

**Donna M and Robert J Manning College of Nursing & Health Sciences**



# **Graduate Nursing Program Student Handbook**

**2024-2025 Academic Year**

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## Section 1

### **Purpose of This Handbook**

The Nursing Department Graduate Handbook at the University of Massachusetts Boston (UMB) is a comprehensive guide for nursing students across the Master's and Doctoral Programs. The handbook is a dynamic document subject to periodic updates and improvements. Students are notified of changes through official UMB communication channels, maintaining transparency and accountability. This handbook supplements the online University publications, which contain general information related to student rights, academic policies, registration, financial aid, campus facilities, and course descriptions.

### **About the College**

The Dean of the College oversees the overall direction and operations of the College, including 4 departments: Exercise and Health Sciences, Gerontology, Nursing, and Urban Public Health. The Dean is supported by an Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, an Associate Dean of Research, and an Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance. The Nursing Department is one of four departments within the Donna M. and Robert J. Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

The Department of Nursing Chairperson reports to the Dean. The Chairperson is supported by the Assistant Chair in Nursing, Program Directors and their Program Assistants. The Department of Nursing Chairperson facilitates implementation of curricula and policies developed by the faculty. Undergraduate Program Directors are responsible for implementing curricula and policies with support from the Department of Nursing faculty and Program Assistants. Undergraduate Nursing Program Directors oversee the programs professional staff working therein.

### **Nursing Department Philosophy**

The philosophy of the Department of Nursing has been developed by the departmental faculty and is in accordance with the missions and visions of the University and the College. This philosophy contributes to the development of program goals and provides direction for students, faculty, and graduates. The faculty believes that the nursing meta-paradigm concepts include human beings, health, the environment, and nursing and that the nursing discipline can be studied within a systems framework.

Nursing is an art and science with a body of knowledge concerning human beings, their environments, and their levels of functioning in health and illness in interaction with multiple systems- family, health care, community, and society. Many patterns of knowing undergird nursing knowledge, including empirics, ethics, personal knowing, aesthetics, and sociopolitical knowing. Ethical knowing includes rights and justice, responsibility, integrity and ethical comportment, and caring as a moral imperative. As an essential human service, nursing responds to the needs of society by implementing culturally sensitive, evidence-based nursing practice. The accumulation of evidence is facilitated by the use of the nursing process and research guided by theory, augmented by knowledge from other disciplines such as the physical, biological, medical, social, and behavioral sciences. Current and historical contexts from political, social, legal, ethical, and economic perspectives are also considered in determining nursing practice.

Entry into the practice of professional nursing requires a baccalaureate degree with a major in nursing. Professional nurses use the nursing process to work with individuals, families, groups, and communities to achieve optimal levels of wellness. Professional nurses are accountable and responsible for their nursing practice, applying leadership and management skills and

collaborating with members of the health care team as they apply the nursing process. Advanced practice nurses, who hold earned master's or doctoral degrees in nursing, assume leadership roles in healthcare delivery systems through research, practice, teaching, and/or administration.

The human being is an integral, whole, and open system with biological, psychological, social, developmental, spiritual, and cultural attributes. Humankind is the focus of nursing practice and is made up of diverse multicultural populations. The faculty believes that human beings possess the right and ability to function on their own behalf in health promotion and disease prevention, detection, and management.

Health is a dynamic process occurring on a wellness/illness continuum across the lifespan. Health care is approached through concepts such as patient-centered care, evidence-based practice, quality, safety, informatics, teamwork and collaboration to promote, maintain, and restore health. To achieve man optimal state of health, individuals, families, and communities respond with a variety of strategies that are influenced by multiple factors, such as culture, gender, genetic endowment, age, socioeconomics, and the environment.

The environment includes all conditions, circumstances, and influences surrounding and affecting individuals, families and other groups, communities, and society. Health is affected by the environment; some aspects may be altered to promote wellness, whereas others are fixed and require accommodations.

Education is a process in which changes, and learning is facilitated through interactions with teachers, learners, and the environment. Learning includes acquiring and generating new knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, and exercising sound clinical judgment, critical thinking, and reflection on actions. Optimal learning occurs when both the teacher and learner are motivated, open, engaged, and actively participate in creative, innovative, and integrative processes. Learning is fostered by freedom of inquiry in an environment of acceptance, trust, responsibility, and commitment to social justice.

### **Mission, Vision and Values**

The Graduate DNP Program adheres to the [mission and values of UMB](#) and the [mission, vision and values](#) within the nursing department in the Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences

### **Accreditation**

The MCNHS Baccalaureate, Master's, and Doctor of Nursing Practice degrees are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 655 K Street, NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001, 202-887-6791. The baccalaureate pre-licensure program is fully approved by the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing. The University of Massachusetts Boston is accredited by New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE)

### **Professional nursing standards**

The department identifies the AACN Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education to guide the implementation of its curriculums. In our nurse practitioner program, we use the 2022 Standards for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs [National Task Force on Quality Nurse Practitioner Education (NTF), 2016].

### **Shared Governance**

Faculty, students, and staff contribute to the evaluation and continuous improvement of the Nursing department and its programs. Students and faculty provide input into program evaluation and improvement through service on program and departmental committees. The College maintains the right to amend published policies, procedures, and requirements at any time to achieve stated missions and objectives.

### **Student Involvement in the University**

The Graduate Student Government is comprised of representatives from the graduate student body, acts as the voice of UMB students and is dedicated to enhancing the academic and professional development of graduate students. The GSA provides information about resources available to graduate students such as graduate traineeships, assistantships, funding sources, and student services. See information at [Government - UMass Boston \(umb.edu\)](http://www.umb.edu/gsa)

### **Program Communication Policies for Students and Faculty**

All communications with the University must be conducted through student UMB emails and this includes communication with the Graduate Programs. Students are expected to check their University e-mail on a frequent and consistent basis to ensure that they are staying current with all official communications generated by the graduate program but also by the Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences and the University at large.

Students can find their email address by logging into WISER and selecting the link to their "Personal Portfolio" and then viewing "Email Addresses". All students receive a default email account. The link to access UMB email is found at <https://www.umb.edu/it/software-systems/email/>.

## **Section 2: Academic Policies, Procedures, and Requirements**

### **Academic Policies, Procedures, and Requirements**

All graduate nursing students should familiarize themselves with the University's Graduate Academic Policies available at <http://catalog.umb.edu/index.php>

### **Admission**

Admission to graduate nursing programs is competitive and requires the submission of appropriate application and related documentation. Specific admissions criteria for each program are listed separately on the MCNHS website.

The MCNHS complies with the U Mass Boston policies on admission. UMass Boston prohibits discrimination and harassment based upon a legally defined protected class such as an individual's race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, religion, sex, gender, religion, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information, disability, and any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under applicable federal, state or local law, in employment, admission to and participation in academic programs, activities, and services, and the selection of vendors who provide services or products to the University.

## Disability-Related Accommodations

Both the College and University adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended (ADAAA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

[The Ross Center for Disability Services](#) approves and coordinates academic accommodations, provides resources, and offers training in assistive technology. If you are a student at UMass Boston and have a disability, you may be eligible for accommodations through the Ross Center. For more information about the Ross Center, including eligibility information and a description of the process for applying for reasonable accommodation of a qualified disability, contact the Ross Center via their website ([www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/disability](http://www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/disability)), or email [ross.center@umb.edu](mailto:ross.center@umb.edu).

Pregnancy, childbirth, pregnancy loss, and early parenting accommodations are provided by the [Office of Civil Rights and Title IX](#). For more information about this process or to seek accommodation contact CRTIX via their website ([https://www.umb.edu/titleix/pregnant\\_and\\_parenting\\_rights](https://www.umb.edu/titleix/pregnant_and_parenting_rights)) or email [CivilRights.TitleIX@umb.edu](mailto:CivilRights.TitleIX@umb.edu).

## Attendance

MCNHS follows the university policy for [attendance](#).

In addition, MCNHS requests that students who anticipate excused absences for religious observances, university sanctioned activities, or governmental obligations notify course faculty within the first week of classes so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Attendance in class, clinical, and labs is expected of all students. Students are responsible for meeting all course requirements and learning objectives. Should a situation arise that prevents a student from attending class, clinical or labs, the student is expected to notify the faculty member as soon as possible. The faculty member is not obligated provide make up work for absences, and students with excessive absences may be advised to withdraw from the course.

## Grading Policy

Letter grades are given in accordance with the grading criteria indicated in the UMB Graduate Student Handbook. Students must earn a B minimum of (83 total points) to pass a graduate level course.

For graduate students, the University uses a system of letter grades that are equivalent to numerical quality points according to the following table:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Quality Points
A	93-100%	4.00
A-	90-92%	3.75
B+	87-89%	3.25
<b>B</b>	<b>83-86%</b>	<b>3.00</b>
B-	80-82%	2.75
C+	77-79%	2.25



C	73-76%	2.00
F	0-72%	0.0
W	Received if withdrawal occurs before the withdrawal deadline.	N/A
AU	Audit (only permitted on space-available basis)	N/A
NA	Not Attending (student appeared on roster, but never attended class. Student is still responsible for tuition and fee charges unless withdrawal form is submitted before deadline. NA has no effect on cumulative GPA.)	N/A

Graduate students may also be given grades of: NA (Not Attending), Inc (Incomplete), Y (In Progress), SAT (Satisfactory), and/or AUD (Audit).

### **Incomplete**

See policy on incomplete grade at the following link  
<https://www.umb.edu/registrar/policies/incomplete>

### **Transfer Credit Policy**

Applicants who have completed graduate course work at other accredited institutions may transfer coursework toward the completion of a UMass Boston graduate degree. Transfer credits are restricted to up to 6 credits from such courses in which the applicant received a grade of B or higher. These courses may be accepted for transfer provided that they have not been used to fulfill requirements for another degree and were earned no more than seven years before matriculation in the program. There is a 24-credit residency requirement for the DNP program. See graduate catalog for transfer of credit policy <https://catalog.umb.edu/index.php>

The Graduate Program Director determines what credits are eligible for transfer based on a review of the official transcript at the time of admission to the program and a review of the course description or syllabus if requested. Once enrolled in the Graduate Program, students also can request transfer credit. Requests should be made to the Program Director and include a copy of the student's transcript and a copy of the course syllabus. Transfer credit decisions for either core or elective courses are made on a course-by-course basis. Courses accepted for transfer will show in student Wisier accounts but will not be included in the student's grade point average.

### **Requests to Take Non-UMB Courses during Program**

Students who wish to take a class off-campus need to contact their Graduate Program Director to ensure the class is acceptable for transfer. The Transfer Credit Approval form is sent to [external.credit@umb.edu](mailto:external.credit@umb.edu) to record the approval on the students. The Registrar's Office will confirm receipt and provide information for submitting an official transcript once the class is done.

## **Course Waiver Policy/Advanced Standing**

A student may seek a waiver/Advanced standing from a prescribed course in the Program if they have completed a course with substantially equivalent content at another institution or in another college of UMass Boston. Courses are waived course-by-course based upon equivalency and relevance. Courses must have been taken at an accredited institution, no more than seven (7) years prior to matriculation at UMB and received a grade of B or better. If a course waiver is granted, the student will receive 0 credits towards degree requirements and must take additional courses to complete the required credits for the degree.

Course waivers will be decided on a case-by-case basis, through negotiation between the student seeking the waiver and the Graduate Program Director. All waived courses require a written request submitted to the Program Director. Approved waivers are documented as W on the plan of study.

Advance Standing applies to students in the PhD and DNP program and the course waiver policy above applies along with the Advanced Standing cannot reduce the number of credits below 24 credits as part of the doctoral residency requirement including research hours and dissertation credits. Students who fail to complete their doctoral program cannot apply for their Advanced Standing master's courses for an additional master's degree from UMass Boston

## **Independent Study NU 796**

Students may complete an independent study to fulfill required or elective credits. Independent study credits vary from one to three depending on the scope of the project. The independent study should consist of study and work at the graduate level with a specified written product. The faculty member who agrees to work with the student in independent study must be a recognized expert in the content area. The student and faculty member must agree to the UMass Boston number of credits, scope of the work and the amount of supervision required (for example, weekly or biweekly meetings). A written agreement, signed by the student and the faculty member, must be approved by the Graduate program director in all cases of independent studies.

## **Academic Progress**

The office of Graduate Studies specifies that a student must make satisfactory academic progress (SAP) toward completion of a degree within the Statute of Limitations for the graduate degree.

The determination of SAP is based on the student's GPA and credits completed vs. attempted. Failure to meet SAP requirements may result in the loss of eligibility for financial assistance. Please note that the determination of SAP is not a substitute for determining student academic standing.

## **Statute of Limitations**

Each graduate matriculated student in the PhD and DNP must complete all degree requirements within eight (8) calendar years of entering the program. Students in the master's program must complete all degree requirements within 5 calendar years of entering the program. Any semester where a student is not enrolled in coursework requires payment of a continuation fee or the student will be removed from the program. A student may request an extension in extenuating circumstances. To apply for an extension, students should submit a [statute of limitations extension](#)

[form](#) to their graduate program director with a letter of explanation accompanied by a detailed schedule for completion. If supported, the form is then reviewed by the Office of Graduate Studies and Admissions and submitted to the Registrar's Office for processing if approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

All degree-seeking graduate students must maintain continuous registration. Students can register for program fee (CAS 600) on the WISER online registration system. Continuous registration must also be maintained even when a student is on a leave-of-absence from the program. Continuous registration requires a fee be paid to maintain matriculation. Failure to register prior to the registration deadline for the semester in which the student is registering for may result in late fees and classification as an inactive student. <https://www.umb.edu/registrar/policies/graduate-student-statute-limitations/>

### **Full and Part-time Status**

Students will meet with the program director prior to beginning the program to determine their academic plan. Students qualifying for federal financial aid must carry at least six credits per semester in the fall and spring.

