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

Graduate Nursing Program Student Handbook

2025-2026 Academic Year

Table of Contents

Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Purpose of This Handbook

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

1.2 About the College

The Dean of the College oversees the overall direction and operations of the College, including 4 departments: Exercise and Health Sciences, Gerontology, Nursing, and Urban Public Health. The Dean is supported by an Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, an Associate Dean of Research, and an Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance. The Department of Nursing Chairperson reports to the Dean. The Chairperson is supported by the Assistant Chairperson, Program Directors, Track Coordinators, Nursing Program Manager, and Program Assistants. The Department of Nursing Chairperson and Assistant Chairperson provide strategic oversight and advance curricula and policies developed by the faculty and Dean of the College. Undergraduate Program Directors are responsible for implementing curricula and policies with support from the Department of Nursing faculty, Nursing Program Manager, and Program Assistants. Undergraduate Nursing Program Directors oversee the program's professional staff working therein.

It is important for students to follow the chain of command to ensure it is addressed in the proper way. Following this process shows professionalism and helps ensure clear communication and fair outcomes.

The chain of command for students to follow with an issue or concern is as follows:

1. First, speak with your nursing faculty member, as they are your direct point of contact.
2. If the issue is not resolved, contact the Nursing Program Director.
3. If further follow-up is needed, you may then contact the Assistant Chair of the Nursing Program.
4. Finally, if the concern remains unresolved, the Chair of the Nursing Program will review the matter and make a final decision (if this is needed).

1.3 Nursing Department Philosophy

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

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

Entry into the practice of professional nursing requires a baccalaureate degree with a major in nursing. Professional nurses use the nursing process to work with individuals, families, groups, and communities to achieve optimal levels of wellness. Professional nurses are accountable and responsible for their nursing practice, applying leadership and management skills and collaborating with members of the health care team as they apply the nursing process. Advanced practice nurses, who hold earned master's or doctoral degrees in nursing, assume leadership roles in healthcare delivery systems through research, practice, teaching, and/or administration. The human being is an integral, whole, and open system with biological, psychological, social, developmental, spiritual, and cultural attributes. Humankind is the focus of nursing practice and is made up of diverse multicultural populations. The faculty believes that human beings possess the right and ability to function on their own behalf in health promotion and disease prevention, detection, and management.

Health is a dynamic process occurring on a wellness/illness continuum across the lifespan. Health care is approached through concepts such as patient-centered care, evidence-based practice, quality, safety, informatics, teamwork and collaboration to promote, maintain, and restore health. To achieve an optimal state of health, individuals, families, and communities respond with a variety of strategies that are influenced by multiple factors, such as culture, gender, genetic endowment, age, socioeconomics, and the environment.
The environment includes all conditions, circumstances, and influences surrounding and affecting individuals, families and other groups, communities, and society. Health is affected by the environment; some aspects may be altered to promote wellness, whereas others are fixed

and require accommodations.

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

1.4 Mission, Vision and Values
The Graduate Programs adheres to the vision, mission and values of UMB and the Department of Nursing in the Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

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

1.6 Professional Nursing Standards

The department identifies the AACN Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education to guide the implementation of its curriculums. In our nurse practitioner programs, we use the 2022 Standards for Quality Nurse Practitioner Education (6th edition). 1.7 Shared Governance
Faculty, students, and staff contribute to the evaluation and continuous improvement of the Nursing department and its programs. Students and faculty provide input into program evaluation and improvement through service on program and departmental committees. The College maintains the right to amend published policies, procedures, and requirements at any time to achieve stated missions and objectives.

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

1.9 Program Communication Policies for Students and Faculty
All communications with the University must be conducted through student UMB emails, and this includes communication with the Graduate Programs. Students are expected to check their University e-mail on a frequent and consistent basis to ensure that they are staying current with all official communications generated by the graduate program but also by the Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences and the University at large. Students can find their email address by logging into WISER and selecting the link to their "Personal Portfolio" and then viewing "Email Addresses". Email accounts are created automatically upon enrollment. The link to access UMB webmail or email is found at https://www.umb.edu/it/software-systems/email/.

Section 2: Academic Policies, Procedures, and Requirements

2.1 Academic Policies, Procedures, and Requirements
All graduate nursing students should familiarize themselves with the University's Graduate Academic Policies available at http://catalog.umb.edu/index.php

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

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

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

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

Pregnancy, childbirth, pregnancy loss, and early parenting accommodations are provided by the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX. For more information about this process or to seek accommodation contact CRTIX via their website or email CivilRights.TitleIX@umb.edu.

2.4 Attendance
MCNHS follows the University policy for attendance. In addition, MCNHS requests that students who anticipate excused absences for religious observances, university sanctioned activities, or governmental obligations notify course faculty within the first week of classes so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Should a situation arise that prevents a student from attending class, clinical or labs, the student is expected to notify the faculty member as soon as possible. The faculty member is not obligated to provide make-up work for absences, and students with excessive absences may be advised to withdraw from the course.

2.5 Grading Policy
Letter grades are given in accordance with the grading criteria indicated in the UMB Graduate StudentHandbook. Students must earn a minimum of a **B** (83 total points) to pass a graduate level course. For graduate students, the University uses a system of letter grades that are equivalent to numericalquality points according to the following table:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Quality Points
A	93-100%	4.00
A-	90-92%	3.75
B+	87-89%	3.25
B	**83-86%**	**3.00**
B-	80-82%	2.75
C+	77-79%	2.25
C	73-76%	2.00
F	0-72%	0.0
W	Received if withdrawal occurs before the withdrawal deadline.	N/A
AU	Audit (only permitted on space-available basis)	N/A
NA	Not Attending (student appeared on roster but never attended class. Student is still responsible for tuition and fee charges unless withdrawal form is submitted before deadline. NA has no effect on cumulative GPA.)	N/A

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

2.6 Incomplete
See policy on incomplete grade here.

2.7 Transfer Credit Policy
Applicants who have completed graduate course work at other accredited institutions may transfer coursework toward the completion of a UMass Boston graduate degree. See policy on transfer of credits. There is a 24-credit residency requirement for the DNP program.

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

2.8 Requests to Take Non-UMB Courses during Program
Students who wish to take a class off campus need to contact their Graduate Program Director to ensure the class is acceptable for transfer. The Transfer Credit Approval form is sent to external.credit@umb.edu to record the approval of the students. The Registrar's Office

will confirm receipt and provide information for submitting an official transcript once the class is done.

2.9 Course Waiver Policy/Advanced Standing

A PhD or DNP student may seek a waiver/Advanced standing from a prescribed course in the Program if they have completed a course with substantially equivalent content at another institution or in another college at UMass Boston. Courses are waived course-by-course based upon equivalency and relevance. Courses must have been taken at an accredited institution, no more than seven (7) years prior to matriculation at UMB and received a grade of B or better. If a course waiver is granted, the student will receive 0 credits towards degree requirements and must take additional courses to complete the required credits for the degree. Advanced Standing cannot reduce the number of credits below 24 credits as part of the doctoral residency requirement including research hours and dissertation credits. Course waivers will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the Graduate Program Director. All waived courses require a written request submitted to the Program Director. Approved waivers are documented as W on wiser.

2.10 Independent Study NU 796

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

2.11 Academic Progress

The office of Graduate Studies specifies that a student must make satisfactory academic progress (SAP) toward completion of a degree within the Statute of Limitations for the graduate degree. The determination of SAP is based on the student's GPA and credits completed vs. attempted. Failure to meet SAP requirements may result in the loss of eligibility for financial assistance. Please note that the determination of SAP is not a substitute for determining student academic standing.

2.12 Statute of Limitations

Each graduate matriculated student in the PhD and DNP must complete all degree requirements within eight (8) calendar years of entering the program. For the PhD program, students will only be granted a 6-month Statue of Limitations (SOL) extension with the Program Director and the Dean of Graduate Studies approval. PhD students can take up to 9 months to complete their dissertation defense if supported by their chairs and the Program Director (i.e., this time frame will realistically allow for completion). Students in the master's program must complete all degree requirements within five (5) calendar years of entering the program. To apply for an extension, students complete the statute of limitations form. The form is then reviewed by the Graduate Program Director, Office of Graduate Studies and Admissions and submitted to the Registrar's Office for processing if approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

All degree-seeking graduate students must maintain Continuous registration, including when a student is on a leave of absence from the program. Students need to register for (CAS 600) on the WISER to maintain matriculation. Failure to register prior to the registration deadline for the

semester in which the student is registering may result in late fees and classification as an inactive student.

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

2.14 Leave of Absence
The Office of Graduate Studies requires that a student seeking a leave of absence (LOA) must complete the leave of absence form. An approved LOA extends the statute of limitations for degree completion by the length of the leave.

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

2.16 At Risk of Course Failure Policy and Procedures
At any time during the academic program that the student is determined to be at risk of failing, the student will be advised by the faculty of record. The student will be asked to meet with the course faculty to discuss their deficiencies and develop a plan for meeting the course objectives. It is recommended that the student and faculty member set up a schedule to meet and discuss the student's progress in meeting the course objectives. If a student does not make sufficient progress in meeting course objectives, the student will receive a non-passing grade.

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

2.18 Academic Probation, Dismissal & Appeal
Refer to the Graduate Catalog for policy on academic probation, dismissal and appeal.

MCNHS Appeals: Graduate students may appeal dismissal decisions to the MCNHS Standards & Credit Committee (SCC). Students should contact the Office of Student Support to submit an appeal to the Standards and Credits Committee. The Standards and Credits Committee will review the appeal and recommend conditions of Probation or Dismissal and forward these to the Department Chair and Program Director. The Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education makes a final determination as to whether to rescind the dismissal. In addition, the Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education may add further stipulations to the reinstatement. All students for whom the dismissal is rescinded automatically remain on academic probation. Failure to meet any terms identified within the probationary letter will result in automatic dismissal without recourse to appeal.

2.19 Readmission of Students Who Voluntarily Withdraw
In general, graduate students who withdraw from the program of study in good standing may resume their studies by completing a readmission form obtained from the Registrar's Office.

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

2.21 Code of Student Conduct
All students are encouraged to review the Code of Student Conduct located at the following link: https://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/dean_of_students/student_conduct

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

• Uncivil language with faculty or peers or in discussion postings
• Non-responsiveness to emails from faculty/staff (i.e., staff have sent 2 emails with no response)
• Unprofessional language with preceptors or staff
• Failure to notify a clinical site of illness
• Failure to adhere to policies at a clinical site
• Tardiness at clinical practica

2.23 Human Subjects
Any study that involves human subjects must comply with relevant University and Federal requirements as contained in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Part 46 (45 CFR 46). The campus Institutional Review Board (IRB) must approve all research involving human subjects. Only after the dissertation proposal has been accepted by the committee may the student submit the required documents to the IRB. Data collection, subject recruitment, or consenting of potential subjects cannot start until IRB approval has been obtained. Forms and information about Human Subject review can be obtained from the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) website, along with forms and timelines.

UMass Boston has contracted with the University of Miami to provide free online training through the Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) for members of the UMass Boston community on issues related to the protection of human subjects in research.

To register for the CITI training, follow the instructions.
Step 1.) Log on to http://www.citiprogram.org and click on the link "Register."
Step 2.) Select a username and password.

Step 3.) Follow the registration prompts until the main menu is reached.
Step 4.) Select the main menu and choose one of two basic courses on protection of human subjects, the Biomedical track, or the Social Behavioral track to begin the training.

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. Directly address the concern with the faculty member or staff member concerned.

2. If there is no resolution, let the faculty or staff member know your concern is unresolved and contact the Graduate Program Director.

3. If there is no resolution, let the Program Director know your concern is unresolved and contact the Executive Director or the Office of Student Success, Support and Engagement (OSSE)

4. If there is no resolution, let the Executive Director or the Office of Student Success, Support and Engagement know your concern is unresolved and contact the Nursing Department Chairperson. *For grade appeals, the Nursing Department Chairperson's decision is final.

