DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN NURSING SCIENCE

2023-2024 Ph.D. Student Handbook

sc.edu/nursing

College of Nursing
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Ph.D. Graduate Student Handbook (AY 2023-2024)

PREFACE

Welcome to USC College of Nursing (CON). We are here to help you be successful in your graduate nursing education endeavors. The College of Nursing Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing Science (Ph.D.) Graduate Student Handbook provides students with current information about curricula, policies, and other vital information concerning the graduate programs in the College. Wherever in this CON Ph.D. Graduate Student Handbook the pronoun "they" is used, the same shall be interpreted to include members of both sexes.

Students must become familiar with the current Ph.D. Graduate Student Handbook. All graduate students must read and understand the content and are responsible for adhering to the policies and procedures stipulated in the Handbook. Students must sign a statement annually attesting that they have read the current Handbook.

Disclaimer

The policies and procedures described in this handbook are continually revised and updated on the College of Nursing website. The College of Nursing and the University of South Carolina must reserve the right to change policies, fees, curriculum, or any other matters announced in this handbook. Notifications of changes or additions to the Ph.D. Graduate Student Handbook made throughout the year are posted promptly on the CON website and Virtual Communities in Blackboard (Bb). Students are responsible for checking Bb regularly for all program-related for all program-related updates and handbook updates. If you have questions regarding the contents of this handbook, please get in contact with the Office of Academic Affairs.

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University of South Carolina, College of Nursing Overview

Dean's Welcome

https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/nursing/about/message_from_dean/index.php

Accreditation

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredit the University.

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) and State Board of Nursing Regulation Information

Please review SARA and State Board of Nursing Information at
https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/nursing/academic_programs/accreditation.php.

Offices

Dean's Office

Jeannette O. Andrews
Dean and Helen Gurley Wolford Professor of Nursing
College of Nursing
Phone: (803) 777-3862
E-mail: jandrews@sc.edu

Office of Academic Affairs

Alicia K. Ribar, Executive Associate Dean for Academics & Accreditation and Professor, (803) 777-4889, ribara@mailbox.sc.edu

Cheryl Y. Nelson, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, (803) 777-8777, cynelson@e-mail.sc.edu

Program Directors:

Robin Dail, Ph.D. Director, and Health Sciences Endowed Professor, (803) 576-6187, rdail@mailbox.sc.edu

College of Nursing Leadership Team

https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/nursing/about/leadership_team.php

University Bulletins and Policies and Procedures

There are several resources available to aid you in meeting your academic and personal goals. Registration at the University of South Carolina assumes the students' acceptance of all published regulations. The academic bulletins are the official documents of record concerning undergraduate and graduate academic programs and regulations. These bulletins are for information purposes only and do not constitute any contractual agreement between a student and the University of South Carolina. The University

reserves the right to make changes in curricula, degree requirements, course offerings, or academic regulations at any time when, in the judgment of the faculty, the president, or the Board of Trustees, such changes are in the best interest of the students and the University.

All graduate students are also responsible for the regulations listed below:

2023-2024 Graduate Studies Bulletin

https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/graduate/

2023-2024 Policies and Regulations

https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/policies-regulations/

USC Policies and Procedures Manual

http://www.sc.edu/policies/policiesbydivision.php

Academic Calendar

- The College of Nursing follows the University Academic Calendar in the Fall and Spring terms.

  (https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/registrar/academic_calendars/index.php

- The College of Nursing Summer Calendar differs from the traditional University calendar. There are typically three sessions offered each summer. Accelerated courses are typically scheduled to begin after spring final exams and run through July. Non-clinical courses are scheduled to begin after spring final exams and run through the first of August. Clinical courses are typically scheduled to begin after spring final exams and run through mid-August. Registration for summer and fall courses occurs simultaneously during the Advance Registration period in the spring semester.

- Consult the appropriate academic calendar for information regarding the academic year (e.g., semester beginning and ending dates, registration windows, holiday, etc.

USC College of Nursing Strategic Plan

Mission

The University of South Carolina College of Nursing provides nationally recognized educational programs and advances science, practice, and policy to optimize health for all.

Vision

To be a preeminent College of Nursing of distinction that pioneers innovation, leadership, and excellence.

Values

Diversity, Inclusivity, Commitment, Caring, Integrity, Respect, Professionalism

At USC College of Nursing, we value each student, staff, and faculty. We want everyone to feel welcome, included, and have a sense of belonging. We aim to cultivate and support the values of the College of Nursing: inclusivity, commitment, caring, integrity, respect, diversity, and professionalism. We believe that upholding our values is necessary to achieve academic and institutional excellence. All members of the CON community not only matter, but their unique perspectives are the core of our strength and success.

University of South Carolina Harassment and Discrimination Policies

The University of South Carolina follows the lead of the state and federal government when maintaining the laws and regulations concerning discrimination and harassment. Questions or concerns regarding the University's equal opportunity programs should be directed to the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX, 901 Sumter Street, James F. Byrnes Building, Suite 401, Columbia, SC 29201, or 803-777-3854 (Voice), fax 803-777-2296, e-mail: civilrights@mailbox.sc.edu, https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/civil_rights_title_ix/index.php.

Statement of Academic Responsibility

It is the responsibility of every student at the University of South Carolina Columbia to adhere steadfastly to truthfulness and to avoid dishonesty, fraud, or deceit of any type in connection with any academic program. Any student who violates this rule or who knowingly assists another to violate this rule shall be subject to discipline.

Academic Integrity

All students at the University of South Carolina College of Nursing must adhere to the following school-wide policies:

Carolinian Creed

We oppose intolerance by promoting integrity within our campus community. Our common values are formed upon the foundation of our creed, which emphasizes openness and civility. https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_affairs/our_initiatives/involvement_and_leadership/carolinian_creed/index.php)

Code of Conduct

Our Code of Conduct (http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf626.pdf) outlines students' responsibilities to themselves and the Carolina community.

USC Honor Code

All USC students are responsible for adhering to the [Carolinian Creed (https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_affairs/our_initiatives/involvement_and_leadership/carolinian_creed/index.php)](https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_affairs/our_initiatives/involvement_and_leadership/carolinian_creed/index.php)

Honor Code violations include:

- Plagiarism: "Use of work or ideas without proper acknowledgement of source."

- Cheating: "Improper collaboration or unauthorized assistance on connection with any academic work."

- Cheating: "Using, possessing or distributing the contents of any examination (e.g., unauthorized access to test/quiz information, unauthorized duplication of test/quiz materials) without authorization."

- Falsification: "Misrepresenting or misleading others with respect to academic work.

- Complicity: "Assisting or attempting to assist another in any violation of the Honor Code."

  For more detailed information, please review the [USC Policy on Academic Responsibility – The Honor Code (http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf625.pdf)](http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf625.pdf).

  The [Office of Academic Integrity (https://www.sa.sc.edu/academicintegrity/)](https://www.sa.sc.edu/academicintegrity/) provides resources to faculty and students for combating and preventing cheating, plagiarism, falsification, and complicity. Be aware that USC faculty are bound to report any violations of the Honor Code to the Office of Academic Integrity.

  When a violation of academic integrity occurs:

  - Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity decides non-academic (University) sanctions.

  - In addition to university sanctions, the academic unit makes decisions about academic (course) sanctions.

  - At the College of Nursing, academic penalties range from a 0 (zero) for an assignment to dismissal from the program, depending on the severity of the violation.

Artificial Intelligence Statement

It is important to the CON that any assignment submission is a pure reflection of the student's work and understanding. Unauthorized use of artificial intelligence options to complete academic work jeopardizes the faculty's ability to evaluate the student's

understanding of the course content and robs the student of the ability to demonstrate mastery of the subject matter.

Suspicions of unauthorized use of artificial intelligence aids will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity as alleged violations of Cheating, defined as "unauthorized assistance in connection with any academic work" and/or Falsification, which includes "Misrepresenting or misleading others with respect to academic work or misrepresenting facts for an academic advantage."

Student Code of Conduct on Disruptive Activity

The University of South Carolina strives to maintain an educational community that fosters the development of students who are ethical, civil, and responsible persons. Policies that address student conduct can be found at the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity page (http://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_conduct_and_academic_integrity/index.php).

As students' progress through the curriculum, they are preparing for transition into professional life. Some behaviors expected in the classroom/clinical setting parallel many behaviors expected in the workplace.

Classroom Expectations

  a. Notify professor when unable to send assignment on time prior to the deadline.
  b. Complete reading all assignments.
  c. Engage in class discussion.
  d. Maintain appropriate and professional demeanor during online class activity.
  e. Refrain from the use of online discussion forums for posting of non-academic material (e.g., advertisements for jobs, products, or services).

Ethics for Nursing

Nursing is a profession, and as such, nursing students are expected to behave ethically. Ethical behavior applies to colleagues, peers, supervisors, subordinates, and clients.

Click https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/ethics/code-of-ethics-for-nurses/ for the complete Code of Ethics for Nurses developed by the American Nurses Association (ANA). The Code of Ethics serves as a guide for ethical behavior in the nursing profession. As such, students should adhere to the Code of Ethics, the Carolinian Creed, USC Code of Conduct, and Honor Code.

Copyright Policy

The Nursing Programs seek to aid enrolled students by offering electronic presentations and recordings of lectures to improve student engagement and to better

meet individual learning needs. With the growing use of technology, students and faculty have the responsibility to understand and observe copyright laws including educational fair use guidelines, obtaining written permission, and to follow the corresponding campus University policy.

As supplemental tools, all material found in lectures is owned by the University of South Carolina College of Nursing or its faculty and is protected by United States Copyright laws.

Lecture material is only available to students enrolled in the course where the content is available, and use is not permitted outside the scope of the course. Recorded lectures will only be posted to Blackboard. Material found in the lectures may not be photocopied, screenshot, duplicated or distributed by any student without the express, written permission from the faculty member who created the material. Video, audio, or photographic recordings of course material are prohibited. Recordings, course material, quizzes, tests, and lecture notes may not be reproduced verbatim nor uploaded to publicly accessible web environments. Recordings and course material may not be exchanged nor distributed to a third party for compensation. Recordings and course material may not be used for any purpose other than personal study and may not violate any policies herein. An individual may individually print copies of lecture material solely for personal use under the scope of the course.

Duplication or dissemination of lecture materials without authorized use may violate federal or state law and USC University policies.

Failure to adhere to these policies violates the College of Nursing Professionalism Policy and may result in disciplinary action under university guidelines.

Dispute Resolution

Recognizing that disputes or concerns will arise, USC CON's basic guideline is that any dispute should be resolved at the lowest level possible. Your course instructor(s), advisor, program director, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation, Interim Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity, and Dean are resources available to you. See Student Grievance Policy or Student Petition Policy.

Academic Programs

Graduate Nursing Program Requirements

Individual program policies may supersede this policy due to national accreditation regulations. Check with your Program Director to determine any additional requirements:

Program of Study

Every doctoral degree student must file a doctoral program of study (**D-POS**) in The Graduate School for approval by the Dean of The Graduate School. A program of study is a list of courses that satisfy degree requirements and is one of the degree audit documents. It allows the student and the advisor to engage in early planning of course work, explore research interests, and discuss requirements for progress toward degree; facilitates subsequent advisement; and protects the student in the event of unexpected curriculum or faculty changes Modification to the Doctoral Program of Study may be made only in consultation with the Program Director. Before beginning any change(s), the change(s) must be submitted to The Graduate School on the Program of Study Adjustment Form (GS-43 (POSA)), which is submitted by the Ph.D. graduate student advisor. Forms are found at **Graduate School Forms Library.**
(https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/forms_library/index.php)

Ph.D. Requirements

Ph.D. Overview

The **Ph.D. program** at the University of South Carolina is designed to prepare graduates for a lifetime of intellectual inquiry through creative scholarship and research. Students in this doctoral program acquire the knowledge and skills to conduct research that will contribute to furthering nursing science, practice, education, and administration.

Ph.D. Learning Outcomes

1. Utilize a biobehavioral scientific approach in collaboration with an interdisciplinary team in advancing knowledge to improve health for diverse populations.

2. Demonstrate, through the comprehensive examination, an understanding of the history, theory, and philosophy of science that serve as a foundation for a substantive research area.

3. Generate and communicate new knowledge to public and professional audiences to advance nursing and health.

4. Demonstrate conceptual, methodological, analytical and dissemination skills to advance nursing science within the context of planning, implementing, and evaluating research aimed at improving health and healthcare.

5. Incorporate, through program deliverables and the dissertation proposal, concepts of diversity and inclusion in research, advocacy, and policy to promote health equity.

6. Use leadership and mentorship skills in research and advocacy to advance the nursing profession.

Ph.D. Program Requisites and Co-Requisites

B.S.N. entry students need to complete 18 credit hours of master's level courses which may be from one of the existing nursing majors or emphasis areas or in an individualized program of study. Typically, enrollment in the master's courses occurs before enrollment in the Ph.D. core courses and includes courses in nursing theory, research methods and entry level statistics.

Non-M.S.N. master's entry students who do not have beginning level graduate courses in nursing theory, research, or statistics equivalent to those required in the USC College of Nursing Master of Science in Nursing degree program will need to complete these courses prior to beginning the Ph.D. core courses.

The Ph.D. Program Director will determine these required courses, in consultation with appropriate course faculty and communicated to students at the time of admission. These courses may relate to the student's research area of interest. All students must have a recent (within 5 years) graduate statistics course or relevant experience.

Ph.D. Curriculum

The Ph.D. in Nursing Science curriculum consists of core courses in which students develop the requisite knowledge and skills for the conceptual, methodological, and analytical development, implementation, interpretation, and critique of nursing research. Upon completion of the required core courses, students take the Qualifying Examination (refer to section entitled Qualifying Examination). Additional program components build on core courses and allow for the development of individualized programs of study, including the preparation and defense of the doctoral dissertation. All Ph.D. requirements, including the dissertation defense, must be completed within ten years of initial enrollment. Curriculum varies depending on the student's preparation at entry Post-BSN, Post MSN, Post-masters (non-MSN), Post-Ph.D. All students will take the following Ph.D. nursing core courses: NURS 800, NURS 801, NURS 803, NURS 804, NURS 810, NURS 811, NURS 813, NURS 817, NURS 870, NURS 898 and NURS 899 (12 hours). A detailed description of the courses required for each preparation entry is found in the **USC Graduate Studies Bulletin** website.

Ph.D. Degree Requirements

A summary of degree requirements is listed below. Each of the requirements is described in detail under the Ph.D. Program Academic Policies.

a. Doctoral residency of at least 18 graduate credit hours for three consecutive major semesters. Enrollment in a summer term is not required to maintain continuity, but credits earned during summer terms (including May session) will count toward the 18 hours required for residency. The residency requirement may be met only after admission to the Ph.D. program;

b. Completion of an approved program of study totaling not less than 39 credits for D.N.P. entry options (at least 30 credits must be earned at the University of

South Carolina); not less than 57 credit hours for master's entry options and not less than 75 credit hours for B.S.N. entry option;

c. completion of the admission-to-candidacy examination at least one full academic year prior to the date on which the degree is to be granted;

d. completion of a foreign language and/or research methods requirement, met through a reading knowledge of a foreign language or competency in statistics/research methods specific to the student's proposed course of study;

e. completion of a mentored research experience under the supervision of College of Nursing faculty (**NURS 898**);

f. completion of a comprehensive examination taken after admission to candidacy and completion of all course requirements except those courses in which the student is currently enrolled;

g. completion of an oral defense of a doctoral dissertation.