### **Leave of Absence**

The Office of Graduate Studies requires that a student seeking a leave of absence (LOA) must petition the Program Director who provides justification for the request to the Dean of Graduate Studies. An approved LOA extends the statute of limitations for degree completion by the length of the leave. [Graduate - University of Massachusetts Boston \(umb.edu\)](http://www.umb.edu/graduate)

For the PhD program, students will only be granted a 6-month SOL extension with the program director and the Dean of Graduate Studies approval. The request must be put in writing with a rationale. PhD students can take up to 9 months to complete their dissertation defense if supported by their chairs and the director (i.e., this time frame will realistically allow for completion).

### **Academic Standing**

Academic standing is the basis for decisions regarding student progression, probation, graduation, and dismissal in the Graduate Nursing Programs. Academic standing is determined by the student's cumulative quality point average, a measure of all the grades the student has earned at the University which are applied to the course requirements of the Graduate Program.

### **At Risk of Course Failure Policy and Procedures**

At any time during the academic program that the student is determined to be at risk of failing, the student will be advised by the faculty course member. The student will be asked to meet with the course faculty to discuss his/her deficiencies and develop a plan for meeting the course objectives. An email will be sent to the student outlining a plan for the remainder of the semester. It is recommended that the student and faculty member set up a schedule to meet and discuss the student's progress in meeting the course objectives. If a student does not make sufficient progress in meeting course objectives, the student will receive a non-passing grade.

## **Progression Policies**

All full and part time students must maintain a cumulative average of 3.0 to graduate. Students must earn a grade of B (3.00) in all required courses listed on the student's program of study. Any grade below a B (3.00) is considered a failure in a required course. All full and part-time students who fail to maintain a 3.0 GPA may be subject to academic dismissal. If a satisfactory grade (B) is not achieved when the student repeats the previously failed course, the student will be recommended by the Program Director to the Dean of Graduate Studies for dismissal.

### **Academic Probation, Dismissal & Appeal**

Refer to [the Graduate Handbook](#) for policy on academic probation, dismissal and appeal.

Graduate Probation and dismissal decisions are based on the criteria stated below.

1. Graduate students whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 will automatically be placed on academic probation and are not considered to be in good standing academically. Both the student and their graduate program director will be notified of this probationary status.
2. A student who in any two semesters, consecutive or otherwise, has semester grade point averages of below 2.8 is subject to academic dismissal for failure to make satisfactory progress, upon recommendation by the program director to the Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education.
3. Any graduate student who has accumulated four (4) or more INC or IF grades will be considered not to be making satisfactory progress toward the degree, will be placed on probation, and will normally be barred from registering for additional classes until the INC/IF grades are cleared.
4. Students may also be placed on probation for failure to meet program requirements upon the request of the graduate program director.

A student who has been placed on academic probation in any two semesters, consecutive or otherwise, will automatically be dismissed from the program and the University. The dismissal decisions will be initiated by the Office of Graduate Studies, in collaboration with the Registrar's Office, after reviewing transcripts of graduate students who, based on approved program criteria, are subject to dismissal. The Office of Graduate Studies will then refer cases for dismissal to the appropriate Graduate Program Director for review and recommendations. A recommendation for dismissal can be waived by the Graduate Program Director upon request to the Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education. A request for a waiver should include the basis for the recommendation and the terms for successful continuation in the program. Final dismissal decisions will be made by and communicated to the affected graduate student, the Graduate Program Director, and the Office of the Registrar by the Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education. Dismissal Policies.

Additionally, a student may petition to repeat up to two failed courses a total of one time for each course during their entire program of study. If a satisfactory grade (B) is not achieved when the student repeats the previously failed course, the student will be recommended by the Program Director to the Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education for dismissal.

Graduate students may appeal dismissal decisions to the MCNHS Standards & Credit Committee. Instructions will be sent to the student on how to submit their appeal to the Standards and Credits Committee. Based upon review of the student's record and letter of appeal, the MCNHS Standard & Credits Committee will recommend conditions of Probation, or Dismissal and forward these to the Department Chair and Program Director. The Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education makes a final determination as to whether to rescind the dismissal. In addition, the Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education may add further stipulations to the reinstatement. All students for whom the dismissal is rescinded automatically remain on academic probation. Failure to meet any terms identified within the probationary letter will result in automatic dismissal without recourse to appeal.

### **Readmission of Students Who Voluntarily Withdraw**

In general, graduate students who withdraw from the program of study in good standing may resume their studies by completing a readmission form obtained from the Registrar's Office. Applicants will be notified in writing of their request for readmission status. Graduate students are referred to the Office of the Registrar website [graduate re-enrollment](#)

### **Readmission of Students Who are Dismissed**

All requests for readmission by dismissed students must be submitted to the Standard & Credits Committee. The letter requesting readmission should contain: new and pertinent information not previously presented to the Standard & Credits Committee that will assist the Committee in re-evaluating the dismissal. Students should make an appointment with the Program Director to discuss the appeal.

### **Code of Student Conduct**

All students are encouraged to review the Code of Student Conduct located at the following link: [https://www.umb.edu/life\\_on\\_campus/dean\\_of\\_students/student\\_conduct](https://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/dean_of_students/student_conduct)

### **Ethical Conduct**

Our graduate faculty are dedicated to sustaining an environment of respect and inclusivity. The graduate faculty strives to achieve the highest level of professional comportment and expects all students to do the same. We aim to prepare you to be a respected, independent licensed provider with professional behaviors that match your new role as collaborators and providers in the health care of persons, families, and societies. Therefore, we demand a high level of professional comportment consistent with graduate-prepared nurses. Unprofessional behaviors that may result in an academic warning include:

- Uncivil language with faculty or peers or in discussion postings
- Non-responsiveness to emails from faculty/staff (i.e., staff have sent 3-4 emails with no response)
- Unprofessional language with preceptors or staff
- Failure to notify a clinical site of illness
- Failure to adhere to policies at a clinical site
- Tardiness at clinical practica

## Human Subjects

Any study that involves human subjects must comply with relevant University and Federal requirements. The campus Institutional Review Board (IRB) must approve all research involving human subjects. Only after the dissertation proposal has been accepted by the committee may the student submit the required documents to the IRB. Data collection, subject recruitment, or consenting of potential subjects cannot start until IRB approval has been obtained. Forms and information about Human Subjects review can be obtained from the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) [website](#), along with forms and timelines.

All research and research-related activity proposed by any member of the UMass Boston community that involves human subjects in any way must be reviewed by the university's IRB. This requirement is based upon the university's assurance given to the Federal Department of Health and Human Services that UMass Boston researchers—faculty, students, administrators, staff—are aware of and follow all federal rules and regulations concerning the protection of human subjects in research as contained in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Part 46 (45 CFR 46).

UMass Boston has contracted with the University of Miami to provide free online training through the Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) for members of the UMass Boston community on issues related to the protection of human subjects in research. The CITI modules span a variety of areas including the assessment of risk, informed consent, and research involving special populations such as children or prisoners. The required modules can be completed in more than one sitting at the researcher's convenience. At the completion of the training, CITI notifies UMass Boston that the training has been completed and the researcher's name is added to a dynamic database monitored by the university's IRB administrator, Sharon Wang. See website for contact information <https://www.umb.edu/research/orsp/>.

To register for the CITI training, log on to <http://www.citiprogram.org> and click on the link "Register." Enter organization full name "University of Massachusetts Boston" from the "Select Your Organization Affiliation" section. Continue to Step 2. Students will then be asked to select a username and password. Follow the registration prompts until the main menu is reached reach the main menu and select one of 2 basic courses on protection of human subjects, the Biomedical track or the Social Behavioral track to begin the training. The selection of the focus should reflect the primary research activities of the student. Of note, if the student is conducting research at other institutions as part of their academic program or training, they should determine the training requirements of these respective institutions in deciding which course to take. For example, students working on research projects in the academic medical centers will likely be required to take the Biomedical human subjects training.

Questions concerning UMass Boston policy and procedures relating to research with human subjects, or questions concerning the CITI training and how to register for the training should be directed to Sharon Wang, IRB Administrator at (617) 287- 5374 or [sharon.wang@umb.edu](mailto:sharon.wang@umb.edu).

## Student Rights and Grievances

All concerns will be handled in accordance with written policies of the University of Massachusetts Boston and MCNHS. The college encourages direct communication for resolution of the concern. Concerns may relate, but are not limited to, the course expectations, the overall program of study, faculty, classmates, college staff, or other college activities.

For Course-related concerns or complaints, the course faculty member will serve as the student's first resource and primary contact for communication.

For Program-related concerns or complaints, the Graduate Program Director will serve as the student's first resource and primary contact for communication.

For College-related concerns or complaints, the Senior Director of Student Support, Success, and Engagement (OSSE) will serve as the student's first resource and primary contact for communication.

Should grievances or concerns arise as part of the educational experience students have the right to due process by following the steps outlined below. The following Grievance Procedure applies to all undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

1. Directly address the concern with the faculty member or staff member concerned.
2. If no resolution, let the faculty or staff member know your concern is unresolved and contact the graduate program director.
3. If no resolution, let the Program Director know your concern is unresolved and contact the Senior Director or the Office of Student Success, Support and Engagement (OSSE)
4. If no resolution, let the Senior Director or the Office of Student Success, Support and Engagement know your concern is unresolved and contact the Nursing Department Chairperson.  
\*For grade appeals, the nursing department chairperson's decision is final.
5. If no resolution, let the Nursing Department Chairperson know your concern is unresolved and contact the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
6. If no resolution, let the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs know your concern is unresolved and contact the Dean.

### **Appeals of Grades**

Students who dispute a grade received for a paper, examination, or course must first meet with the involved faculty within two weeks of receiving the grade. Discussion should focus on understanding the evidence for the grade. If a mutually accepted understanding is not reached, either party may ask to meet with the Program Director. The Program Director will make an effort to help parties involved to reach a mutually accepted understanding. If a satisfactory resolution is still not reached, students may appeal to the Nursing Department Chairperson, whose decision will be final.

### **University Policy on Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy**

The University of Massachusetts complies with applicable state and federal laws on non-discrimination, harassment, and retaliation including Title IX of the Education Amendments of

1972, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, and the Massachusetts anti-discrimination law. This policy states the University's commitment to assure compliance. Access the full [policy](#) here. The Administrative Standards for the Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy can be found here. [Office for Civil Right and Title IX](#) handles concerns related to discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment.

### **Rights as a Student and FERPA Guidelines**

The following link brings you to important information for graduate students at UMass Boston. It covers the required Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

<https://www.umb.edu/registrar/policies/ferpa/>

### **Filing for Graduation**

All graduate students are eligible to apply for graduation during their final semester of degree work. Applying for graduation assumes that the student will have completed all of the university and degree requirements as outlined by the student's major program by the end of the term selected. For further information, go to <https://www.umb.edu/registrar/graduation/applying>

All students are charged a commencement fee regardless of whether they will participate in the commencement ceremony. The MCNHS recognizes students as eligible for graduation in December and June.

### **University Support for Specific Concerns**

[Ombuds Services](#) is a confidential resource for any member of the UMass Boston community experiencing a university-related problem, conflict, or concern. The Ombuds can help you think through complex issues, understand your options, and consider next steps. Where appropriate the Ombuds can provide practical assistance toward a resolution.

## **Section 3: MCNHS Student Advising & Services**

### **MCNHS Office of Student Success & Engagement (OSSE)**

The mission of the Office of Student Success and Engagement (OSSE) is to strengthen the educational experience of UMass Boston's diverse student population through comprehensive resources and support. Please visit the [OSSE web site](#) for further information.

### **Academic Advising and Registration**

The Program Director or track coordinator (for the Master's Program) serves as an academic advisor to all students. An academic plan of study for the entire program is developed and filed with the Program office. Students are expected to follow this plan of study and if changes are needed, then the student should meet with the program director to revise their academic plan. Students should access their [WISER](#) account to register for classes.

Information on dates related to drop, add, withdrawal, UMB holidays/breaks can be found posted online. Refer to the University [Academic Calendar](#).

### **Clinical & Internship Placement Office (CIPO)**



The (CIPO) is led by a Coordinator and supported by Clinical Placement Specialists. The CIPO oversees relationships with clinical agencies as well as the clinical clearance and placement of students within their clinical agency sites for clinical courses, preceptorships, and internships. To maintain partner compliance per our affiliation agreements, the CIPO staff regularly communicates with various outside constituents, such as healthcare partners and their legal counsel, the Office of General Counsel, the Board of Health, the Center for Disease Control, the Massachusetts Centralized Clinical Placement System, and others

### **MCNHS Grants and Scholarships**

There are a wide variety of nursing scholarships for graduate nursing students. Several hospitals and hospital systems support nursing student education through a variety of scholarships.

[https://www.umb.edu/academics/MCNHS/nursing/scholarships\\_and\\_aid](https://www.umb.edu/academics/MCNHS/nursing/scholarships_and_aid)

### **Requirements for Writing Papers & Writing House Office (WHO)**

The MCNHS has uniformly adopted the American Psychology Association (APA) style for all academic/studentpapers. All students should obtain the most current copy of the Publication Manual for use throughout the program.