5. If there is no resolution, let the Nursing Department Chairperson know your concern is unresolved and contact the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

6. If there is no resolution, let the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs know your concern is unresolved and contact the Dean.

2.25 Appeals of Grades
Students who dispute a grade received for a paper, examination, or course must first meet with the involved faculty within two weeks of receiving the grade. Discussion should focus on understanding the evidence for the grade. If a mutually accepted understanding is not reached,

either party may ask to meet with the Program Director. The Program Director will make an effort to help parties involved reach a mutually accepted understanding. If a satisfactory resolution is still not reached, students may appeal to the Nursing Department Chairperson, whose decision will be final.

2.26 University Policy on Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy
The University of Massachusetts complies with applicable state and federal laws on non-discrimination, harassment, and retaliation including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, and the Massachusetts anti-discrimination law. This policy states the University's commitment to assure compliance. Access the full policy here. The Administrative Standards for the Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy can be found here. Office for Civil Right and Title IX handles concerns related to discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment.

2.27 Rights as a Student and FERPA Guidelines
Graduate students at UMass Boston are covered by the Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): https://www.umb.edu/registrar/policies/ferpa/

2.28 Filing for Graduation
All graduate students are eligible to apply for graduation during their final semester of degree work. For further information, go to https://www.umb.edu/registrar/graduation/applying

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

2.29 University Support for Specific Concerns
Ombuds Services is a confidential resource for any member of the UMass Boston community experiencing a university-related problem, conflict, or concern. The Ombuds can help you think through complex issues, understand your options, consider the next steps and provide practical assistance toward a resolution, as appropriate.

Section 3: MCNHS Student Advising & Services

3.1 MCNHS Office of Student Success & Engagement (OSSE)
The mission of the Office of Student Success and Engagement (OSSE) is to strengthen the educational experience of UMass Boston's diverse student population through comprehensive resources and support.

3.2 Academic Advising and Registration
The Program Director or track coordinator (for the Master's Program) serves as an academic advisor to all students. An academic plan of study is developed and students are expected to follow this plan of study. If changes are needed, the student should meet with the Program Director to revise their academic plan. Students should access their WISER account to register for classes. Information on dates related to drop, add, withdrawal, and UMB holidays/breaks can be found posted online. Refer to the University Academic Calendar.

3.3 Clinical and Internship Placement Office
The (CIPO) is led by a Coordinator and supported by Clinical Placement Specialists. The CIPO oversees relationships with clinical agencies as well as the clinical clearance and placement of students within their clinical agency sites for clinical courses, preceptorships, and internships. To

maintain partner compliance per our affiliation agreements, the CIPO staff regularly communicates with various outside constituents, such as healthcare partners and their legal counsel, the Office of General Counsel, the Board of Health, the Center for Disease Control, the Massachusetts Centralized Clinical Placement System, and others.

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

3.5 Requirements for Writing Papers & Writing House Office (WHO)
The MCNHS has uniformly adopted the American Psychology Association (APA) style for all academic papers. WHO is MCNHS's dedicated academic writing support center, serving all MCNHS students. Students can schedule a live tutoring session (on-campus or online) or request asynchronous written feedback on your paper via WHO's scheduling system:
https://umb.mywconline.net/

Section 4: University Services

4.1 Financial Aid
UMB graduate students may apply for assistantships, grants, loans, and federal work-study jobs. Pleasesee our web site for the most up to date information, including how to apply:
https://www.umb.edu/financial-aid/graduate-student-financial-aid/

4.2 Funding Opportunities
There are a wide variety of scholarships, grants, and funding opportunities available to our Doctoral students. These opportunities include:
1.   Eligibility for university research and teaching assistantships that may include tuition remission and health insurance benefits
2.   Scholarships funded by the federal government
3.   Loans
4.   Professional traineeship grants
5.   Competitive scholarships
6.   Grant funding from Sigma Theta Tau, the International, the Honor Society of Nursing*
7.   Other professional societies and clinical agencies

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

4.3 Graduate Assistantships
The University offers a limited number of graduate assistantships in teaching or research to qualified students. Applicants for admission to the graduate programs and currently enrolled students should consider applying. Graduate Assistantships are in the form of research and teaching assistantships (RA/TA). The assignments may require a commitment of 9.00 (0.50 FTE) to 18 (1.0 FTE) hours per week, depending on the percentage of assistantship held, for the entire semester. A student may not hold more than the equivalent of one full-time graduate assistantship appointment at any time. These graduate assistantships require weekly service in the areas of teaching, research, or administrative support. In return, the University pays a stipend and provides a tuition waiver and a waiver of a certain percentage of the fees. Students are also eligible for a

contribution towards the cost of university-provided student health insurance (SHP), dental (HMO) and vision care (HMO), as provided in the current collective bargaining agreement. Students may obtain more information about assistantships by contacting the Graduate Program Director.

Graduate Assistantships Definition, Eligibility & Time Commitment

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

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

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

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

4.5 Library
The library provides details on interlibrary loans, access to databases, e-books and e-resources. Single Sign-On (SSO) provides access to all library services. Students sign in using their UMass Boston ID and password. provides an easy-to-use, one-stop search and discovery tool

for books, e-books, videos, articles, digital media, and helps the student manage their research. Students sign in using their UMass Boston ID and password.

4.6 Graduate Writing Center
The Graduate Writing Center offers various services tailored to meet the needs of graduate writers. Our individual writing consultations provide writers with the opportunity to work with a trained writing consultant on any writing at any stage of the writing process.

4.7 WISER
WISER is the student information system used by UMass Boston students to manage registration, grades and student records. Directions and videos are available on the WISER help page.

4.8 University Health Services
University Health Services (UHS) provides medical and mental health services. Click on this link to learn more: https://www.umb.edu/healthservices
- Medical Support | Call 617.287.5660
- Counseling Support | Call 617.287.5690

Section 5: Overview of the Master's in Nursing: Family Nurse Practitioner, Adult Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner & Post Masters Certificate for Family Nurse Practitioner

The Master of Science (MS) Adult/Gerontological Primary Care, Family Nurse Practitioner and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner curricula have been designed to accommodate part-time study. A total of 45-48 credits are required for MS programs. The MS program of study is located here: https://www.umb.edu/academics/program-finder/nursing-ms/

Graduate Nursing Program Director
Elizabeth Russet, DNP, FNP-BC, PMHNP-BC
Elizabeth.Russet@umb.edu

Adult/Gerontology Nurse Practitioner Track Coordinator
Jessica Bardina DNP, AGNP-C
Jessica.Bardina@umb.edu

Family Nurse Practitioner Track Coordinator
Elizabeth Russet, DNP, FNP-BC, PMHNP-BC
Elizabeth.Russet@umb.edu

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Track Coordinator
Mercy Bashir, DNP, AGPCNP, PMHNP
Mercy.Bashir@umb.edu

Graduate Clinical Placement Specialist
Eva Benoit-Allien, M.Ed.
Eva.benoitallien@umb.edu

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

*For questions about the Master's Program email nursing@umb.edu.
This is your **first point of contact** and will help guide you and answer questions.

As an accredited program of the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), the UMB Master's Program aligns with the American Association of College of Nursing (AACN) 2021 -The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education. The scope of knowledge addressed in the core and specialty courses in the Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (AGNP), Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) programs reflect the Domains, Competencies, and Sub-Competencies included therein.

5.1 MS Program Outcomes

1. Demonstrate competence in advanced nursing practice and the management of health and illness for individuals, families, and aggregate populations using critical thinking and evidence-based clinical decision making.
2. Apply theories and research-based evidence from nursing and other disciplines to advance clinical decision making as the foundation for the highest level of advanced practice.
3. Promote and deliver person-centered care that is holistic, just, respectful and facilitates positive healthcare outcomes for all.
4. Collaborate across healthcare settings and in the community to assess population needs, for the improvement of equitable population health outcomes.
5. Enhance nursing scholarship by researching healthcare issues, evaluating relevant literature, and integrating findings into practice to deliver optimal care across diverse populations.
6. Apply quality improvement principles to support a culture of safety for patients, providers, and the workplace.
7. Plan comprehensive, continuous care through interdisciplinary collaboration across health care settings with an emphasis on diverse and urban populations.
8. Optimize system effectiveness by engaging in care coordination and technologies to deliver safe, high-quality, equitable nursing care in accordance with professional and regulatory standards.
9. Demonstrate a professional identity of accountability, advocacy, and ethical decision making that is collaborative and is reflective of nursing's values and characteristics.
10. Engage in self-reflection to promote professional growth, self-care, well-being, and resilience, while supporting the development of nursing expertise and the cultivation of leadership skills.

5.2 Clinical Practicum Information and Guidelines

The clinical practicum enables graduate students to integrate theory and research into advanced nursing practice. Completion of a specified number of clinical hours is required for each clinical course and is necessary for eligibility to sit for specialty certification exams

Attendance
Students are required to attend clinical weekly throughout the semester and to adhere to the scheduled clinical days and times established with their preceptors. Any changes to contracted

hours or preceptor assignments must be entered by the student in the UMB database and approved by the Graduate Clinical Faculty Advisor. Starting clinical early is discouraged but may be approved by the Clinical Instructor for up to one week prior to the start of the semester, if necessary.

Students who complete required clinical hours before the end of the semester must continue clinical participation for a minimum of four hours per week through the final week of classes, unless otherwise approved by the Clinical Instructor, Course Instructor, and Track Coordinator.

Evaluation
At midterm (weeks 6–7), students must demonstrate satisfactory progress by earning a passing midterm clinical evaluation and completing approximately 50% of the required clinical hours. Students with insufficient hours will receive an academic warning and must contact course faculty within 48 hours to develop a remediation plan.
If clinical hour requirements are not completed by the end of the semester, an Incomplete (INC) will be assigned until all requirements are met. Continued preceptorship beyond the agreed contractual period is not guaranteed and may require renegotiation among the student, clinical site, and faculty.

Grading
Clinical success and failure are determined by the preceptor and documented through the Clinical Evaluation Tool. Failure of the clinical practicum results in a grade of F for the entire course. In some cases, additional clinical hours beyond the minimum required may be assigned to achieve competency across all required domains. Students whose performance or professional behavior falls below safe practice standards may be removed from clinical. Such students will be referred to the course faculty and Track Coordinator for review, remediation planning, and determination of sanctions. Dismissed students may not return to or contact the clinical site.

FMLA/MLOA
Students on medical leave (FMLA or MLOA) who plan to participate in clinical must notify both the clinical and the course faculty as well as the Track Coordinator. Faculty reserves the right to determine clinical participation if a student's health condition may impact safe practice

5.3 Setting up The Clinical Practicum

The Master of Science program at UMass Boston requires completion of **600 total clinical hours** for graduation for the FNP. All clinical practica must be approved by the Graduate Clinical Faculty Advisor. Preceptors include NPs, CNMs, CNSs, PAs, MDs, and DOs. For each clinical course, a minimum of 50% of required clinical hours must be completed in a primary care setting. Up to 50% of clinical hours may be completed in an outpatient specialty setting, provided the placement is approved in advance by Graduate Clinical Faculty Advisor. While many outpatient specialty settings are appropriate, some are too limited in scope to meet course objectives and therefore may not be approved.

Students must submit all required clinical documentation **prior to the start of each rotation**. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all clearance materials are **completed accurately, fully, and on time**. Failure to meet documentation deadlines will result in the student being prohibited from entering clinical and may require withdrawal from the course. Clinical agencies may impose additional documentation or orientation requirements. Failure to comply with

agency requirements will result in forfeiture of the clinical site, and the student must secure a new placement.

5.4 Steps for Securing Clinical Placements

Students must attend a **mandatory clinical orientation**.

Each quarter the Clinical Internship and Placement Office (CIPO) will announce when the INPLACE application will open and close for the designated semester. INPLACE is the UMass Boston clinical placement management system.

