

2017-2018

M.S. in Nursing Program Student Handbook



VCU

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

School of Nursing

Creating collaboration. Advancing science. Impacting lives.

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www.nursing.vcu.edu

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About this Handbook

This handbook is designed to be a resource for currently enrolled Master's students at Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Nursing (SON) as well as faculty of the Master's Program in Nursing. This handbook supplements the VCU Graduate Bulletin located at: <http://bulletin.vcu.edu/>. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the policies and information contained in each of these resources.

Welcome from the Dean



It is my pleasure and privilege to welcome you to the VCU School of Nursing. You have made a great investment in your future by selecting a school that is ranked among the top schools of nursing in the nation. We offer a supportive, collaborative environment to ensure your success as you progress through our program.

This handbook is a very important resource designed to provide you with information on life as a student at the VCU School of Nursing. Our highly trained faculty and staff will support you every step of the way and help you get the most out of your experience here. Graduates of our school represent the future of nursing and are well-prepared to improve the care of the patients we serve.

On behalf of the faculty and staff, I extend our best wishes for a dynamic and rewarding educational experience. Thank you for being a part of our tradition of nursing excellence.

Jean Giddens, Ph.D., RN, FAAN
Dean, School of Nursing

Welcome from the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs



Congratulations on beginning or continuing your nursing education at the VCU School of Nursing. As the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (“chief academic officer”), I and the team of expert educators and professional staff are committed to assuring that you have a world class educational experience at VCU. In light of an ever-changing and complex health care environment, we are constantly employing principals of continuous quality improvement, evolving pedagogical principals and best practices to assure that your academic program is cutting edge. We have much to learn from each other. Please let me know if I can ever be of service to you. A career in nursing is the gift that keeps on giving.

Debra J. Barksdale, PhD, RN, FNP-BC, ANP-BC, CNE, FAANP, FAAN
Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, School of Nursing

Welcome from the Program Director



The Master of Science Nursing Program welcomes you to the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Nursing (VCU SON). We are delighted that you made the decision to pursue your graduate degree here at VCU. We are passionate about helping you to achieve your professional goals, and helping to develop the next generation of advanced practice nurses and leaders that will improve health and healthcare across the state of Virginia and wherever your careers take you.

Our goal is your success! To assist you, we have a variety of online and human resources to answer questions and guide your journey. We will collaborate to plan your educational experience, and provide an environment where you can thrive. We encourage you to become active in contributing to the success of the VCU SON. I look forward to meeting you!

Carla Nye, DNP, RN, CPNP-BC, CNE, CHSE
Master's Program Director, School of Nursing

School of Nursing Mission, Vision and Values

Mission

We shape the future of nursing through the power of education, discovery and collaboration.

Vision

VCU SON will be the destination for those committed to transforming health care.

Values

Integrity | Compassion | Diversity | Innovation | Collaboration

Program Roles & Faculty Information

A. Departments

Adult Health and Nursing Systems

Chair: Beth Rodgers, Ph.D., RN, FAAN
Department Administrator: Morgan Martin

Family and Community Health Nursing

Chair: TBD
Department Administrator: Kimberly Mason

B. Master's Concentrations

Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner

Concentration Coordinator: Rachel Cloutier, M.S., RN, ACNP-BC
Email: cloutierr@vcu.edu

Adult Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner

Concentration Coordinator: Holly Buchanan, DNP, RN, ANP-BC
Email: habuchanan@vcu.edu

Family Nurse Practitioner

Concentration Coordinator: Allison Gregory, M.S., RN, FNP-BC
Email: aagregory@vcu.edu

Nursing Administration and Leadership

Concentration Coordinator: TBD
Email:

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Concentration Coordinator: Lyons Hardy, M.S., RN, P-MHNP
Email: hardyl@vcu.edu

Program Overview

A. Outcomes of Graduates

Program Goals

Graduates will achieve advanced nursing practice competencies by demonstrating:

1. Systems and organizational leadership
2. Implementation of advanced nursing practice interventions
3. Effective use of research and technology
4. Systematic evaluation of interventions and outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes

Graduates will be able to:

1. Demonstrate core competencies in their advanced practice specialties
2. Integrate nursing and related sciences into the delivery of advanced nursing care to diverse populations and systems of health care delivery
3. Apply ethical analysis and clinical reasoning to assess, intervene and evaluate advanced nursing care delivery
4. Understand the implications of social, cultural, economic, policy and organizational systems that impact practice and outcomes
5. Synthesize evidence for practice to determine appropriate application of interventions across diverse populations and settings
6. Use quality processes and improvement science to evaluate care and ensure patient safety for individuals, populations and systems
7. Integrate organizational science and technology to make changes in the care environment to improve health outcomes and practice efficiency

B. Technical Standards

The VCU School of Nursing is responsible for providing education without regard to disability while assuring that academic and technical standards are met. This document defines the non-academic criteria for advancement through and graduation from the Master's and Post-Master's programs at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Nursing.

The following technical standards describe the essential functions that a student is expected to demonstrate in order to fulfill the requirements of a nursing education program, and thus, are required for advancement through and graduation from the program. The technical standards for each category identified below are consistent with the expectation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, including changes made by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. The technical skill areas include motor, sensory/observation, communication, cognitive and behavioral.

Students must read and sign the technical skills document before matriculation into the VCU School of Nursing. It is incumbent upon the student to review these technical standards on a regular basis to ensure continued compliance. If a student finds that they are unable to be in compliance with technical standards for an acute or chronic condition, they should speak with the Master's Program Director and pertinent course faculty immediately.

1. Motor

GENERAL: A student must have sufficient motor function and coordination of gross and fine muscle movements necessary to execute movements essential to providing effective and safe

healthcare activities required of a nurse. Students must be able to execute these movements in a safe, deliberate and (as the situation warrants) swift fashion.