Writing House (WHO) is CNHS's dedicated academic writing support center, serving all CNHS students, in any class, from the first year through graduate level. Students and faculty have access to writing, learning, and teaching resources on the Writing House Online Blackboard site.

Schedule a live tutoring session (on-campus or online) or request asynchronous written feedback on your paper via WHO's scheduling system: <https://umb.mywconline.net/>

For more information, please email WritingHouse.CNHS@umb.edu, or call (617) 287-7372. Please also visit their web page for further information <https://www.umb.edu/nursing-health-sciences/student-success-engagement/who/>

## **Section 4: University Services**

### **Financial Aid**

UMB graduate students may apply for assistantships, grants, loans, and federal work-study jobs. Please see our web site for the most up to date information, including how to apply:

<https://www.umb.edu/financial-aid/graduate-student-financial-aid/>

### **Funding Opportunities**

There are a wide variety of scholarships, grants, and funding opportunities available to our Doctoral students. These opportunities include:

1. Eligibility for university research and teaching assistantships that may include tuition remission and health insurance benefits
2. Scholarships funded by the federal government
3. Loans
4. Professional traineeship grants

5. Competitive scholarships
6. Grant funding from Sigma Theta Tau, the International, the Honor Society of Nursing\*
7. Other professional societies and clinical agencies

\*Department of Nursing Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International is called Theta Alpha Chapter. Leadership, Scholarship, and Dissertation funding awards are available annually and are bestowed in the Spring at the annual induction event.

## **Graduate Assistantships**

The University offers a limited number of graduate assistantships in teaching or research to qualified students. Applicants for admission to the graduate programs and currently enrolled students should consider applying. Graduate Assistantships are in the form of research and teaching assistantships (RA/TA). The assignments may require a commitment of 9.00 (0.50 FTE) to 18 (1.0 FTE) hours per week, depending on the percentage of assistantship held, for the entire semester. A student may not hold more than the equivalent of one full-time graduate assistantship appointment at any time. These graduate assistantships require weekly service in the areas of teaching, research or administrative support. In return, the University pays a stipend and provides a tuition waiver and a waiver of a certain percentage of the fees. Students are also eligible for a contribution towards the cost of university- provided student health insurance (SHP), and dental (HMO) and vision care (HMO) as provided in the current collective bargaining agreement. Students may obtain more information about assistantships by contacting the Graduate Program Director. General information about assistantships is also available from the Office of Graduate Studies.

### **Graduate Assistantships Definition, Eligibility & Time Commitment**

1. Teaching Assistant (TA) - A graduate student employed on a salaried basis who is primarily assigned to instructional support activities such as the following: Coordinate, lead or assist in the instructional process in preparation and direct interaction with students in lab, discussion, quiz, examination, or problem sessions. Provide tutoring and student consultation periods. Grade homework, papers, reports, and other work assigned to the enrolled students of a course. Grade and proctor course examinations. Prepare experiments and set up/dismantle laboratory materials and equipment for lab sessions. Additional related duties as assigned.
2. Teaching Fellow (TF) - A graduate student employed on a salaried basis who is instructor of record for a lecture or independent lab section of a course and has independent responsibility for its teaching and grading
3. Research Assistant (RA) - A graduate student who is employed on a salaried basis to perform work primarily related to academic research or other similar work including, but not limited to, the gathering and analysis of data, conducting bibliographical searches, the development of theoretical analysis and models, the production or publication of scholarly journal and research reports, which are for the benefit of the University, its faculty, centers, institutes, or an academic staff supervisor, or a granting agency, and is secondarily for the graduate student employee's own research. Graduate students may be employed to perform research work not directly related to their own research.
4. Administrative Assistant (AA) - A graduate student who is employed on a salaried basis to perform work of an administrative or technical nature which is not otherwise described in Sections 1.03 (a) and (b) above.

*Assistantship Eligibility:* 1) matriculated in graduate program, 2) good academic standing (GPA≥3.0), and 3) international students hold an F-1 Visa

FTEs for Assistantships	Number of Hours
1 FTE	18 hours
.75 FTE	13.5 hours
.50 FTE	9 hours

### **IT Service Desk**

The IT Service Desk offers a variety of services including technical support for Blackboard, Canvas, WISER, and Email. Discounts on hardware and software is available through the IT department. Information on support is located on this link <https://www.umb.edu/it>

### **Library**

The library [web site](#) for details on interlibrary loans, access to databases, e books and e resources. [Single Sign-On \(SSO\)](#) to access library services provides access to all library services. [UMBrella](#) provides an easy-to-use, one-stop search and discovery tool for books, e-books, videos, articles, digital media, and helps the student manage his/her research. Students sign in using their UMass Boston ID and password.

[Zotero](#) and [Mendeley](#) are citation tools and free to all UMass Boston students, faculty, staff and alumni. They are web-based citation management tools that facilitates collecting and organizing references and formatting research papers. The library provides [online documentation](#) to help identify the features between Zotero and Mendeley.

### **Graduate Writing Center**

The purpose of the [Graduate Writing Center](#) is to offer various services tailored to meet the needs of graduate writers. Our individual writing consultations provide writers with the opportunity to work with a trained writing consultant on any writing at any stage of the writing process.

### **WISER**

[WISER](#) is the student information system used by UMass Boston students to manage registration, grades and student records. Directions and videos are available from the [WISER help page](#).

### **University Health Services**

University Health Services (UHS) provides medical and mental health services. Click on this link to learn more: <https://www.umb.edu/healthservices>

- Medical Support | Call 617.287.5660
- Counseling Support | Call 617.287.5690

## Section 5: Overview of the Master's in Nursing: Family Nurse Practitioner, Adult Gerontology Nurse Practitioner Programs & Post Masters Certificate for Family Nurse Practitioner

The Master of Science (MS) Adult/Gerontological Primary Care or Family Nurse Practitioner Primary Care curricula have been designed to accommodate part-time study. A total of 48 credits are required for AGNP and FNP programs. The MS FNP and AGNP program of study is located here: <https://www.umb.edu/academics/program-finder/nursing-ms/>

The PMC Program is designed for RNs who have an MS degree in nursing (MSN) from an accredited institution to acquire the knowledge and clinical experience that will prepare them to be certified as a Family Primary Care Nurse Practitioner through the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) or the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) Certification Program. The Post Master's certificate program has both a 12-credit and a 21-credit option. The 12-credit Family Primary Care Nurse Practitioner program is only open to Primary care PNs, AGNPs, and ANPs who satisfy the prerequisite course requirements. Master's-prepared nurses, in leadership or education; or CNMs, WHNPs, CRNAs, PMHNPs are eligible to apply to the 21-credit certificate Family Primary Care Nurse Practitioner program. An unofficial gap analysis may be requested by an applicant based upon unofficial transcripts. The final determination of the required number of credits/courses is ultimately determined by the track coordinator based upon an applicant's official academic transcripts and clinical portfolio. Nurses with non-nursing Master's Degrees are not eligible for the Post Master's Certificate Program.

Graduate Nursing Program Director  
Elizabeth Russet, DNP, FNP-BC  
[Elizabeth.Russet@umb.edu](mailto:Elizabeth.Russet@umb.edu)

Family Nurse Practitioner Track Coordinator & Post Master's FNP Certificate Program  
Elizabeth Russet, DNP, FNP-BC  
[Elizabeth.Russet@umb.edu](mailto:Elizabeth.Russet@umb.edu)

MS Adult/Gerontology Nurse Practitioner Track Coordinator  
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Graduate Clinical Placement Specialist  
Eva Benoit-Allien, M.Ed.  
[Eva.benoitallien@umb.edu](mailto:Eva.benoitallien@umb.edu)

Graduate Clinical Support Faculty  
Carolyn O'Brien, PhD, AGNP-BC  
[Carolyn.obrien@umb.edu](mailto:Carolyn.obrien@umb.edu)

\*For questions to the Master's Program email [postmasternp@umb.edu](mailto:postmasternp@umb.edu)  
This is your **first point of contact** and will help guide you and answer questions.

As an accredited program of the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), the UMB Master's Program uses the American Association of College of Nursing (AACN) ) [The](#)

[Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing](#) as the foundation for the curriculum.

The scope of knowledge addressed in the core and specialty courses in the Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner (AGNP) Primary Care and Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) programs reflect the student outcome competencies found in *The Essentials of Masters Education for Advanced Practice Nursing* (2011), and the Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification and Education (LACE) that was initiated in 2008 for the new standards for national certification.

### **Program Goals**

- Assuring an appropriate supply, diversity, and distribution of advanced practice nurses to meet emerging health care system needs in the Commonwealth and Boston urban and suburban community.
- Preparing advanced practice nurses with the highest level of knowledge and competence to successfully pass the national certification exams in their specialty and obtain employment in their specialty area.
- Developing advanced practice nurses with competence in health systems leadership, policy development, and interdisciplinary collaboration to improve health care quality and increase health care access for all populations.
- Preparing graduates with transformational leadership skills in policy change to overcome disparities in health care for those population groups bearing a disproportionate share of disease and disability.

### **Program Learning Objectives**

- Demonstrate competence in the advanced nursing practice and management of health and illness for individuals, families, and aggregate populations using critical thinking and evidence-based clinical decision making.
- Promote individual/family relationships that facilitate positive health care outcomes for diverse populations.
- Design, implement and evaluate educational programs for individuals, professionals, and communities.
- Plan comprehensive continuous care through interdisciplinary collaboration across health care settings with an emphasis on diverse and urban populations.
- Monitor and ensure the quality of nursing and health care practices utilizing advocacy and ethical decision-making.
- Design, implement and evaluate evidence-based care in relation to ethnocultural and spiritual beliefs within diverse populations.
- Apply theories from nursing and other disciplines to the advanced nursing practice for individuals and families from diverse populations.
- Identify researchable health care problems and continually appraise relevant literature.
- Communicate and consult with health care providers and others to influence policy change.
- Demonstrate competency in professional oral and written communication.

### **Clinical Practicum Purpose, Hours, and At Risk of Failure Policies**

The clinical practicum provides graduate students with the opportunity to integrate theory and research with practice. A specific number of clinical practice hours are required for each clinical

course and are necessary prerequisites for students to register for the specialty certification exams upon graduation from the program of study and the number of hours varies by state. Preceptors and agencies have a contractual agreement with UMass Boston to precept students for a predetermined number of clinical hours for the determined period of time. Students are expected to comply with the times and days that have been arranged with their clinical preceptors. Deviations from prearranged contractual hours are permitted only by agreement with the agency and preceptor and must be in writing. Students must contact [MCNHSClearance@umb.edu](mailto:MCNHSClearance@umb.edu) to change any dates of clinical practicum. Failure to do so may result in an academic warning. Students may arrange actual clinical days with the preceptor but arranging an earlier start or a later finish always requires the permission of the course faculty.

Any student who is currently on a medical leave (FMLA or MLOA) and is unable to work in their personal clinical/ work related role due to a serious health condition, and planning to participate in a clinical experience, must notify the proper clinical faculty and track coordinator at UMass Boston. The instructor of the clinical course is responsible for supervising all student's clinical hours and needs to be

notified of any potential impairment that impacts the student. Your clinical faculty and/or track coordinator reserves the right to determine the extent that a student may participate in clinical if the student is incapacitated and undergoing treatment.

The graduate clinical nursing courses have two components, theory and practicum and both components must be successfully completed in order to pass the course. The clinical practicum of the course is pass/fail. At the mid-term of the semester (week 6-7) students in clinical courses must demonstrate that they are meeting course objectives as demonstrated by a satisfactory mid-term clinical evaluation and a sufficient number of clinical logs (approximately one-half of the expected number of logs for the semester) in order for faculty to assess their performance. Students with insufficient numbers of clinical hours logged will receive an academic warning. Students must contact the course faculty within 48 hours of receiving an academic warning to develop a plan for meeting the course objectives.

If a student fails the clinical practicum portion of the course, then the student will receive an F for the entire course. A grade of F for the clinical portion of the course is determined by the preceptor and is communicated to the faculty through the Clinical Evaluation Tool. The preceptor and faculty of the course may request that additional hours beyond the minimum required for the course be completed to achieve "competent" in all areas of the tool. If at any time during the clinical practice experience a preceptor, course faculty member or other licensed agency personnel determines that a graduate student's performance is below the minimum standards consistent with safe clinical nursing practice or whose professional comportment is deemed below what is expected of a licensed registered nurse, the graduate student will not be permitted to continue their clinical practicum. The student will be referred to the Track Coordinator and course faculty to be notified of the specifics of the alleged unsafe practice and/or professional comportment and of sanctions to be imposed.

Students who are dismissed from clinical placements will work with faculty to determine a plan for remediation. Students who are dismissed from clinical placements will not return to the site nor have any other contact with the site. If a problem or misunderstanding ever arises at a clinical site, the student shall inform the faculty immediately.

## Setting up The Clinical Practicum

The Master of Science in Nursing program at UMB requires students to complete a total of 600 hours for graduation. One hundred hours can be supplemented with simulation, but direct care hours are preferred to simulation. All clinical practica are subject to the approval of the Clinical Faculty or Track Coordinator. Preceptors may be NPs, CNSs, PAs, MDs, or DOs. **UMBs programs are all in primary care; therefore, clinical practica are highly encouraged to be done in the primary care or outpatient settings. Inpatient settings will not be accepted.**

Students must submit documentation prior to beginning every clinical rotation. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that completed clinical clearance materials are submitted correctly, completely, and on time. If the documentation is not submitted in a timely manner, the student will be prevented from entering clinical and may be required to drop the course. Additional requirements beyond those of UMass Boston may be required by the agency. Students are expected to comply with these requests or else the clinical site will be forfeited by the student and a new one must be found.