Once a site agrees to precept a student, the student enters all required site information into INPLACE. CIPO, in collaboration with the Graduate Clinical Faculty Advisor, will determine site acceptability within **72 business hours**. If a working agreement does not exist, CIPO will initiate one with the site.

Due to the high volume of medical and health professions students in the Boston area, many large Massachusetts health systems participate in the Centralized Clinical Placement (CCP) process to ensure equitable access to preceptors. Students should not contact CCP-managed organizations directly. Students interested in these sites must work with the Clinical Internship and Placement Office (CIPO), which will submit CCP applications on the student's behalf. Submission through CCP does not guarantee placement; students are expected to continue identifying and pursuing additional clinical sites. Current sites that only allow students to request a preceptor through the CCP are:

- Massachusetts General Hospital

- Atrius Health

- Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

- Boston Children's Hospital

- Tufts Medical Center

- Cambridge Health Alliance

- VA Healthcare System

In addition to placement approval, students are required to complete all clinical clearance requirements through the COMPLIO system by the designated deadlines. COMPLIO clearance is mandatory prior to the start of each clinical rotation and includes required health, immunization, and compliance documentation. Failure to complete COMPLIO requirements accurately and on time will result in the student being prohibited from entering clinical and may require withdrawal from the course. Students are responsible for ensuring their COMPLIO account remains current throughout the semester.

Students may not begin clinical until **both student and preceptor receive clearance from CIPO**. Starting clinical early without clearance will result in an academic warning. Site onboarding and orientation may occur prior to the first clinical day.

UMB provides **malpractice insurance at no cost** to students during clinical placements. Students without an approved placement by the **add/drop date** will be required to drop the clinical course.

5.5 Change of Track/Concentration
Matriculated MS students wishing to change concentrations (e.g., from FNP to AGNP, AGNP

to FNP, or into the PMHNP track) must first contact their current faculty advisor, participate in the required interview process, and secure a clinical placement that aligns with the desired concentration prior to approval. Once these steps are completed, the student will be prompted to submit the Change of Program petition form found here change of program form. Students may only request a track change during NU 615; requests submitted after or before NU 615 will not be considered. Permission to change tracks will be granted on a space-available basis for students in good academic standing with a minimum GPA of 3.0. Students will receive an approval or non-approval decision by the end of the semester. If a change is approved, the student is expected to meet with their new advisor as soon as possible. Graduate students cannot register for courses until a new program plan has been filed. The Manning College reserves the right to deny any request for a change in program of study.

5.7 Family Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Post Masters Certificate Program

5.8 Clinical Practicum for the Post Masters Certificate Program
All students in the 21-credit program must complete a total of 600 hours of documented direct clinical care hours. Students in the 12-credit option must complete 300 hours of direct clinical care hours in the chosen concentration.

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

All clinical practicums are subject to the approval of the clinical faculty. Preceptors may be NPs, CNSs, PAs, MDs, or DOs. **Since this program is primary care, clinical practice must be done in the primary care setting**. A limited number of hours may be completed in other settings (urgent care, ER, specialty clinic), but the number of hours are determined on a case-by-case basis by clinical support faculty (NU 682, NU 670, NU 672).
*Refer to the pages above for information on clinical placements.

Section 6: Overview of The University of Massachusetts Boston (UMass Boston) Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Programs

The UMass Boston DNP program is an accredited program of the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The UMass Boston (UMB) DNP Program uses the American Association of College of Nursing (AACN) 2021 Domains, Competencies, and Sub-Competencies for Advanced-level Nursing Education as the foundation for the curriculum to prepare nursing students for advanced professional nursing practice.

6.1 UMass Boston: DNP Programs of Study (BS-DNP & Master's to DNP)
The two terminal Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degrees (BS-DNP & MS-DNP) are designed to prepare nurses for advanced practice roles and leadership positions in diverse health care settings. Both programs emphasize the application of evidence-based practice to enhance patient outcomes and strengthen healthcare systems.

6.2 BS-DNP Program:

The BS-to-DNP program is structured so that students become eligible to earn the MSN Nurse Practitioner (NP) credential at the midpoint of the program upon completion of required credits. A total of 73 credits and 1,065 clinical hours are required to complete this BS-DNP program. The program of study culminates in the Scholarly Project experience. Students are guided by faculty throughout the program in completing a Scholarly Project that demonstrates the student's ability to analyze and guide a change in health care delivery. The BS-DNP program of study can be found at [Doctor of Nursing Practice - DNP - UMass Boston (umb.edu).](#)

6.3 Master's to DNP Program:

The MS-DNP program builds on the professional and clinical expertise of advanced practice nurses, preparing them to lead and transform healthcare systems while driving improvements in patient outcomes as they achieve their terminal Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. A total of 31 credits and 400 practicum hours are required for this program. Students are guided by faculty throughout the program in completing a Scholarly Project that demonstrates the student's ability to analyze and guide a change in health care delivery. The MS-DNP program of study can be found at [Doctor of Nursing Practice - DNP - UMass Boston (umb.edu).](#)

6.4 DNP Program Contact Information

Program Assistant: The program assistant serves as a general resource for the DNP program students. The program assistant can provide help with answering questions **and** direct DNP students to appropriate support as needed.
Email: nursing@umb.edu
DNP Program Director: MaryAnn Martin DNP, FNP B.C, PMHNP B.C, MBA
Email: maryann.martin@umb.edu

6.5 DNP Program Outcomes:

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

10 Domains of the Essentials of Advanced Level Nursing Education (AACN, 2021).	**Advanced Level DNP Program Outcomes**
Domain 1: **Knowledge for** **Nursing Practice**	Critically appraise, synthesize, and translate knowledge from nursing and other disciplines to inform and guide the practice of nursing in developing, implementing, evaluating, and disseminating evidence-based practices with advanced clinical judgment and decision making focused on improving healthcare outcomes across populations.
Domain 2: **Person-Centered** **Care**	Integrate and apply principles of evidence-based, person-centered care at an advanced level to promote accessible, safe, high-quality delivery of healthcare.
Domain 3: **Population Health**	Apply population health principles to analyze and interpret all levels of evidence to address priority health problems at the local, state, national, and global levels

		and identify trends related to healthcare equity for vulnerable populations.
Domain 4: Scholarship for Nursing Practice		Use analytic methods to critically appraise empirical, qualitative, and non-research evidence to create positive change and transform healthcare.
Domain 5: Quality, Safety, and Domain 6: Interprofessional Partnerships and Systems Based Practice		Collaborate with nursing colleagues, interprofessional teams, and other relevant stakeholders to design, lead, and implement changes at a systems level that will achieve quality of care that is safe, accessible, and equitable for all.
Domain 7 & 8: Informatics and Healthcare Technologies		Integrate information and healthcare technology to make data driven decisions to optimize healthcare delivery and empower patients, families, and caregivers to lead healthy lives, while upholding standards for privacy, security, and ethical use of health information.
Domain 9: Professionalism		Embody a professional nursing identity that reflects nursing values, legal and ethical principles that are essential to the advanced nursing practice role.
Domain 10: Personal, Professional and Leadership Development		Engage in practices that foster professional growth, resilience, well-being, self-awareness, leadership, and lifelong learning to support nursing in the advanced practice role.

DNP Program Course Electives
The purpose of electives in the DNP Program is to enhance the student's competence in meeting the 10 Domains of the Essentials of Advanced Level Nursing Education. Electives can be accepted from a certificate program, but they cannot be transferred as an elective if the course is used to meet credits for a degree requirement. Elective courses that students wish to transfer into the DNP program must be reviewed and evaluated for approval by the Program Director. The list of electives offered at UMass Boston can be found at Doctor of Nursing Practice - DNP - UMass Boston (umb.edu)

Academic Advising
The DNP Program Director serves as each student's academic advisor. Academic advising sessions with the Program Director are required to be held bi-annually during the fall & spring semesters.
 A total of 1,000 clinical/practice hours is required at completion of the DNP program. Students will be given information in the program on practice hours and obtainment when they enter the scholarly project courses (714, 716, 717, 718, & 719).

BS to DNP Students accumulate 600 clinical practice hours as part of the clinical training component of the MS program. Guidance around the practice requirements for the clinical training component of the program is outlined in an earlier section of the Graduate Student Handbook.

<u>Master's to DNP students</u> apply up to 600 hours from their MSN program, which results in national certification (e.g. APN). For students who did not complete a practice-focused master's program, the DNP Program Director will review the student's master's curriculum to assess the number of post-masters practice hours needed to meet the required 1,000 practice hours required for DNP program completion.

Course	DNP Post-Master's Practicum Hours
NU 717	200
NU 718	100
NU 719	100
	Total= 400 hours

Guidance for Post-Master's Practice Hours

Practice Hours Per the 10 Domains of the Essentials of Advanced-Level Nursing Education
Students are required to attain practice hours in all 10 Domains of the AACN Essentials of Advanced-Level Nursing to ensure the required DNP Program outcomes are attained.

Practice Hours Documentation
Students maintain documentation (logs) of their DNP Practice Hours for each course. The DNP Post-Master's Practice Hours Log (Excel spreadsheet) documents the student's DNP direct care hours spent on the scholarly project and cross-maps these experiences with the DNP Domains and student goals.

Note: For BS to DNP students
Documentation of their clinical practice hours will follow the format required in the MS clinical courses and will be reviewed by faculty in those courses. The above sections apply only to the Post-Master's practicum hours completed as part of the DNP Program. Upon entering into the DNP portion of the program, all clinical hours will be reviewed by the Program Director of the DNP program.

Fulfillment of the DNP Program Requirements for Graduation
To fulfill the DNP program requirements for graduation, the student must:
1. Successfully complete all coursework and DNP practicum hours
2. Complete the DNP portfolio
3. Complete the DNP Scholarly Project (oral defense, written paper, & dissemination)

Portfolio of DNP Experiences
Throughout the DNP program, students will compile evidence of the acquisition of the 10 Domains of the Essentials of Advanced-Level Nursing Education of the DNP Program under the guidance of the DNP Seminar faculty. A program-specific google web-based template of the portfolio is to be utilized by each DNP student at program start and is used throughout the DNP program.

DNP Scholarly Project

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

DNP Scholarly Project Timeline and Process

What it Means	What is Required	Signatures and Dates
Project Development Phase		
Under the guidance of course faculty, project ideas are explored in NU 714, and the project is developed and designed in NU 716.	Successful completion of NU 714 and NU 716 (Course grade in WISER)	Due dates per the NU 714 and NU 716 Course Syllabi
Project Proposal Phase		
With the advice and guidance of the 716-course faculty member, a DNP Scholarly Project Committee is formed. The committee is comprised of the Faculty Advisor/mentor, the Practice Site Mentor, and the Committee Mentor.	Students identify a Practice Site Mentor; course faculty serves as the Faculty Mentor and suggests the Committee Mentor.

Student's complete DNP Tracking Form Part 1 and relevant information and upload to the DNP Program OneDrive.

The DNP Program Administrator sends the document out for signatures and submits the signed form to OGS. | Committee members, DNP Program Director, Office of Graduate Studies (OGS).

Due dates per the NU 716 Course Syllabus |
| Under the guidance of the NU 717 course faculty, the project design and evaluation strategy are finalized. | Students submit their Proposal paper to the course faculty for final approval and a grade. | Due date per the NU 717 Course Syllabus |
| When the NU 717-course faculty member feels the student is ready, students present their project to their committee (DNP Scholarly Project Proposal Hearing) for their input.

Students query the committee for | Once the date is set, the student distributes a copy of the proposal paper to their committee 10 days in advance of the Proposal Hearing.

At the end of the student's Proposal Hearing The committee meets in | The proposal hearing is completed by mid-semester (NU 717).