Ph.D. Time Limitations

A maximum of ten (10) calendar years, beginning with the initial graduate course following matriculation, is allowed for completion of the work for the Ph.D. degree. For post-PH.D. entry students, the anticipated length of the Ph.D. in Nursing Science program is 3 to 4 years of full-time enrollment or 4 to 5 years part-time enrollment. For students who enter with an MSN degree or an MS degree in another field, the anticipated length of the Ph.D. in Nursing Science program is 3 to 4 years of full-time enrollment or 5 to 6 years of part-time enrollment. Students entering with a BSN should anticipate completing the program in 4 to 5 years of full-time enrollment or 6 years of part-time enrollment.

A Ph.D. candidate must present a dissertation and abstract approved by the student's Doctoral Committee, the Ph.D. Program Director, and the Dean of The Graduate School no later than five years after the comprehensive examination (i.e., Dissertation Proposal) has been successfully completed.

Upon enrollment, students are expected to make satisfactory and timely progress towards the degree. An Annual Advising Meeting will be held to review and finalize the Individual Development Plan (IDP) Form and update the student's bio sketch. The advising meeting will take place in the Fall or Spring of each academic year. The student is responsible for drafting the Individual Development Plan (IDP) Form, updating the bio sketch, scheduling the advising meeting obtaining signatures on the final form, and submitting the final IDP and bio sketch to the Ph.D. Program Director by May 1 of each academic year.

Following three years of non-enrollment, admission to the Ph.D. in Nursing Science program becomes invalid and students must reapply and meet current admission requirements for readmission. Upon readmission, students are subject to regulations of the Graduate Studies Bulletin in effect at the time of reenrollment.

Additionally, when courses that are taken at the University are beyond The Graduate School ten-year limit, the course must be revalidated to be applied toward the degree. Please refer to the Graduate School Bulletin Academic Regulations section on Revalidation of Out of Date Courses for more information. Coursework taken at other institutions cannot be revalidated.

Ph.D. Advisement and Mentoring

Upon admission to the Ph.D. program, students receive initial academic advising with the Ph.D. Program Director. Upon entry into the program, students will be assigned a Major Professor selected from College of Nursing Graduate Faculty who will mentor the student with academic support during degree progression through the core courses and candidacy process. Both the Major Professor and the Ph.D. program director may be involved in academic advising during the student's first year of course work. If there continues to be mutually good fit between student and Major Professor, this faculty member will become the student's Doctoral Committee Chair. Upon successful completion of the Qualifying Exam, students are admitted to candidacy and required to establish a Doctoral Committee; however, selection of a Major Professor and Dissertation Committee members is encouraged early within the second academic year to facilitate active progression towards dissertation. Once a student has been admitted to candidacy, the primary advising role moves to the student's Doctoral Committee Chair with continued support by Dissertation Committee Members.

Qualifying/Candidacy Examination

Overview

The Qualifying/Candidacy Examination is referred to as the Qualifying Examination in the College of Nursing. Ph.D. students are eligible to sit for the Qualifying Examination once they have satisfactorily completed all required core Ph.D. courses. The required courses include NURS 800, NURS 801, NURS 803, NURS 804, NURS 810, NURS 811, NURS 813, NURS 817, and NURS 870.

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set forth expectations, guidelines, criteria, resources and useful references for the preparation and evaluation of the College of Nursing Ph.D. Candidacy Examination. The Candidacy Examination is an opportunity for students to demonstrate scholarship. Scholarship is defined as command of a subject that encompasses discovery, integration, application, and/or teaching of knowledge (Boyer, 1990). Characteristics of scholarliness include demonstrated understanding of the relationships among theory, research, practice, and philosophy. Scholarship also includes appreciation and understanding of the value of pluralism in paradigms, articulation of the boundaries and domains of practice, research, and nursing science and how these domains influence each other.

As a student progresses through the Ph.D. program relationships among theory, research, philosophy, and practice become apparent through a synthesis of the

discipline's different components. Over time, various course assignments contribute to this synthesis. For example, concept and philosophical analysis papers, integrative research reviews, analysis and critique of models, theories and research reports help the student synthesize existing knowledge from theoretical and data-based literature. Based on this analysis and synthesis students gain the knowledge, skill, and abilities to advance nursing science based on their own nursing research agenda. The candidacy examination provides students an opportunity to demonstrate what they know, and how they think, and how they have organized and integrated or synthesized issues. The written and oral defense components of the examination should provide evidence of mastery of content associated with a student's completion of the core nursing courses. The examination provides faculty with evidence of the student's mastery of knowledge, skill, and abilities necessary to conduct the research required at the dissertation stage of the program. The examination is an opportunity for the student to demonstrate they have the knowledge and values that support professional identity as a nurse scientist invested in the scholarly development of the discipline.

Faculty members who evaluate candidacy exams are looking for evidence that the student is a critical thinker who can demonstrate synthesis and be advanced to the dissertation stage. Critical thinking is defined as purposeful self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as the explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based (Facione & Facione, 1996).

Synthesis is the ability to put together various elements and parts to form a whole. Synthesis is the process of combining elements from many sources to put them together into a structure, pattern, or product not clearly present before. The synthesis represents personal and professional expression of disciplined inquiry. In order to synthesize one must develop some of the characteristics of an ideal thinker. The ideal thinker has been described as "habitually inquisitive, well-informed, trustful of reason, open minded, flexible, fair minded in evaluation, honest in facing personal biases, prudent in making judgments, willing to reconsider, clear about issues, orderly in complex matters, diligent in seeking relevant information, reasonable in the selection of criteria, focused in inquiry, and persistent in seeking results which are as precise as the subject and the circumstances of inquiry permit (Facione & Facione, 1996). The examination provides the student an opportunity to demonstrate these competencies.

The definition of critical thinking can be expanded and includes many sub-skills. Evidence that these skills are employed in the development of one's ideas and oral defense is useful criteria for evaluation purposes. Critical thinking skills and sub-skills and corresponding elements are outlined below. In evaluating the examination faculty will pay attention to the presence or absence of these skills. Questions that you may want to consider as a means to help you reflect on your paper are outlined. Finally, an evaluation checklist faculty use in grading the examination is attached for your information.

Critical Thinking Skills

Interpretation: categorize, decode sentences, and clarify meaning. Knowledge of specifics and ways and means for dealing with specific facts, trends, conventions, methods, theories, content relative to nursing theory and research given an identified phenomenon of concern.

Analysis: examine ideas, identify arguments, and analyze arguments. Analysis of concepts, principles, theories, methods, and relationships among concepts, theories, variables, measures, methods, and outcomes.

Inference: query evidence, conjecture alternatives, draw conclusions. Interpretation, explanation and discussion of implications, consequences, corollaries, and effects. Derive logical consequences given analysis of the evidence, and consequential results.

Explanation: state results, justify procedures, present arguments. Inductive, deductive or retrodictive development of propositions and their relationships or theoretical/conceptual framework associated with a research tradition.

Evaluation: assess claims, assess arguments. Ability to indicate logical fallacies and to compare work with standards or criteria relevant to state-of-the-art scholarship and research-based evidence.

Synthesis. Ability to draw upon many elements from many sources and put them together in a pattern or structure, plan, or communication not clearly present before -- a unique communication, a plan or proposed set of operations, derivation of a set of abstract relations based on disciplined inquiry.

Self-regulation: self-examination, self-correction. Ability to think about own thinking skills, evidence of self-monitoring, analyzing, predicting, planning, evaluation, and revising.

Questions to Consider in Evaluation of the Written Examination. Given these skills, several questions guide faculty and students in evaluating both the written and oral components of the examination. For example:

1. To what degree does the paper demonstrate knowledge of specifics and ways and means for dealing with specific facts, trends, conventions, methods, theories, content, and process relative to nursing theory and research given the identified phenomenon of concern or issue raised by the question?

2. To what degree does the paper illustrate competent and critical analysis of concepts, principles, theories, methods, and relationships among the elements of the question or among concepts, theories, variables, measures, methods, and outcomes associated with the subject matter of the paper?

3. To what degree is competence evident in the interpretation, explanation, and discussion of the implications, corollaries, consequences and effects of issues or observations raised in the paper?

4. To what degree is the student able to derive logical consequences from the analysis of evidence presented? Are the consequential results of that analysis adequately discussed and evaluated? Are the applications and relevancy of these issues for nursing science made explicit?

5. How specifically did the student present and justify arguments and state results? To what degree does the student adequately develop propositions, and relationships among ideas that are associated with the research traditions relevant to the topic of the paper or the issues and observations related to the question?

6. To what degree does the student express in writing or verbally the knowledge, values, and commitments associated with being a nurse scientist?

7. To what degree do you think the student possesses the knowledge, skills, and abilities to conduct independent research?

8. Does the paper demonstrate synthesis?

9. Should the student be advanced to candidacy status? If not, why not?

The checklist on the next page can assist faculty in determining the acceptability or unacceptable nature of the criteria identified.

References and Resources

Blackburn, S. (2000). Think. London: Oxford University Press.

Boyer, E. (1990). Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities for the Professorate. Princeton, NJ: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Brown, Sharon, Cohen, S, Kaeser, L et. al. (1995). Nursing perspective of Boyer's scholarship paradigm. Nurse Educator, 20, 5, 26-30.

Chinn, P.L., & Kramer, M.K. (1999). Theory and Nursing: Integrated Knowledge Development (5th ed.). St. Louis, MO: Mosby.

Facione, N & Facione, P. (1996). Externalizing the critical thinking in knowledge development and clinical judgment, Nursing Outlook, 44,3,129-136.

Howard, V & Barton, J. (1986). Thinking on Paper. New York: William Morrow.

Meleis, A. (1997). Theoretical Nursing: Development and Progress (3rd ed.) Philadelphia: Lippincott.

Pinch, W. (1995). Synthesis: Implementing a complex process. Nurse Educator, 20, 1, 34-40.

Zinsser, W.K. (1994). On writing well. New York: Harper Perennial.

*Guidelines may be changed at anytime

The Qualifying Examination Panel is composed of three Ph.D.-program faculty and may be from the student's Dissertation Committee, if that committee has been selected. If the dissertation committee has not been selected, the student should submit names of three (3) Ph.D. program faculty who agree to serve on the Qualifying Examination Panel, to be approved by the Ph.D. Program Director. The Chair of the Qualifying Examination Panel will be the student's Major Professor.

The Qualifying Examination consists of a written and oral component. The written component is based on five questions selected from a bank of questions that assess essential learning from the core courses in the Ph.D. program of study. The Ph.D. Program Director will select questions in consultation with the student's Major Professor. The oral component involves the student defending their written responses and responding to questions raised by the Qualifying Examination Panel.

Procedure

Prior to scheduling the Qualifying Exam, the student must complete the Graduate School Doctoral Program of Study Form (DPOS) in consultation with the Ph.D. graduate student advisor.

The student must email the Ph.D. Program Director the request to sit for the Qualifying Examination. As part of this request, the student must include the names of the three Ph.D. program faculty who will serve as the Qualifying Examination Panel and specify the Major Professor who will serve as Chair of the Panel. In the request, the student will need to identify the suggested date(s) that they and their panel members choose to hold the examination. The final Qualifying Examination dates will be determined and approved by the Ph.D. Program Director.

The timeline and details of the Qualifying Examination follows:
1. The request to sit for the Qualifying Examination must be received by the Ph.D. Program Director at least one month prior to the date chosen by the student and their Qualifying Examination Panel.
2. If the request is approved, the Ph.D. Program Director will notify the Qualifying Examination Panel and confer with the Major Professor to select 5 questions from the Core Course Question Bank that are most appropriate to the student's intended research plan, while still evaluating essential core courses' objectives.
3. The student receives the written questions via email from the Ph.D. graduate student advisor between 8am and 9am on the start date of the examination and will have 7 days to complete the written questions.
   a. The only requirement for length of the responses is that the response document should be no more than 40 double-spaced pages (Times New Roman, 12-point font) in total, excluding references.

4. Once completed, the student emails the written answers to the examination to the Ph.D. graduate student advisor by 4pm on the due date.
5. The Ph.D. graduate student advisor distributes the essential elements of the written answers to the questions to the Qualifying Examination Panel the day after receiving the written answers from the student.
6. The Qualifying Examination Panel has two (2) weeks (10 business days) to grade the examination.
7. At the end of this two-week grading period, students who pass the written component will undergo an oral defense of their Qualifying Examination. The oral component is anticipated to last approximately one hour.
8. After the Qualifying Examination oral defense, the Qualifying Examination Panel will meet and determine pass/fail and determine if feedback to the student is warranted.
9. The Qualifying Examination Panel Chair (Major Professor) informs the Ph.D. Program Director of the pass/fail results of the examination. The student is informed of the pass/fail results of the examination by the Major Professor.
10. If the student passes the examination, the Chair of the Qualifying Examination Panel completes The Graduate School Doctoral Qualifying Exam Verification Form and submits the form to the Ph.D. graduate student advisor who will submit it along with the final approved Doctoral Plan of Study to The Graduate School.
    a. If the student does not pass the Qualifying Examination, the student will need to wait one full semester before attempting the Qualifying Examination for the second time.
11. The Graduate School confirms and confers Candidacy status. Documentation of the Qualifying Examination is retained in the student file until the student graduates or leaves the program.

Evaluation

Each Qualifying Examination Panel member independently evaluates the written examination and will provide a pass/fail decision for each of the five written questions. To receive a pass on the written portion of the Qualifying Examination, a student must receive three passing votes on each question. In this situation, the student will be permitted to take the oral component of the Qualifying Examination. At the end of the oral component, each Qualifying Examination Panel member will determine if the student has satisfactorily passed the oral component of the Qualifying Examination.

If a student passes 4 out of the 5 written questions, the student is still permitted to take the oral component. Given sufficient oral responses to questions with a focus on content related to the failed written question, the student can pass the Qualifying Examination. If a student fails 2 out of the 5 written questions, the Qualifying Examination process will stop, and the student will need to attempt the Qualifying Examination a second time. However, on the second attempt, the student will only be given two written questions that are related to content of the questions the student failed on the first attempt. If a student fails 3 or more written responses on the first attempt, the student must retake the entire written portion on the second attempt.

The Qualifying Examination may not be taken more than twice. If taken a second time, it is scheduled for the following semester. If the first exam is failed, remediation will be offered prior to repeating the exam. If remediation is needed, the student may be required to take and pass remediation sessions, an independent study, or other remediation support as required by the Qualifying Examination Panel. The Ph.D. Program Director will approve the remediation activities required by the Qualifying Examination Panel. If failed a second time, the student will no longer be able to continue in the Ph.D. Program in the College of Nursing.

Please consult the Office of Academic Affairs or Graduate School website for more information.

Admission to Candidacy by the Graduate School

The Graduate School considers doctoral students to be candidates for their respective degrees when they have 1) been fully admitted to the doctoral degree program; 2) passed a Qualifying/Candidacy Examination; and 3) filed an approved Doctoral Program of Study form with The Graduate School. The Dean of The Graduate School admits the student to doctoral candidacy after completion of all three conditions. The Graduate School will notify the Ph.D. Program Office if there are issues related to admitting the student to candidacy. Completion of all three components of the admission to candidacy procedures must be at least one full academic year before the degree is granted.