## Steps for Securing Clinical Placements

- Students should secure clinical sites **in collaboration with track coordinators/clinical faculty and the MCNHS Clinical Internship and Placement Office (CIPO)** in primary care as close to home as far ahead as possible, preferably 2 to 3 semesters ahead of time.
- Once a site has agreed to precept a student, the student collects necessary information from that site and enters it into InPlace.
- An immediate determination is made by the CIPO staff in collaboration with clinical faculty, and Track Coordinator as to whether the site is acceptable.
- After the student has entered their placement site information into the InPlace, the CIPO office will immediately check to see whether a working agreement exists for the site. If not, CIPO sends a working agreement to the site.
- For Massachusetts students, working agreements exist for all large hospital systems. The CIPO staff enters the student's information into the Centralized Clinical Placement (CCP) system which is a consortium of clinical agencies and colleges in those states who agree to match students with their preceptors, thus avoiding students contacting the sites directly. This does not guarantee a placement so students should continue to identify and submit other sites.
- Students are advised by the CIPO office to avoid direct contact with potential preceptors at the following CCP organization:
  - Massachusetts General Hospital
  - Atrius Healthcare System
  - Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
  - Boston Children's Hospital
  - Tufts Medical Center
  - Cambridge Health Alliance
- No students can begin clinical until they receive clinical clearance which occurs when they are copied on an email that goes to their clinical preceptor stating that the student is ready to begin. Once you receive a copy of the email to your preceptor, you may start clinical.
- Students who begin clinical placements prior to being cleared will receive an academic warning. However, students may meet informally with the preceptor at the site to discuss the clinical expectations of the practicum.

- In most cases, all clinical practicum hours should be completed *during the semester* in which students are taking the clinical courses (NU 640, NU 670, NU 672, NU 682). Students who wish to start 1 week early may do so with the consent of the Track Coordinator in conjunction with the faculty.
- If the clinical practicum hours are not completed during the semester, INC will be given until clinical experience is completed. Once both the minimum hours and the minimum level of clinical competency for all domains of practice are achieved faculty will replace the INC with a course grade. Students may not assume that their preceptors will continue to be available to continue the preceptorship role beyond the weeks stated in the working agreements; all clinical incompletes will require renegotiation of terms between the student, clinical site, clinical faculty and course faculty to support the student in building the competencies for the course.
- UMB provides malpractice insurance at no cost to students while they are in the clinical practicum setting.
- Students without a clinical placement by the add/drop date will be asked to drop from a clinical course.

## Policies for the FNP and AGNP Program

### Change of Track/Concentration

Matriculated students wishing to change concentrations (from FNP to AGNP or AGNP to FNP) must first contact their faculty advisor to complete a petition form which will then be submitted to the Track Coordinator for review. Permission to change concentrations will be granted on a space available basis for students who are in good academic standing with a minimum GPA of 3.0. The Manning College reserves the right to deny requests for a change in the program of study.

If the request to change concentrations is approved, the student is expected to meet with their new advisor as soon as possible following acceptance into the new program of study to file a revised program plan that must be approved by the Track Coordinator. Graduate students cannot register for courses until a new program plan has been filed.

### Request for Extending Five Year Limitation

A student may request an extension in extenuating circumstances. To apply for an extension, students should submit a [statute of limitations extension form](#) to their graduate program director with a letter of explanation accompanied by a detailed schedule for completion. If supported, the form is then reviewed by the Office of Graduate Studies and Admissions and submitted to the Registrar's Office for processing if approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

### Family Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Certificate Program

The 21-credit program is available to **CNMs, WHNPs, AGACNP, CNSs, PMHNPs, CRNAs, and those with an MSN in Leadership and Education**. This program is available once prerequisites have been satisfied.



## 21-Credit Family Primary Nurse Practitioner Care Plan of Study

<b>NU 637 Psychosocial Mental Health</b>	<b>3 credits</b>
<b>NU 639 Primary Care of the Adult</b>	<b>3 credits</b>
<b>NU 670 Primary Care of the Adult Practicum (300 clinical hours in ages 13 and older)</b>	<b>6 credits</b>
<b>NU 681 Primary Care of the Childbearing Family</b>	<b>3 credits</b>
<b>NU 682 Primary Care Childbearing Family Practicum (300 hours total, includes 220 pediatric hours and 80 hours of Pediatric Specialty; CNMs and WHNPs will do all 300 hours in Pediatrics)</b>	<b>6 credits</b>

The 12-credit program is only available to **primary care ANPs, AGNPs and PNP**s. This program is available once prerequisites have been satisfied.

### 12-credit Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Plan of Study

For Pediatric Primary Care NPs	
<b>NU 637 Psychosocial Mental Health</b>	<b>3 credits</b>
<b>NU 639 Primary Care of the Adult</b>	<b>3 credits</b>
<b>NU 670 Primary Care of the Adult Practicum (300 hours in ages 13 and older)</b>	<b>6 credits</b>

For Adult Primary Care NPs	
<b>NU 637 Psychosocial Mental Health</b>	<b>3 credits</b>
<b>NU 681 Primary Care of the Childbearing Family</b>	<b>3 credits</b>
<b>NU 682 Primary Care Childbearing Family Practicum (300 hours, includes 80 hours of a specialty, 220 pediatric)</b>	<b>6 credits</b>

### Prerequisites

Prerequisites to the Post-Master's program include evidence of graduate level coursework in an APRN program in the "3 P courses." These courses are advanced health assessment, advanced pathophysiology and advanced pharmacology. To be recognized, the "3 P courses" must have been:

- Taken in an APRN track program.
- Earned a letter grade of a B or better, (pass/fail are not acceptable).
- Completed within 5 years of application.
- Equivalent in content and credits (3 credits) to UMass Boston courses.
- Stand-alone courses (i.e., no combination courses, such as patho-pharmacology).

The Role of the Advanced Practice Nurse is also a prerequisite for the program. If a role course was not taken as a stand-alone course in the MSN program, then the student must show evidence that the content was integrated into the program. The Role of APRN course is also waived for practicing APRNs.

Students may have the opportunity to be granted a waiver of prerequisite courses in several ways.

1. As noted above with courses taken in an APRN track program, earned a B or better within the past 5 years, 3 credit courses and stand alone.
2. A practicing APRN in primary care (PNP, ANP, AGNP) will be granted a waiver as long as the courses were a primary care/internal medicine course (not specific to a population foci) and earned a B or better.
3. The APEA test may be taken and completed with a passing grade to show. This shows competency in the 3 P's and a waiver may then be granted for those prerequisites.

At the time of admission, an email is sent to the student applicant from the Track Coordinator regarding the need to take some, none or all of the prerequisites. Individual inquiries regarding prerequisites may be made prior to application by submitting a request to the program assistant with unofficial transcripts.

Student applicants who are APRNs in specialty areas may be asked to take the pre-requisites because many specialty programs, although they include these core courses, are specific to the area of specialty and will not prepare the student to practice in primary care. For example, a Women's Health Nurse Practitioner may take "Advanced Health Assessment of Women." This would not fulfill a primary care program's advanced health assessment course and would not be accepted as a prerequisite to our program. Similarly, a pediatric APRN program may have pharmacology course specific to the pediatric population and this would not be accepted for the prerequisites.

Any student who is not granted a waiver for the prerequisite courses will be required to take the courses at UMass Boston or at another accredited program.

NU614: Advanced Pathophysiology

NU634: Advanced Pharmacology

NU615: Advanced Health Assessment (65 clinical hours) (prerequisite is NU 614)

NU601: Introduction to Advanced Practice Nursing: Knowledge for Practice in the Global Community

### **Clinical Practicum for the Family Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Certificate Program**

All students in the 21-credit program must complete a total of 600 hours of documented direct clinical care hours. Students in the 12-credit option must complete 300 hours of direct clinical care hours in the chosen concentration.

State rules for clinical hours vary by state and it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the total clinical hours of our program will fulfill the state requirements where the student plans to be licensed. For example, the Texas BON requires 500 clinical hours for each NP specialty. Therefore, students from Texas are responsible for identifying specifically what their board requires. Any hours required that are over the 300 hours that are provided in our program, will be obtained through the student taking a 3-credit Independent Study Course.

All clinical practicums are subject to the approval of the Track Coordinator and supervising faculty of the designated course. Preceptors may be NPs, CNSs, PAs, MDs, or DOs. **Since this program is primary care, clinical practice must be done in the primary care setting. A**

limited number of hours may be completed in other settings (urgent care, ER, specialty clinic) but the number of hours are determined on a case-by-case basis and by either the track coordinator or the faculty for the course (NU 682, NU 670, NU 672).

**\*Refer to pages above for information on clinical placements.**

## Section 6: Overview of The University of Massachusetts Boston PhD Program

### PhD in Nursing Program Goals

The Population Health and Health Policy focus in the PhD Program in Nursing in the MCNHS , prepares graduates to explore Population Health/Health Policy research questions. Our PhD graduates obtain research skills to study phenomena in these highly related areas to attain the highest possible quality of life for populations, by means of nursing activities directed to promote or restore and maintain wellness across the life course and to prevent disease (Fawcett & Ellenbecker, 2015)

Our PhD program focuses on the intersection of nursing, population health and health policy, and prepares its graduates for leadership roles as researchers and educators who:

- Analyze historical, sociological, economic, political, and healthcare perspectives of population health issues and health policies.
- Evaluate health policies that influence the access, quality, and cost of healthcare delivery and nursing practice locally and globally.
- Generate theory-guided qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods research that advances Nursing Science with an emphasis in population health or health policy.
- Create innovative, evidence-based strategies to shape population health and health policy development at local, national, and global levels based on contemporary nursing and interdisciplinary research.
- Relate new inquiries, activities, and values to role development as a nurse scientist, steward of the discipline, and educator for the next generation.

Our PhD Graduates are prepared to meet the American Association of Colleges of Nursing expected outcomes of PhD Programs in Nursing as below:

**Develop the Science:** Assume leadership in the conduct of culturally competent scholarship to improve nursing practice (Master in-depth knowledge in a substantive area; Critique and integrate different science perspectives in the conduct of research; Communicate research findings to lay and professional audiences and identify implications for policy, nursing practice, and the profession)

**Steward the Discipline:** Integrate the components of scholarship: research, teaching, mentoring, and service to the profession (Communicate scholarship including peer-refereed publications and presentations for professional interdisciplinary audiences; Understand the evolving roles and responsibilities of a nurse scholar)

**Educate the Next Generation:** Contribute to a global community of scholars

### **PhD Contacts**

The program assistant for the DNP will assist students with any questions and direct students.  
Email: [phdnursing@umb.edu](mailto:phdnursing@umb.edu)

PhD Program Director: Ling Shi [ling.shi@umb.edu](mailto:ling.shi@umb.edu)

### **PhD in Nursing Curriculum**

All students are encouraged to meet with their academic advisor each semester to review course work completed and plan for future course work prior to registration time at the university (usually October/November/ and March/April each academic year). The program director and assistant are always available to help with any questions related to courses and requirements ([https://www.umb.edu/registrar/academic\\_calendar](https://www.umb.edu/registrar/academic_calendar))

The PhD Nursing Program at UMass Boston collaborates with the PhD Nursing programs at the other four UMass campuses and the Exercise and Health Sciences PhD Program at the Robert and Donna Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences at UMass Boston. Because of the collaborative nature of the PhD program in Nursing, some of the required courses are taught on one campus or the other. Students may be required to travel from one campus to the other. Students also may enroll in courses at any of the UMass campuses for elective credits.

Collaboration with faculty and students at UMass PhD programs who have similar research interests or expertise is encouraged. This collaboration enriches and expands the program within the UMass system. When registering for courses at other UMass campuses, students need to fill out an [Intercampus Registration Form](#). It is delivered to the registrar's office for processing. The completed form should be submitted to the program assistant of the PhD Program for processing with the registrar.

Course Planners can be found on the Microsoft Teams Bulletin Board for PhD Nursing Students under Advising.

### **Dual Degree Programs**

BS-to-PhD obtaining Master's Degree (En Route Master's Degree) or Master's Degree

An En route MS degree can be awarded after completion of 30 credits in the PhD program and successful performance on the comprehensive examination. Students need to submit a [degree application](#) to the office of the registrar to formally request the MS degree to be awarded upon fulfilling the requirements. Students receiving the En route MS degree will not be eligible for certification in an APN specialty without further didactic and clinical courses.

The 30 credits comprise 21 credits from the BS-to-PhD curriculum plus 9 credits required as part of the AACN essentials (NU 615 Advanced Health Assessment, NU 634 Advanced Pharmacology, and NU 614 Advanced Pathophysiology)

**Note:** An NP certification is offered if students choose to take an additional 18 credits after successful defense of their PhD dissertation. Please ask the PhD Program director for more details.

### **Academic Advising and Course Registration**

The program director serves as a general advisor to all students. When entering the PhD program students are assigned to an individual academic adviser. The academic advisor will guide in choosing courses and staying on target with the curriculum plan until comprehensive examinations are passed. A course of study for the entire program is developed and placed on file with the academic adviser and in the PhD Program office. Each semester the plan will be reviewed with the student and revisions will be placed on file. Students taking courses need to meet with their academic advisor in the spring to plan for fall and in the fall to plan for spring during the designated time by the university calendar periods.