Students are informed of |

a mutually agreeable date and time for the Proposal Hearing. Proposal Hearings are done individually via zoom and last 60 minutes.	executive session and determines if the student is approved, approved with major or minor revisions or not approved. They inform the student of changes that need to be made (if any) and provide a timeline for changes.	the committee's decision and any changes to be made within one week of the Proposal Hearing.
If the Proposal Hearing is successful, students proceed to project implementation.	Students' complete DNP Tracking Form Part 2 and upload to the DNP Program OneDrive. The DNP Program Administrator sends the document out for signatures and submits the signed form to OGS.	Committee Members, DNP Program Director, OGS. Complete before the end of NU 717
At the conclusion of the Proposal Hearings, the NU 716-course faculty submits a compendium of projects to the UMass Boston IRB. DNP projects are quality improvement projects and do not need IRB approval as human subject research.	Students submit a copy of their approved Project Proposal Abstract, Determination of Clinical Quality Improvement Checklist and CITI certificate to the course faculty in accordance with the workflow described in the syllabus. The NU 717-course faculty member compiles individual students' documents into one group document and files with the UMass Boston IRB.	Complete before the end of NU 717
Project Defense Phase		
At the conclusion of the project, students present their project outcomes to their committee, peers, and the practice and academic community (DNP Scholarly Project Oral Defense).	NU 718 course faculty works with the DNP Program Director and Administrator in the Fall to set the date for the cohort graduating the following spring, and to reserve the room and create the zoom link. Students inform their committee of the date so they can plan and "save the date".	For May graduates, the date is set for 1 month in advance of the NU 719-semester end. For August and December graduates,
The cohort of students graduating in May defend their DNP Scholarly Project Oral Defenses on the same day.	Students, the course faculty and the DNP Program Administrator collaborate to develop and distribute a Program that announces	individual dates are set

Students attend and present in person; committee members can attend via remote webinar if needed. Students graduating in August or December defend their DNP Scholarly Project individually via remote webinar.	the defenses. Project Defenses are public. The program announcement is distributed to the academic and practice community at least one month in advance.	as needed.
The final project paper and defense presentation are prepared under the direction of the 719-course faculty member.	Students share a copy of the final project paper and presentation PowerPoint with committee members at least 10 days in advance of their oral defense. At the end of the students' Project Oral Defense the committee meets in an executive session and determines if the student meets the criteria for a DNP project presentation (A) or does not meet the criteria for a DNP project presentation (N). They inform the student of changes that need to be made (if any) and provide a timeline for changes.	Due date per the NU 719 course syllabus.
If the defense is successful (approved or approved with revisions), students prepare final edits to their project paper based on committee feedback. Students submit to the course faculty for final approval. If the defense is not successful, the student meets with the NU 719-course faculty member to develop a plan to complete.	The final DNP Scholarly Project Paper (addressing requested edits) is approved as to style and content to the satisfaction of the NU 719 Course Faculty and the student receives a grade for the final paper.	
	Students complete DNP Tracking Form Part 3 and relevant information and upload to the DNP Program OneDrive. The DNP Program Administrator sends the document out for	Committee members, DNP Program Administrator, OGS Tracking

	signatures and submits the signed form to OGS.	Form 3 signed by the end of NU 719.
	Student must have a passing grade for NU 719 to meet the requirements for graduation.	Grade for NU 719 in WISERby the semester grade deadline
Project Dissemination Phase		
Once the 719-course faculty member deems the paper to be of publishable quality, the paper is submitted to the UMass Boston ScholarWorks repository. Students complete this step by the end of the NU 719 semester. In rare situations, a student may need additional time to finalize the required formatting. In this case, the NU 719-course faculty member works with the student to finalize the paper. All students must meet the OGS deadline to meet the requirements for graduation.	Students upload to ScholarWorks using the established DNP ScholarWorks workflow.	End of NU 719 semester. OGS deadline 1 August for May degree date 1 November for August degree date 1 March for December degree date

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

Acknowledgements: Contributors who do not qualify as authors should be mentioned under Acknowledgements. Under acknowledgements, students can specify contributors to the article other than the authors accredited. It is helpful to include specifications of the source of funding for the study and any potential conflict of interest if appropriate. Suppliers of materials should be named, and their location (town, state/county, country) included.

DNP Candidacy and Degree Credentials
DNP Candidacy and degree credentials (e.g., AD, BS, BSN, MS, MSN, PhD, EdD, DNP, DNSc) are commonly used and indicate completion of a particular educational program. The highest degree attained is usually placed immediately after the last name, followed by certifications, licenses, and fellowships. All or some degrees can be used. Terms used to indicate partial completion of a degree or student status, such as "DNP(c) (DNP candidate) or "ABD" (all but dissertation), are fabricated terms and are not to be used. Students completing their proposal hearing in NU 717 can then use DNP(c) after their name.

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

Section 7: Overview of The University of Massachusetts Boston PhD Program

PhD in Nursing Program Goals
The PhD Nursing Program focus is Health Policy within the context of Population Health. Our PhD graduates obtain conceptual, theoretical, and research methods skills to study health policies for populations to attain the highest possible population quality of life by means of health policy-focused nursing activities directed to promote or restore and maintain wellness across the life course and to prevent illness and disease (Fawcett & Ellenbecker, 2015).

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

1. Analyze historical, sociological, economic, political, and healthcare perspectives and health policies within the context of population health issues.

2. Evaluate health policies that influence the access, quality, and cost of healthcare delivery and nursing practice of diverse populations to advance social justice locally and globally.

3. Generate rigorous, innovative, and high-quality theory-guided qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods research that advances nursing science research that advances nursing knowledge of health policies for populations addressing inclusion, equity, equality, and anti-racism.

4. Create innovative, evidence-based strategies to shape population-focused health policy development at local, national, and global levels based on contemporary nursing and interdisciplinary research.

5. Relate new inquiries, activities, and **values** to role development as a nurse scientist, steward of the discipline, and educator for the next generation.

PhD Contacts

The Program Assistant for the PhD nursing program will assist students with any questions and direct students. Email: nursing@umb.edu

PhD Program Director. Lingling Zhang Lingling.Zhang@umb.edu

PhD in Nursing Curriculum

Our PhD Nursing Program offers two tracks—BS-PhD and MS-PhD.
All students are encouraged to meet with their academic advisor each semester to review completed course work and plan for future course work prior to registration time at the university (usually October/November/ and March/April each academic year). The Program Director and Program Assistant are always available to help with any questions related to courses and requirements (https://www.umb.edu/registrar/academic_calendar)

PhD Nursing Program Plans of Study
Please note that the plans of study are subject to revision.

BS-PhD Track **program of study**
- **Electives must be research methods courses that provide the methods knowledge and skills to support the dissertation research**
- Each degree-seeking graduate student is required to maintain continuous registration until the degree that the student is seeking has been formally awarded. See student handbook.
- Once students have defended successfully, the chair of the dissertation committee is required to submit a letter grade using the Change of Grade Form for all dissertation credits (NU899).

**Either NU/EHS 823 or NU 780 can be taken as the required quantitative methods course (as indicated in

the plan of study OR one of the courses can be taken as the required course and the other course can be taken

as a methods elective.

MS to PhD-Full Time **program of study**

MS to PhD Part Time **program of study**

- **Electives must be research methods courses that provide the methods knowledge and skills to support the dissertation research**
- Each degree-seeking graduate student is required to maintain continuous registration until the degree that the student is seeking has been formally awarded. See student handbook.
- Once students have defended successfully, the chair of the dissertation committee is required to submit a letter grade using the Change of Grade form for all dissertation credits.

Collaboration Across the UMass System

The PhD Nursing Program at UMass Boston collaborates with the PhD Nursing programs at the other four UMass campuses and the UMass Boston Donna M. and Robert J. Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences Exercise and Health Sciences, Urban Public Health, and Gerontology PhD Programs. Because of the collaborative nature of the UMass PhD Nursing Programs, some of the required courses are taught on one campus or the other. Students may be required to travel from one campus to the other if hybrid options are not available. Students also may enroll in courses at any of the UMass campuses for methods elective credits.

Collaboration with faculty and students at UMass PhD programs who have similar research

interests or expertise is encouraged. This collaboration enriches and expands the program within the UMass system. When registering for courses at other UMass campuses, students need to fill out an Intercampus Registration Form. It is delivered to the Registrar's office for processing. The completed form should be submitted to our Program Assistant of the PhD Program for processing with the registrar.

Dual Degree Programs

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

The En Route Master's (MS) Degree is available to interested PhD Nursing students who are in the BS-PhD track. An En Route MS degree can be awarded after completion of 30 credits in the PhD program and successful performance on the comprehensive examination. Students need to submit a degree application to the Office of the Registrar to formally request the MS degree to be awarded upon fulfilling the requirements. Students receiving the generic En Route MS degree will not be eligible for certification in an APN specialty without further didactic and clinical courses.

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

The Plan of Study is given here:

Student Name and ID:				Advisor:		
Advising Form: Nursing PhD Program			**Student Workload:**			
BS-to-PhD (En Route Master's) **Application for this degree occurs only after completion of the Comprehensive Examination**						
Semester	**No.**	**Course Title**	**Credits**		**Semester Completed**	**Notes**
Fall Year 1	NU702	Doctoral Seminar	3			
	NU700	Philosophy of Nursing Science: Ways of Knowing	3			
	NU760	Biostatistics I	3			
	NU750	Contemporary Disciplinary Knowledge	3			
Spring Year 1	NU770	Biostatistics II	3			
	NU745	Population Health I	3			
	NU780	Epidemiologic Methods	3			
Summer Year 1	NU614	Advanced Pathophysiology *(online)*	3			
	NU634	Advanced Pharmacology for the Advanced Practice Nurse *(online)*	3			
		(both can be taken concurrently)				
Fall Year 2	NU615	Advanced Health Assessment Practicum *(in class)*	3			
		(followed by the rest of courses on plan of student BS-PhD)				
		*If students want to complete clinical work to become advanced practice nurses, they can do so at the **END** of their PhD curriculum after completion of the dissertation				

	Total Credits	30		

**Each degree-seeking graduate student is required to maintain continuous registration until the degree that the student is seeking has been formally awarded.

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

Academic Advising and Course Registration
The Program Director serves as a general advisor to all students. When entering the PhD program, students are assigned to an individual academic adviser. The academic advisor will guide in choosing courses and staying on target with the curriculum plan until comprehensive examinations are passed.

Individual Development Plan (IDP) (in process)
An Individual Development Plan (IDP) that will be developed each semester and academic year is prepared by the student and the academic advisor and placed on file in the PhD Program. Each semester, the IDP will be reviewed with the student, and revisions will be placed on file. Students taking courses need to meet with their academic advisor in the spring to plan for fall and in the fall to plan for spring during the designated time by the university calendar periods.

Registration holds will be placed on each student and released after advisement is received. Students should access their WISER account to register for classes.

Comprehensive Pathway:
There are two options for the Comprehensive Exam. Regardless of the option, students must complete two papers. One paper must focus on a conceptual issue (health policy analysis, concept analysis, or review and synthesis of literature) and one paper must focus on a methodological issue (critique of instruments to measure a concept; diverse research methods used to measure a concept).

o   Traditional 2 Paper Option
o   1 Paper + 1 Scholarship Option
     o   1 paper written specially for the comprehensive examination
     o   1 published or in-press first author manuscript

PROGRAM MILESTONE	REQUIRED DOCUMENTS COMPLETED/DATE FILED	DATE COMPLETED
Comprehensive Oral Exam	Stage 1- Topic and Committee	
	Stage 2- Oral Examination Assessment	
Dissertation Proposal Hearing	Stage 1- Notification of Candidacy	

	Stage 2- Notification of Proposed Dissertation Committee	
	Stage 3- Notification of Proposal Acceptance	
Dissertation Defense	Stage 4- Notification of Intent to Defend Dissertation	
	Stage 5- Approval of Dissertation Defense	

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES SELF-ASSESSMENT	
STRENGTHS	DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS
Year 1:	
Year 2:	
Year 3:	
Year 4:	
Years 5:	

GOALS
SHORT-TERM NEEDS FOR IMPROVING CURRENT PERFORMANCE

What are your short-term goals? (next 12 months)

Please complete each year to reflect upon what you hope to accomplish.