Once the student has passed their Comprehensive Examination and entering their dissertation phase, they may use Ph.D. candidate (spelled out) for personal designation. The use of Ph.D.-c is not an acceptable designation and not an earned credential.

Appointment of Doctoral Committee

The Ph.D. candidate must establish a Doctoral Committee responsible for providing guidance through the final phases of doctoral work. The Graduate School regulations governing doctoral programs are outlined on their website in the Doctoral Progress to Degree section.

The Doctoral Committee directs the student in the preparation of the dissertation, examines the student on the dissertation, and informs the Dean of The Graduate School as to whether the student passed or failed. The dissertation cannot be submitted to The Graduate School until it has been approved and signed by members of the Doctoral Committee. The Doctoral Committee must consist of at least four members, one of whom is from outside the College of Nursing. An external member may be from another unit of University of South Carolina or another university or college.

The Doctoral Committee Appointment Request Form (G-DCA) includes a description of The Graduate School's policy on committees and faculty membership eligibility requirements. Questions regarding faculty who are eligible to serve should be directed to the Ph.D. Program Director. All Doctoral Committees must receive approval before

functioning as a committee. Where alteration of committee membership is necessary, the change must be initiated by the student on a new Doctoral Committee Appointment Request Form (G-DCA).

NOTE: If the proposed outside member of any Doctoral Committee is not a member of the USC Graduate Faculty, a copy of his or her curriculum vitae and statement indicating experience as a doctoral committee member and research experience relevant to the students' research topic should accompany the request for approval submitted to the Ph.D. Program Director.

Comprehensive Examination

Students must pass a Comprehensive Examination composed of a written dissertation proposal and oral defense of their dissertation proposal (i.e., first four chapters of the dissertation) under the direction of their Doctoral Committee. In the College of Nursing, the written dissertation proposal and oral defense of the dissertation proposal constitutes the Comprehensive Exam. The written and oral portions of the Comprehensive Examination are administered by the Doctoral Committee in accordance with the approved Ph.D. Dissertation Proposal Guidelines.

The student first needs to select the members of the Doctoral Committee. The Doctoral Committee consists of a minimum of three Ph.D.-prepared faculty with graduate status from the College of Nursing and one outside member. The student designates the Major Professor/Doctoral Committee Chair. The outside member should be chosen based on expertise that enhances the comprehensive background of the committee members. The Major Professor (Doctoral Committee Chair) and the Ph.D. Program Director approve the outside member. The Dean of the Graduate School makes final approval of the Doctoral Committee.

When the Major Professor determines the proposal is ready to defend (i.e., first four chapters of the dissertation), the student will submit the proposal to the Doctoral Committee members. The committee members will have two weeks (10 business days) to review the proposal and give feedback to the student. The Doctoral Committee should provide feedback to the student one business week (i.e., 5 days) prior to the oral presentation. The student then initiates the Comprehensive Exam/Dissertation Proposal Defense Approval form. The form is signed by all members of the Dissertation Committee indicating the written proposal is ready for the oral defense. The proposal defense may be scheduled when the signed Comprehensive Exam/Dissertation Proposal Defense Approval Form is submitted to the Ph.D. graduate student advisor. The Chair of the Dissertation Committee will schedule the date of the oral defense with the student, the other Doctoral Committee members and the Ph.D. Program Director. The oral portion includes a 30–40-minute PowerPoint presentation of the proposal. Upon successful completion of the written and oral Comprehensive/Dissertation Proposal, the Doctoral Committee Chair must submit a completed Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Verification Form to the Ph.D. Program Director. The form is then submitted to the Graduate School. Two attempts at both the written and oral comprehensive exam are permitted.

A candidate must present a dissertation and abstract approved by the student's Doctoral Committee and the Dean of The Graduate School no later than five years after the comprehensive examination has been successfully completed.

Ph.D. Dissertation Proposal Guidelines

Approved by the CON Graduate Council January 11, 2020

This is the general format for the Dissertation Proposal in the College of Nursing. Students are expected to work closely with their Major Professor/Dissertation Chair and Committee members in tailoring the proposal to the context and methods of the dissertation research.

The Dissertation Proposal in the College of Nursing is organized as follows:

- Chapter 1 Introduction

- Chapter 2 Review of the Literature

- Chapter 3 Conceptual Framework

- Chapter 4 Research Plan

The following are general guidelines for the content of each chapter.

CHAPTER 1 - Introduction

Identify phenomenon of interest

Background, context, and discussion of the relevance and significance to nursing science

Specific aims of the proposed research

CHAPTER 2 - Review of the Literature

A review of the relevant literature (i.e., scoping review, systematic review, narrative review, etc.) in relation to the phenomenon of interest. This chapter may be presented in manuscript format.

CHAPTER 3 - Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

Discuss conceptual/theoretical framework(s) guiding the proposed research. This chapter may be presented in manuscript format.

CHAPTER 4 - Research Plan

Present proposed research plan, including (as warranted) description of the research setting and context, sample size and inclusion/exclusion criteria, participant

recruitment plan and strategies, study variables, definitions, and measurement, data collection method(s), data analysis strategies, ethical considerations and protection of human subjects, and researcher role and engagement/reflexivity.

Many students find it helpful to learn from examples of previous nursing doctoral students (particularly previous students which your chair has advised). The Thomas Cooper library maintains all dissertations for university doctoral students. The database can be found under their Database link (Dissertations & Theses @ University of South Carolina) on their homepage. As a note, more recent dissertations may not be electronically available immediately, but can be requested via Interlibrary Loan.

Ph.D. Dissertation Deadlines

Specific deadlines are outlined on The Graduate School website in the Doctoral Progress to Degree section Doctoral Progress to Degree. Students are urged to consult multiple Graduate School information sources to ensure timely adherence to all deadlines in their final term of enrollment, including:

- Completion of dissertation research and other degree requirements (language examination, etc.).

- Application for Graduation. Submit application for graduation to The Graduate School.

- Dissertation Format Check/Defense. Verify deadlines with The Graduate School published calendars.

- Dissertation Signature and Approval Form is available on The Graduate School website.

- Dissertation Final Approval. Verify dates with The Graduate School regarding deadlines for the final approved dissertation that is submitted via the electronic thesis and dissertation/ETD process.

- Order academic regalia (graduation gown, hood, etc.) from the USC Bookstore (if attending Convocation and/or hooding).

- Attend the College of Nursing Convocation and USC doctoral hooding ceremony with family, faculty, and friends to celebrate this tremendous accomplishment (optional)!

Additional Ph.D. Dissertation Guidelines

Approved at the April 13, 2015, CON Graduate Council Meeting

The USC College of Nursing Ph.D. dissertation includes three manuscripts which have been published, submitted for review, or ready to submit to a peer-reviewed journal during the period of matriculation as a Ph.D. student in USC College of Nursing. The

three-manuscript dissertation consists of one conceptual, theoretical, or methodological manuscript or an integrated literature review and two data-based manuscripts reporting findings from the dissertation research.

Format and Structure of Three-Manuscript Dissertation

Chapter 1 – Introduction to the research; includes summary of the aims, background, and methods and brief overview of the 3 manuscripts and target journals.

Chapters 2-4 - Each of these three chapters contains one of the three manuscripts which have been published, submitted for review, or ready to submit to a peer-reviewed journal.

- Chapter 2 – Chapter 2 contains one article that is either an integrated review of the literature or a theoretical, conceptual, or methodological manuscript.

- Chapters 3 and 4 – Each of these chapters contains a data-based manuscript consisting of specific aims, background, methods, results, and conclusions.

- Each manuscript included in the dissertation must be formatted for a specific journal.

- At least one of the three manuscripts must have been submitted prior to the dissertation defense.

- Manuscripts submitted for publication prior to the final dissertation defense must have the approval of all dissertation committee members in order to be included in the final dissertation.

- Manuscripts that have not been submitted at the time of the Dissertation Defense must have prior approval of all committee members in order to be included in the dissertation.

Chapter 5 - Conclusions and Recommendations; includes a synthesis of the conclusions of the research, discussion of implications for nursing research, education, and practice, and presentation of future research directions.

Authorship: The Ph.D. Candidate must be the first author on all three manuscripts, each of which must be prepared under the guidance of at least one member of the candidate's Dissertation Committee. The student should consult the current Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association for further information on publication credit or other professional organization guidelines on authorship and acknowledgement of contributions.

***If the student has not submitted the remaining manuscripts within a two-year period following graduation, the faculty members involved in the dissertation research may re-negotiate authorship order on subsequent publication submissions.

Preparing Future Faculty Professional Development Program

All Ph.D. students are strongly encouraged to successfully complete the requirements for the Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Program. The PFF is a national credentialing program established by the Council of Graduate Schools, the Association of American Colleges and Universities, the Pew Charitable Trust, and the National Science Foundation. At USC, the PFF program is administered through a partnership between the Center for Teaching Excellence and The Graduate School. See **PFF** program for more information.

Academic Policies and Procedures

The policies and procedures listed should not be viewed as a replacement for the [2023-2024 Graduate Studies Bulletin](#). As appropriate, the graduate programs within the CON may develop their own policies and procedures to augment the Graduate Studies Bulletin.

Organization of this Section

Information relevant to all programs is included in all handbooks, supplemented by program specific information. Wherever possible, students are also referred to electronic references via hyperlinks.

Confidentiality and Release of Student Records

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as amended, sets forth requirements regarding the privacy of student records and affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. A full explanation is available on the [Office of the University Registrar website](#).

Core Performance Standards

The USC College of Nursing sets forth its essential eligibility requirements for its nursing program by citing the core performance standards. The standards describe requirements in six dimensions of ability/performance (see below). An example would be if a student's condition requires that they use a crutch, walker, cane, or arm cast, they will not be allowed to participate in clinical activity until the student submits a statement from their provider of care stating they may resume all activities without any assistive devices.

Core Performance Standards

Standard 1. Critical Thinking and Related Mental Abilities: Must have critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not an all-inclusive list): Has the ability to interpret, investigate, communicate, and comprehend complex situations; identify cause and effect relative to clinical situations under varying degrees of stress; must be able to read and comprehend detailed charts, reports, journal articles, books, etc.; and capable of performing all arithmetic functions (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, ratios, and simple algebraic equations).

Standard 2. Communication and Interpersonal Abilities: Must be able to read, write, speak, and comprehend English with sufficient skill to communicate effectively verbally and non-verbally. Must have interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and

intellectual backgrounds. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not all inclusive): Has the ability to establish rapport with clients and their families, peers, agency personnel, and faculty; explain treatment procedures, initiate health teaching; and document and interpret nursing actions and client responses.

Standard 3. Physical Activities: Must have physical abilities sufficient to move from room to room and maneuver in small spaces with gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective nursing care. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not all inclusive): Able to move around a client's room, work spaces, treatment areas and administer CPR; calibrate and use equipment; position and transfer clients; capable of pushing up to 200 pounds independently; capable of reaching 18 inches above head without the use of mechanical devises to elevate themselves; capable of sitting, standing, walking for extended periods of time; experience no limitations when bending, stooping, sitting, standing, walking (i.e. uses no mechanical devices to assist themselves which would impede the safety of a client), ability to move to and respond to an emergency situation in a timely manner, and able to document in a clear, legible manner.

Standard 4. Hearing: Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not all inclusive): Able to hear auscultatory sounds, monitor alarms and emergency signals; able to tolerate loud noises for extended periods of time. Assistive devices must correct hearing to this degree and must always be worn during practicums.

Standard 5. Visual: Must have the visual ability sufficient for observation, assessment, and intervention necessary for nursing care. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not all inclusive): Observe client response, accurately read equipment, gauges, and monitors, vision correctable to 20/40, normal depth perception, and ability to distinguish colors and ability to tolerate offensive visual situations.

Standard 6. Smell: Smelling ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not all inclusive): Having ability to differentiate between various types of smells, and ability to tolerate offensive odors.

*Standards may be changed at any time.

**For any injury or illness that occurs while enrolled in the CON, please refer to Medical Clearance for Absences from Class Due to Injury or Illness or Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Protocol

Overview

For nonacademic issues, see STAF 6.27, Student Grievance Policy, Non-Academic. For academic issues refer to both STAF 6.30, Academic Grievance Policy and the College of Nursing policy below.

The graduate student academic grievance policy describes the channel of resolution used in the College of Nursing to resolve students' academic issues or complaints. The channel requires that the student seek resolution with the faculty member alleged to have caused the problem, and if not resolved, the student should initiate resolution through a defined set of procedures.

Students are encouraged to meet with their course faculty if they have academic problems. Further procedures for the resolution of differences are outlined in the Academic Grievance Policy of the current USC Policies and Procedures Manual and this College of Nursing Graduate Student Handbook. Contact the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs in the College of Nursing for assistance.

Graduate Student Grievance Policy - Academic

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA COLLEGE OF NURSING

GRADUATE STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY – ACADEMIC

The purpose of this policy is to inform students of their rights and responsibilities regarding the academic issues cited below.

1. Protection of freedom of expression. Students should be free to take reasoned exceptions to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion. They are responsible, however, for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.

2. Protection against improper academic evaluation. Students should have protection, through orderly procedures, against prejudice or capricious academic evaluation. At the same time, they are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled.

3. Protection against improper disclosure. Information about student views, beliefs, and political associations which professors acquire in the course of their work as instructors, advisors, and counselors should be considered as confidential. Protection against improper disclosure is a serious professional obligation. Judgments about a student's ability and character may be disclosed under appropriate circumstances, normally with the knowledge and consent of the student.

Student Grievance Process

If a student perceives that any of the protections described above have been violated, the student should initiate resolution through the following channels and in the sequence indicated.

1.   Discuss the issue with the faculty member involved in the alleged violation. The discussion must take place within 30 calendar days after the end of the semester during which the alleged incident occurred. If the complaint is not resolved with the faculty involved, then go to the next step.

2.   Notify the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, who will explain the grievance policy and the student's rights and responsibilities. The Assistant Dean for Student Affairs will assist the student in completing a written narrative describing the alleged violation of the protections described above. The narrative must contain the nature of the problem or complaint, reasonable evidence to support the case, background material, and a description of what has been done to resolve the problem.

3.   Meet with the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation and submit the written narrative describing the alleged violation. The written narrative must be submitted no later than one semester after the alleged violation has occurred. The Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation will send to the student a written response within 10 regular working days following the meeting. If, after receiving the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation' response, the complaint is not resolved to the aggrieved student's satisfaction, the student must notify the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation within 10 working days of receiving the letter and request a grievance hearing. The Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation will appoint an Ad Hoc Grievance Committee of four faculty members, one of whom will serve as chair, and three students to conduct the grievance hearing. The grievance hearing will be held within 10 regular working days of the student's request. The Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation will distribute the written narrative of the student's grievance to the Ad Hoc Grievance Committee and the faculty alleged to have caused the violation at the time of appointment to the Ad Hoc Committee.

4.   Attend the grievance hearing and present the alleged violation(s) to the Ad Hoc Grievance Committee and answer questions. The faculty member(s) who is alleged to have caused the grievance has the right to be present during all presentations of evidence to the Committee. The student and the faculty member may call witnesses. However, the Chair of the Ad Hoc Grievance Committee must be notified in writing at least 24 hours before the hearing of the names of all witnesses and the reason each witness has been called.