Registration holds will be placed on each student and released after advisement is received. Student should access their [WISER](#) account to register for classes.

### **Annual Reporting of Student Progress**

At the end of each semester, the program director will review each student's transcript and assess the adequacy of each student's progress in achieving university and program objectives. Students will be required to complete a progress report annually in April the program director. If students are not progressing as expected within the SOL, the director in consultation with the Academic Advisors will prescribe a course of action to be completed in order for the student to return to good standing in the program. The program director will inform the student in writing that s/he is not meeting minimum academic standards and what the committee prescribes as corrective action.

### **Course Load**

Full-time students are expected to take at least nine (9) credit hours per semester. Full-time continuous students should complete all their course work by the second year of study. The university considers graduate students engaged in dissertation research to be full-time students, regardless of the number of dissertation credits for which they register, providing the program director certifies they are working full-time on research. A student may not take more than 6 dissertation credits in one semester.

Part-time MS- PhD students must carry at least six (6) credits per semester in each of the fall and spring semesters. Part-time students should complete their coursework in three years.

A student may take up to 15 credits during the fall and spring semesters and up to 9 credits in the summer. Any student who wishes to register for more than the maximum credit load must secure written permission from the program director and approval from the Office of Graduate Studies.

### **Electives**

Electives should enhance the student's competency to complete the dissertation requirement and have a research method focus. Electives should be chosen in collaboration with the student's academic adviser or the program director.

Courses offered by the Robert and Donna Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences

at UMass Boston, any of the campuses within the UMass system, or other PhD or Master's programs on either campus that are at the **600-level or above** and focus on research methods can be taken as electives. Each course will appear on the student's transcript with the course title and grade.

Students may take graduate level courses at other universities with the approval of the director of the PhD program. The student must make the request in writing and submit a copy of the course syllabus. Only six (6) credits from other universities outside of the UMass System may be applied to this program (see section on "waivers").

### **International Students**

International students are required to register as full-time students (9 credits) each semester and maintain a 3.0 GPA. See the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) site for more FAQs. ([ISSS](#)) | [Current Students - UMass Boston \(umb.edu\)](#) for current information.

### **Comprehensive Examinations**

The comprehensive examination is designed to determine the student's ability to think critically and apply the content of their course work in meeting PhD program goals. Successful completion of Comprehensive examinations admits the student to candidacy for the PhD degree. The comprehensive examination consists of two parts, one written and one oral. To be eligible for the examinations, students must be in good academic standing (GPA 3.0 and carrying at least 9 credits each semester if full-time or 6 credits if part-time) and must have fulfilled any incomplete required course work prior to the examination date.

The comprehensive examinations commence when students in the MS-PhD have completed all required coursework.

There are two options for comprehensive examination format, including the option of traditional 2 paper process and the option of research portfolio.

#### **The process for the traditional 2 paper option is outlined below:**

1. Students select a chair and a secondary member (two individual faculty members) who will review the two papers: one conceptual paper and one methodological paper
2. While this is not required, the secondary member should have expertise related to the student's area of research interest and must be a member of the faculty of the Robert and Donna Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences.
3. Prior to meeting with the chair/secondary member, students must submit a detailed outline of the paper(s). Outlines must be submitted at least 1 week prior to meeting with the chairs. Outlines must clearly indicate where the two papers will differ. One revision of the proposed outline to be submitted to the chairs for final approval is acceptable.
4. **NOTE: THE FACULTY CHAIR OR COMMITTEE MEMBERS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO GUIDE OR SUGGEST CONTENT TO THE OUTLINE (THIS IS AN EXAMINATION); THE FACULTY WILL ONLY VERIFY THAT THE DIRECTIONS HAVE BEEN FOLLOWED AND THAT THE OUTLINE HAS ENOUGH DETAIL (SPECIFICITY) TO GENERATE COMPLETION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION.**
5. A detailed timeline must be provided to the chair, committee members, and the program

assistant (see [Microsoft Teams Comprehensive Exam Group](#)).

<b>Timeline</b>
<p><b>Note:</b> Timeline for initiating Comprehensive Exam procedures will be determined on an individual basis.</p> <p><b>Step 1:</b> Student and Chair collaborate on creation of the outline for each paper. <b>Step 2:</b> The Chair approves each outline and shares these with the second reader; the student then writes each paper independently (four weeks). <b>Step 3:</b> Student submits papers to Committee and PhD Nursing Program Office (two-week review). <b>Pass</b> – Student works with the PhD Program Assistant to schedule oral exam. <b>Conditional Pass</b> – Revise and resubmit in two weeks; Committee determines Pass or Fail within one week.</p>
<p><b>Fail</b> – Do not progress – if a student fails the written exam, one retake of the written component is allowed within one year at the discretion of the Chair and Committee. <b>Step 4:</b> Student participates in a two-hour oral examination. <b>Pass</b> – Proceed to take NU 899. <b>Conditional Pass</b> – Retake of the oral exam will be scheduled within one week; Committee will determine pass or fail. <b>Fail</b> – Student will not proceed to NU890; student is permitted one retake of the comprehensive exams within one year at the discretion of the Chair and Committee.</p>

6. Stage I form needs to be submitted to the program assistant (see [Microsoft Teams Comprehensive Exam Group](#)).
7. Students will work *independently* after the meeting with their chair.
8. There are two components of the examination: a written and oral component. The written component and oral component BOTH need to be passed to successfully move forward.
9. Students have a maximum of approximately one month (5 week days X 4 weeks= 20 days PLUS 8 weekend days =28 days total) to complete the papers. One hardcopy and an electronic copy of each paper must be submitted to the PhD program Office by dates determined by the faculty chair(s) and student.
10. Papers should be of publishable quality in terms of organization, format, and clarity of writing, synthesis, and critical thinking. The student's original analytic thinking especially in the area of ability to synthesize information is emphasized over extensive compilations and summaries of other literature.
11. Once both papers have been submitted, the chair and the secondary member and Standard Reader will have 2 weeks (10 weekdays and 4 weekend days) to review each paper after which time an oral examination is scheduled if the written component is passed successfully.
12. The oral component gives students an opportunity to clarify any areas in the written component as well as correct any errors made in the written component. It is also an opportunity for the faculty committee to ask further questions about content and process to be assured of the PhD student's understanding of what they have written.
13. Students are expected to make a presentation of no more than 15 minutes for each paper. Slides and/or handouts are recommended. The remaining time of the comprehensive examination will be

devoted to questions and answers.

14. At no time should any component of the oral examination be audio recorded by the faculty or students unless permission is granted by both the faculty members and student.

The Comprehensive Exam form (**Stage 1**) needs to be completed and filed in the student file, which will include information regarding agreed topic for the exam, secondary member and dates for the oral defense (see [Microsoft Teams Bulletin Board for PhD Nursing Students](#) for Stage 1 form).

An electronic copy in PDF format of each paper must be submitted to the Chair, committee members, and the PhD Program Office by 5:00 P.M. Eastern Time on the due date (agree upon on the timeline), which must be no later than 4 weeks (28 days) following approval of the outlines.

The **Stage 2** form is completed in advance by the student and is given to the program assistant so that the Chair has it available the day of the comprehensive examination (see [Microsoft Teams Bulletin Board for PhD Nursing Students](#)). The Stage 2 form is the form that indicates the pass status of the comprehensive examination.

Each paper should be no longer than 15 pages in length (not including references, title page, abstract, figures or tables and written in accordance with guidelines (6th edition) issued by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2009).

\*\*1-inch margins throughout; Font Times New Roman 12; Double-Spaced

\*\*\*Any paper that does not meet these specifications will be returned to students and comprehensive examinations may be delayed.

- The first paper will be a conceptual paper: a concept analysis, policy analysis, integrative review or state of the science paper on the identified area of inquiry. The specific topic will be determined by the student in consultation with his/her PhD advisor/mentor (chair and secondary member).
- The second paper will be a discussion of either methods or measurement to the student's area of research interest, including possible designs, measures and analytical processes that can be applied to this area.

[SEE MICROSOFT TEAMS BULLETIN BOARD FOR PHD NURSING STUDENTS FOR QUICK GUIDE TO COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS AND FOR FLOW DIAGRAM OF COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION PROCESS](#)

### **Research Portfolio Option**

The rationale for offering option of research portfolio for the Comprehensive Exam is to give students credit for applying conceptual/theoretical and research knowledge during their student tenure and encourage dissemination of research knowledge commensurate with the AACN PhD Program Outcomes.



Examples of scholarly products include 1<sup>st</sup> author published or in-press article in a peer-reviewed journal and submitted research proposal, with faculty oversight and from a faculty approved funding source. Scholarly products are valid only when they occur after the acceptance into the doctoral program and the topic must be relevant to the student’s dissertation.

**Progression**

Successful completion of the comprehensive exam advances the student to doctoral candidacy. The examination is to be passed before the student enrolls in NU899, Dissertation Research. Papers required for the written component of the exam should guide and inform the substantive content and methodology used in preparation of the dissertation proposal.

**PhD Candidacy and Degree Credentials**

Degree credentials (e.g., AD, BS, BSN, MS, MSN, PhD, EdD, DNP, DNSc) are commonly used and indicate completion of a particular educational program.

The highest degree attained is usually placed immediately after the last name followed by certifications, licenses, and fellowships. All or some degrees can be used. Terms used to indicate partial completion of a degree or student status such as “PhDc (PhD candidate) or “ABD” (all but dissertation) are fabricated terms and are not to be used.

PhD or DNP candidates, should use the following convention:  
Joanne Doe, MSN, RN (Doctoral Candidate OR PhD/DNP Candidate).

See APA <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2016/09/misuse-phd.aspx> for rationale.

**Dissertation**

The PhD dissertation is an original body of work in which the candidate demonstrates an in-depth understanding of a population health or health care policy research question that is relevant to individuals, groups, or communities. The dissertation should demonstrate the candidate’s ability to effectively meet the goals and objectives of the program.

Although dissertation planning may begin early in the program, the dissertation process normally begins after the student has passed the comprehensive examination and has been admitted to candidacy.

There are five (5) dissertation process forms that need to be completed across the dissertation stages (for forms see [Microsoft Teams Bulletin Board for PhD Nursing Students](#)).

Student successfully completes comprehensive exams	(FT/PT 39 credits in MS-PhD Programs OR FT 60 credits in BS-PhD Programs).
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NU899

- Taken after successfully completing comprehensive exams

- See advisor for advising on how many credits students should register for NU899 (3 credits or 6 credits).

### NU899 Dissertation Research

Dissertation credits represent the work being done in developing and defending a proposal and completing the work of the dissertation. This time varies to completion of the dissertation among students.

### Program Fee (CAS 600)

After all NU 899 credits are completed, student should register for the program fee until the dissertation is defended. (See Academic Standing in handbook).

### **Dissertation Stages**

<b>Stage or action</b>	<b>What it means</b>	<b>What is required</b>	<b>Signature required</b>
<b>Stage One:</b> Notification of Candidacy	Student successfully completes all required courses and comprehensive exams.	No action needed from student.  The program assistant submits the form to the Office of Graduate Studies.	Graduate program director (GPD); Office of Graduate Studies
<b>Stage Two:</b> Notification of Proposed Dissertation Committee	With the guidance and advice of the selected chairperson, the chair identifies suggested committee members to the student.  This is done prior to the committee's approval of a student's dissertation proposal.	Student provides stage 2 form completed to GPD and program assistant.  The Program Assistant submits the form to the Office of Graduate Studies.	GPD; Office of Graduate Studies
<b>Stage Three:</b> Notification of Proposal Acceptance	When chairperson determines, a dissertation proposal is sent to committee members (allow 4 weeks to read 28 days).  If hearing is successful – student proceeds to conduct dissertation study.  IRB application is completed and approval is obtained as needed.	Once date and time are agreed upon, committee and student notifies GPD and program assistant. Student provides stage 4 form completed. If needed Program assistant will provide support in facilitating room request  After committee members sign the form, the chairperson returns the form to the program assistant.  The program assistant submits the form to the Office of Graduate Studies.	Dissertation committee members; GPD; Office of Graduate Studies
<b>Stage Four:</b>	When chairperson determines,	Student notifies GPD and Program Assistant	Dissertation

<p>Notification of Intent to Defend Dissertation</p>	<p>final draft of dissertation is sent to committee members (allow 4 weeks to read).</p> <p>When chairperson determines, after polling committee members, schedule defense 2-4 weeks in advance.</p> <p>It is expected that the chair and the committee members be physically present at the defense; extenuating circumstances can be considered in collaboration with the PhD program director.</p>	<p>once date and time are agreed upon for Dissertation Defense. Student provides stage 4 form completed. Program assistant will provide support in facilitating room request.</p> <p>The program assistant submits the form to the Office of Graduate Studies.</p>	<p>committee members; GPD; Office of Graduate Studies</p>
<p><b>Stage Five:</b> Approval of Dissertation Defense</p>	<p>Report on the results of the dissertation defense.</p> <p>The candidate must pay particular attention to deadlines and the timing of the dissertation defense to allow enough time for a completed manuscript to be filed prior to June or December degree dates. (See below for dates.)</p> <p>Any recording of the dissertation defense needs to be approved by the student defending as a matter of intellectual property and privacy.</p>	<p>Notice of dissertation defense must be posted at the College 2-4 weeks in advance.</p> <p>Student provides stage 5 form completed to GPD and program assistant. Program assistant will provide form to the chair.</p> <p>After committee members sign the form, the chair returns the form to the program assistant.</p> <p>The program assistant submits the form to the Office of Graduate Studies.</p> <p>Y grade for NU899 converted to letter grade by chair of committee.</p>	<p>Dissertation committee members; GPD; Graduate Studies</p>

### Dissertation Application and Process

Students should inform the program director/assistant when they officially have completed the requirements for the degree BEFORE SUBMITTING THE DEGREE APPLICATION.