Year 1:

Year 2:

Year 3:

Year 4:

Year 5:

What additional competencies do	How are you going to acquire these	When will you acquire	Completion Date (est)	Completion Date (act)

you need?	competencies?	them?		

LONG-TERM CAREER GOALS				
What are your career goals?				
What additional competencies do you need?	How are you going to acquire these competencies?	When will you acquire them?	Completion Date (est)	Completion Date (act)

STUDENT SUMMARY OF GOAL ATTAINMENT *This section is meant to provide an overview of the students' specific accomplishments, such as research activities, publications, presentations, and conference attendance.*	
Year 1	
PLAN	
Year 2	
PLAN	
Year 3	
PLAN	
Year 4	

PLAN	

ADVISOR COMMENTS	
Year 1	
Progress: Satisfactory __	**Needs Consultation Review Required**
Faculty Advisor Signature _____ **Date:**	
Year 2	
Progress: Satisfactory __	**Needs Consultation Review Required**
Faculty Advisor Signature _____ **Date:**	
Year 3	
Progress: Satisfactory __	**Needs Consultation__ Review Required**
Faculty Advisor Signature _____ **Date:**	
Year 4	
Progress: Satisfactory __	**Needs Consultation_____**	**Review Required**
Faculty Advisor Signature _____ **Date:**	

PHD END-OF-PROGRAM OBJECTIVES *This section should be completed by the faculty advisor.*	
EOP objectives	Please evaluate student's overall progress towards each of these objectives.
1.Analyze historical, sociological, economic, political, and healthcare perspectives of and health policies within the context of population health issues.	
2.Evaluate health policies that influence the access, quality, and cost of healthcare delivery and nursing practice of diverse populations to advance social justice locally and globally.	
3.Generate rigorous, innovative, and high-quality theory-guided qualitative,	

quantitative, or mixed methods research that advances nursing science research that advances nursing knowledge of health policies for populations addressing inclusion, equity, equality, and anti-racism.	
4.Create innovative, evidence-based strategies to shape population focused health policy development at local, national, and global levels based on contemporary nursing and interdisciplinary research.	
5.Relate new inquiries, activities, and values to role development as a nurse scientist, steward of the discipline, and educator for the next generation.	

Research Portfolio
In addition to the Individual Development Plan, students may want to create a Research Portfolio to record their goals and progress for their scholarly work during the PhD nursing program, such as conference presentations and published papers.

Annual Reporting of Student Progress
At the end of each semester, the Program Director will review each student's transcript and assess the adequacy of each student's progress in achieving university and program objectives. Students will be required to complete the Individual Development Plan in collaboration with the academic advisor annually in April, submit the Plan to the Program Director and the Program Assistant.

If students are not progressing as expected within the UMass Boston Statute of Limitations (SOL; 8 years), the Program Director, in consultation with the academic advisors, will prescribe a course of action to be completed for the student to return to good standing in the program.

The Program Director will inform students in writing that they are not meeting minimum academic standards and what the committee prescribes as corrective action. Students may notify the Program Director that they would like to voluntarily withdraw from the program. If students exceed the SOL or withdraw from the program, they may apply for reenrollment if they fully intend to complete all program requirements.

Course Load—Full and Part-Time Enrollment
International students are required to register as full-time students (9 credits) each semester and maintain a 3.0 GPA. See the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) site for FAQs. (ISSS) | Current Students - UMass Boston (umb.edu) and other current information..

Furthermore, all students and students in the BS-PhD track must maintain full-time enrollment throughout the program. Full-time students are expected to take at least nine (9) credit hours per semester. Full-time continuous MS-PhD track students should complete all coursework in the relevant Plan of Study by the end of the second academic year of study, whereas full-time continuous BS-PhD students should complete all coursework in the relevant Plan of Study by the end of the third academic year.

The university considers graduate students engaged in dissertation research to be full-time students, regardless of the number of dissertation credits for which they register, provided the Program Director certifies they are working full-time on research. A student may not take more than 6 dissertation credits in one semester.

Part-time MS-PhD students must carry at least six (6) credits per semester in each of the fall and spring semesters. Part-time MS-PhD students should complete their coursework in three years. A student may take up to 15 credits during the fall and spring semesters and up to 9 credits in the summer. Any student who wishes to register for more than the maximum credit load must secure written permission from the Program Director and approval from the Office of Graduate Studies.

Electives
Electives should enhance the student's knowledge and skills in research methods to complete the dissertation requirement, Program Director.

Courses offered by the Donna M. and Robert J. Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences at UMass Boston, any of the campuses within the UMass system, or other PhD or Master's programs on either campus that are at the **600-level or above** and focus on research methods can be taken as electives. Each course will appear on the student's transcript with the course title and grade.

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

Comprehensive Examination
Draft: November 14, 2023/January 15, 2024/February 5, 2025/Approved by PhD Nursing Program Committee March 2025/Approved by Department of Nursing Faculty April 2025; Additional editorial clarifications added in May 2025

<div align="center">

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON
PhD Nursing Program
Comprehensive Examination

</div>

1. Introduction
The comprehensive exam should demonstrate the student's conceptual knowledge of a phenomenon of interest and research methods that give the chair and other committee member confidence that the student is prepared to progress to their dissertation research. The goal of the comprehensive examination is to establish the foundation for a high-quality rigorous dissertation.

2. Two Options for Comprehensive Exam
There are two options for the Comprehensive Exam format
- Traditional 2 papers
  or
- Scholarship activity and 1 other paper
  Specifically, students can choose the traditional 2 paper option OR a 1 paper + scholarship activity. Scholarship combines 1 paper written specially for the comprehensive examination and one paper that is accepted as qualified scholarship activities. A qualified scholarship activity includes a student first-authored paper that is in press or published in a peer-reviewed journal. The option selected by the student must be approved by the comprehensive examination committee members (chair plus second reader).

  Regardless of the selected option, one paper must focus on a conceptual issue (health policy analysis, concept analysis, or review and synthesis of literature) and
  one paper must focus on a methodological issue (critique of instruments to measure a concept; diverse research methods used to measure a concept. Note that the concept should be identified in the conceptual paper)

  After the approval of the option selected by the student, the student will prepare an outline for each paper, which is to be reviewed and approved by the faculty members who will be the comprehensive examination committee members. Following approval of the outlines, the student prepares the papers which are to be reviewed and approved by the comprehensive examination committee members. Following approval of the papers, the student proceeds to an oral examination.

  More specifically, there are two components for the comprehensive examination: the written component and oral component.

Committee Structure:
Comprehensive Exam committee consists of two members:
1. The student will select one Chair of the Committee. The Chair must be a tenure track faculty member in the Department of Nursing.
2. The student and Chair will select the second reader. The second reader must be a member of the UMass Boston faculty. If the student's work is produced within a faculty member's program of research or a research team, the second reader for the committee must come from outside that team to offer an outsider's objective perspective.
3. The PhD Program Director will select a standard reader if the two members cannot reach consensus about the comprehensive examination outcome.
4. The student will submit the **Comprehensive Examination Form Stage 1** with the list of the proposed committee members to the Program Director.

Timeline Summary
All students are required to submit a timeline to the comprehensive examination committee and the PhD Nursing Program Assistant. The timeline pertains to either option for the comprehensive examination.

Timeline Summary
Note: The actual timeline (start date) for initiating the Comprehensive Exam procedures will be

determined on an individual basis.

Step 1: Student and Chair collaborate on creation of the outline for either option with input from the second reader. Student will submit the **Comprehensive Examination Form Stage 1** and timeline to Program Director. See Process 5.3 below for guidelines for the outline. **See additional file for the Stage 1 form.**

Step 2: The Chair and second reader approve the papers for the selected option. The student then has four (4) weeks to complete the papers. See 7 below for additional guidelines for the papers.

Step 3: The student submits the papers to the committee members and to the PhD Nursing Program Office. The committee members have 2 weeks for their review and decision about the papers.
Decision about the written papers component of the comprehensive examination
Pass – The student works with the PhD Nursing Program Assistant to schedule the oral exam.
Conditional Pass – The student must revise and resubmit in two weeks; the committee determines Pass or Fail within one additional week.
Fail – Do not progress – If a student fails the written exam, one retake of the written component is allowed within one year at the discretion of the committee.

Step 4: Student participates in a one to two-hour oral examination. The oral exam should be a **summary** of the two papers (conceptual and methods) and may be presented as a PowerPoint file. The oral exam may be virtual. Prior to the oral examination, the student will submit the **Comprehensive Examination Form Stage 2. See additional file for the Stage 2 form.**
Decision about the oral component of the comprehensive examination
Pass – The student becomes a PhD candidate and proceeds to develop the dissertation proposal and takes any other needed research methods elective(s) that will support the dissertation proposal
Conditional Pass – The student must retake the oral examination, which will be scheduled within one (1) week. The committee determines pass or fail.
Fail – The student may not proceed to dissertation proposal development. The student is permitted one retake of the comprehensive exam within one year, at the discretion of the committee.

Step 5: Student will submit a copy of their committee approved papers.

5. Process
5.1. Responsibilities of the Comprehensive Examination Committee: See 3 Committee Structure above. The Comprehensive Examination Committee is responsible for reviewing and approving the option selected by the student, reviewing and approving the papers, and conducting the oral component of the comprehensive examination, as well as making the decision about the written and oral components of the comprehensive examination.

5.2 Determination of Comprehensive Examination Format and Content: After discussion and negotiation with the comprehensive examination committee, the student will select the option for the comprehensive examination (see 2 and 5.1 above) and will indicate the specific topic (phenomenon of interest) for the papers, which should reflect the student's research interest and be related to the proposed dissertation research.

5.3 Development of the Outline: After discussion and negotiation with the committee members, the student will create a detailed outline for each paper. Each outline is limited to no more than three (3) double-spaced pages. The outlines should identify the content and content organization for each paper and must clearly indicate how the conceptual paper and the methods paper differ. The papers must reflect the student's ability to think critically and analytically, as well as their ability to synthesize the published literature about the topic. *Guidelines are available for each type of paper in the Graduate Student Handbook and are also included at the end of this document.*

> The outline for each paper is to be sufficiently detailed for the committee to be able to follow the logical flow of the papers. Following approval by the committee, the outlines serve as an agreement regarding the content for each paper.

5.4 Approval of Outline and Writing the Papers: In accordance with the timeline (see 4 Timeline Summary above) the committee approves the outlines and the student then works independently to write the papers. The comprehensive examination papers are to follow the format of the most current version of the American Psychological Association Manual for Publication.

The papers will be evaluated in terms of accuracy of content, clarity of writing, critical thinking, content organization, and appropriate format. The student's original analytic thinking is emphasized over extensive compilations and summaries of literature. Each paper must be between 15-20 pages, excluding title page, abstract, references, any tables and/or figures, and appendices. The format for each paper must adhere to the most recent edition of American Psychological Association Manual guidelines. Students have a maximum of four (4) weeks to complete the papers.

5.5 Paper Submission: An electronic copy of each paper must be submitted to the comprehensive examination committee members and to the PhD Nursing Program Office by 5:00 P.M. Eastern Time on the due date, which must be no later than four (4) weeks following approval of the outline for each paper.

5.6 Paper Review: Once the papers have been submitted, the committee members will have two weeks to review the papers. Each written paper will be assigned one of three (3) grades: Pass, Conditional Pass (Revise and Resubmit), or Fail. Students who are given a "Conditional Pass" will be given comments from the committee describing why revisions are deemed necessary and will be given two weeks from the time they receive the comments to submit revisions. If a student receives a grade of Pass, the student will work with the Program Assistant to schedule the oral component of the comprehensive examination. If a student receives a grade of Fail for one or both papers, the student will not progress to the oral examination. The student may retake the comprehensive examination within one year.