5.   It is the responsibility of the student and the faculty member, respectively, to arrange for the appearance of witnesses. The Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation may not attend the grievance hearing.

6. The Ad Hoc Grievance Committee must schedule a hearing; inform the faculty involved in writing and schedule their appearances at the hearing; maintain accurate, confidential records of the case; conduct the hearing in a fair and impartial manner; and inform the student and the faculty member(s) of the decision within two regular working days of the hearing.

Appeal

Graduate students may file an appeal of the decision of the Ad Hoc Grievance Committee to the Dean of the College of Nursing within ten days of receipt of the finding of the Ad Hoc Grievance Committee. The appeal must be filed on grounds that cite procedural error that results in a bias decision; new evidence; or penalty imposed that is not appropriate to the violation. If the Dean finds merit in any of the above claims, the Dean will appoint a new Ad Hoc Grievance Committee who will conduct a new grievance hearing. If the Dean does not find merit to student claims, the finding of the Ad Hoc Grievance Committee will be upheld.

Graduate students may appeal decisions to the Graduate School. Appeals accepted by the Graduate School for consideration of reversal or modification of the Departmental decision are those with one or more of the following cited as grounds: inequitable application of regulations, bias, conflict with regulations, or extenuating circumstance. See current Graduate Bulletin for additional information.

A faculty member who feels aggrieved because of student grievance proceedings has the right to appear before the University Faculty Grievance Committee and present their case to the Committee. The process is described in the Faculty Manual.

*Policy may be changed at anytime

Student Petition Policy

Overview

Students who feel they are entitled to relief from or deviation in the academic regulations of the University or the College of Nursing should apply through the petition process of the Student Petitions Committee of the College.

The purview of the Student Petitions Committee is to address student petitions, in accordance with College and University guidelines. Students will receive an e-mail notification within 24 hours followed by a letter informing them of the Committee's decision and outlining the required course of action. A copy will be sent to the student's advisor and Program Director. All matters of academic discipline are acted upon through the Student Petitions Committee of the College of Nursing.

Meetings
The Student Petitions Committee meets at least three times a year at the close of the fall, spring, and summer semesters, and as needed, to rule on specific academic problems.

Petition Process

A student must petition the committee in writing, describing the situation, and may be asked to present their case at the committee meeting. The petition form is obtained from and submitted to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs.

A student may submit a petition for the following reasons. This list is not all inclusive.

- Continuance of Probation Status (Institutional GPA below 3.000 as required by the terms of your probationary semester).
- Waiver of Graduate Conditional Admission Requirements.
- Waiver of graduate rule – Any student receiving two (2) grades of 79.99% (C+) or lower in the same NURS course or in any two NURS courses will be dismissed from the College of Nursing.
- Waiver of graduate rule – a student may attempt each NURS course twice in the graduate program and a grade of **W** (withdrawal) in any graduate course will constitute an attempt.

Student should explain any extenuating circumstances - whatever they might be - e.g., finances, anxiety, family, illness, etc. that caused you to not be successful, and even more importantly a plan for success if allowed to continue in the program. Please attach supporting documentation if available.

CON Graduate Course Progression Policy

- Any required, NURS or ITEC course on the student's program of study must receive a grade of **B** or better. If a grade lower than **B** is earned, this course must be repeated.
- All students must maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA.
- Any student receiving two (2) grades of **C+** or lower in the same NURS or ITEC course or in any two NURS or ITEC courses will be dismissed from the College of Nursing.
- Any non-NURS or non-ITEC elective or contributing course must receive a grade of **C** or better.

CON Graduate Course Attempt Policy

- A student may attempt any NURS course twice in the graduate program.
- A grade of **W** (withdrawal) in any graduate course will constitute an attempt.
- If an attempt results in a course failure, the second failure will lead to dismissal from the College of Nursing See the CON Graduate Course Progression Policy above.

CON Graduate Pass/Fail Spring 2020 Policy (CON Graduate **S+/S/U** for Spring 2020 Full Term and B Term Courses Only)

Approved by the USC Faculty Senate on April 1, 2020

To address complications presented by the COVID19 pandemic, the Faculty Senate Steering Committee approved the following grading accommodations for undergraduate students enrolled in Spring 2020.

- All courses will be graded as originally planned according to grading criteria in course syllabi. After grades are submitted at the end of the semester, undergraduates can choose, on a course-by-course basis, to request a pass/fail grade for the Spring 2020 semester with the exception of Graduate or professional school courses, which can be taken as pass/fail only when deemed appropriate by the program or school Dean.
- The following pass/fail scale will be used: Earned grades of **A, B+, B, C+**, and **C** will be replaced with **S+**, earned grades of **D+** and **D** will be replaced with **S**, and an earned grade of **F** will be replaced with **U**.
- If students select the **S+/S/U** grading scale for a course, points will not be factored into the GPA. Courses with S+ and S will count towards earned semester hours.
- Courses graded with the **S+/S/U** scale, under this exception for Spring 2020, will count towards applicable curricular, major, continuation, and graduation requirements. For example, if a course requires a **C** or better in a prerequisite, students selecting this alternative grading scale would need an **S+** in the prerequisite course.
- Faculty members will not be aware of students who select the pass/fail grading choice when entering final grades. Grades will be entered in the format for which the course was approved.
- Students who previously decided to take a course on a pass/fail basis will continue a pass/fail basis using the University's established **S/U** system (e.g., S is earned if the grade is **D** or above and **U** is earned for grades below **D**).
- For the Spring 2020 semester, undergraduate students who choose to replace a course letter grade with the **S+/S/U** option must do so no later than July 1, 2020.
- This process will occur through the Office of the University Registrar. A form will be available on the University Registrar website for the student to request that a letter grade be replaced with the **S+/S/U** scale.
- USC will include a transcript note on all academic records, regardless of grading basis, indicating the extraordinary circumstances of the global public health emergency during Spring 2020.
- Because some graduate and professional programs require letter grades to be reflected on transcripts, when necessary, students will be able to request an official letter attesting to the letter grade earned in any classes that were converted to **S+/S/U**. This letter would attest only to grades, not to GPA. We will ensure that those who need evidence of your academic achievements this spring will be able to get it. A form will be available on the University's website for students to request these letters.

- Students will be allowed to retake undergraduate courses in which they earned an **S+, S, or U** during Spring 2020. Any undergraduate courses retaken under this provision will not count towards the number of courses currently allowed by the current course grade forgiveness policy. In addition, students who were retaking a class for grade forgiveness in Spring 2020 can retake the class another semester, without penalty.

The graduate council has approved to expand the P/F policy approved by the faculty senate on 4/1/2020 for all graduate courses. The USC Graduate School has administrative oversight of all CON graduate programs; therefore, this policy will be an available option for all graduate nursing students. All aspects of the UG policy are intact with the major difference in the Graduate policy is **courses on a graduate program of study must be completed with a grade of C or better, therefore, only the S+ grade will be satisfactory for graduate students and this policy does not waive any progression requirements for a grade of B or better.**

CON Graduate Course Progression Policy (suspended for the full-term Spring 2020 and Spring B 2020 terms)

- A minimum grade of 80% (**B**) is required in all graduate NURS courses.
- If a grade lower than 80% (**B**) is earned, this course must be repeated.
- Any student receiving two (2) grades of 79.99% (**C+**) or lower in the same NURS course or in any two NURS courses will be dismissed from the College of Nursing.

CON Graduate Course Attempt Policy (suspended for the full-term Spring 2020 and Spring B 2020 terms

- A student may attempt each NURS course twice in the graduate program.
- A grade of **W** (withdrawal) in any graduate course will constitute an attempt.
- **Any NURS course attempted will not count toward the two-course attempt policy.**

Course Failure

If a required course is failed, it must be repeated at the next available offering and a satisfactory grade must be achieved. The repeated course may not be taken with the Pass/Fail Option. Any courses for which the failed course is a prerequisite may not be taken until a satisfactory grade in the prerequisite course has been achieved. However, the failing grade remains on the transcript even though the student has repeated the course and obtained a passing grade. The failing grade is still calculated into the cumulative GPA.

Graduate Learning Contract

Graduate students may also require guidance on professional behavior or clinical remediation. A graduate learning contract may be developed by the course faculty in conjunction with the program director or graduate director. The learning contract will

outline the behavior or clinical skills in need of improvement, an action plan and timeline for improvement as well as consequences if improvements are not achieved.

Special Enrollment Status (Z Status)

The dean of The Graduate School, under certain circumstances, may certify that a student's full-time enrollment is less than the normal requirement of 9 hours for graduate students or 6 hours for students serving as graduate assistants. This is known as Z-Status. Students seeking an exception to minimum enrollment requirements (Z-Status) should submit a written request to the dean of The Graduate School with acceptable justification from the student's academic advisor or the graduate director of the academic program. International students must also submit the approved Exemption from Full-time Enrollment form from International Programs for Students.

For a student, whose need for under-enrollment results from an internship, practicum, or field experience required by the graduate program, a justification indicating the term requested and the nature of the experience should be submitted in a written memo to the dean of The Graduate School by the student's academic advisor or the program's graduate director.

Students nearing completion of a doctoral degree requiring a dissertation may be granted special enrollment status and certified as half-time or full-time if the student has completed course work required for the degree except dissertation preparation (899). Eligibility requires verification of three conditions by the student's academic advisor or program graduate director. The memo requesting Z-status must indicate that:

1. All course work on the program of study has been completed except for dissertation preparation (899).
2. The student is working on the dissertation full-time, or if applicable, at least half-time; and
3. The student is not employed outside their graduate assistantship or, if applicable, employed no more than half-time if not on a graduate assistantship.

A Z-status request for under-enrollment privilege must be term-specific and is limited to two terms. Z-status for under-enrollment privilege may be extended beyond two terms with the approval of and justification from the academic unit and with the approval of the dean of The Graduate School.

Students who request exemption from full-time enrollment for financial aid purposes must submit the Special Academic Enrollment Release form (F 6.2) from the Office of Financial Aid.

Family Leave (Z Status)

A graduate student who is the primary child-care provider is eligible to take a one major term of family leave from graduate study the major term during or following the

event for the birth of a child or adoption of a child less than six (6) years old. The graduate student taking family leave will receive a one-year extension of all academic responsibilities, including time to degree, removal of incomplete grades, and course in-date time. During family leave, the graduate student will be on special enrollment (Z-status) status and must have health coverage. The student may waive out of university-sponsored health insurance if covered by other insurance or may elect to continue enrollment in the University-sponsored student health insurance plan. The student is responsible for submitting required waivers and/or for contacting the student health insurance contractor directly to enroll in the health insurance program and for paying premiums by the deadline. Students should be aware that a graduate assistantship position or other financial support may not be available upon return from family leave.

Note: While this policy does not mandate that programs continue financial support during family leave and/or guarantee student support or resumption of an assistantship after returning from family leave, programs are strongly encouraged to do so whenever possible. For process information view Graduate Studies Bulletin, Family Leave (Z-status) .

Leave of Absence or Inactive Status

A student taking one or more semesters off from course work will need to reactivate degree-seeking enrollment privileges. Any student wanting to return after a semester off should check with their Ph.D. graduate student advisor for the appropriate application deadlines. The Program Director and/or Admission Committee will review the application and determine the semester of return based on the student's revised program of study. A new background check, drug screen, and proof of current unencumbered RN license will be required upon re-enrollment. Additional documents may be required depending on the length of leave, e.g., updated goal statement. Visit Update Application or Admission Status for more information.

Ph.D. students must contact their program director and/or Ph.D. graduate student advisor if taking one or more semesters off from course work.

Withdrawal from Course and/or University

A student may attempt a specific graduate course twice in the graduate program. An attempt is any grade or **W** received in a course. Each Ph.D. course may only be attempted twice.

Students can drop a course or withdraw with a grade of **W** or **WF** via SSC. Deadlines for dropping a course without receiving a **W** and **WF**, as well as refund dates, are determined by the part of term to which a course is attached. Every part of term during a semester has a drop/add deadline.

Withdrawals are defined by the time in the semester you wish to withdraw. There are both academic and financial implications associated with the date you drop your course(s). Should you wish to withdraw from a course with a grade of **W** or **WF**, a

grade of **W** or **WF** will be recorded on your transcript. A grade of W will not be calculated in your GPA but will be recorded on your permanent record. Courses dropped after the **WF** deadline will be recorded as a **WF** on your permanent record. The grade of **WF** is treated as an **F** in the calculation of your GPA. The **WF** deadline will vary based on the part of term for your class found in SSC. Prior to withdrawing, you are encouraged to view your Concise Student Schedule located on the Registration tab of the Student section found in SSC to identify your part of term, speak with a counselor at the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships for questions regarding how dropping some or all your courses will impact your aid (e.g., federal, and private loans, grants, scholarships, special status, etc.).

A student who wishes to drop a course for medical reasons or other acceptable cause after the session penalty date specified on the Academic Calendar for that term (last day to receive a **W**), may petition for assignment of **W** by submitting a Request for Assignment of **W** for Extenuating Circumstances form (AS-122A) available from the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs with the appropriate documentation of circumstances, (e.g., a letter from a physician or health care provider). The petition requires the approval of the student's graduate director, the instructor of each course, and the dean of The Graduate School. A request for partial reduction (rather than complete) withdrawal for extenuating circumstances must include evidence (e.g., a written statement from a physician, counselor, or other qualified professional; or other documentation of extenuating circumstances) that a reduction in, rather than complete withdrawal from, student course work is appropriate. Students must be aware that liability for repayment of student loans and other financial obligations may apply. Note: **W** or **WF** does count as an attempt of the course. Only two attempts per course are permitted.

For information about tuition refunds, please contact the Bursar's Office.

Ph.D. Transfer Credit

Course work not part of a completed certificate program or graduate degree from USC or another institution may be transferred for credit toward a doctoral degree. A limited amount of course work may be transferred from another institution for credit toward a doctoral degree. The exact number of transfer hours varies by program but may not constitute more than 50 percent of the hours listed on a program of study, not including dissertation preparation (899) or the equivalent.

The transfer course work must be relevant to the program and have course content and a level of instruction equivalent to that offered by the University's own graduate programs. All transfer credit decisions are at the discretion of the course faculty. The appropriate faculty member reviews the syllabus to determine equivalency and to make a formal recommendation to the appropriate program director. The Program Director routes their recommendation along with faculty member's recommendation to the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation for final CON approval. Approval for acceptance of transfer credit is then submitted to the dean of the Graduate School for final approval on the Request for Transfer of Academic Credit (G-RTC) form. Only credits with grades of **B** or better (equivalent to 3.0 on a 4.0

grading scale) may be transferred from another institution into a doctoral degree program. Course work transferred for credit toward a doctoral degree must be from an accredited institution and must be no more than ten years old at the time of graduation. Please refer to the Graduate Studies Bulletin Academic Regulations section on Transfer Credit before contacting the Ph.D. graduate student advisor for more information about transfer credit.

Revalidation of Outdated Courses

Students enrolled in a doctoral program at the University of South Carolina may, with permission of the academic program, request revalidation of USC graduate courses over ten years old for inclusion on the doctoral program of study. Each academic unit will determine whether a course is appropriate for revalidation. All instructions for revalidation must be followed and the Permit for Revalidation Examination (PRE) form must be completed and submitted to the dean of The Graduate School for approval prior to revalidation. Proof of payment of revalidation fees must be submitted with the Permit for Revalidation Examination form.