There is a difference between finishing the degree requirements and “graduating/graduation”. Students will be formerly invited to commencement/graduation by the university.

**It is the responsibility of the students to work with their dissertation chair to complete the signature page for the dissertation.** This action needs to be completed well in advance of commencement/graduation. It is mandatory that signatures be completed on the day of the dissertation defense or at the time when all editing and changes have been agreed upon by the chair and committee.

Mid-March	All dissertation work must be completed by mid-March of the year in which the candidate plans to graduate, and a defense scheduled no later than the end of March to comply with April 20 <sup>th</sup> deadline to submit a revised dissertation copy to OGS.
Mid-November	For December degree date, these dates are respectively early to comply with December 1st degree date.
<u>July 20<sup>th</sup></u> for August degree date <u>April 20<sup>th</sup></u> for June degree date <u>December 1st</u> for December degree date	The deadline for candidates to submit a copy of their defended and revised dissertation, approved in full for content by the program, to the OGS via the UMass Boston ProQuest/UMI ETD website.

### The Dissertation Committee

The candidate selects a chair and consults with the chair on which individuals may be the best candidates to participate as members on the dissertation committee. ***The committee must have a minimum of three members and no more than five (5) members. At least two (2) members, including the chair, should come from the Department of Nursing at the Robert and Donna Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences.*** The dissertation committee shall include a member who is external to the candidate’s program. The external member(s) may come either from within the University or outside the University. The graduate program director will be responsible for any additional nominations of committee members where indicated. At least one member should be a nurse with a PhD degree and is explicitly asked to ensure the student work is advancing nursing science and the discipline. If the chair is a non-nurse, then they should actively seek advice and input from the nurse committee member on the salience of the student work to the discipline of nursing.

The candidate, in collaboration with the chair, should provide in writing 1) a one-page explanation of the unique contributions or expertise that will be offered by the external member and 2) a CV to the program director. The candidate must submit the names of the committee members and chair to the program director (Stage 2 of the dissertation tracking form). The program director reviews the submission and, if approved, forwards the form to the Office of Graduate Studies for review and approval. CVs for every external member of the committee must accompany the form. See appendix A. for best practices for dissertation.

### Qualifications and Responsibilities of Chairs and Members of Dissertation Committees

#### Qualifications of faculty to chair dissertation committees:

1. To qualify to chair a dissertation committee, a department of nursing faculty member must:
  - a. Hold a PhD degree in nursing or a related discipline.
  - b. Have a record of distinguished scholarly publications and/or professional achievement within a period of five years prior to the formation of any dissertation committee that the faculty member chairs.

### Qualifications of faculty and/or outside professionals serving as members of dissertation committees:

To qualify to be a member of the dissertation committee, a faculty member must have

1. An appropriate terminal degree (typically a PhD or EdD but in some instances a degree such as a JD, MD DBS, DNP, or MBA may be appropriate).
2. A record of excellence in scholarly publications and/or professional achievement within a period of five years prior to the formation of the dissertation committee.

### Responsibilities of Chairs and Members of Dissertation Committees

The dissertation committee chair holds primary responsibility for advising the student in their dissertation work. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Work with the student to identify the dissertation topic and methods.
- Provide ongoing support to the student with proposal development and dissertation work.
- Monitor student progress and help keep the student on track.
- Review the draft of the proposal and dissertation (by section and the whole work) and make sure the accuracy, quality, and clarity of the work, and the appropriateness of the formatting.
- Assess if the proposal and dissertation draft is ready for the committee to review.
- Work with the student to address concerns and suggestions raised by the committee members.
- Work with the student to schedule the proposal hearing and dissertation defense.
- Facilitate the meeting during the proposal hearing and dissertation defense.
- Work with the student to address any further questions and concerns raised during the proposal hearing and dissertation defense.
- Make sure the revisions are made to adequately address the suggestions, questions and concerns.

### The responsibilities of the dissertation committee include, but are not limited to:

- Provide conceptual and/or methodological guidance to the student during proposal development and dissertation phase.
- Review the proposal and dissertation closely and provide in depth feedback in a timely manner.
- Make sure the dissertation explicitly speaks to how the dissertation works related to the discipline of nursing.
- Determine the quality and acceptability of the proposal and dissertation. If the committee member has major concerns about the proposal or the dissertation, they should let the chair know at least one week prior to the defense date.
- Attend the proposal hearing and dissertation defense and provide critical inquiries about the work.

## **The Dissertation**

The candidate is required to use the [Standards for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations](#) to format their dissertation from the moment they begin their dissertation. Failure to format dissertations before deadlines may result in delays to degree completion. Policies for dissertations are available at the [UMass Graduate Students & Assistantships webpage](#).

<b>HELPFUL HINTS TO FORMAT YOUR DOCUMENT</b>
These hints are designed to help you avoid common mistakes that will take you the most time to correct. In particular, any mistakes that affect pagination can be time-consuming to fix because then you will have to

redo your Table of Contents as well. So make sure you follow the margin instructions exactly. Please use the following tips to help you format your document.

**PLEASE NOTE: These are not all the guidelines, and you must still read and incorporate all the guidelines in this [Standards for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations booklet](#).**

1. Make sure you use Times New Roman 12 point font. If you use the wrong font, your page numbers will change when you correct this, and your Table of Contents will have to be redone.

2. Check your margins. They should be LEFT 1 1/4", RIGHT 1", TOP: 1", BOTTOM: 1". The left margin must be 1.25" because your document will be bound in an 8" x 11" volume. A too tight left margin will cause you to lose important data. This is a common mistake. If you need to correct margins after submission, all the page numbers will change and you will need to create a new Table of Contents.

3. Page numbers should be positioned at least 1.25" from the bottom of the page (measured from the bottom of the page number to the bottom of the page).

4. The title of each chapter must be 2" from the top of the page, and you should hit return a few times to create some space between the title and the beginning of the text. Use the same spacing between the chapter title and the text in every chapter.

5. Use the orphan/widow control found in most versions of Word. No page can begin or end with a single line of text or a single subheading.

6. Page numbering - Page numbering begins with roman numerals on the Abstract page, which should be page iv. There should be no page numbers on the title page, copyright page or signature page. Continue roman numerals until the first page of your thesis or dissertation, which should be arabic numeral 1.

7. Placement of Tables, Illustrations, and Charts can be tricky. If the table, illustration or chart fills more than half the page, then it can remain alone on the page. If you have sequential small tables, illustrations, and charts that can fit two to a page, then do so.

No landscape pages are allowed. They will not fit when the document is bound into an 8.5 x 11 volume. You may place a table or figure on its side on a portrait-oriented page to make it fit. You may also shrink it to make it fit. But the title must be at the top of the portrait-oriented page, and the page number must be at the bottom of the portrait-oriented page.

Feel free to contact the format editor with questions or samples of tables/illustrations/charts placement while you are working and before you submit your document.

8. Lists of Figures and Tables - for titles in the Lists, use only the text up to the first period of the title as the title, even if the title on the table/figure is longer than that. Make sure the text you use for your title in the List is identical, word for word, including the words you choose to capitalize, in the text and in the list.

9. All subheadings in the Table of Contents must be identical, word for word, including the words you choose to capitalize, to the subheadings in the text.

10. References - don't split references. Don't start a citation on one page and finish it on the next. Keep

the entire citation on the same page.
11. Subheadings - this is a common area of difficulty for students and can be time-consuming to correct. This is how it should work.
The first time the reader sees a subheading in chapter 1 that is the first level subheading. However you format that first level subheading in chapter 1 is how you must format every first level subheading in the entire document. So for example, if the first level subheading in chapter 1 is bold, centered, the first level subheadings in all chapters must be bold, centered. Also, in the Table of Contents, the first level subheading is indented once.
For second level subheadings, these must be formatted differently from the first level subheadings, and every second level subheading must be formatted the same way in every chapter. So for example, if the second level subheading in chapter 1 is flush left, italics, then the second level subheading in every chapter must be flush left, italics. The second level subheadings are indented twice in the Table of Contents.
For subsequent levels, format each level (3rd, 4th, etc.) in a unique way and use that format in every chapter as you did for the first and second level subheadings above. Then indent the subheading one more time per level in the Table of Contents. So the third level subheading is indented three times, the fourth level subheading is indented four times, and so forth.
This can be confusing, but it has to be done this way. One way to keep track is by listing Ch 1, first level subheading, second level, etc., and the format of each one on a separate piece of paper. Then when you do chapter 2 and all other chapters, refer to that list to keep them straight. That is the method the editor will use to keep track of them

The candidate will work closely with the chair and other committee members throughout data collection, data analysis and final writing phases of the dissertation. The candidate should expect some repeated iterations of the dissertation to accommodate the committee chairs' and members' input and guidance designed to enhance the overall conceptual and methodological quality of the dissertation.

Students register for dissertation credits (NU 899) for 2-3 consecutive semesters (9 credits total), after they have completed all other coursework. No grade is assigned for the dissertation while it is in process. The students receive a "Y" grade which stands for "year-long course" each semester they are registered for dissertation credits. Once students have defended successfully, the chair of the dissertation committee is required to submit a letter grade using the Change of Grade Form for all dissertation credits to the Registrar's Office. Candidates cannot be awarded degrees if dissertation grades have not been changed to final grade(s).

### **The Dissertation Proposal**

The dissertation research proposal may be submitted any time after the committee has been approved by Office of Graduate Studies (OGS). All dissertation work follows the format of the most current version of the American Psychological Association Manual for Publication, and any relevant OGS guidelines.

Although the length of the proposal will vary with the candidate and the topic, the proposal must include the following elements:

- Format: Times New Roman Font 12, 1-inch margins all around.
- 300-400/word abstract;
- Introduction that clearly states the problem, establishes its significance and how the need for the proposed research advances science and policy, and states the research questions to be examined or the hypotheses to be tested. In addition, historical, sociological, political, and economic aspects of the dissertation should be addressed.
- Clear statement of the conceptual-theoretical-empirical structure that will guide the research if applicable
- Critical review of the literature that synthesizes the current research on the problem, explores related bodies of knowledge that contribute to the understanding of the problem, and explores the theoretical framework of the study.
- Description of the methodology including research design, the study population and sample, a plan to access the study population, human subjects, considerations, data collection methods, and the plan for data analysis.
- Work plan that identifies needed resources, indicates how they will be obtained, and presents a realistic timeline for data collection and analysis.
- References.

### Three Manuscript Dissertation

Students may choose to complete the three-manuscript dissertation instead of the standard dissertation

<p>Chapter 1: Introduction to the body of work  Chapters 2-4: Three manuscripts prepared in publishable fashion, prepared for submission and/or submitted in appropriate peer-reviewed journals. The content of the manuscripts and the journal selection would be approved by the dissertation committee. At least two of the three manuscripts should be data-based (i.e., not methodological or conceptual). Data-based manuscripts should include aims, background, methods, results, and conclusions.  Chapter 5: Summary chapter synthesizing conclusions, implications, and future directions.</p>	<p>Chapter 1, plus a summary of the aims, background, and methods/approach for each article.</p>
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format. The three-manuscript dissertation consists of three or more related manuscripts submitted for publication in a peer reviewed journal. The three manuscripts are bookended by an introductory and concluding chapter.

### Proposal Hearing

The candidate should work closely with the chair of the committee. Together they will decide when to forward the draft proposal to the entire committee for review. The candidate and the chair will review the committee members' recommendations and make necessary adjustments to the proposal. The chair will schedule a proposal hearing. Two weeks prior to the scheduled hearing, the final draft of the proposal will be delivered to all committee members. All members of the committee are expected to attend the proposal hearing in person or via teleconference.

Following the hearing, the committee meets in an executive session and makes one of three



determinations regarding the proposal: 1) A= approve; 2) AR= approve with revisions; 3) N= do not approve. Each member must initial their vote on the Dissertation Tracking Form (Stage 3). In the case of approval, the candidate may proceed with the dissertation, after IRB approval. In the case of approval with revisions, the candidate need only resubmit the revised proposal to the chair and any other specified committee members. Once revised, the chair forwards two (2) copies of the approved proposal to the program director with a letter stating that all revisions have been satisfactorily completed. The program director forwards one copy to Office of Graduate Studies and Research, along with the dissertation tracking form.

## The Dissertation Defense

A dissertation defense will be scheduled only after the committee members agree that the dissertation is sufficiently complete to undergo defense. Two weeks prior to the scheduled defense, the final draft of the dissertation must be delivered to all committee members.

Final copies of the revised dissertation and completed signature page must be provided to the program director and the OGS before the candidate can be certified for the PhD degree. The final dissertation manuscript must conform to Guidelines for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

For most updated version of the guidelines as well as an update on deadlines click on [Guidelines](#)

The program has designated the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th Edition) as the appropriate format for organization, tables, illustrations, and references.