5.7 Oral Examination: The purpose of the oral component of the comprehensive exam is to evaluate the student's *overall understanding of research* related to the student's area of research interest. During the oral component, students will have the opportunity to clarify any questions arising from the written papers. The oral component of the comprehensive examination will focus on questions relevant to the written papers as well as questions regarding overall objectives of the PhD program. *At no time during the oral component should the examination be recorded by faculty or the student unless expressly approved in advance and in writing by the committee chair and student.*

Students are expected to make a 15-minute in-person presentation for each paper to the committee. PowerPoint slides and/or handouts are recommended. The remaining time for the oral component of

the comprehensive examination will be for questions from the committee members and answers by the student.

Questions will be developed by the committee members and reflect the PhD program objectives and overall content of the coursework in the program. Examples of questions faculty could ask:

   a.   Your work is grounded in a specific conceptual or theoretical perspective. What other conceptual and/or theoretical perspectives did you or could you consider for your work?
   b.   In your study of population health disparities, you are proposing to use existing population-based datasets. What are the main strengths and limitations of this approach for your study topic?
   c.   Explain how a different conceptual model would change the approach to your research.
   d.   You discuss the analytic strategy you might plan to use for your research. Why is this the best analytic method for your research and what other methods of analysis might be applicable?
   e.   You have chosen to conduct, for example, a survey of school nurses to understand knowledge and skills associated with management of asthma in elementary school children. Given that a substantial body of knowledge in this area already exists, how will your proposed survey add to the existing knowledge in this area? What other study designs might serve to move the field forward beyond what we already know?
   f.   Please discuss the validity and reliability of the measurement instrument(s) you plan to use.

5.8 Outcome of the Comprehensive Examination: The Committee will meet in closed session immediately following the oral examination of each student. The committee members' final evaluation of the student is a consensus. The examination outcome is Pass, Conditional Pass, or Fail. **Pass** indicates the student has successfully completed the Comprehensive Examination written and oral parts and is admitted to candidacy.

5.9 Conditional Pass indicates that one component (one or both written papers and/or the oral examination) of the Comprehensive Examination must be retaken.
   - If one or both papers receive a Conditional Pass, students will have 2 weeks to submit the required revisions. The Committee will then have 1 week to review the paper(s) and determine the outcome: Pass or Fail.
   - If the oral component of the examination receives a Conditional Pass, a retake will be scheduled within 1 week. The Committee will then determine the outcome: Pass or Fail.

5.10 Fail indicates the student did not successfully pass both components of the comprehensive examination and may have the option to retake them one additional time within one year. Note that the student must maintain matriculation during that time by paying the program fee for each semester when no courses are being taken.

The Committee Chair completes **Comprehensive Examination Form Stage 2** and forwards it to the PhD Program Office. If the student passes the comprehensive examination, the PhD Program Director completes and forwards the **Stage 1 of Dissertation Tracking Form** (Notification of Candidacy) to the Office of Graduate Studies. If the student fails the comprehensive examination, one retake is allowed at the discretion of the Comprehensive Examination Committee. The student should meet with the committee chair to determine an approach for addressing deficiencies and to identify a time frame for retaking the examination. If a student fails the comprehensive examination, and the committee

recommends the student not be offered the opportunity to retake the exam, they will be presented to the PhD Program Committee for consideration of dismissal from the program.

Both components of the comprehensive examination (written and oral) must be passed before the student progresses to PhD candidacy (designated as PhD candidate) and development of the dissertation proposal. The comprehensive examination content should guide and inform the substantive content and methodology used in preparation of the dissertation proposal.

5.11 Academic Integrity/Honor System: The comprehensive examination will be administered on the honor system. Students are not allowed to consult anyone (other students, faculty, outside professionals, or any other person) in completing the comprehensive examination. After acceptance of the outline for each paper by the Comprehensive Examination Committee, papers are to be entirely the student's work, without additional assistance including the assistance of technical writers or editors. Any violation of this rule will constitute the basis for dismissal from the program. Note that use of an artificial intelligence (AI) program is not permitted, nor is any instance of plagiarism. It is understood that an in-press or published paper used for the written component of the comprehensive examination may have been written with input from faculty, although the topic for the paper must have been selected by the student and the student must be the first author.

Note: Content from either or both of the comprehensive exam papers (conceptual and methods) can be used for the dissertation (for example, the content from the conceptual paper could be used for Chapter 2 and parts for Chapter 1 for the traditional dissertation, or for the introduction "bookend" for the 3-paper dissertation. The content from the methods paper could be used for part of Chapter 3 for the traditional dissertation, or perhaps as part of the methods section of the introduction "bookend", or for one of the data-based papers for the 3-paper dissertation. How much content from either paper depends on the dissertation topic and the dissertation committee advice.

Guidelines Review and Synthesis of the Literature

Overview

This document provides guidelines for students writing their review and synthesis of the literature paper as partial completion of the PhD Comprehensive Examination. Reviewing and synthesizing the literature allows the student to explore and articulate the current state of the knowledge and priorities for future research in relation to a socially and theoretically significant research topic. In keeping with the goals of the PhD Nursing Program, students will analyze the current knowledge regarding a population health or health policy issue. The review will be a synthesis of what is known and what gaps exist in the literature, concluding with a recommendation for future research.

General Instructions

Students are expected to submit a detailed outline of no more than 3 double spaced pages to the Committee Chair before beginning the paper. The paper must be between 15-20 pages.

excluding title page, abstract, references, any tables and/or figures, and appendices. The paper format must adhere to the American Psychological Association Manual (6th ed.) guidelines.

Outline: The outline should identify the content and content organization for the paper.

Critical Elements of the Paper

The paper should contain the following:
- Abstract: Write a clear and concise abstract.
- Research problem: Clearly identify the population health issue or health policy.
- Background/Introduction: State the social and theoretical significance of the population health issue or health policy. Identify and describe the conceptual model of nursing used to guide the review.
- Methods: Describe the search strategy, databases used, keyword search terms, and the inclusion and exclusion criteria.
- Results: Report and display in a PRISMA or similar diagram the results of the literature search, including types of literature selected for the review. Synthesize the research findings in narrative form. Include a table with details of the literature reviewed. Link the theoretical concepts identified in the literature with relevant concepts of the conceptual model used to guide the review in a narrative and a diagram.
- Discussion: Identify the gaps in the literature and the utility of the conceptual model used to guide the review.
- Conclusion: Identify the descriptive, explanatory, or predictive middle-range theory that emerged from the review and synthesis of the literature, including the theory, concepts, and propositions.
- Recommendations: Identify recommendations that have clear implications for research (knowledge development), and/or translation of research findings to practice (practice improvement) and/or policy (policy formulation or implementation).

What to Avoid, Writing Style

Students should keep in mind that they are not reporters; they are research analysts. The paper content must go beyond descriptions of the literature reviewed to include a detailed analytic discussion and critique.

Any overlaps between the review and synthesis of the literature paper and methodological paper should be kept to a minimum. Each paper is to be distinct from the other. Quote only when you want to strengthen your argument through another writer's work. The Committee members expect to read the student's analysis and interpretation of the literature (main findings and gaps). Please keep in mind that publication does not guarantee high quality work, that methods can be misapplied or results misinterpreted, and that all literature has limitations.

The paper should be written in an objective, scientific, and professional way without colloquialisms. It is expected that the student will fully edit the paper before submission to

Committee members, including improvements in clarity, correction of typographical errors, and avoidance of redundant sentences, paragraphs, and concepts.

References

Fawcett, J. (2013). Thoughts about conceptual models, theories, and literature reviews.

Nursing Science Quarterly, 26, 285-288

Grant, M. J., & Booth, A. (2009). A typology of reviews: An analysis of 14 review types and

associated methodologies. *Health Information and Libraries Journal, 26,* 91–108.

http://www.cochranelibrary.com/

Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). Retrieved

from www.prisma-statement.org.

See also *Journal of Advanced Nursing* author guidelines for systematic literature review papers here.

Guidelines Concept Analysis Paper:

Overview

This document provides guidelines for students writing their concept analysis paper as partial completion of the PhD Comprehensive Examination. In keeping with the goals of the PhD Nursing Program, students will analyze the current knowledge regarding a concept that is relevant for population health or health policy. A concept analysis paper is a report of an in depth exploration of a concept. A concept analysis is a first step in communicating meanings, understandings, and feelings to create a shared definition of the concept.

General Instructions

Students are expected to submit a detailed outline of no more than 3 double spaced pages to the Committee Chair before beginning the paper. The paper must be between **15-20 pages** excluding title age, abstract, references, any tables and/or figures, and appendices. The paper format must adhere to the American Psychological Association Manual (6^h ed.) guidelines.

Outline

The outline should identify the content and content organization for the paper.

Critical Elements of the Paper

The paper should contain the following components:
1. Abstract: Write a clear and concise abstract.
2. Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to present an analysis of [name the concept].
3. Background: State the need for the concept analysis by addressing the social and

theoretical significance of the concept. (Do not write that no one has done an analysis of the concept as the need.) Identify and describe the conceptual model of nursing that guided the concept analysis.

4. Data Sources: Identify the databases used, the years of literature searched, the search terms used, and the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

5. Review methods: Identify the approach to concept analysis used.

6. Results: Identify the number and types of papers used for the analysis, the attributes of the concept, the antecedents to and consequences of the concept, and the definition of the concept.

7. Discussion: Link the attributes of antecedents to, and consequences of the concept with relevant concepts of the conceptual model used to guide the concept analysis in a narrative and a diagram. Identify the descriptive, explanatory, or predictive middle-range theory that emerged from the concept analysis, including the theory concepts and propositions. Evaluate the utility of the conceptual model used to guide the concept analysis.

8. Conclusion: State the implications of the concept analysis for research (knowledge development), and/or translation of research findings to practice (practice improvement) and/or policy (policy formulation or implementation).

What to Avoid, Writing Style

Students should keep in mind that they are not reporters; they are research analysts. The paper content must go beyond descriptions of the literature reviewed to include a detailed analytic discussion and critique.

Any overlaps between the concept analysis paper and methodological paper should be kept to a minimum. Each paper is to be distinct from the other. Quote only when you want to strengthen your argument through another writer's work. The Committee members expect to read the student's analysis and interpretation of the literature about the concept. Please keep in mind that publication does not guarantee high quality work, that methods can be misapplied or results misinterpreted, and that all literature has limitations.

The paper should be written in an objective, scientific, and professional way without colloquialisms. It is expected that the student will fully edit the paper before submission to Committee members, including improvements in clarity, correction of typographical errors, and avoidance of redundant sentences, paragraphs, and concepts.

References

Fawcett, J. (2012). Thoughts about concept analysis: Multiple approaches, one result. *Nursing Science Quarterly, 25,* 285-287.

Paley, J. (1996). How not to clarify concepts. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *24*, 572-578.

Parse, R. R. (1997). Concept inventing: Unitary creations. *Nursing Science Quarterly, 10,* 63-64.

Risjord, M. (2009). Rethinking concept analysis. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *65,* 684-691.

Rodgers, B. L., & Knafl, K. A. (2000). *Concept development in nursing: Foundations, techniques, and applications* (2nd ed.). Philadelphia: Saunders.

Journal of Advanced Nursing author guidelines for concept analysis papers:
http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1365-2648/homepage/concept_analysis.htm

Guidelines Policy Analysis Paper

Overview
This document provides guidelines for students writing their policy analysis paper as partial completion of the PhD Comprehensive Examination. The policy analysis paper provides an opportunity for the student knowledge of the policy process and the ability to conduct a policy analysis.

General Instructions
Students are expected to submit a detailed outline of no more than 3 double spaced pages to the Committee Chair before beginning the paper. The paper must be between 15-20 pages excluding title page, abstract, references, any tables and/or figures, and appendices. The paper format must adhere to the American Psychological Association Manual (6th ed.) guidelines.

Outline
The outline should identify the content and content organization for the paper.

