enrolled
Select dissertation committee members.	First semester of second year
Preliminary draft of proposal goes to dissertation committee	First semester after Candidacy Exam passed
Dissertation committee approves dissertation topic and proposal File Notification of Approved Dissertation Topic and Proposal is filed.	End of first or into second semester
Verify Clinical and research compliance	Semester of Candidacy Exams
IRB approval obtained.	First semester of Dissertation I
Research is conducted.	Second semester of Dissertation I
Check final date for oral defense to qualify for graduation and prepare timeline to completion.	During Data analysis
Prepare draft of dissertation and allow a minimum of 10 days for the dissertation committee to read dissertation.	1-3 months
Graduate Faculty Representative and moderator identified.	2-3 months prior to final oral defense date
A pre-defense meeting is held. The committee meets to give preliminary approval of dissertation. Comments and suggestions by dissertation committee are forwarded by dissertation chair to candidate	4-6 weeks prior to final oral defense date

Final draft of dissertation is prepared and approved by chair.	4-6 weeks prior to final oral defense date
Final draft goes to the dissertation committee and at least 10 days are allowed for dissertation committee to read dissertation.	2 weeks prior to final oral defense date
Dissertation defense is completed. Report of examination results are filed with the CON Office of Student Services, Division of Graduate Studies, Registrar, and University Libraries.	By posted date in Academic calendar to qualify for graduation
Submission of final dissertation to Library ETDS system	Posted date in Academic Calendar

## **Program Planning and Advising**

### **Program Plan**

All graduate students pursuing an MSN degree or certificate from the CON will have a program plan in KSU's Graduate Planning System (GPS). The Office of Student Services enters a standardized plan of study in the GPS Planner for each student upon admission. Once entered, students must review their plans regularly and prior to registering for subsequent terms and follow them to ensure their enrollment in required courses. Students wishing to update or modify their plans must meet with the graduate advisor in Student Services or their concentration coordinator/program director.

To access the GPS plan:

- Log onto Flashline
- Select "Student Menu"
- Select "Resources"
- Select "Advising and GPS"
- The GPS Audit lists all courses completed, are enrolled in, and still need to complete.
- The Plans tab lists courses to be taken in the future.

Timely enrollment in courses is required. Students who delay their enrollment may become closed out of required courses, which can result in a delayed graduation date.

If a student takes a Leave of Absence or changes concentrations, the Office of Student Services will update the student's GPS Planner.

PhD students should complete a program of study with their advisor and update each semester.

### **Advising**

Student advising is a shared responsibility between the Office of Student Services, concentration coordinators and program directors, and in the case of PhD and DNP students, the PhD or DNP student advisor or dissertation/scholarly project chair.

### ***The Office of Student Services***

The Office of Student Services assists students with enrollment: developing GPS plans, providing registration overrides as needed, completion of required University forms (e.g., leave of absence, re-enrollment, transfer credits, extension of time limits, change of program), and in some cases providing supporting documentation for financial aid. Alterations of students' program plans in the GPS are carried out by the Office of Student Services in collaboration with concentration coordinators and program directors. The Office of Student Services is also responsible for admissions processing, graduation clearance, and monitoring student adherence to the Clinical Compliance Policy.

### ***Concentration Coordinators and Program Directors***

Concentration coordinators (i.e., MSN and certificate concentrations) and program directors (i.e., DNP and PhD) assist students with role transition and socialization as graduate students and with advanced role adoption. Students work with concentration coordinators or program directors, and program faculty to identify preceptors and clinical experiences that best fit the

needs of the respective course. Concentration coordinators and program directors work with students and advisors in the Office of Student Services to make alterations in their program plans. Concentration coordinators also complete the appropriate certification exam documentation and other licensure forms. PhD students work primarily with their advisor and chair rather than the PhD director. The PhD director supports the advisors and dissertation chairs.

### **Change in Program or Concentration**

Policies and procedures for changing the plan of study are outlined in the University Catalog. Students considering a change to another concentration or program within the CON should discuss their plans with both their current and proposed concentration coordinators/program directors. If the student wishes to proceed with requesting the change, he or she should contact the Office of Student Services for assistance in completing and submitting the Change of Program of Study form, which can be accessed at <http://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/forms-library>. An updated CV and goal statement must also be submitted. Change of concentration requests are evaluated at the beginning and end of each academic term, and at the time new applicants are considered for admissions each fall and spring. Change of concentration requests are made on a space available basis and utilizing the same evaluation method as new applicants to the University (<http://catalog.kent.edu/>).

## Practicum Requirements

For complete information on practicum placements, refer to the Practicum Information tab on the Graduate Student Nursing (GSN) Blackboard Learn course.