For the *initial* submission, students should turn in an electronic copy of their thesis/dissertation via the UMass Boston-ProQuest/UMI ETD website <http://www.etdadmin.com/cgi-bin/school?siteId=283>.

The ETD submission process streamlines the review and approval process and enhances communication with the T&D (Thesis and Dissertation) Format Editor, Carol Cullen ([carol.cullen@umb.edu](mailto:carol.cullen@umb.edu)). The ETD makes graduate students' research immediately available with publication occurring near the point of submission rather than many months later. All graduates are required to use the ETD submission site. For more information visit the UMass Boston-ProQuest/UMI site <http://www.etdadmin.com/umb>.

## Section 7: Overview of The University of Massachusetts Boston Doctor of Nursing Practice Program

As an accredited program of the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), the UMB DNP Program uses the American Association of College of Nursing (AACN) [The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice](#) (2006) as the foundation for the curriculum.

- I. Scientific Underpinnings for Practice
- II. Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Improvement and Systems Thinking
- III. Clinical scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-Based Practice

- IV. Information Systems/Technology and Patient Care Technology for the Improvement and Transformation of Health Care
- V. Health Care Policy for Advocacy in Health Care
- VI. Interpersonal Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes
- VII. Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving the Nation's Health

### **DNP Program Outcomes**

The UMB DNP student is an advanced practice nurse (APRN) who is a health care leader and seeks to improve patient care and health services for all populations, especially the under-represented/underserved. At the completion of the UMB DNP Program, the student will be able to:

### **Nursing DNP Program Outcomes**

The UMass DNP student is an Advanced Practice Nurse (APRN) who is a health care leader and seeks to improve patient care and health services for all populations, especially the under-represented/underserved.

At the completion of the UMass Boston DNP Program, the student will be able to:

- Evaluate the role of the nurse in shaping health care policy and systems that provide care for individuals, communities, health professions and populations.
- Apply population health principles to analyze and interpret research data to address basic questions related to individual, aggregate, and population health at the local, state, and national levels and selected trends related to health care disparities and inequity in health care access to populations at risk.
- Apply theory guided and evidenced based research to develop practice innovations and influence policy formation that will improve quality, safety, outcomes, cost and/or access to care for a specific setting or population.
- Employ the leadership skills necessary in professional practice to direct clinical policy evaluation, management of systems change, and practice improvement.
- Evaluate programs related to the use of information, information technology, communication networks, and patient care technology that monitor outcomes of care, care systems, and practice improvement to improve quality and efficiency in care delivery.
- Demonstrate knowledge in leadership related to evaluation and resolution of ethical and legal issues within healthcare systems, health policy and in research with human subjects.
- Apply health care economic and finance theory, including budget preparation, utilizing economic measurements and management of the financial status of health care organizations, to analyze factors influencing health systems' structure, function and process.
- Employ the knowledge of the science of improvement and process improvement methods, with a focus on structure, processes and outcomes, to advance quality and safety in health care organizations.
- Distinguish the concepts and methods of statistics, apply them in critiquing literature in the field of clinical and population-based research.

- Develop a practice improvement project that:
  - addresses a practice gap/problem in a priority area
  - is guided by theory
  - is based on best practice evidence
  - integrates knowledge from the sciences and humanities
  - applies an appropriate implementation method
  - addresses ethical considerations
  - evaluates outcomes
  - has the potential to lead to process and/or outcomes improvements in the local setting.

Revised Oct 2022

### **DNP Contacts**

The program assistant for the DNP will assist students with any questions and direct students.  
Email: [dnp@umb.edu](mailto:dnp@umb.edu)

DNP Program Director: Christine Salvucci  
Email: [christine.salvucci@umb.edu](mailto:christine.salvucci@umb.edu)

### **Post-Master's Doctor of Nursing Practice Curriculum**

The UMass Boston post-masters DNP Program was developed as a clinical practice doctorate. By the completion of the post-masters DNP Program, students have attained the leadership skills necessary to be a change agent.

### **Degree Requirements Post-Master's**

A total of 31 credits and 400 practicum hours are required for this program. Students are guided by faculty throughout the program in completing a Scholarly Project that demonstrates the student's ability to analyze and guide a change in health care delivery.

MS to DNP program of study found [Doctor of Nursing Practice - DNP - UMass Boston \(umb.edu\)](http://umb.edu)

### **BS-Doctor of Nursing Practice Program (BS-DNP)**

The BS-DNP program prepares BS nurses to excel as leaders in health care as advanced practice nurses. The student first obtains an MS degree after 48 credits and 665 clinical hours in their program of study. Students take the national certification exam as an advanced practice nurse (APRN) at the completion of the MS portion of the program. The DNP portion of study is an additional 22 credits.

The BS-DNP Program prepares the student in advance practice nursing in one of the population healthtracks: Adult/Gerontological Primary Care Nurse Practitioner or Family Primary Care Nurse Practitioner.

### **Degree Requirements BS-DNP**

A total of 70 credits and 1,065 clinical hours are required to complete this program. The program of study culminates in the Scholarly Project experience. Students are guided by faculty throughout

the program in completing a Scholarly Project that demonstrates the student's ability to analyze and guide a change in health care delivery.

Program of study found at [Doctor of Nursing Practice - DNP - UMass Boston \(umb.edu\)](https://www.umb.edu/doctor-of-nursing-practice-dnp)

## **Electives**

The purpose of electives in the DNP Program is to enhance the student's competency in meeting the Essentials of DNP. Electives can be accepted from a certificate program, but they cannot be transferred as an elective if the course was used to meet credits for a degree requirement. List of electives can be

Found at [Doctor of Nursing Practice - DNP - UMass Boston \(umb.edu\)](https://www.umb.edu/doctor-of-nursing-practice-dnp)

## **DNP Practicum Hours**

Practicum hours are designed to demonstrate synthesis and application of expanded knowledge acquired within the DNP curriculum. The practicum hours signify the capability of the student to meet the core competencies of the DNP degree as established by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). Coursework for DNP students includes 400 practicum hours focused on attainment of the DNP Essentials. The practicum hours are to be related to the scholarly project and /or to advance knowledge in the student's area of specialization. Students are required to have completed a minimum of 1000 clinical hours *post baccalaureate degree* as required by The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (AACN, 2021).

The practicum hours may be demonstrated through a variety of methods including but not limited to:

- In-depth work/mentorship with experts from nursing, as well as other disciplines
- Opportunities for meaningful student engagement within practice environments
- Opportunities to build and assimilate knowledge for advanced specialty practice at a high level of complexity
- An opportunity for further synthesis and expansion of learning
- Experience in the context within which the final DNP Scholarly Project is completed
- An opportunity to integrate and synthesize the essentials and specialty requirements necessary to demonstrate competency in an area of specialized nursing practice
- Programmatic efforts to address a clinical practice issue
- Data collection and analysis
- Direct care or practice experiences outside of the job description and core responsibilities of the student.
- Educational activities/experiences outside of the DNP courses activities. Activities that would not be included are course webinars, discussions and assignments. Seminar experiences related to the student's project can should be included in the experiences

## **Fulfillment of the DNP Program Requirements for Graduation**

To fulfill the DNP program requirements for graduation, the student must

1. Successfully complete all coursework & DNP practicum hours
2. Complete the portfolio
3. Complete the DNP Scholarly Project (oral defense, written paper, dissemination)

## **Successful Completion of Coursework & Practicum Hours**

Successful completion of all coursework and Practicum hours stipulated in the DNP Program of Study is required in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Nursing Practice.

## **Portfolio of DNP Experiences**

Throughout the DNP program, students will compile evidence of acquisition of the DNP Essentials. A google web-based template of the portfolio is to be utilized by each DNP student and should begin upon entering and are used throughout the DNP program. As the student progresses through coursework and completes assignments in those courses, the student reflects on the DNP Essentials and then places the assignment in the portfolio according to the Essential fulfilled. A completed portfolio is required to pass NU 719. The portfolio reflects the attainment of the Essentials of DNP Programs and the process of completing the DNP Scholarly Project.

## **DNP Scholarly Project**

The DNP Scholarly Project is the culmination of the doctoral candidate's engagement in the DNP program and is expected to reflect the highest levels of nursing practice competencies. The project is practice focused, evidence-based and utilizes sound quality improvement methods.

## **The DNP Scholarly Project: Advancing to Candidacy**

Advancing to candidacy is the first step in the DNP Scholarly Project process. To advance to candidacy the student must have:

1. Successfully completed required coursework
2. Formulated and maintained a Portfolio of DNP Experiences (DNP Portfolio)
3. Successfully completed the DNP Scholarly Project Proposal Paper (NU 716)
4. Formed a Scholarly Project Committee
5. Successful Proposal Hearing.

\*Once a student has advanced to candidacy, they are eligible to use the initials DNP(c).

### **1. Successful Completion of Coursework**

The first stage of the advance to candidacy process involves the successful completion of all core-required courses deemed pre-requisites for advancing to candidacy. Refer to the program of study for the specific courses required throughout the program.

### **2. Formulate and Maintain a Portfolio of DNP experiences**

As part of Advancing to Candidacy, it is expected that the student's portfolio will be up-to-date and demonstrate that the student has progressed through the program of study. As noted previously, the portfolio will contain evidence of acquisition of the Essential of DNP Programs competencies to include course papers, projects, logs and other sources of evidence of student scholarship and knowledge/skill acquisition.

### **3. DNP Scholarly Project: Proposal Paper (NU 716)**

The DNP Scholarly Project proposal paper is written in stages. The student writes the initial draft in NU 716 under the direction of the course faculty. At the end of NU 716, the student will have

the majority, if not all of DNP scholarly proposal paper completed with continued work in NU 717. The DNP Scholarly Project and paper are expected to be of sufficient quality and rigor to meet the requirements of doctoral study. At all stages of the paper the student should expect multiple iterations in response to faculty and committee suggestions.

The DNP Scholarly Proposal paper is to be written in SQUIRE 2.0 format. The expected length of the proposal paper is approximately 12-14 pages, double spaced and must contain a title page, abstract, introduction and methods section according to SQUIRE 2.0 format. References and in-text citations should be in APA format. Two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled proposal defense hearing, the Scholarly Project paper must be submitted to all committee members for their review

#### **4. Forming the Committee**

The faculty in NU 717, NU 718 and NU 719 will oversee the students scholarly project (they will be the faculty advisor). The student will then work with the faculty member in selecting a practice site mentor that is a content expert from the practice site and need not be a nurse or have a higher degree. The student may also invite a faculty member from Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences as a third member of their committee.

The DNP candidate will work closely with the faculty advisor and other committee members throughout the DNP Scholarly Project, including project development, implementation, evaluation, writing phases and dissemination.

#### **5. Scholarly Project Proposal Defense Hearing**

The student is expected to work closely with the faculty advisor to develop a proposal paper that is of doctoral level rigor and quality and suitable to be presented to the full committee. Once the proposal paper meets the expectations of the faculty advisor, the proposal hearing will be scheduled. Two weeks prior to the scheduled hearing, the final draft of the proposal paper will be delivered to all committee members. One week before the proposal hearing the materials to be used in the proposal defense hearing will be shared with the faculty advisor.

The proposal defense hearing consists of a presentation that follows the proposal paper format (SQUIRE2.0). This presentation is conducted over a web-based meeting, and it is expected that all committee members attend. The length of the proposal defense hearing will vary with the candidate and the topic but is generally about 30 minutes of student presentation with additional time for discussion/ questions. The proposal hearing must conform to the criteria for the DNP Scholarly Proposal contained in the Syllabus for NU 716 follows the SQUIRE 2.0 guidelines for reporting practice improvement/quality improvement projects. Additional information on SQUIRE 2.0 guidelines may be retrieved from <http://squirestatement.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.ViewPage&pageId=471>

NOTE: For the proposal hearing, the student will not have the results or conclusions/recommendation sections completed. The project results and recommendations will be incorporated into the final paper after completion of the implementation, data collection and data analysis phases of the project.

Following the student presentation, the committee meets in executive session and makes one of four determinations regarding the Scholarly Project proposal:

1. Approved
2. Approved subject to minor revisions

3. Requires major revisions
4. Not approved

In the case of approved as is, the candidate may proceed with the project.

In all other cases, within ten (10) days of the proposal hearing the faculty advisor will provide the student with an email detailing the revisions required by the committee.

In the case of approved subject to minor revisions, the DNP candidate will revise their proposal in accordance with the committee instructions and submit the revised proposal to the faculty advisor and the other committee members. Once the proposal is revised to the satisfaction of the faculty advisor, the candidate may proceed with the project.

In the case of major revisions, the candidate must revise the proposal and resubmit the proposal to all committee member revisions within the designated due dates. The committee will decide if the revised proposal fulfills the requested revisions and if the student is required to orally present the project again. If not completed to the committees' satisfaction, the student will not advance to candidacy. Without successful completion of the DNP Scholarly Project proposal and proposal paper, the student will receive an incomplete for NU 717. The student will not be allowed to continue with coursework until the incomplete is converted to a passing grade.

Once the student has successfully completed their proposal hearing this means they have Advanced to Candidacy.

## **DNP Tracking Forms**

The DNP Scholarly Project Tracking Forms serve as the official document that chronicles the student's progress through the process of forming a committee, advancing to candidacy, delivering the final oral defense and completing the final paper. There are three parts to the DNP Tracking form (available in NU 717, 718 and NU 719 Blackboard course) which are required to be completed and submitted to the Program Assistant

### **1. DNP Tracking Form: Part 1**

Tracking Form 1 is completed after you form your committee and under the guidance of the faculty advisor in NUR 717. In addition, students are to complete the practice site mentor information form and acquire a copy of the practice site mentor CV. This information is needed for any committee member who is not on faculty at Mass Boston.