- Revalidation of a course requires that the student demonstrate current knowledge of the course content by a faculty member who currently is teaching or has taught the course.
- Core, foundation, and clinical courses leading to nurse practitioner preparation cannot be re-validated. These courses must be repeated.

The College of Nursing Program Director recommends approval to the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation, who then sends the request to The Graduate School for approval. A per credit hour fee must be paid to the Bursar's Office before revalidation can occur, and a receipt must accompany the Permit for Revalidation Examination form for approvals. It is the student's responsibility to track the Permit for Revalidation Examination form through the approval process, and to obtain the faculty member's signature upon completion of revalidation requirements. The completed form must then be submitted to the appropriate College of Nursing Ph.D. graduate student advisor for filing and forwarding to The Graduate School.

Note: Course work taken at other institutions may not be revalidated.

Independent Study Courses

The purpose of an independent study is to allow the student to pursue an area of academic interest not covered by the regular course structure. Students seeking to enroll in an independent study course should work with a faculty member willing to serve as Instructor of Record. Prior to enrolling in the course, the student and faculty member(s) will meet to develop the learning objectives and course outcomes. A syllabus is required to be completed and approved.

Prior to enrolling in a graduate independent study course, a student must complete a graduate Independent Study Contract form (**G-ISC**). The approval of the instructor, advisor, and the graduate director of the program is required. Students send an approved copy of the **G-ISC** to the Office of the University Registrar before registering

for the course. Students enrolled in the Ph.D. programs may not enroll for nursing independent study courses on a pass/fail basis.

Registration for Independent Study

The Graduate School Independent Study Contract form (**G-ISC**) is required for any graded, for-credit course in which the student is doing independent academic work. This contract is to contain the following information:

- Course description should give insight into the content to be covered within one semester or part of the semester.
- List of Tasks should include 1) a brief description of each task and how it will be assessed, 2) an estimate of when it will be due or accomplished, and 3) the weighted contribution toward a final grade, preferably expressed as a percentage. The total of all the tasks should be 100 percent.
- Grading Scale should indicate the percentage ranges for each grade and must include an **A** and an **F**. Indicating the full range of grade possibilities is most desirable. For example: **A** = 90–100%; **B+** = 87-89.99%; **B** = 80–86.99%; **C+** = 77-79.99%; **C** = 70–76.99%; **D+** = 67-69.99%; **D** = 60-66.99%; **F** = 0-59.99%.

The course faculty and graduate director must approve this form. The G-ISC form and syllabus should be first submitted to the Ph.D. graduate student advisor prior to registration.

Attendance Policies

University and College Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all regular class meetings. Unsatisfactory class attendance may be considered adequate reason by the instructor for requesting the student to withdraw from a course. Any special circumstances must be discussed with the course faculty prior to the start of the semester.

University and College Attendance Policy for Online Graduate Courses

Students are expected to log into the course at least two (2) times weekly to read announcements, access course content in Course Weekly Guides, participate in interactive online learning activities. Unsatisfactory class attendance may be considered adequate reason by the instructor for requesting the student to withdraw from the course.

Religious Observance and Holidays

USC is required by law to excuse absences from class for observance of a religious practice, holiday or holy day, if the instructor of the class is provided written notification by the student of their intent to observe such religious practice, holiday or holy day no later than the end of the second week of regularly scheduled classes in a full fall or spring semester term, and within twice the length of the drop/add period for any other term. Change/Drop dates can be found at https://mysc.edu/codes/partofterms/index.

Grading Policies

The following policies are in place to promote quality learning outcomes and fairness to all students.

Grading Scale

The College of Nursing uses a 10-point grading scale with no grade rounding.

A = 90-100
B+ = 87-89.99
B = 80-86.99
C+ = 77-79.99
C = 70-76.99
D+ = 67-69.99
D = 60-66.99
F = 59.99 or lower

The Grade Point Average (GPA) is tabulated at the end of each semester. The University of South Carolina grades on a standard 4.00 grading system.

Student grade report is viewable within SSC in the Grades section. Final grades are due 72 hours after the exams. If your grade is not posted, contact your instructor. For letter grade definitions, see 2023-2024 Graduate Bulletin, Grading Policies

Rounding Policy

The College of Nursing does not allow grade rounding.

Grading of Ph.D. Dissertation Courses

Completion or satisfactory progress in these courses will be indicated by the grade of **T;** unsatisfactory progress will be indicated by a grade of **U**. No other grading options (i.e., Incomplete) are available. These grades will not be used to calculate the student's GPA. However, the College of Nursing does not allow a student to continue in the program with a grade of **U** in two courses.

Grade Disagreement

The role of the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation in matters of grade disagreement is to investigate the processes used by faculty in determining the grade and advise the faculty member in handling any perceived problems with applying grading processes outlined in the syllabus or any other apparent violations of fairness. The faculty member determines the grade that is awarded.

Incomplete Policies

The grade of **I** (incomplete) is assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, in the instructor's judgment, a student is prevented from completing a portion of the assigned

work in a course because of an illness, accident, verified disability, family emergency, or some other unforeseen extenuating circumstance.

Re-enrolling in a course will not make up for an incomplete grade. A grade of **I** is not computed in the calculation of a student's cumulative grade point average until the make-up grade is posted.

After 12 months, an I (incomplete) grade that has not been replaced with a letter grade is changed permanently to a grade of **F** or to the backup grade indicated by the faculty member on the Assignment of Incomplete Grade form. In the rare instance the instructor believes there is justification for an extension beyond the 12- month limit, a request for extension of incomplete time should be submitted to the dean of The Graduate School before the expiration of the 12- month period on the Extension of Incomplete Time Period Authorization (**GS-47**) form for approval. The Graduate School does not approve the make-up of **I** grades in courses which are already out-of-date for use on a student's program of study or extensions of time without sufficient justification and/or supporting documentation.

Incomplete in Non-Clinical Courses

A grade of incomplete based on of an illness, accident, verified disability, family emergency, or some other unforeseen extenuating circumstance in a non-clinical course is assigned by the instructor only under the following conditions:

- The student has academic good standing in the course with a passing grade average.
- The student has no more than two outstanding course requirements unmet in the course.
- The student and instructor have an agreed date of submission for all outstanding course requirements. The student has up to 12 months to complete the work unless the instructor has given an earlier deadline.

Any grade of incomplete which remains after one calendar year from date of assignment automatically converts to either an **F** or the backup grade assigned by the instructor.

Examination Policies

1. All exams must be taken in proctored settings.
2. All exams must be completed by the due date/time. Failure to complete any exam by the due date/time will result in a grade of 0 for that assignment. In case of emergencies and/or extenuating circumstances, please notify the faculty in advance.
3. Point deductions will be incurred for failure to complete the exam in the designated time frame. If you exceed the time limits for the exam, 2 points per minute will be subtracted from the grade.

4. Discussion or reproduction of any online assessment (e.g., exams or quizzes) in any form is a violation of academic integrity and, if it happens, it will be reported.

Proctored Examination Options

There are four (4) options for taking proctored exams:

- Students may take proctored exams in the Office of Distributed Learning Testing Center on the Columbia Campus. The center, which is located at **1716 College Street**, has 9 computers/testing workstations. The center is open Monday –Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. No fee.

- Online Test Proctoring: Monitor, by Respondus is a remote proctoring service. Monitor provides automated exam proctoring and enables students to take assessments within Blackboard. After a one-time installation of a plugin, each student follows a startup sequence that guides them through completion of requirements set by the instructor (these requirements are entered when you set up your assessment in Blackboard). Monitor records each student's session for later review and applies monitoring algorithms to notify instructors of the timestamp of any suspicious activity for their review. This product is integrated in Blackboard, and available for use at no cost to students, instructors, or academic departments. System Requirements: Windows: 10 (but not 10S), 8, 7; Mac: OS X 10.12 or higher; or iOS: 10.0+ (iPad only). Students must also have a web camera (internal or external) & microphone and a broadband internet connection.

- Student Disability Resource Center provides alternative testing accommodations. SDRC Test Proctoring Suite is located at 1705 College Street, Close-Hipp, Suite 203. No fee.

- The University of South Carolina System offers a number of approved testing sites. To schedule an exam, students must inform Distributed Learning of their preferred testing site, and then contact the site coordinator *at least one week before each exam* to schedule an appointment. Off-Campus Sites: Students may use a proctor from any accredited college or university that has testing services available. Most institutions have testing facilities or testing services offered through their online program. Students will need to complete a Proctor Request Form [PDF] for approval to take exams at an off-campus testing location.

More information for students about test proctoring can be found on the USC Distributed Learning Test Proctoring page.

Travel to Research Sites

Students are responsible for transportation to sites for their research each semester and for covering the cost of travel. It is the obligation of students to provide their own vehicle collision and/or bodily injury liability insurance for their personal vehicles. Neither the College of Nursing nor the University of South Carolina is responsible for the cost of any vehicle transportation or occurrences.

CON Policies and Procedures Specific to Graduate Nursing Programs

Organization of this Section

Information relevant to all programs is included in all handbooks, supplemented by program specific information. Wherever possible, students are also referred to electronic references via hyperlinks.

Communication between the College of Nursing and Graduate Students

The official mode of communication between the College of Nursing and graduate students is through university e-mail. All students matriculated in the CON are assigned a USC e-mail account upon acceptance of an admission offer. Students must monitor their university e-mail account regularly and are responsible for responding promptly to requests made by e-mail. No other e-mail account may be used for official communication with the school.

Guidelines for Electronic Communication

Electronic communication with faculty, staff and class members is considered professional communication. When sending email messages to faculty, staff, or fellow classmates, please follow these guidelines:

- Use your USC email address for all USC and CON related communication.
- Always include a concise and descriptive subject line.
- Always start your message with an appropriate salutation or greeting.
- Be mindful of the tone of your message. Do not post or send messages when you are angry or upset.
- Do not type messages in ALL CAPS as it can be perceived as shouting.
- Use complete sentences and correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- Carefully review your messages before sending them by email.
- Always sign your messages using your first and last name to avoid any uncertainty about the author. An email address is not always sufficient to identify the sender.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The USC is committed to ensuring that every student has equal access to all aspects of the USC experience. Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) coordinates efforts to ensure that students with disabilities receive reasonable accommodations and serves as consultants to faculty, staff, and campus partners. SDRC information can be viewed here. Please contact SDRC with any questions at (803) 777-6142, e-mail: sadrc@mailbox.sc.edu

Medical Clearance for Absences from Class Due to Injury or Illness

Students must notify all courses and clinical faculty if injury or illness results in absence from class and/or clinical experiences (including simulation, immersions, lab, and extrinsic). Students do not have to disclose diagnoses or disabilities to the College of Nursing.

- Step One: If <u>missing class, simulation, lab, immersion, and or clinical</u> - Notify course faculty via email.

- Step Two: If <u>missing simulation, lab, immersion, and/or clinical</u> - **Also** notify Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (NURSEVTS@mailbox.sc.edu) and clinical instructor via their preferred contact method if needing to be absent from clinical, simulation, lab, or immersion experience.

    - Students should expect a response within 24 hours from the faculty with instructions/plans for the course/clinical.

- Step Three: If missing more than one day of simulation, lab, immersion, or clinical, download from your course the Medical Clearance for Core Performance Standards (MCCPS) form. This form should be completed at the time of being assessed formally by a healthcare provider. A medical clearance form or "return to school" note generated from a provider, which is not documented on the MCCPS form will not be accepted. The only exception is the medical clearance form generated by USC University Health Services. Please obtain a business card for the provider as well if not documented on the University Health Services clearance form. Please be sure that the clearance addresses **both** clinical and class.

- Step Four: **DO NOT attend clinical, lab, simulation, or immersion,** even if you have completed the above steps.

    - Any student reporting injury/illness is **NOT** cleared for face-to-face class until receiving final clearance from the course faculty.

    - Any student reporting injury/illness is **NOT** cleared for simulation, lab, immersion, and/or clinical until receiving final clearance from the CON administration, regardless of being seen by a healthcare provider and/or completion/submission of the medical clearance form. The medical clearance form should be submitted to NURSEVTS@mailbox.sc.edu.

    Clearance for simulation, lab, immersion, and/or clinical will be submitted to the appropriate students daily no later than 8:00 pm. If you are a student waiting for clearance and do not receive clearance by 8:00 pm on that day, <u>then you are not cleared to resume simulation, lab, immersion and/or clinical</u> on the next day.

Student Substance Use Disorders (SUD) Policy

Purpose
The College of Nursing recognizes the importance of educating its students about the problems of substance use disorders (SUD). Unfortunately, this significant health risk is prevalent among healthcare providers. Aside from impacting the personal and psychological integrity of the individuals with SUD, Substance use disorders might significantly alter the ability of healthcare providers to administer safe, competent patient care. In extreme cases, SUD by a healthcare provider can lead to malpractice lawsuits and even criminal prosecution. Recognizing that SUD is both a brain disease and a professional hazard, the University of South Carolina has resources available for students experiencing SUD issues.

The College of Nursing has established this policy to clarify procedures for students who are found to have misused controlled or illegal substances and/or alcohol. This policy addresses the student's ability to maintain personal and professional integrity and facilitates the student's success both clinically and didactically. In the clinical setting, this policy enhances patient safety. It also fosters the development of professional nurses who are well educated about the prevalence of SUD and its potential to lead to adverse patient outcomes.

Policy
This policy applies to all students who have matriculated into College of Nursing academic program(s).

Any unlawful possession, use, manufacture, distribution, diversion, or improper use of any substances by any student in the College of Nursing may constitute removal from clinical and/or cause for termination from the program(s). In addition, no student may consume or be under the influence of or be in the possession of alcohol at any time the student is in the classroom and/or performing clinical duties. Improper use of alcohol may also constitute removal from clinical and/or cause for termination from the program. Students must comply with all local, state, or federal laws and regulations controlling the possession, manufacture, use, or distribution of controlled or illegal substances and alcohol. Students are accountable for their ingestion of substances, regardless of whether they are aware or unaware of the contents of which they ingested (including orally, inhaled, vapored, or other means). The College of Nursing will deal with student claims of unintentional intoxication on a case-by-case basis considering all facts and circumstances. Students must also adhere to all University of South Carolina policies regarding alcohol and/or drug use. Specific policies of note include: STAF 3.02, Alcohol Policy and Guidelines for the University Community; STAF 3.18, Drug Policy for University Students; STAF 3.19, Overdose Medical Treatment; STAF 6.26, and Student Code of Conduct. These policies can be found at **Policies and Procedures Manual.**

In addition, there are circumstances in which students might need to take over the counter or prescribed medications that have the potential to impair their professional performance in the clinical setting or personal behavior. Documentation from treating provider should indicate diagnosis and anticipated length of medication

administration. As such, all students are responsible for being aware of the effect these medications may have on performance and must notify their Program Director, Course Coordinator, or Instructor within 72 hours prior to clinical attendance or required drug screening about the use of any medication that could impair performance or has the potential to influence a drug screen result.

Failure or refusal to comply with the SUD policy may be grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program. Any attempt to delay, hinder, or tamper with any drug screen or to alter the results of a drug screen will be considered a refusal to comply with this policy. In addition, failure, or refusal to comply with any aspect of the SUD policy may be reported to the University's Office of Student Conduct for possible disciplinary action in accordance with the University's Student Conduct Policy.