### Orientation to First MSN or Certificate Practicum Course

Students entering their first practicum courses will be expected to attend a mandatory orientation. You will receive a notification about the orientation from your concentration coordinator. Orientation sessions will be held early in the semester before the start of the first practicum course. Students are encouraged to become familiar with the GSN Blackboard Learn course described below much sooner than the mandatory orientation.

### GSN Blackboard Learn Course

The CON's GSN Blackboard Learn course contains resources for all graduate students to assist in locating preceptors, meeting agency standards for onboarding, and meeting the CON Clinical Compliance Policy, which is outlined below. Students are responsible for meeting all requirements by posted deadlines. Students may not begin practicum experiences until all requirements are met. Practicum experiences cannot be started in advance of the first date of the semester. An exception to this guideline is when students may meet with preceptor(s) and complete agency onboarding requirements before the semester starts. Practicum experiences must end by last day of the semester, or earlier, if specified by the course faculty.

### Typhon

The Typhon database is utilized by students in the MSN and DNP programs, and certificates enrolled in practicum courses. It requires a one-time fee which is payable by credit card upon initial login. The fee provides you access to the system while you are enrolled as a student and for 5 years after you graduate.

Typhon is a student clinical experience tracking system, featuring a comprehensive data base of clinical sites and preceptors, student profiles, clinical encounters, patient logs, student portfolios, and evaluations. The CON uses two Typhon data bases as follows:

- Nurse Practitioner concentrations and DNP program: <https://www3.typhongroup.net/np/>
- Clinical Nurse Specialist, Nurse Educator, and Nursing Administration and Health Systems Leadership concentrations: <https://www3.typhongroup.net/nsst/>

Documentation of practicum experiences (e.g., time logs and case logs) must be entered into the Typhon database no later than 15 days after the date of the practicum experience.

Directions for this are contained in each practicum course syllabus and in the Graduate Student Guide for clinical Placements, which is on the GSN Blackboard Learn site.

### Preceptor/Clinical Agency Selection

All students in the MSN and DNP programs, and certificates are required to complete clinical hours as a component of practicum courses. Selection of clinical agencies and preceptors is a mutual process among student, faculty, and preceptor, with final approval by faculty. Students are responsible for identifying qualified preceptors in appropriate clinical agencies and confirming with practicum faculty. Students who are entering their first practicum course are



assisted by their respective concentration coordinator to find a practicum site and preceptor during the semester prior to start of the first practicum course. Some practicum sites do not allow students to contact preceptors directly; complete information and instructions for these agencies is on the GSN Blackboard Learn course. Students may only complete hours at facilities that have a current affiliation agreement with the CON. Affiliation agreements are arranged between the KSU CON and the facility, **not** by students.

Course faculty and concentration coordinators and the DNP program director are available to assist students in securing preceptors as needed. Faculty must approve the preceptor and clinical agency selection. Faculty and students consider the following guidelines in choosing an appropriate preceptor and agency:

- Course and program objectives;
- Student's desired certification post-graduation;
- Student's specialization plans for practice, if any;
- Previous clinical placements in the program;
- Current and past work experience and employment.

Students must have finalized agreements with preceptors by the deadlines specified in the Graduate Student Guide for Clinical Placements, which is located on the GSN Blackboard Learn site. Failure to meet these deadlines may delay the start of clinical hours.

### **Clinical Compliance Policy**

All graduate students must adhere to the Clinical Compliance Policy outlined in the KSU Catalog, which can be accessed at <http://catalog.kent.edu/colleges/nu/#policiestext>. The current vendor maintaining student records documenting compliance is CastleBranch. More information about how to establish an account with CastleBranch, immunizations, physical examination, CPR requirements, background checks, and drug screens can be accessed on the "College of Nursing GSN" Blackboard Learn site. Clinical compliance forms are also located on the "College of Nursing GSN" Blackboard Learn site. The following deadlines are in place for students in the MSN, Certificate, DNP, and PhD programs:

- MSN and Certificate students must be compliant with the all components of the clinical compliance policy by the end of their first semester of study. If a student will be entering a practicum course in the first semester of study, he/she must be clinically compliant prior to the start of the course. Students will not be allowed to complete any practicum hours until they are compliant with the policy.
- DNP students must be compliant with the all components of the clinical compliance policy by the end of their first semester of study.
- PhD students must be compliant with all components of the clinical compliance policy at the time of the dissertation proposal defense. Students will not be allowed to defend their dissertation proposal until they are compliant with the policy.

Various components in the clinical compliance policy may expire while a student is still completing practicum coursework, such as the annual TB testing and influenza vaccine. If this occurs, CastleBranch will notify the CON. You and your practicum course instructor will

receive instructions via email from Student Services in the CON of the process you need to follow to become compliant again. You cannot complete any practicum hours until you complete this process and meet all components of the clinical compliance policy.