Critical Elements of the Paper
1. Introduction: What is the issue, problem, or policy you are examining?
2. Background of the Health Policy: Identify and describe the social significance of a health policy that addresses an individual health condition or a population health issue. Identify and describe the conceptual model of nursing that guided the analysis of the health policy, including associated guidelines for health policy analysis. Describe (a) the historical roots of the problem,(b) the sociological forces that have shaped the problem and the past attempts by society to address the problem (if there are past attempts), (c) the political forces that have resulted in the current status of the problem (if any), and (d) the economic forces or factors that have shaped the current health policy.
3. Agenda Setting: Explain how or why the health policy addresses an individual health condition or population health issue that is on the national agenda. Identify relevant stakeholders: who and why are some stakeholders supporting the health policy and who and why some other stakeholders are opposed to the health policy? Discuss how important stakeholder support or opposition is to implementation or continued implementation of the health policy.
4. Policy Alternatives: Consider alternatives to the health policy. Are there other policies or solutions that would be better to address the individual health condition or population health issue What other solutions have been tried? What do we know about the success of this and other health policies from the findings of empirical research?
5. Implementation: What agencies, organizations, or branches of government would most likely be or already are involved in implementing this health policy? What barriers to implementation exist? What has or would facilitate success of implementation of the health policy?

6. Evaluation: If the health policy has been or will be enacted into law, how would you determine its success? Describe the process a researcher might use to explore, describe, or test the outcomes of the policy, including intended and unintended consequences.

7. Discussions and Conclusions: Summarize the key points of the analysis. Evaluate the utility of the conceptual model used to guide the health policy analysis. Describe the role that doctorally prepared nurses have in facilitating any needed refinements in the health policy and how these nurses can influence implementation or continued implementation of the health policy. Identify the relevant concepts and propositions of the middle-range theory that constitute the health policy.

What to Avoid, Writing Style

Students should keep in mind that they are not reporters; they are research analysts. The paper content must go beyond descriptions of the literature reviewed to include a detailed analytic discussion and critique.

Any overlaps between the health policy analysis paper and methodological paper should be kept to a minimum. Each paper is to be distinct from the other. Quote only when you want to strengthen your argument through another writer's work. The Committee members are expecting to read the student's analysis and interpretation of the literature about the health policy. Please keep in mind that publication does not guarantee high quality work, that methods can be misapplied or results misinterpreted, and that all literature has limitations.

The paper should be written in an objective, scientific, and professional way without colloquialisms. It is expected that the student will fully edit the paper before submission to committee members, including improvements in clarity, correction of typographical errors, and avoidance of redundant sentences, paragraphs, and concepts.

References

Aronowitz, T., & Fawcett, J. (2015). Analysis of the public policies for sexuality education in Germany and the Netherlands. *American Journal of Sexuality Education, 10*, 140–157.

Fawcett, J., & Russell, G. (2001). A conceptual model of nursing and health policy. *Policy, Politics, and Nursing Practice, 2,* 108-116.

Kingdon, J. W. (2011). *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies* (2nd ed. updated). Boston: Longman.

Russell, G.E., & Fawcett, J. (2005). The conceptual model for nursing and health policy revisited. *Policy, Politics, and Nursing Practice, 6,* 319-326.

Stone, D. (2012). *Policy paradox: The art of political decision making* (3rd ed.). New York: Norton.

Guidelines Methods Paper

Overview

This document provides guidelines for students writing their methods paper as partial

completion of the PhD Comprehensive Examination. In keeping with the goals of the PhD Nursing Program, students will analyze methodological issues associated with a specific population health issue or health policy.

General Instructions

Students are expected to submit a detailed outline of no more than 3 double spaced pages to the Committee Chair before beginning the paper. The paper must be between <u>15-20 pages</u> excluding title page, abstract, references, any tables and/or figures, and appendices. The paper format must adhere to the American Psychological Association Manual (6th ed.) guidelines.

Outline

The outline should identify the content and content organization for the paper.

Critical Elements of the Paper
The paper should contain the following components:
1. Abstract: Write a clear and concise abstract.
2. Background/Introduction: Identify and describe a concept or middle-range theory that addresses an individual health condition or a population health issue. State one or more relevant research questions about the concept or theory.
3. Data sources: Identify the databases used, the years of literature searched, the search terms used, and the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Describe the numbers and types of literature retrieved.
4. Results: Critically analyze and evaluate the methods that have been used to study the population health issue or the health policy, with emphasis on (a) philosophical paradigms evident in the literature reviewed, (b) specific types of qualitative, quantitative, and/or mixed methods theory generating and/or theory-testing research designs, (c) strategies for selection of populations and/or samples, and (d) data analysis techniques. Evaluation of the methods should include consideration of (a) historical evolution of the research designs, strategies for selection of populations and/or samples, and data analysis techniques, (b) the extent to which the research designs allowed the research question(s) to be answered, (c) appropriateness of the strategies used for selection of populations and/or samples, and adequacy of sample sizes, and (d) appropriateness of data analysis techniques and validity of the statistical conclusions.
5. Conclusion: Discuss the advantages, disadvantages, and limitations of the research designs, strategies for selection of populations and/or samples, and data analysis techniques found in the literature.
6. Prepare a brief (no more than 2 pages) proposal for an ideal research design, population or sample selection, and data analysis techniques for one research question about a concept or middle range theory that addresses an individual health condition or a population health issue. The content of the proposal should emphasize the advantages and avoid or minimize disadvantages and limitations of the research designs, strategies for selection of populations and/or samples, and data analysis techniques found in the literature.

What to Avoid, Writing Style

Students should keep in mind that they are not reporters; they are research analysts. The paper content must go beyond descriptions of the literature reviewed to include a detailed analytic discussion and critique.

Any overlaps between the methods paper and conceptual paper should be kept to a minimum. Each

paper is to be distinct from the other. Quote only when you want to strengthen your argument through another writer's work. The Committee members expect to read the student's analysis and interpretation of the literature about the concept. Please keep in mind that publication does not guarantee high quality work, that methods can be misapplied or results misinterpreted, and that all literature has limitations.

The paper should be written in an objective, scientific, and professional way without colloquialisms. It is expected that the student will fully edit the paper before submission to Committee members, including improvements in clarity, correction of typographical errors, and avoidance of redundant sentences, paragraphs, and concepts.

References

Burns, N., Grove, S. K., & Gray, J. (2011). *Understanding nursing research: Building an evidence-based practice* (5th ed.). Maryland Heights, MO: Elsevier/Saunders.

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Cohen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin, 112,* 155-159.

Cook, T. D., Campbell D. T. (1979). *Quasi-experimentation.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design, Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fawcett, J. (2015). Invisible nursing research: Thoughts about mixed methods research and nursing practice. *Nursing Science Quarterly, 28,* 167-168.

Fawcett, J. (2015). Thoughts about theories and statistics. *Nursing Science Quarterly, 28,* 245- 248.

Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher, 33*(7), 14-26.

Munro, B. H. (2005). *Statistical methods for health care research* (5th ed.). Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins.

Polit, D. E., & Beck, C. T. (2012). *Nursing research: Generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice* (9th ed.). Philadelphia: Wolters Kluwer Health/Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Guidelines Measurement Paper

Overview

This document provides guidelines for students writing their measurement paper as partial completion of the PhD Comprehensive Examination. In keeping with the goals of the PhD Nursing Program, students will analyze measurement issues associated with a specific population health issue or health policy.

General Instructions

Students are expected to submit a detailed outline of no more than 3 double spaced pages to the Committee Chair before beginning the paper. The paper must be between <u>15-20 pages</u> excluding title page, abstract, references, any tables and/or figures, and appendices. The paper format must adhere to the American Psychological Association Manual (6th ed.) guidelines.

Outline

The outline should identify the content and content organization for the paper.

Critical Elements of the Paper

The paper should contain the following components:

1. Abstract: Write a clear and concise abstract.

2. Background/Introduction: Identify and define a concept of middle-range theory that addresses an individual health condition or population health issue; the appropriate middle-range theory should guide the examination of the selected concept's measurement.

3. Data sources: Identify the databases used, the years of literature searched, the search terms used, and the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Describe the numbers and types of literature retrieved. The literature should include the original reports of development of the instruments and reports of the use of the instruments for research and practice purposes.

4. Results: Identify, describe, critically analyze, and evaluate existing qualitative and/or quantitative research instruments that have been used to measure the middle-range theory concept. Summarize the information found in the literature about the trustworthiness (involving credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability) of any sources of data collection and instruments (e.g. research tools such as focus group or interview guides, document data) used to obtain qualitative (word) data and the psychometric properties (types of reliability and validity) of any instruments used to obtain quantitative (numerical) data. Description of the research instruments should include the number and type of items; methods used to analyze word data; and rating scales, scoring procedures, and interpretation of scores for numerical data. Evaluation of the research instruments should include consideration of (a) historical evolution of the research instruments, such as refinements in each instrument and/or use of newer instruments over time, (b) extent to which existing estimates of trustworthiness and/or psychometric properties are adequate, (c) cultural equivalence of any instruments used for studies of population or samples from diverse cultures, and (d) consistency of the measurement with translation from concept into measure (theoretical or conceptual system to research or operational system).

5. Conclusion: Discuss the overall strengths and weaknesses of the existing research instruments found in the literature.

6. Prepare a brief (no more than 2 pages) proposal for an **ideal** approach to the development of a new research instrument or to further development and testing of an existing research instrument that will measure the middle-range theory concept within the context of a conceptual model of nursing. The content of the proposal should emphasize the strengths and avoid or minimize weaknesses of the existing research instruments found in the literature.

What to Avoid, Writing Style

Students should keep in mind that they are not reporters; they are research analysts. The paper content must go beyond descriptions of the literature reviewed to include a detailed analytic discussion and critique.

Any overlaps between the methods paper and conceptual paper should be kept to a minimum. Each paper is to be distinct from the other. Quote only when you want to strengthen your argument through another writer's work. The Committee members expect to read the student's analysis and interpretation of the literature about the concept. Please keep in mind that publication does not guarantee high quality work, that methods can be misapplied or results misinterpreted, and that all literature has limitations.

The paper should be written in an objective, scientific, and professional way without colloquialisms. It is expected that the student will fully edit the paper before submission to Committee members, including improvements in clarity, correction of typographical errors, and avoidance of redundant sentences, paragraphs, and concepts.

References

Burns, N., Grove, S. K., & Gray, J. (2011). *Understanding nursing research: Building an evidence-based practice* (5th ed.). Maryland Heights, MO: Elsevier/Saunders.

Cook, D. A., Beckman, T. J. (2005). Current concepts in validity and reliability for psychometric instruments: Theory and application. *The American Journal of Medicine,* 119, 166.e7-166e16.

Flaherty, J. A., Gaviria, F. M., Pathak, D., Mitchell, T., Wintrob, R., Richman, J. A., & Birz, S. (1988). Developing instruments for cross-cultural psychiatric research. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases, 176,* 257-263.

Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1994). *Psychometric theory* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw- Hill.

Polit, D. E., & Beck, C. T. (2012). *Nursing research: Generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice* (9th ed.). Philadelphia: Wolters Kluwer Health/Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

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

PhD Candidacy and Degree Credentials

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

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

PhD or DNP candidates, should use the following convention:
Joanne Doe, MSN, RN (Doctoral Candidate OR PhD/DNP Candidate).
See APA http://www.apa.org/monitor/2016/09/misuse-phd.aspx for rationale.

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

Although dissertation planning may begin early in the program, the dissertation process normally begins after the student has passed the comprehensive examination and has been admitted to candidacy.
There are five (5) dissertation process forms that need to be completed across the dissertation stages (for forms see Forms - UMass Boston).

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

NU899
- Taken after successfully completing comprehensive exams
- See advisor for advising on how many credits students should register for NU899 (3 credits or 6 credits).

NU899 Dissertation Research
Dissertation credits represent the work being done in developing and defending a proposal and completing the work of the dissertation. This time varies to completion of the dissertation among students.

<u>Program Fee (CAS 600)</u>
After all NU 899 credits are completed, students should register for the program fee until the dissertation is defended.