Procedures

I. Drug Screens

Many clinical training sites, or institutions in which human research is being conducted, require that students undergo drug screens, like what is required of their employees, prior to placement at the sites. Therefore, all students involved in clinical practice settings, whether for education purposes or for the recruitment of research subjects and/or the collection of research data, will be required to undergo drug screening prior to entering clinical sites.

In addition, during enrollment in a College of Nursing program(s), a student may be required to undergo drug or alcohol testing for cause when the university faculty and/or administrator(s) determine there is reasonable suspicion that the student is impaired due to illegal drug or alcohol use, or the use or misuse of prescribed or over-the-counter medications. Drug screening based on reasonable suspicion may be requested in the following scenarios, but will not be limited to these examples: when unusual or aberrant behavior or patterns of abnormal or erratic behavior; physical symptoms of impairment; arrest or conviction for a drug or alcohol related offense; evidence of drug tampering, drug diversion, or misappropriation; direct observation of drug use or discrepant drug counts; alterations in student clinical and/or didactic performance that may not be attributed to other causes; following a work-related injury or illness when there is any evidence (direct or circumstantial) that it may have been related to use of a controlled substance; observation of poor judgment or careless acts which caused or had the potential to cause patient injury, jeopardize the safety of self or others, or resulted in damage to equipment. Drug screening may also be required following a work-related injury or illness if requested by the facility or third-party payor such as an insurance company.

II. Reporting

A faculty or staff member who suspects substance misuse by a student must report the suspicions along with relevant supporting information to the Program Director or Course Coordinator who will then immediately contact the Assistant Dean for Student

Affairs, and the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation. In the absence of the Program Director or Course Coordinator, the faculty member observing the behavior should contact the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, and the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation. Any faculty member with evidence that an enrolled student has engaged in clinical care of patients and families or participated in classroom activities while impaired must report their observations to the appropriate Program Director.

A student who suspects substance misuse or a violation of this policy by another student has the responsibility to report this information. A report needs to be made to the student's academic advisor or Instructor, Course Coordinator, or Program Director. The Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation should be notified by the advisor, course instructor, course coordinator and/or program director. The identity of the individual making the report will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible consistent with the need to investigate the report and subject to legal requirements.

Any student arrested or convicted of violating any federal, state, or local law pertaining to the manufacture, possession, sale, use, or distribution of a drug or alcohol or misuse of prescribed medications must report this event to the appropriate Program Director, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation within three days of the event and prior to any clinical contact with patients and families. If the student holds a nursing license, the student should also contact their governing Board of Nursing for guidance in reporting an arrest and/or conviction.

III. Drug Screening Procedure

Drug and alcohol screening required by the College of Nursing will be conducted utilizing the following measures:

a. Students are responsible for all expenses incurred for drug screens.
b. The student must be screened at a facility approved by the College.
c. The student must fully comply with the approved facility's drug screening standards, methods, and procedures for collecting samples.
d. The drug screen shall screen for the use of the controlled substances (examples listed in Appendix 1).
e. The student must disclose any prescribed or over-the-counter medications, as well as any dietary habits that could modify screening results.
f. If the accuracy of a positive drug screen is disputed by the student, the student may request a retesting of the initial samples by the facility; however, the student will cover the cost of the additional drug screens. Drug screens done outside the appropriate window of time will not be considered valid.
g. Substance use disorder is verified if either: (i) the positive test result is not disputed, or (ii) if the student-requested retest of the initial sample is positive.
h. If the drug screen is inconclusive, the screening will be treated as positive until definitive analysis by alternate testing is accomplished. Alternate testing will be

conducted at the same facility as the inconclusive drug screen results and will be at the student's expense. During this time, the student will not be permitted to have any contact with their clinical sites, but may be allowed to attend classes, pending the approval of the appropriate Program Director.

    i. The approved drug screening facility will publish a final report of the test results (positive, negative, or inconclusive) to the College of Nursing.

    j. A student who is required to submit to drug and/or alcohol screening will be expected to authorize the release of the results to the College and other relevant University offices.

    k. If a student refuses to release the drug screen results to the College and other relevant University offices, the test will be presumed positive and treated as a positive screening result for the purpose of this policy.

Admission to the program will be withdrawn for a student screening positive. All interim actions up to or including: (1) a student undergoing a drug or alcohol screening, (2) a student refraining from contact with clinical sites, and/or (3) a student refraining from class attendance will be determined by the appropriate Program Director in consultation with the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation, relevant Course Coordinator or Instructor and relevant University experts. In the case of drug or alcohol screening based on reasonable suspicion, the cost of any required drug or alcohol testing will be the responsibility of the student at a facility approved by the College of Nursing. A student who refuses to submit to a drug screen or who refuses to release the results of drug or alcohol screen will be regarded as having voluntarily relinquished their clinical responsibilities and can be suspended from the program(s) until further investigation is completed. Any attempt to delay, hinder, or tamper with any drug screen or to alter the results of a drug screen will be considered a refusal to submit to testing and may result in an inference of impairment and/or a violation of this policy.

IV. Confidentiality

The requirement that a student be screened, as well as the drug screen results, will remain confidential and disclosed only to those individuals within the University of South Carolina or an affiliated clinical site with a need to know or as required by law. Upon written request, students will be provided with a copy of the drug screen results. All students who hold a nursing license and who are suspected of SUD will be asked to self-report to their respective State Board of Nursing. If the student refuses to self-report, the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation will consult with the appropriate Program Director, Course Coordinator or Instructor, and other relevant University officials with a need to know. If a health or safety emergency exists which puts the student or others at imminent risk of harm, then the College of Nursing may choose to report the student to the appropriate State Board of Nursing.

V. Self-Disclosure

Students who self-disclose a substance or alcohol use problem to a faculty member, staff member, Program Director, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, or the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation **prior to** or following a positive drug/alcohol screen result, and who are willing to enter and complete an appropriate program of treatment may be granted a medical leave of absence while they undergo treatment. In consultation with their health care provider and University providers (Counseling and Psychiatry-Student Health Services and/or Substance Abuse Prevention and Education (SAPE)), a treatment program will be identified, and the student will be assisted with entrance. The student must sign appropriate HIPAA Authorization forms permitting designated University providers (Counseling and Psychiatry-Student Health Services and/or SAPE) to communicate with the student's private health care providers about their recovery status with the College of Nursing.

VI. Treatment and Counseling Resources

Students concerned that they may have a substance or alcohol use problem are encouraged to seek appropriate assessment, treatment, and counseling from qualified healthcare professionals. The following websites reflect some treatment resources, counseling services, and mutual support programs that are available to students:
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- American Society of Addictive Medicine
- Mental Health at USC
- Narcotic Anonymous
- National Directory of Drug and Alcohol Abuse Treatment Programs
- USC Substance Abuse Prevention and Education
- USC University Health Services

VII. Reentry into the Academic and Clinical Environment

Return from a medical leave of absence due to disclosure of a substance use problem will be considered by the appropriate Program Director and approval of the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation following successful treatment and sustained progress in recovery efforts in addition to other conditions that may be stipulated in the leave of absence agreement. The leave of absence will be a minimum of one calendar year from the time of the positive drug screen with a longer period if determined as needed by your healthcare professionals. Time of re-entry would also be contingent on space available in the program of study. The conditions will be appropriately individualized considering the situation and needs of the student. All required University and College documents must be completed, including a plan for successful return to course and clinical work that is approved by the student's health care provider, relevant University experts (Counseling and Psychiatry and Student Health Services) and the College of Nursing. Factors that have been identified as helpful for reentry into the academic and clinical environment include 12-step program participation, random drug screenings, and sponsorship in a support group. The student must also provide medical clearance from the appropriate individual coordinating therapeutic intervention and evidence of an unencumbered nursing license (if a RN-BSN or graduate student). Re-entry to the College of Nursing will be

determined in consultation with the Counseling and Psychiatry and Student Health Services offices. A student in recovery from SUD who is permitted to reenter the College of Nursing must comply with all the conditions of return delineated as part of the program reentry agreement.

Depending upon the length of absence from the program, the student may be required to restart the clinical and/or didactic components of their program of study. Alternatively, the student may only be required to repeat specific semesters of clinical and didactic study, based on the decision of the appropriate Program Director in consultation with the relevant Course Coordinator. A student recovering from SUD will be monitored closely, particularly in clinical practice. Frequent monitoring to ensure the student remains substance free will be required.

Reentry can be difficult for students, especially for those who have just started their educational program and have limited time invested in the program. Reentry after relapse into SUD is not advised for any student. Reentry into a nursing program's curriculum after a period of absence, no matter what the reason, can be a stressful time of readjustment. A student who has been in rehabilitation for SUD requires the same period of adjustment as a person who has been away from clinical and didactic arena for any other reason. A student in recovery who is reentering the program will be encouraged not to resume their course of study too hastily, but instead allow themselves time to develop appropriate support systems to facilitate the reentry.

Appendix 1
- Amphetamine (methamphetamine) Barbiturates
- Benzodiazepine
- Cocaine
- Marijuana
- Methadone
- Opiates (codeine & morphine) Phencyclidine
- Propoxyphene
- MDMA
- Oxy (2 categories)

Revised June 2023

Student Use of Social Media Guidelines

As professional nurses, students are responsible for protecting the privacy and confidentiality of patients and research participants. The following guidelines are intended to minimize the risks of using social media:

a. First, nurses must recognize that they have an ethical and legal obligation to always maintain patient privacy and confidentiality.

b. Nurses are prohibited from transmitting by way of any electronic media any patient-related image. In addition, students/nurses are restricted from transmitting any information that may be reasonably anticipated to violate patient rights to confidentiality or privacy, or otherwise degrade or embarrass the patient.

c. Do not share post or otherwise disseminate any information, including images, about a patient or information gained in the nurse-patient relationship with anyone unless there is a patient care related need to disclose the information or other legal obligation to do so.

d. Do not identify patients by name or post or publish information that may lead to the identification of a patient. Limiting access to postings through privacy settings is not sufficient to ensure privacy.

e. Do not refer to patients in a disparaging manner, even if the patient is not identified.

f. Do not take photos or videos of patients on personal devices, including cell phones. Follow employer policies for taking photographs or videos of patients for treatment or other legitimate purposes using employer-provided devices.

g. Maintain professional boundaries in the use of electronic media. Like in-person relationships, the nurse has the obligation to establish, communicate and enforce professional boundaries with patients in the online environment. Use caution when having online social contact with patients or former patients. Online contact with patients or former patients blurs the distinction between a professional and personal relationship. The fact that a patient may initiate contact with the nurse does not permit the nurse to engage in a personal relationship with the patient.

h. Consult employer policies or an appropriate leader within the organization for guidance regarding work related postings.

i. Promptly report any identified breach of confidentiality or privacy.

j. Be aware of and comply with employer policies regarding the use of employer-owned computers, cameras and other electronic devices and use of personal devices in the workplace.

k. Do not make disparaging remarks about employers or co-workers. Do not make threatening, harassing, profane, obscene, sexually explicit, racially derogatory, homophobic, or other offensive comments.

l. Do not post content or otherwise speak on behalf of the employer unless authorized to do so and follow all applicable policies of the employer.

*All guidelines apply to students. Students should also not make disparaging remarks related to their clinical site, faculty, staff, or school. The College of Nursing has adopted the NCSBN position statement:

NCSBN (2011) White Paper: A Nurse's Guide to the Use of Social Media https://www.ncsbn.org/NCSBN_SocialMedia.pdf

Student Social Media Takeover Guidelines

Please refer to the guidelines below when participating in any form of social media takeover- Instagram, TikTok, etc.

Takeover at the Clinical Setting

- You may record/take pictures before entering and after exiting the clinical building or facility. No recording or taking of pictures of any identifying signs or names of the clinical site.
  - No pictures or videos while inside the clinical building or facility. The CON phone policy will be enforced while in clinical.
  - You may talk about your experiences such as the highlights of your day, what you learned, your feelings, what skills you performed, etc.
  - Do not state which hospital you were at or your exact location within the hospital- you may say what unit you were on.
    - Example: my clinical was on a med surgical unit today…

Takeover at the College
- You may record/take photos before and after class.
- If you record/take photos of classmates, please inform them that their photo will be on the CON social media so those who do not want to be featured can decline.
- Do not speak about specific test questions, simulation experiences, or other academically confidential experiences. It is best to obtain permission from the faculty, if during a class.
- Simulation lab.
  - No photos or video during a simulation.
  - You may take staged photos with manikins during a break, before/after class.
  - Patient confidentiality rules apply in simulation. If you choose to photograph with a manikin, please do not take photos with a manikin that is being used that day as a patient.
  - See the Clinical Simulation Lab Operations Manager to assist with any pictures of manikins.

Takeover General Reminders
- While in uniform remember to respect the Core Values of Nursing.
- Follow all HIPAA best practices.
- Have FUN! Make us PROUD!

What makes a good Takeover? At the USC CON, takeovers usually focus on a unique event or experience in a student's life. Content should build community among current nursing students and provide prospective students an authentic experience of Gamecock life such as diverse, interactive narratives based on their passion for and participation in university organizations, events, and academics. Examples include:
- Day in the life of a Gamecock nursing student.
- Highlights of a class, clinical, or experiential learning experience.
- Special events such as organizations, internships, scholarship, convocation, or commencement.
- Other events as identified by the student or CON.

These guidelines will help you create a successful Takeover story:

Takeover Do's:
- **Start the takeover with a video or picture of yourself. Introduce who you are and that you are taking over the CON social media Instagram.**
- **Introduce yourself** at events and announce that you are snapping, so those who do not want to be featured can say, "no" or decline.
- **Be friendly and gracious.** Respect people's boundaries and thank participants.
- **Be positive.** Represent the University and CON, and its students, faculty, staff, and larger community in a positive light.
- **Do over.** If a subject stumbles or says something offensive. Ask nicely to reshoot the picture/video without profanity, etc. If they resist, thank them for their time and move on.
- **Take us through your typical day.** Are you involved in any organizations, clubs, committees, etc.? Where is your favorite place to eat on campus? Where do you hang out/study between classes? Do you ever attend events on campus? Do you venture into the city?
- **Shoot vertically.**
- **Adhere to** the University Student Code of Conduct, and University laws and policies.
- **No alcohol, drugs, profanity, nudity, harassment, political campaigning, or degradation in posts. You must follow all copyright and hosting/posting laws/regulations.**
- **Ask permission.** When featuring specific individuals, get their verbal consent before recording them. If the situation demands recording them first, then ask for consent after. When in a public place or not focusing on a specific person or group of people, you do not need to get consent. When in doubt, ask permission.

Takeover Don'ts:
- **When in doubt, do not.** If you feel a picture/video is questionable in content, talk with one of the administrators about your concerns.
- **Do not use social media while driving.** This is illegal and extremely dangerous.
- **Do not be disappointed or upset if an administrator does not use your story.** They are the curators. You might not be aware of other issues happening behind the scenes.
- **Do not be afraid to ask questions** of the administrators. We are here to help.

Nursing Licensure

All USC College of Nursing graduate students must have a SC Registered Nurse unencumbered licensure or be eligible for a SC unencumbered licensure when admitted and must maintain current unencumbered licensure throughout the program. Students must have a current RN licensure for the state in which precepted clinical experiences occur. USC must have state authorization for the student to engage in clinical in that state. Unencumbered SC licensure is required if the precepted clinical experience occurs in SC unless licensed in a Compact state.