### **Student Conduct in Clinical Settings**

Behavior in the clinical setting must always reflect standards of practice for professional nursing and the graduate student role. Standards of professional behavior are reflected in the American Nurses Association's, *Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* and professional and legal codes for nursing practice (e.g., Ohio Board of Nursing, NONPF, NACNS).

Agency guidelines and consideration for patient safety and well-being must always be adhered to. This includes strict adherence to confidentiality and privacy laws (e.g., HIPAA).

Students with direct patient contact must maintain appropriate documentation on patients' clinical record throughout the semester within the scope of the student role. Students must complete any required training for access to patient records and for documentation privileges, according to agency policies.

Students must maintain the schedule for clinical hours and notify preceptor and course faculty of absences and plans for makeup.

Failure to adhere to these conduct guidelines may result in a grade of "F" for the clinical course, regardless of grades earned through course assignments or other evaluation criteria.

### **Appearance Standards**

The faculty of the College, our partner clinical agencies, and the clients we serve expect that students present a professional well-groomed and non-revealing appearance that reflects the nature of the program, profession, and facility. Safety and cultural awareness are also vitally important to consider in standards of appearance. Both faculty and students are to follow both the CON standards, and any additional standards of the research settings or clinical agencies to which they are assigned, which may be more stringent. Certain faculty, agencies, or specific units may establish additional appearance standards to those listed below.

#### ***Cleanliness***

Personal cleanliness and hygiene are essential both to portray a professional appearance, and to safeguard the health of clients, agency staff, and other students. Hygiene maintenance requires attention to odors. Students must use only fragrance-free body products since scented products (e.g., perfumes, colognes, lotions, deodorants, after shaves) can be offensive or allergenic to many people. Students should also be cognizant of body odor and bad breath and take measures to avoid both. Students who smoke should have no detectable odor of smoke on their person when in clinical setting.

#### ***Attire***

Attire appropriate to the type of experience (e.g., lab coat, scrubs) and agency requirements must always be worn during each clinical experience except in selected areas such as obstetrics, community health, and psychiatric/mental health, where scrubs or street clothes are worn.

Specific apparel requirements for these areas are provided by the affiliating clinical agencies, the course syllabus, and/or the faculty. All clothing worn should fit appropriately and at no time should breast or gluteal cleavage be visible. Clothing should meet the standards of the agency, be appropriate for professional appearance, and the College name badge should be worn. The College name badge should not be worn outside of the clinical experience in the program.

### ***Hair***

Hairstyles for men and women must be neat and clean. Beards and mustaches must be neatly trimmed. When in contact with patients, long hair must be pulled back and fastened by a clip or elastic band so that it does not fall forward over the shoulders or face. In nursing units that require covering of hair, such standards will be followed.

### ***Jewelry***

A watch with a second hand, a single pair of plain gold or silver posts worn in the lower ear lobe of pierced ears, and a wedding band are the only acceptable jewelry. Visible piercings with jewelry in places other than the lower ear lobes (e.g. upper ear, nose, tongue, eyebrows) are not permitted in the clinical area. All open piercings must remain empty. Spacers are not permitted while attending clinical experiences.

### ***Nails***

Artificial nails are not permitted during direct contact with patients in any clinical setting. This includes wraps, inlays, decals, and artificial nails. Natural nails are to be clean and less than one-quarter inch beyond the fingertip when in contact with patients. Nail polish, if worn, must be clear in color and not chipped or cracked.

### ***Body Art***

Tattoos or other body art must be covered as much as possible in the clinical setting.

### ***Other***

Excessive makeup is not acceptable and gum chewing is not permitted in the clinical or research setting.

### **Professional Liability Insurance**

While students are in their practicum courses, KSU provides liability insurance. This coverage includes a substantial out-of-pocket deductible. Students may, but are not required to, obtain their own student liability insurance. A copy of the liability insurance form can be found in GSN Blackboard.

### **Clinical Incident Reports**

If involved in an incident during a clinical experience involving self, a patient, family member, or staff member, the student must notify the preceptor and course instructor and complete a clinical incident report as soon as possible.

## Graduate Student Research and Scholarship

The College of Nursing encourages and supports graduate student engagement in research and scholarship activities throughout their academic studies. Both the College and University provide support for students.

### *Center for Nursing Research*

The Center for Nursing Research (CNR) aids students pursuing nursing research and scholarly endeavors. In coordination with the student faculty advisor, the CNR can provide students with relevant consultation and assistance with all aspects of the research or scholarly project. We can help with grant development, proposal review, project budgets, and potential funding opportunities.

Center for Nursing Research staff are available to work with students on manuscripts and publications (outside of class assignments). CNR staff provide editorial review and assistance with manuscripts by ensuring that manuscripts follow each journal's author guidelines, adhere to the required style guide, contain well-developed and organized ideas, and are as error-free as possible.