\*Students are required to upload the completed Tracking Form 1, Practice Site Mentor information and CV prior to the proposal hearing. Incomplete will be given to students not completing this task by the end of the semester.

Email completed forms to program assistant. The DNP Program assistant will email your committee for signatures using DocuSign.

Please note; if committee members are added or dropped during the time you are working on your project, you will need to consult with your DNP Project Faculty Advisor and complete a new Tracking Form 1. At the conclusion of your program of study, when you present your DNP Project Oral Defense, you need to have a Tracking Form 1 that reflects your committee.

### **2. DNP Tracking Form: Part 2 DNP Scholarly Project Advance to Candidacy**

Tracking Form 2 is completed after the proposal hearing in NUR 717. Once advanced the faculty advisor will instruct the student to complete tracking form part 2. Upload the completed Tracking

Form 2 and a copy of your Project Proposal PowerPoint (pdf, 6 to a page) to the OneDrive (Link will provided by program assistant). The DNP Program assistant will email the committee for signatures using DocuSign.

\*Students are required to upload the completed Tracking Form 2 within one week after their proposal hearing. Incomplete will be given to students not uploading tracking form 2 by the end of the semester.

### **3. DNP Tracking Form: Part 3 DNP Scholarly Project Oral Defense**

Tracking Form 3 is completed after the DNP Scholarly Project Oral Defense in NUR 719. The course faculty will inform student once approved to complete the form. Upload the completed form and a copy of the Oral Defense PowerPoint (pdf, 6 to a page) to the OneDrive. The DNP Program assistant will email the committee for signatures using DocuSign.

Students who do not upload Tracking Form 3 by the end of the semester will receive an **incomplete** in the course which could affect graduation date.

Note: if your committee changed over the course of your project implementation, return to Tracking Form 1 and provide an updated form.

## **The DNP Scholarly Project Final Stages**

### **1. The DNP Scholarly Project: Oral Defense**

All students must participate in an oral defense of their project. In order to participate in the oral defense, the student must have completed their project including the data analysis, results and discussion sections to the satisfaction of the faculty advisor and committee.

The date of the oral defense for all students is held on the same day and requires an on-campus visit towards the end of the semester. It is expected that all students in the graduating cohort will attend.

The presentation is to be submitted to the faculty advisor at least two weeks prior to the defense date for review and feedback. Each student is scheduled for 1 hour to complete the oral defense. The presentation should be about 30 minutes in length with 10-15 minutes for questions. Following the student presentation, the committee will determine if the project oral defense met the requirements of the scholarly project. If requirements for presentation of the scholarly project are not met the student will meet with the faculty advisor to determine the next steps.

### **2. DNP Scholarly Project Paper**

The DNP Scholarly Project paper is written under the guidance of the student's faculty advisor and committee. DNP Scholarly Project paper is to be written in SQUIRE 2.0 format and reflect all phases of the project including the development, implementation, and evaluation of the project. References and in-text citations should be in APA format. The paper must be approved by the full committee before it is accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. Committee members are responsible for determining if the final paper is:

1. **Approved-** the student will be ready to submit the paper to the Office of Graduate Studies.
2. **Approved with minor revisions-**In the case of approval with minor revisions, the candidate will resubmit the revised Scholarly Project Paper to the faculty advisor and committee members. Once the student has made all requested changes and it is approved by the student's



faculty advisor, the paper is submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies

3. **Major revisions-** In the case of major revisions, the candidate must resubmit the Scholarly Project paper to all committee members. The candidate must complete both minor and major revisions by the date indicated by the faculty advisor. If the scholarly paper does not reach approval by this date the student's graduation date will be changed to a later date (even if the oral defense has been completed).

4. **Not approved-** the committee will meet with the candidate and decide how to proceed.

The final copy of the Scholarly Project paper and PowerPoint should be uploaded to the student portfolio

#### 4. Scholarly Project: The Dissemination Product

The student must fulfill requirements for dissemination as part of the requirements of the DNP degree. The DNP Scholarly Project paper is required to be submitted to the UMass Boston ScholarWorks for completion of NU 719. Directions on uploading to ScholarWorks will be provided in NU 719. Past scholarly projects can be accessed at [https://scholarworks.umb.edu/nursing\\_dnp\\_capstone/](https://scholarworks.umb.edu/nursing_dnp_capstone/)

Students are also encouraged to submit their project as a journal article, a poster that is presented at an approved professional conference, or a podium presentation. The faculty advisor and all committee members must be made aware of the plan for dissemination and approve prior to the student disseminating the project.

##### Authorship, Acknowledgements and Attribution

Dissemination about work done while at UMass Boston doctoral student, including the DNP Scholarly Project, should provide attribution to UMass Boston. The project's site affiliation is also appropriate to list, but the primary affiliation on any dissemination related to a student's project should list the student as a DNP student (or a simply as a doctoral student) at UMass Boston.

Determination of authorship of books or manuscripts based on Scholarly Projects can be challenging. The doctoral student, as author of the scholarly project, holds the position of primary authorship of any subsequent publications based on it. Including co-authors, such as members of the committee, is inappropriate if such persons meet the requirements of authorship set out in the International Guidelines that are abstracted below.

*Authorship:* Authors submitting a paper do so on the understanding that the manuscript has been read and approved by all authors and that all authors agree to the submission of the manuscript to the journal. ALL named authors must have made an active contribution to the conception and design and/or analysis and interpretation of the data and/or the drafting of the paper and ALL must have critically reviewed its content and have approved the final version submitted for publication.

The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) authorship criteria state that authorship should be based on 1) substantial contributions to conception and design of, or acquisition of data or analysis and interpretation of data, 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content and 3) final approval of the version to be published. Authors should meet conditions 1, 2 and 3.

*Acknowledgements:* Contributors who do not qualify as authors should be mentioned under Acknowledgements.

Under acknowledgements, students can specify contributors to the article other than the authors accredited. It is helpful to include specifications of the source of funding for the study and any potential conflict of interests if appropriate. Suppliers of materials should be named, and their location (town, state/county, country) included.

## **Ethical Assurance**

Assuring that the DNP Scholarly Project meets ethical standards is a core value of the DNP program. The range of activities involving human participants in healthcare settings comprises patient care, teaching, and research; however, not all of these activities constitute human subject research. For example, training, education, quality improvement, and review of case reports are activities in which faculty and staff are commonly engaged in addition to research. The UMass Boston Office of Research and Sponsored Projects, in collaboration with the DNP faculty, has determined that projects which meet the following criteria and do not involve human subjects and therefore do not need to be reviewed by the IRB

- The project is designed to implement knowledge or assess a process or program considered standard practice that provide immediate and continuous improvement and feedback in the local setting
- While the activities described may involve accidental discoveries and/or innovative practices, they do not constitute research unless they also involve a systematic investigation with the intent to contribute to generalizable knowledge.
- The project translates established evidence to practice.
- The intention of the project is not theory generating or theory testing; the efficacy of new devices or drugs will not be tested.

If it has been determined the project meets the criteria for practice improvement, then the student must have an ethics section in your DNP Scholarly Project paper which includes the following statement: “ *The project or innovation [proposed (proposal paper); implemented (final paper)] is quality improvement and does not meet the definition of human subjects research because it is not designed to generate generalizable findings but rather to provide immediate and continuous improvement feedback in the local setting in which the project is carried out.* ”

If a project deviates from the above stated guidelines for practice improvement, then the student will need to discuss the project with the faculty advisor. In the rare case where it is determined that a student’s project meets the criteria for human subject research, the student will need to apply to the UMass Boston Institutional Review Board (IRB) as well as the project site IRB. Directions for completing a UMass Boston IRB application can be found on the UMass Boston website. If IRB approval is required, the student must obtain this prior to implementation of the project.

In all cases, the student should discuss the details of the DNP project with the practice site mentor to understand the organizations process for determining whether the project fits their definition of practice improvement or would be considered human subject’s research. In the case of the latter, the student will need to obtain institutional IRB approval prior to implementing the project.

## Appendix A. Best Practices for Dissertation

*Best Practices for Dissertation Advisors and Advisees University of Massachusetts Boston  
Office Of Graduate Studies  
Office for Faculty Development  
2019*

### Best Practices for Dissertation Advisors

*The dissertation advisor, along with the Dissertation Committee, the Office of Graduate Studies, and the Graduate Program Director, plays a critical role in a student's completion of the doctorate. The following guidelines are intended to help dissertation advisors understand and fulfill this role.*

#### *Communication and Feedback*

**Provide clear, timely, and honest communication about dissertation work.**

**Communicate frequently with advisees about expectations and responsibilities, ensuring with each communication that there is mutual understanding.** Discuss the dissertation's strengths and weaknesses; offer strategies for addressing the weaknesses. *Written* feedback is especially important although it should never replace face-to-face meetings. Meet one-on-one with advisees on a regular basis. When in-person meetings are not possible, connect through email, video chat, or phone. Frequency of meetings will vary by field and the student's stage in the dissertation.

**Help advisees to plan, set attainable goals, and establish a timeline for completion of the dissertation.** Though a plan may change, having one ensures that an advisee sees a path forward. Support advisees during the dissertation-writing phase, and provide advice about productive writing processes, the value of writing groups, and other forms of peer support. Use OGS dissertation tracking forms to monitor each advisee's progress. (*See \* below for information regarding tracking forms.*)

**Assist advisees in matters concerning the dissertation committee.** Help them to select their dissertation committee and assure that the committee meets at least annually to review the student's progress (A committee may meet more frequently, depending on program guidelines or student needs.)

**Decode or demystify departmental and OGS policies, requirements, and terminology regarding the dissertation.**

Help with IRB processes and compliance. Explain ethical standards for research and authorship.

#### *Respect for Advisee*

**Provide an environment that is intellectually stimulating, emotionally supportive, safe, and free of harassment.** Encourage openness about any challenges or difficulties that may impact an advisee's progress on the dissertation and work with the advisee to resolve them. Create environments that foster help-seeking and more importantly, minimize barriers to

honest communication. You should not require advisees to perform tasks unrelated to their academic and professional development.

**Understand and respect that each advisee brings different perspectives, experiences and interests.** Different backgrounds warrant thoughtful advising approaches as well as sincere effort to understand individual experiences and interests and how these affect the advisee's progress.

**Listen to and support an advisee's scholarly and professional goals.** Advisors must realize that an advisee's goals will not always align with their own goals for a student. You should not place your own personal and professional goals over the advisee's goals for the dissertation.

### *Career Advising*

Prepare an advisee to be competitive for future careers inside and beyond the academy, eg: Recognize and promote an advisee's contributions to research in publications or presentations in conferences; Support the development of teaching skills when relevant to career goals;

Acknowledge the advisee's service as, for example, mentors and graduate student peers, etc.

Connect an advisee to your own professional networks and support opportunities for the advisee to cultivate professional and technical skills that may open up broader career outcomes;

Be realistic, open, and honest about career prospects and options.

### **Best Practices for Dissertation Advisees**

*Along with the dissertation advisor, an advisee has responsibilities in forging a productive and professional relationship.* The following guidelines are intended to help advisees understand and fulfill their role.

#### *Communication and Feedback*

**Take primary responsibility for completion of the dissertation and for communicating with your advisor toward its completion.** Work with your advisor to develop a project, set goals and a timeline. Strive to meet deadlines.

Take advantage of resources that facilitate productive and consistent writing practices.

**Communicate clearly with your advisor about questions regarding his/her feedback. Try to reach a point of mutual understanding.** Be available for face-to-face meetings and use other means when this is not possible. Maintain a high level of responsiveness and professionalism in your communication with your advisor.

**Work with the dissertation advisor on matters concerning the dissertation committee.** Seek your advisor's help with its selection. Expect to meet with your committee at least once a year and take its advice seriously.

**Be knowledgeable about dissertation policies and requirements.** Read available materials and seek clarification of any unclear policies, requirements, or terms. Take responsibility for understanding and practicing high ethical standards in research and authorship.

### *Respectful Collaboration*

**Expect and contribute to a working environment that is intellectually stimulating, emotionally supportive, safe and free of harassment.** Discuss promptly with your advisor any challenges you are facing that may affect your progress. If you experience an uncomfortable working environment, see: [https://www.umb.edu/titleix/student\\_procedure](https://www.umb.edu/titleix/student_procedure)

**Help your advisor to understand your scholarly and professional goals.** The advisor should respect your individuality in relation to your interests and topic choice. In turn, you should be open to the dissertation advisor's perspective on a scholarly topic. Try to negotiate a plan that accommodates your goals and the program's standards.

### *Career Preparation*

**Take primary responsibility for developing a career following the completion of the doctoral degree.** Be open to your advisor's assistance in preparing you for a career through conference participation, contributions to publications, networking connections and guidance in basic career skills such as grant writing, oral and written communication, lab management, and animal and human research policies.

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*This document draws heavily on similar documents from Brown University and the University of Iowa. It was prepared by Judith Goleman, Director, Office for Faculty Development; Rita Kiki Edozie, Assoc. Dean, MGS; Corinne Etienne, GPD, Applied Linguistics; Andrea Leverentz, GPD, Sociology, Heath MacIndoe, GPD, Public Policy and Public Affairs.*