Handbook Acknowledgment

All students are required to read the Ph.D. Graduate Student Handbook annually. Students will sign and upload into Viewpoint Screening the **Handbook Acknowledgement Form**.

Academic Bulletin(s) and Code of Conduct Acknowledgment

All students are required to read the Academic Bulletin(s) and Code of Conduct annually. Students will sign and upload into Viewpoint Screening an Academic Bulletin(s) and Code of Conduct Acknowledgement. The form is downloaded from Viewpoint Screening.

CON Guidelines for COVID-19 Vaccine Policies established by Clinical Organizations

Clinical organizations may have COVID-19 vaccination requirements that differ from and are beyond the control of the University's and College's vaccination policies. For any College of Nursing student whose academic progress depends on clinical placements, failure to meet COVID-19 vaccination requirements established by external organizations could mean the student will be unable to finish the degree as previously advised. Updated guidelines are posted in courses each semester.

Center for Simulation and Experiential Learning (SAEL)

The Center for Simulation and Experiential Learning of the College of Nursing in the Williams-Brice building. This state-of-the-art facility is designed to replicate realistic practice environments where healthcare students develop clinical decision-making skills and enhance technical skill acquisition. Students function within their full scope of practice while receiving real-time feedback and guidance from expert clinical educators. All simulation-based learning experiences adhere to the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning's (INACSL) Standards of Best Practice: SimulationSM. For more information, please visit **SAEL**.

Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Protocol

This protocol applies to all USC Columbia campus employees, student employees and all other USC students who have an exposure to a potentially infectious biological material. A potentially infectious material or biological hazard may include an incident involving a microorganism (e.g., bacterial agent, viral agent, and fungal agent), human-derived material, biological toxin, or an incident involving recombinant DNA research. Exposures through sexual contact are not included in this protocol.

Procedures for needle sticks or other exposure to a potentially infectious material:

- Report the incident immediately to the supervisor and clinical faculty to authorize medical evaluation. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring students are offered immediate medical care, appropriate diagnostics, and treatment.

- Percutaneous Exposure (e.g., needle stick, cut, animal bite) – Immediately wash or flush the exposed area with soap and water for 10 minutes.

- Mucous Membrane Exposure (e.g., eyes, nose, or mouth) – Flush the exposed area with water. If exposure is to the eyes, flush eyes (holding open) using the eyewash station for 10 minutes.

- The student or supervisor should immediately notify the appropriate entity within the health care institution where the exposure occurs, to initiate testing of the "source patient" for HIV, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C infection. It is important for rapid HIV testing to be completed with results available within a few hours. Each institution has its own procedures for obtaining "source patient" testing, and supervising faculty should know these procedures. If there is uncertainty about whom to contact within the host institution, instructions should be obtained from one or more of the following:

  - Employee health office

  - Charge nurse for the floor or unit where the exposure occurred

  - Infection control nurse

  - Administrative officer of the day

  - Clinic director (for outpatient sites)

- Once the necessary "source patient" testing has been ordered, seek medical treatment as soon as possible after the incident (see below for specific instructions).

- Notify Assistant Dean for Student Affairs of incident at 803-608-7770 between the hours of 9am-9pm. Leave a message with your return phone number if there is no answer. If there is no response within one hour, call the Office of Academic Affairs at 803-777-7412.

- Steps to Take When an Injury Occurs:

  - Immediately report the injury to your faculty supervisor. For **non-life-threatening** injuries or illnesses, in which medical treatment may be necessary the faculty supervisor and injured student together will **immediately** call CompEndium Services (**available 24/7**) at **877-709-2667** to report the injury.

Note: In case of a life-threatening injury or illness, dial 911 or go to the nearest emergency room and contact your supervisor and CompEndium as soon as possible. CompEndium will assist in processing and scheduling the employee's work-related injury for treatment and claims handling with the university's insurance provider.

- o **CompEndium will direct the injured student to a medical provider for treatment.** They will also issue a treating authorization number to the medical provider, which will authorize treatment of the injured student.

- o The injured student will complete the **[Employee Injury Report Form (81-B)](#)** and the faculty supervisor will complete the **[Supervisor Report of Injury Form (81-C)](#)**. These completed forms are required to be faxed to CompEndium at 877-710-2667 **AND** emailed to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs., NURSEVTS@mailbox.sc.edu.

All exposure incidents in the clinical agencies and the client-simulated laboratory (CSL) shall be reported, investigated, and documented. If an exposure occurs and there is no faculty present, the student must notify faculty and/or the Office of Academic Affairs as soon as possible.

Workers' Compensation covers the following populations who experience a bloodborne pathogen exposure while working or at clinical if, appropriate reports are filed:

- All university employees and apprenticeship students in the Colleges of Education, Exercise Science, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, and Social Work.

- Work study students and graduate assistants who are exposed while on the job.

Students who suffer a Non-Job Related/Non-clinical related Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure during an enrolled academic session:

- Should report to the University Health Services for initial evaluation and referral. If the University Health Services is closed, students may seek care at the nearest hospital emergency department. If away from the Columbia area, the student should report to the nearest hospital emergency department.

Evaluation and Review

The Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation is responsible for annually reviewing this policy and procedures and its effectiveness and for updating the program as needed. (Reviewed June 2023)

Technology

Information regarding the Computer Standards, Computer Purchasing through USC, and Software used in the Nursing Curriculum can be found at https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/nursing/internal/current_students/technology/index.php.

Student Progression with Course of Study

Academic Advising

For most graduate students, the academic advisor is the Program Director or Ph.D. graduate student advisor. Advisors are the principal source of assistance to students in planning an academic program, seeking advice, and dealing with problems as they arise. However, it is the responsibility of the student to maintain contact with the advisor. Faculty and staff will make every effort to help students but cannot be expected to be responsible for problems not brought to their attention in a timely manner.

A mandatory online orientation is required for all new Ph.D. students. Each student receives advisement and is provided with a doctoral program of study developed by the program director prior to initial registration. Thereafter, all Ph.D. students are required to participate in advisement as needed as communicated via Blackboard announcements. Deviation from the program of study will result in a mandatory advisement with the program director prior to subsequent registration. Enrollment in clinical and other special courses is contingent upon a student fulfilling additional requirements by stated deadlines (e.g., prerequisites, immunization and other health requirements, health agency requirements, and contractual agreements in effect).

Academic Standard for Progression

Good Standing

A student in good standing is defined as a student who:
- Graduate courses may be passed for degree credit with a grade as low as C, but a degree-seeking student must maintain at least a B (3.000 on a 4.000 scale) cumulative grade point average. The CON stipulates that no grade below B can be applied to a core course.
- Maintains the proper course load (without incompletes).
- Is not on academic probation.
- Does not have two consecutive semesters of non-enrollment.
- Is on an approved leave of absence.
- Is not on financial hold nor carrying past-due balances.
- Has completed the immunizations, background check, and drug screening processes with no identified problems if required.

Academic Probation

A student will be placed on probation if they
- Has a cumulative GPA of less than 3.00 (**B**) at the end of any semester. A student is allowed one calendar year to raise the cumulative GPA to at least 3.00.
- Has a cumulative GPA of less than 3.00 due to conversion of grades of incomplete at end of semester in which the grade is posted. Students are allowed one major semester of probation dating from the semester in which the

University Registrar receives the Incomplete conversion grade to raise the cumulative GPA to 3.00 or above.

- Has earned less than a minimum grade of 80% (**B**) in any graduate course work. If a grade lower than **B** is earned, this course must be repeated to enroll in subsequent nursing courses. However, the initial below **B** grade remains on the student record and counts toward the "Two **C** Rule" (see Academic Dismissal).
- See CON Graduate Pass/Fail Spring 2020 policy (CON Graduate **S+/S/U** for Spring 2020 Full-Term and B Term Courses Only).

Academic Dismissal

A student will be dismissed from the College of Nursing if they:
- Receive two grades of 79.99% (C+) or lower in the same NURS or ITEC course or in any two NURS or ITEC courses. *
- Fail a required graduate course twice or withdraw from the graduate course twice (or any combination thereof). A student may only attempt a specific graduate course twice in the graduate program. An attempt is any grade or W received in a course. *
- Have a grade of **U** in two courses. *
- Have a cumulative GPA of less than 3.00 at end of one calendar year of academic probation.
- Have a cumulative GPA of less than 3.00 at end of major semester of probation dating from the semester in which the University Registrar receives the Incomplete conversion grade.
- Are banned from a clinical agency because of unprofessional, unethical, or illegal behavior.
- Have a positive drug screening.
- Have an encumbered professional (RN or APRN) license. A student in a post-license program who becomes no longer licensed (suspension, revocation, or lapsed) or has any form of restriction/probation as a registered professional nurse by any license granting authority, no longer meet the admission criteria of the program and are no longer eligible to progress. If at any time after the initial background and drug screen have been completed, there is a change in the student's status, it is the student's responsibility to immediately report the circumstances to the appropriate Program Director, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, or Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation. Failure to report can result in immediate dismissal from the program.
  *See CON Graduate Pass/Fail Spring 2020 policy (CON Graduate **S+/S/U** for Spring 2020 Full-Term and B Term Courses Only)

Appeals for Reinstatement

Appeals for reinstatement from students should be reviewed first by the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs. If the appeal is approved, then the Student Petitions Committee must forward it to the Dean of the Graduate School for action (see Student Petitions).

Academic Suspension

Students are expected to maintain professionalism, adhere to ANA's Code of Ethics, USC Honor Code, and the College of Nursing's Core Values always while in the clinical setting or when representing the University of South Carolina College of Nursing. A student banned from a clinical agency because of unprofessional, unethical, or illegal behavior may receive an academic penalty, including but not limited to clinical failure, course failure, suspension, expulsion from the College, or other penalties. The violation may be reported to the Board of Nursing or the governing board of the student's license.

Reinstatement after Suspension

After suspension, reinstatement to the College of Nursing will not be granted for one calendar year following the term of suspension. To appeal for reinstatement the student must submit a completed petition packet to Assistant Dean for Student Affairs.

If the appeal is approved, then the Student Petitions Committee must forward it to the Dean of the Graduate School for action (see Student Petitions).

Appeals may be initiated at any point following suspension, but petition packets submitted by students must be received by the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs at least 45 days before the start of the term for which the student wishes to be readmitted.

Graduate School Academic Forgiveness

The Graduate School Academic Forgiveness Policy is outlined in the Graduate Studies Bulletin in the Graduate Academic Regulations section.

Academic Standard for Graduation

At the time of graduation, the student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) must be at least 3.00 (**B**) on a 4.000 scale. Additionally, the student's average on all grades recorded on the program of study for courses numbered 700 or above must be at least 3.000 and all courses listed on the program of study must be at least 3.000.

Course Enrollment Status and Load

Students enrolled in full-time or part-time study are entitled to use the full services of the University. Full-time status requires enrollment in at least nine credit hours during a regular semester and six credit hours during the summer. For the purposes of financial aid, a student must be enrolled in at least six (6) hours per semester to be eligible for financial aid. Students may elect not to enroll for a summer session; however, they are not entitled to use faculty, computing, or library resources during that time. A student must be enrolled for at least one credit during any semester in which the Ph.D. project progress is made and such University resources as the library, computer facilities, or faculty time are used.

Graduate School requires any student who misses one or more semesters to renew their enrollment privileges. If three years or more lapse between enrollments, students must reapply for admission.

Course Format Definition

All nursing courses in the Ph.D. Programs are delivered online through Blackboard Learning Management System which allows USC faculty to create a secure course website for class communications, posting assignments, posting readings, linking to complementary websites, administering exams, and much more. In courses that use Blackboard, the course syllabus will provide basic information about accessing Blackboard. Additional information about Blackboard is available at Getting Assistance.

Students access online courses at Blackboard Access. Courses offered in this format are constructed and conducted differently than traditional classroom courses. Below are some suggestions on how to be successful in online courses:
- Become familiar with Blackboard (Bb), the course software.
- Learn how to access Bb using multifactor authentication.
- Read the "How to…" guides that are found in each course. They are well worth your time.
- Participate actively in the course.

Clinical courses have didactic component online but require direct clinical practice and other activities such as clinical conferencing or simulation.

Course Attempts

A student may attempt a specific graduate course twice in the graduate program. An attempt is any grade, **W**, or **WF** received in a course. Each Ph.D. course may only be attempted twice.

Course Load

The Graduate School definition for normal full-time enrollment status for graduate students is 9 hours for graduate students or 6 hours for students serving as graduate assistants.

Common Verification Requests

- Current students can access their Myhub account through their **Self Service Carolina** account. Click on **'Official Record Request'** and then **'Enrollment Verification.'** If you have additional questions, please visit Degree and Enrollment Verification (Current Student, Former Students and Alumni) (https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/registrar/transcripts_and_records/degree_and_enrollment_verification/index.php or you may contact the Office of the University Registrar by **email** or phone at 803-777-5555.
- USC will also provide a student with an official transcript for a fee. An official transcript is a complete record of a student's enrollment history, including all University of South Carolina campuses and can be used to verify credit hours

completed by a student. A transcript can be used to verify a student's degree awarded, enrollment history, GPA, good standing, or eligibility to return to USC. Current students can order an official transcript via **Self Service Carolina**.

- University of South Carolina has authorized the National Student Clearinghouse to provide enrollment and degree verifications to third parties. They can be contacted through their **web portal** (https://nscverifications.org/welcome-to-verification-services/) or by phone at 703-742-4200.
- **Insurance Forms** are available to students online through Self Service Carolina or through Myhub.
- **Loan Deferments** are available to students online through Self Service Carolina or through Myhub.

Course Registration

Registering for courses is an important task that all students must complete throughout their time at USC. New and transfer graduate Nursing students may only register for nursing courses once they have been admitted to the program, agreed to the program of study, and completed orientation. Access our registration system at Self Service Carolina (SSC).

The University Registrar establishes the official calendars followed by the University of South Carolina system. Access the full current and upcoming semester academic calendars to find key dates and information including holidays, registration dates, payment deadlines, drop or add dates, as well as exams and commencement for each term. Each part of term has specific drop, add, and refund dates. Review your schedule in SSC to determine the part of term for your classes.

Registration Tips

- Step 1: Review your Program of study and make note of the courses you are projected to take in the next term. If you have questions about your program of study or the courses you are scheduled to take, contact your program director.
- Step 2: Check your Registration Time Ticket in SSC - see "Registration" then "Registration Notices and Holds". Make a note of the date/time and set a reminder in your calendar.
  - What is a Registration Time Ticket? It is time the University Registrar appointed a student to begin registration for the next term.
- Step 3: Check your student account for holds. See "Registration" then "Registration Notices and Holds." What should you do if you have a hold on your account in SSC? Contact the office that placed the hold on your account and determine what needs to be done to have the hold removed. Ensure your hold is removed before the time on your Registration Time Ticket.
  - What is an Advisement Hold? Advisement holds are placed on student records by the College of Nursing to ensure students complete all prerequisite requirements. Advisement holds prevent registration. Advisement holds will be removed by staff as Viewpoint Screening compliance is confirmed.