Other services offered include assistance with conference-related abstract submissions, presentations, and statistical support for projects, as well as help accessing PIVOT to search for funding opportunities.

The College of Nursing hosts monthly Brown Bag Engagement Series lectures/presentations with 1.0 continuing education unit (CEU) awarded for attendance per session. These presentations may be attended remotely and are video recorded for later viewing.

For PhD students, The Dr. Richard A. Zeller Nursing Research Fund is available to support nursing research by graduate students and junior faculty in the Kent State University College of Nursing. Subject to available funding, a maximum of three awards of up to \$2,500 may be awarded each academic year. Guidelines are available from the Center for Research.

The Laboon-Stenporche Endowed Research Fund for Nursing is available to support research and other related activities that expand knowledge regarding caregiver burden, stress and /or related experiences regarding palliative care or end-of life care with preferences given to those being cared for in the home. A maximum of two awards of up to 1000.00 may be awarded each academic year pending availability of funds to graduate and undergraduate students. Guidelines are available from the Center for Research.

For assistance contact:

Mary K. Anthony, PhD, RN, Associate Dean for Research ([manthony@kent.edu](mailto:manthony@kent.edu))

Denise Karshner, Grants Administrator and Editor ([dkarshner@kent.edu](mailto:dkarshner@kent.edu))

Michele Varso, Grants Coordinator ([mvarso@kent.edu](mailto:mvarso@kent.edu))

For more information about Research in the College of Nursing, please check our website:

<https://www.kent.edu/nursing/research>

### ***University Resources***

- The Graduate Student Senate Research Award is a competitive award that supports research or project-related expenses. This award is offered twice per year with application deadlines in the Spring and Fall semesters. Students are eligible to receive one Research Award per academic year. For more information, go to <https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/gss-research-award>.
- The Graduate Research Symposium is one the largest annual research events on campus. The event itself features oral and poster presentations by graduate students from a wide variety of disciplines. For more information on the April 2019 event, visit <https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/research-symposium>
- Awards and fellowship are available for graduate students. Complete information is available at <https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/awards>.
- The Three Minute Thesis is an event that allows graduate students to present research they are conducting for a thesis, dissertation, terminal project, as well as any other research project they are engaged in. The exercise develops academic, presentation, and research communication skills and supports the development of graduate students' capacity to effectively explain their research in three minutes in a language appropriate to an intelligent, but non-specialist audience. For more information, please see <https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/3mt>.

### **Student Organizations and College of Nursing Committees**

The CON encourages graduate students to participate in student organizations and committees.

- Several CON faculty committees (e.g., Graduate Curriculum Committee, Academic Complaint Committee) invite students to serve as members.
- The Graduate Student Senate (<http://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/gss>) offers opportunities for networking, research and travel funding, and socialization.
- The Delta Xi Chapter of the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI), has been recognizing excellence in academic achievement and supporting student success at Kent State University CON since 1980. STTI is dedicated to advancing world health and celebrating nursing excellence in scholarship, leadership, and service. Its members are nurses and nursing students committed to the pursuit of excellence in clinical practice, education, research, and leadership. Sigma Theta Tau is the second largest nursing organization in the United States and one of the five largest in the world.
  - Student membership is selective and by invitation only. Awarding membership recognizes, encourages, and actively supports nursing excellence and scholarship

by advancing professional development, scholarly pursuit, leadership, creativity, and commitment to nursing. Members receive honor cords to be worn at commencement, are recognized in the commencement program as honor society members, and receive benefits of membership in the organization, including career counseling, networking opportunities, conferences, subscription to the organization's journal and other literature, chapter activities and service. Delta Xi offers an academic year internship to work with the chapter, chapter leaders, and undertake a project consistent with the STTI mission. Research grant opportunities are also available. For more information on any of these opportunities, use contact information below.

- Students in all academic programs are reviewed for eligibility at least once yearly according to the following criteria:

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>BSN</b>	<b>RN-to-BSN</b>	<b>MSN &amp; Doctoral (PhD &amp; DNP)</b>
Minimum number of <u>nursing</u> (NURS) hours completed	½ of program total	½ of program total	1/4
Minimum number of overall program hours completed	N/A	12 (NURS or non-NURS)	N/A
Minimum overall GPA	3.5	3.5	3.5

- **For More Information:**
  - Email: [deltaxistti@gmail.com](mailto:deltaxistti@gmail.com)
  - Websites:
    - Delta Xi: [deltaxi.nursingsociety.org](http://deltaxi.nursingsociety.org)
    - STTI: <http://www.nursingsociety.org/why-stti/stti-membership/stti-member-benefits-and-resources>
    - <http://www.nursingsociety.org/AboutUs>