Dissertation Stages

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

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

Stages of Dissertation Progression

The form for each stage can be found at https://www.umb.edu/admissions/graduate students/faculty-resources/forms/

Dissertation Application and Process

Students should inform the Program Director/Assistant when they officially have completed the requirements for the degree BEFORE SUBMITTING THE DEGREE APPLICATION.

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

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

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

The Dissertation Committee

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

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

Qualifications and Responsibilities of Chairs and Members of Dissertation Committees

Qualifications of faculty to chair dissertation committees:

1. To qualify to chair a dissertation committee, a department of nursing faculty member must:

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

Qualifications of faculty and/or outside professionals serving as members of dissertation committees:
To qualify to be a member of the Dissertation Committee, a faculty member must have

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

Responsibilities of Chairs and Members of Dissertation Committees
The dissertation committee chair holds primary responsibility for advising the student in their dissertation work. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
- Work with the student to identify the dissertation topic and methods.
- Provide ongoing support to the student with proposal development and dissertation work.
- Monitor student progress and help keep the student on track.
- Review the draft of the proposal and dissertation (by section and the whole work) and ensure the accuracy, quality, and clarity of the work, and the appropriateness of the formatting.
- Assess if the proposal and dissertation draft is ready for the committee to review.
- Work with the student to address concerns and suggestions raised by the committee members.
- Work with the student to schedule the proposal hearing and dissertation defense.
- Facilitate the meeting during the proposal hearing and dissertation defense.
- Work with the student to address any further questions and concerns raised during the proposal hearing and dissertation defense.
- Make sure the revisions are made to adequately address the suggestions, questions, and concerns.

The responsibilities of the dissertation committee include, but are not limited to:
- Provide conceptual and/or methodological guidance to the student during proposal development and dissertation phase.
- Review the proposal and dissertation closely and provide in depth feedback in a timely manner.
- Make sure the dissertation explicitly speaks to how the dissertation works related to the discipline of nursing.
- Determine the quality and acceptability of the proposal and dissertation. If the committee member has major concerns about the proposal or the dissertation, they should let the chair know at least one week prior to the defense date.
- Attend the proposal hearing and dissertation defense and provide critical inquiries about the work.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

10. References - do not split references. Do not start a citation on one page and finish it on the next.

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

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

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

There are two options for the dissertation—the 3-maunuscript dissertation or the traditional dissertation.

The Three (3) Manuscript Dissertation
This dissertation option should be planned with the academic advisor as part of the Individual Development Plan from very early in enrollment in the PhD nursing program so that there is sufficient time for writing publishable papers, (see below in blue highlight for what we have to consider for the guidelines). Consider many aspects of course work and other doctoral work, including the comprehensive examination papers, as beginning sources /content for the chapters.

Doctoral candidates may choose to complete the three-manuscript dissertation instead of the traditional dissertation format. The three-manuscript dissertation consists of three related manuscripts that are determined by the dissertation committee to be publishable. (Note that any or all of the manuscripts could be submitted for publication, in press, or published.)

 The three manuscripts (Chapters 2, 3, 4) are book-ended by an introductory chapter (Chapter 1) and a concluding discussion chapter (Chapter 5). The content of the manuscripts and the publication source selection (e.g., academic peer-reviewed journals; book chapters; a book) selection must be approved by the dissertation committee. *At least two of the three manuscripts are to be data-based (i.e., not methodological or conceptual).*

"The dissertation proposal is typically written in the *future tense"*

"The final dissertation is typically written in the *past tense"*

Format: Times New Roman Font 12, 1-inch margins all around

All dissertation work follows the format of the most current version of the American Psychological Association Manual for Publication, and any relevant UMass Boston Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) guidelines.

- Use a citation management system from the beginning. Best practices suggest beginning a draft document / dissertation from semester one.
- Use the Word program spelling and grammar checker for the dissertation proposal and the final documents.
- Consider running the dissertation through a plagiarism checker at multiple points in the process. This is quality control.

The 3-Manuscript Dissertation

The dissertation research proposal may be submitted at any time after the Committee has been approved by the Graduate Program Director and Associate Vice Provost, Graduate Education. See Stage 2 Dissertation form: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.umb.edu/media/umassboston/content-assets/academics/pdf/Stage-2-Form.pdf

The dissertation proposal is approved after an oral hearing and is signed by the dissertation committee, the GPD and the Associate Vice Provost, Graduate Education See Stage 3 form: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.umb.edu/media/umassboston/content-assets/academics/pdf/Stage-3-Form.pdf

Notification of the oral defense is indicated in the Stage 4 form, which is signed by the dissertation committee, the dissertation committee chair, the GPD and the Associate Vice Provost, Graduate Education. See chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.umb.edu/media/umassboston/content-assets/academics/pdf/Stage-4-Form.pdf

The final dissertation is approved after an oral defense and is signed by the dissertation committee, the GPD and the Associate Vice Provost Graduate Education

The final dissertation is submitted to the UMass Boston Scholar Works after final approval by the dissertation committee and signed off by Dissertation Committee Chair, the Graduate Program Direction and the Associate Vice Provost, Graduate Education (see Stage 5 Dissertation form-- chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.umb.edu/media/umassboston/content-assets/academics/pdf/Stage-5-Form.pdf).

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

300-400/word abstract -- Examples may be available on Scholar Works.

Chapter 1. Introduction

A clear statement of the problem as the topic of a health policy for population health establishes its social significance, the magnitude of the topic and its effects; the theoretical significance of how the need for the proposed research advances nursing knowledge, including health policy; and the *overall* research purpose/aims/ questions/hypotheses to be examined. In addition, historical, sociological, political, and economic aspects of the health policy topic should be addressed.

A clear statement of the nursing conceptual model and the narrative and a diagram of conceptual-theoretical-empirical structure that will guide the research

A summary of each of the three manuscripts to be included

Work plan that identifies needed resources, indicates how they will be obtained, and presents a realistic timeline for data collection and analysis.

References.

Chapters 2, 3, and 4

Each chapter is one of the three manuscripts.

All three manuscripts must address the same *overall* research purpose/aims/questions identified in Chapter 1.

Two of the three manuscripts must be data-based, with data from original data collection or from an existing database (see above: Do we want to continue with two manuscripts data-based, or only one data-based, or one or two depending on negotiation between dissertation committee and the doctoral candidate?) Note: if an existing database is to be used, the research question for each data-based paper must differ.

One of the three manuscripts may be a concept analysis, a conceptual framework, or a research protocol.

 Our options are: (1) all three manuscripts publishable as determined by the dissertation committee; (2) two of the three manuscripts publishable as determined by the dissertation committee;) (3) two of the three manuscripts in press or published; (4) one of the three manuscripts in press or published; or (5) all three manuscripts in press or published.

The format and content of each paper must follow the relevant journal author guidelines.

Chapter 5 Discussion

Summary and synthesis of the content and findings of the three manuscripts.

Utility of the conceptual model that guided the study and any revisions in the CTE structure based on study results (with citations).

Limitations of the study.

Recommendations for future research (with citations).

Further development or revision of the health policy.

The Traditional Dissertation

The Dissertation Proposal

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

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

- Format: Times New Roman Font 12, 1-inch margins all around.
- The dissertation proposal is typically written in the future tense.
- Use the Word program spelling and grammar checker for the dissertation proposal.

- Proposal content: 300-400/word abstract **(**Write the abstract after all other aspects of the dissertation proposal have been written).
- Introduction that clearly states the problem as the topic of a health policy for population health, establishes its significance, and how the need for the proposed research advances nursing knowledge, including health policy, and states the research purpose/aims/questions/hypotheses.
- Summary of historical, sociological, political, and economic aspects of the health policy topic.
- Clear statement of the nursing conceptual model and the conceptual-theoretical-empirical structure that will guide the research.
- Methodology, including research design, population and sample, data collection instruments and procedures or database to be used, data analysis techniques, and procedures for protection of human subjects if relevant.
- Work plan that identifies needed resources, indicates how they will be obtained, and presents a realistic timeline for data collection and analysis.
- References.

The Dissertation

- The final dissertation is typically written in the past tense.

- The traditional dissertation consists of a 300-400/word abstract and five (5) chapters.
- Examples available on Scholar Works. See https://scholarworks.umb.edu/diss_theses/
- Consider many aspects of course work and other doctoral work, including the comprehensive examination papers, as beginning sources /content for the chapters.

- Use a citation management system from the beginning. Best practices suggest beginning a draft document / dissertation from semester one.
- Use the Word program spelling and grammar checker for the dissertation
- Consider running your dissertation through a plagiarism checker at multiple points in the process. This is quality control.

Chapter 1 The Problem (can be based on the comprehensive examination conceptual paper)

- A brief introduction to the dissertation topic and the health policy of interest

- Social significance of the topic-This content may be a summary of the literature presented in Chapter 2

- Theoretical significance of the topic- This content may be a summary of the literature presented in Chapter 2

- Purpose of the study-may be stated as the purpose, aims, or research questions, or hypotheses

- Conceptual framework

- Overview of the nursing conceptual model selected to guide the study

- Conceptual-theoretical-empirical (CTE) structure for the study – narrative and diagram

Chapter 2 Review of the Literature (can be based on the comprehensive examination conceptual paper and literature reviews done for course assignments)

- Historical, sociological, political, and economic aspects of the health policy topic – This content may be in Chapter 1 instead of Chapter 2

- Review of the relevant literature about the health policy topic to include previous and well as any contemporary research – if the dissertation is to include hypothesis testing, the literature must explicitly support these hypotheses

- Should include the literature review procedures

- Databases searched, search terms. PRISMA diagram and narrative

Chapter 3 Methods (can be based on the comprehensive examination methods paper and assignments from required and elective courses focusing on research methods)

- Study design

- Study population

- Target population

- Accessible population

- Power analysis for number of participants if relevant

- Inclusion criteria

- Exclusion criteria – not the opposite of inclusion criteria

- Instruments used to collect data

- Name and source of each instrument

- Number of items, rating scale, scoring procedure for each instrument

- Reliability and validity data for each instrument from the literature and for the study sample

- (study sample data must be in the Chapter 4 results)

- Data collection procedures – when and how and by whom data are to be collected

- Data analysis plan

- Included in dissertation proposal

- Typically also incorporated into Chapter 4 as study findings are presented

- Protection of participants

- Consent procedures – when, by whom, oral or written

- Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval(s)- UMass Boston plus any other IRBs needed

- For the dissertation proposal, indicate only approval(s) from which IRB(s) to be sought

Chapter 4 Results

- Characteristics of participants

- Findings for each study purpose or aim or research question or hypothesis

- Include how the data were analyzed and the results

- May include additional findings not included in the purpose or aims or research questions or hypotheses

- Note: Chapter 4 / Results are results only, no exposition or discussion.

Chapter 5 Discussion

- Utility of the conceptual model that guided the study

- and any revisions in the CTE structure based on study results (with citations)

- Comparison or interpretation of each finding with previous research (with citations)

- Summarize but do not repeat the findings in detail

- Limitations of the study

- Recommendations for future research (with citations)

- Further development or revision

Dissertation Proposal Hearing

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

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

The Dissertation Defense

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

Final copies of the revised dissertation and completed signature page must be provided to the Program Director and the OGS before the candidate can be certified for the PhD degree. The final dissertation manuscript must conform to Guidelines for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations at the University of Massachusetts Boston.
For most updated version of the guidelines as well as an update on deadlines, see section
[Policies and Forms for Theses and Dissertations](#)

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

For the *initial* submission, students should turn in an electronic copy of their thesis/dissertation via the UMass Boston-ScholarWorks website https://scholarworks.umb.edu/

The ETD submission process streamlines the review and approval process and enhances communication with the T&D (Thesis and Dissertation) Format Editor, Carol Cullen (carol.cullen@umb.edu). All graduates are required to use the UMass Boston- ScholarWorks submission site. For more information visit the UMass Boston-UMass Boston- ScholarWorks site [http://www.etdadmin.com/umb.](http://www.etdadmin.com/umb)