- Step 4: Register for the classes listed on your program of study at your designated registration time (See Step 2 above to determine your designated time). Students must register only for those courses listed on their program of study. Students who deviate from their program of study may be removed from courses by the College of Nursing.
  - o Need help with the Registration Processes in SSC? See new 'how-to' videos for the classes.sc.edu class search website. They are linked on the Advising Help Videos , Registration Holds & Course Restrictions, and Registration Help webpages.
  - o How to Identify Registration Restrictions (classes.sc.edu) - https://youtu.be/FHWbXhCFNWM

Course Restrictions

Registration for a clinical nursing course is limited to students admitted to a College of Nursing graduate degree or Certificate of Graduate Study program.

Registration Advisement holds are placed on student records for the following reasons:

1. NURS 840/840A (independent study courses) requires completion of an independent study contract (G-ISC) by the student and faculty member that must be filed with the Ph.D. graduate student advisor for the student file and with the University Registrar.
2. Prior to NURS 899: Each student must be fully compliant with program requirements of completed DPOS and request registration "signoff" from the Ph.D. graduate student advisor for the registration hold to be lifted and to register for the course. The Ph.D. graduate student advisor lifts the registration hold.

Course Selection and Drop Period

The University Registrar's web page SSC enables students to register via the internet and access their personal information such as grades, financial aid, fees, and class schedule. The most up to date information is posted online.

Students can use SSC to add, drop, or change a course or section. Any change in enrollment must be recorded with the University Registrar. Students may check the Academic Calendar online for the last day to drop a course without a grade of **W** being recorded and for the last day to drop a course or withdraw without a grade of **WF** being recorded. Please note that a **W** does constitute an attempt at a course. Failure to complete the official course withdrawal process has serious implications for calculation of the final course grade and calculation of grade point averages. Students should discuss any potential changes with their program director and assigned Ph.D. graduate student advisor prior to making the changes.

For a refund schedule, please see the Tuition Refund section for more information. Please note that should a student fail to attend classes in a course for which they are registered, they may not be automatically dropped from the course. Students who fail

to drop a course they are not taking, but are still registered for, within the drop/add period may receive a grade of **FN** in that course.

Applicants to the Ph.D. programs may only register for nursing courses once they are admitted to the program, have agreed to the program of study, and completed orientation.

Registration for a clinical nursing course is limited to students admitted to a College of Nursing graduate degree or certificate of graduate study program.

All health requirements including background check and drug screening must be compliant by the end of the first semester of enrollment or a registration hold for subsequent semester enrollment will be issued.

Registration for independent study courses requires an independent study contract (see Course Restrictions).

Course/Faculty Evaluations

At the end of each course, students evaluate the course and its instructor(s). The results of these evaluations are maintained by the Office of Academic Affairs.

Textbooks

Most assigned textbooks are available in the University Bookstore. The **University Bookstore** is located on the first floor of the Russell House. Several other bookstores such as the South Carolina Bookstore and Addams University Bookstore, located near campus, also sell required textbooks and academic supplies.

Degree Completion and Graduation

Application for Degree

The graduation application is the first step you will need to take to graduate from your academic program. To be eligible for graduation a student must meet all University and College of Nursing standards to receive a degree. Candidates for degrees must file a formal application during the last semester before graduation prior to the deadline set by the University Registrar. Deadlines are posted for each term on the official academic calendar of the University Registrar. Applications filed after the deadline result will not be accepted and will delay receipt of diploma. At the time of graduation, the student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) must be at least 3.00. Additionally, the student's average on all grades recorded on the program of study for courses numbered 700 or above must be at least 3.00 and all courses listed on the program of study must be at least 3.00.

Review the application and award processes on the University Registrar's website to understand better what happens once you submit your application.

Graduation Requirements

Ph.D. students are expected to complete their program of study in 10 years or fewer. Candidates who are unable to meet this requirement must petition for an extension to the Executive Associate Dean for Academics and Accreditation. Any additional requirements in effect at the time of re-evaluation must be completed.

All failing (**F**), and Incomplete grades must be cleared or completed by graduation day or the student's name will be removed from the graduation list. A cumulative GPA of 3.00 is required. All University balances must be paid in full. At the time of graduation, the student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) must be at least 3.00. Additionally, the student's average on all grades recorded on the program of study for courses numbered 700 or above must be at least 3.00 and all courses listed on the program of study must be at least 3.00.

Ceremonies

Commencement exercises are held for degree candidates in both Fall and Spring each year. The President of the University of South Carolina presides over commencement. To honor their commitment, each degree candidate is recognized by name and congratulated by the dean of the graduate's college or school. Visit the **Registrar's website** for additional information regarding commencement.

Doctoral students who have already graduated may request to participate in commencement exercises for a term other than their actual graduation term. In order to be considered to walk **late**, students must submit the Request to Participate in Commencement Early/Late Form. Visit the University Registrar's website for additional information regarding commencement.

In addition, the College of Nursing celebrates the accomplishments of the graduating class with a special Convocation ceremony in Fall, Spring and Summer each year.

Diplomas

Students with outstanding University balances, incompletes, **NR,** or uncleared **F** grades at the time of graduation will not be able to obtain their diplomas nor will they be able to obtain any official transcripts or other University information until the balances are paid in full.

Have a question about your degree or diploma? Review frequently asked questions to find answers.

Graduation Awards

Students are encouraged to nominate themselves or others for the College of Nursing Student Awards. More information about the nomination process will be disseminated to students during the academic year.

Alumni

Upon graduation, students at the College become alumni of the University of South Carolina. The College's alum family is a major support system for the College and alum donors help to support several scholarships annually. Alums are electronically sent copies of USC College of Nursing's *The CONnection* and invited to attend annual alum events and celebrations. All graduates are encouraged to notify the alum office or My Carolina Alumni Association of address changes. Contact us at https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/nursing/alumni/.

Admission Information

The Ph.D. degree is designed to prepare graduates for a lifetime of intellectual inquiry through creative scholarship and research. Students in this doctoral program acquire the knowledge and skills to conduct research that will contribute to furthering nursing science, practice, education, and administration.

Ph.D. Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently Asked Questions - College of Nursing | University of South Carolina (sc.edu)

Change of Program or Major

After the student has been admitted to a Ph.D. program, the program or major may be changed only upon approval from the existing Program Director and the Program Director from the proposed program. Some graduate programs require essays and/or interviews; this is at the Program Director's discretion. Requests will be evaluated on space availability and may require a delay in the program of study.

If both Program Directors approve the transfer, the Second Application must be submitted to the Graduate School. Along with the second degree-seeking application, current students will submit new recommendations and an updated goal statement for the program requested. Students who missed a semester must also submit an updated unencumbered nursing license and updated Viewpoint Screening information. There may be additional program-specific requirements.

Student Resources

Role of the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs

One of the roles of the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs is to serve as a student advocate in the College of Nursing. The Assistant Dean for Student Affairs also serves as the initial contact for concerns such as requesting exception to a college policy (petitions) or a grievance. The Assistant Dean serves as a confidential, informal, and independent resource for graduate student concerns and conflicts within the College of Nursing. Ms. Cheryl Nelson can be reached at (803) 777-8777 or by e-mail cynelson@e-mail.sc.edu.

Role of the Interim Associate Dean for Access, Belonging and Community Engagement (ABC)

The Interim Associate Dean for ABC strives for impartiality, fairness, and objectivity in the treatment of all students and the consideration of their issues in the College of Nursing. She also serves as a confidential resource for student concerns and conflicts within the College of Nursing. Dr. Sevilla Bronson can be reached at (803) 777-5109 or by e-mail sbronson@mailbox.sc.edu.

College of Nursing Comments and Kudos

The College of Nursing has an electronic box Comments and Kudos (https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/nursing/internal/current_students/suggestions.php) to allow students to make comments, share ideas, ask questions, and provide feedback to the Dean. The Office of the Dean reviews all submissions. Suggestions and comments submitted will be shared with the appropriate personnel as applicable. All submissions can be done anonymously. However, if you would like a response, you have the option to provide your contact information on the form.

Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support

The Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support offers a wide range of services to enhance student experience and support academic success. To learn more about available opportunities and to access the services, visit the SAAS Programs & Services web page (http:/www.sa.sc.edu/about/programs/).

Graduate School Opportunities and Support

https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/opportunities_support/index.php

Graduate Student Resources Hub

The Grad Hub provides graduate students with greater access to student services and resources through a collaboration with National Fellowships and the University Career Center.

Graduate School Ombuds

The Graduate School Ombuds serves as a confidential, neutral, informal and independent resource for graduate student concerns and conflicts.

Student Organizations

- Graduate Student Association
  https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/leadership_and_service_center/student_organizations/graduate_student_association/index.php
- Black Graduate Student Association – Email sobgsa@mailbox.sc.edu, https://sc.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/BGSA/contact

- Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing
- Black Nurses Association
- Student Nurses Association
    https://garnetgate.sa.sc.edu/organization/sna
- Chi Eta Phi
    https://garnetgate.sa.sc.edu/organization/chietaphi

Campus Life

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_affairs/our_experts/our_offices/student_life/index.php

Career Center

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/career_center/index.php

Carolina Alert

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/law_enforcement_and_safety/carolina-alert/index.php

CON Carolina Cares Cupboard (CCC)

The CCC contains food, personal care/toiletry items, and professional clothing for College of Nursing students who are in need. The CCC will also provide limited "scholarships" in cases where students need financial assistance (e.g., gas to get to clinical, clinical supplies, books). Please email Dr. Sevilla Bronson, Interim Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at sbronson@mailbox.sc.edu for additional information.

Dining Services

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/dining_services/index.php

Diversity and Inclusion

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/diversity_equity_and_inclusion/index.php

Law Enforcement and Safety

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/law_enforcement_and_safety/index.php or contact USCPD as follows:

Emergencies: 911

Police Dispatch: 803) 777-4215

The RAVE Guardian Safety App is available on the Apple App Store for iPhones and Google Play for Android devices.

Libraries

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/university_libraries/index.php

Transportation

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/parking/index.php

Student Disability Resource Center

The USC College of Nursing is committed to providing reasonable accommodation for Students with disabilities. Students with disabilities must contact the Student Disability Resource Center prior to or early in their program to determine if reasonable accommodations will be provided. Student Disability Resource Center website (https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_disability_resource_center/index.php).

Student Disability Resource Center
1705 College Street; Close-Hipp, Suite 102
Columbia, SC 29208
Phone: 803-777-6142; Fax: 803-777-6741
Email: sadrc@mailbox.sc.edu

Students with disabilities must be able to continuously meet the core performance standards and functional abilities established to ensure that the objectives of the nursing program are met.

University Health Services

Health and Wellness

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/health_services/index.php

Mental Health Services

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/health_services/mental-health/

- Mental Health Emergencies:

  Mental health resources are available. Students have access to virtual counseling and support 24/7. Go to https://thriveatcarolina.com/ or call 833-664-2854.

  If you think you may harm yourself or someone else, call the USC Police Department at 803-777-4215.

Medical Services

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/health_services/medical-services/index.php

Sexual Assault or Interpersonal Violence

Call (803) 777-8248 to speak to a trained interpersonal violence advocate 24/7.

Student Success Center

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_success_center/index.php

Veterans and Military Services

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/veterans_and_military_services/index.php

Tuition and Required Fees

Ph.D. students are assessed a one-time Nursing Enrichment Fee charge. Tuition is charged based on the number of credit hours taken in each semester. You will also be charged a Health Professions Fee and Technology Fee each semester, and in some semesters may be charged added fees (such as laboratory fee and malpractice insurance fee) that are associated with certain courses.

Health Profession Fee Explanation

- Resources to identify, secure, and support clinical and/or experiential placements for training purposes.
- Staff and support systems to maintain regulatory and compliance standards (to include background checks, immunizations, drug screens, etc.) with experiential training in healthcare systems as mandated by respective accrediting bodies.
- Provides additional resources to improve health professional student experiences and remain competitive against peer programs by recruiting and retaining high quality faculty, preceptors, staff, and graduate assistants.
- Professional and specialized staff to support various activities related to student affairs, advisement, and student services.

Tuition Refund

Withdrawing from class can have both an academic and monetary impact. For information regarding academic withdrawal, please review the withdrawal information provided by the University Registrar. You can also view the Parts of Term Dates and Deadlines located in the Academics section of my.sc.edu. Each part of term has specific drop, add, and refund dates. Review your schedule in SSC to determine the part of term for your classes.

If you withdraw from all courses during a semester, contact regapeal@mailbox.sc.edu to obtain information on the Tuition Refund Appeal process.

Financial Aid

Financial Assistance

The USC Office of Financial Aid and Scholarship can help you evaluate your costs and determine what type of financial aid support you need — loans, scholarships, grants, or student employment. To be fully considered for all financial aid resources, you must complete a new Free Application for Federal Student Aid each year and all your paperwork must be received before the April 1 annual priority deadline. You may contact the Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships directly with any financial aid questions: uscfaid@mailbox.sc.edu or 803-777-8134.

Beginning with admission to the program in 2023, Ph.D. students will receive full tuition funding for the first 36 credit hours of pre-dissertation coursework. All students must complete 30 hours of research assistant hours each term that funding is provided. Failure to complete the hours will result in student becoming ineligible for funding until hours are completed. The College of Nursing also offers scholarships, assistantships and other financial aid options for Ph.D. students.

Ph.D. students admitted prior to Fall 2023 will receive full funding of tuition for the first two years of the program and must complete 30 hours of research assistant hours each term that funding is provided.

The College of Nursing has one graduate scholarship application that is used for consideration for all eligible departmental scholarships in the college. Each year, the online scholarship application will be available on our website in December, and the application will be due by March 15th of the following year. The funding for the submitted application is effective for the upcoming academic year. College of Nursing award decisions are expected to be finalized and announced each year in late May/early June.

In addition, as external scholarships are announced, this information is shared with students via Blackboard in the appropriate communities under Fellowship and External Scholarship Opportunities. Scholarships, traineeships, and research funding opportunities may be available through the College, The Graduate School, the University, and extramural sources.

Federal Nurse Faculty Loan Program

The Federal Nurse Faculty Loan Program is a federally subsidized loan to cover tuition, fees, books, laboratory experiences, and other reasonable educational expenses.

The NFLP is a loan cancellation program with a service obligation for recipients of the loans. To be eligible for the maximum 85 percent cancellation, the borrower must agree to serve as full-time or part-time nurse faculty at a nursing school for a consecutive four-year period following graduation. To learn more, select this link.

Graduate Assistantships

The College offers a limited number of graduate assistantships with stipends. Tuition assistance for graduate assistantships is sometimes available to graduate students

enrolled in at least six (6) credit hours during the fall and spring semesters; summer assistantships require at least three (3) credit hours of enrollment. Contact the College of Nursing Human Resources Director for more information at (803) 777-6918.

Funded Research Opportunities

Full-time graduate students may have Opportunities to participate in funded research programs. This experience can be a valuable addition to a student's studies. For further information, the student may consult the Office of Research at (803) 777-6488.

External Scholarship Opportunities

American Association of Colleges of Nursing

https://www.aacnnursing.org/Students/Financial-Aid

The Foundation of the National Student Nurses' Association, Inc.

www.forevernursing.org

National Institute of Heath Ruth L. Kirschstein Predoctoral Individual National Research Service Award (NRSA or F31)

The purpose of this Kirschstein-NRSA program is to enable promising predoctoral students with potential to develop into a productive, independent research scientist, to obtain mentored research training while conducting dissertation research. See: https://researchtraining.nih.gov/programs/fellowships/F31