Examples of tasks utilizing gross and fine motor skills include, but are not limited to:

- Performing CPR
- Assisting in the transferring and positioning of patients
- Apply physical restraints to adults and children
- Engage in periods of prolonged standing or sitting while in the clinical setting. Shifts may be anywhere from 8-12 hours.
- Move deliberately and safely within confined settings such as the patient room or operating room
- Obtaining labs from a patient via blood draw
- Use and calibrate equipment such as monitors, sphygmomanometers, stethoscopes, etc.

2. Visual

Sensory/Observation

GENERAL: A student must be able to acquire assessment information visually to assist in providing safe, competent nursing care.

Examples of tasks utilizing visual processing include but are not limited to:

- Observing patient's skin color and general body habitus.
- Observing readings on monitors and gauges.
- Observing drainage, bleeding or other exudates on dressings or in drainage devices.
- Properly see and read notes in a patient's chart or medical record.

3. Auditory

GENERAL: A student must be able to acquire assessment information auditorily to assist in providing safe, competent nursing care.

Examples of tasks utilizing auditory processing include, but are not limited to:

- Hearing patient or family member calls for help
- Hearing verbal commands from other providers and colleagues
- Hearing alarms from equipment
- Hearing sounds produced by auscultation via a stethoscope
- Hearing conversations via telephone or other electronic means (i.e., teleconferencing)

4. Tactile

GENERAL: A student must be able to acquire assessment information via tactile assessment (percussion and palpation) to assist in providing safe, competent nursing care.

Examples of tasks utilizing tactile assessment skills include, but are not limited to:

- Palpating skin lesions, masses or other protuberances
- Palpating the skin to assess temperature

5. Olfactory

GENERAL: A student must be able to acquire assessment information via olfactory assessment to assist in providing safe, competent nursing care.

Examples of tasks utilizing olfactory assessment skills include, but are not limited to:

- Smelling exudates or other drainage from a patient
- Smelling smoke, fire or other environmental indicators of imminent danger
- Smelling other clinical indicators of acute patient decompensation (i.e., ketones, alcohol, etc.)

6. Communications

GENERAL: The student must have proficiency of the English language such that they may communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, family members, and other members of the healthcare team. This includes verbal, written, and non-verbal communications. Sound communication is critical for safe, and coordinated quality of care. The student needs to be able to demonstrate appropriate expressive and receptive communication.

Examples of tasks which require sound communication skills include, but are not limited to:

- Reading and obtaining information from various texts, articles and other educational aids.
- Reading and obtaining information from clinical documents including but not limited to patient charts, images (CT, X-ray, MRI, etc.)
- Reading for the purposes of safety verification a patient's arm band, barcode for medication administration, or laboratory order slips.
- Obtaining a health history on a patient, family or community
- Explaining relevant lab results, diagnoses or the plan of care in a manner which is meaningful, respectful, and understood by the patient or the family.
- Explaining aforementioned lab results, diagnoses or plan of care in a way that is respectful and not unduly alarming to patients and their family members.
- Correctly and succinctly document assessment findings either verbally or written as the situation dictates.

7. Cognitive

GENERAL: A student must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate and synthesize complex information and demonstrate acquired knowledge across multiple care settings.

Examples of tasks which require cognitive ability include, but are not limited to:

- Comprehension of three-dimensional relationships
- Understanding and comprehension of spatial relationships of structures to allow for safe navigation of the clinical space.
- Problem solving in a dynamic, fast-paced environment.
- Converse and problem solve with multiple members of the healthcare team in a dynamic, fast-paced environment.
- Engage in critical thinking and analysis in a timely fashion to ensure prompt and safe delivery of care.
- Engage in ethical decision making, properly weighing pros, cons and patients' preferences.
- Obtain and interpret assessment and patient care information from a variety of media including written reports, verbal reports, and electronic orders in a timely fashion to assist in providing safe, competent care.

8. Behavioral

GENERAL: A student must possess appropriate mental and behavioral health required for full use of his/her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with and colleagues.

Examples of tasks which espouse proper mental and behavioral health include, but are not limited to:

- Ability to adapt to rapidly changing environments; maintain functionality and flexibility in highly stressful and uncertain environments and circumstances.
- Ability to be flexible; functioning well in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical setting and the patient's clinical trajectory.
- Demonstration of compassion, integrity and concern for patients, colleagues and others.
- Ability to accept constructive feedback (provided verbally or in writing) in the didactic and clinical portions of the program and appropriately modifying behavior based on the feedback.
- Appropriately modify behavior based on feedback
- Demonstration of appropriate interprofessional relationships with other colleagues and staff.
- Demonstration of appropriate, non-discriminatory and honest relationships with patients, families and communities.
- Demonstration of appropriate professional boundaries with patients and families, including the avoidance of contacting patients via social media (i.e., Facebook)

C. Certification Examinations for Advanced Practice

Graduates of NP concentrations in the VCU School of Nursing Master's program are prepared to sit for certification exams in their concentration. See the table below for certification options for each NP concentration.

Certifying Body	Adult Gero Acute Care NP	Adult Gero Primary Care NP	Family NP	Psych NP
AACN (American Assoc. of Critical Care Nurses)	X			
AANP (American Assoc. of Nurse Practitioners)		X	X	
ANCC (American Nurses Credentialing Center)	X	X	X	X

Pre-Enrollment

A. Criminal Background Check and Drug Screening

Policy

An offer of acceptance to the VCU School of Nursing (SON) is conditioned upon the successful completion of a criminal background check (CBC) and drug screening. Students are also required to complete this process upon program re-entry subsequent to a leave of absence, program withdrawal or program separation greater than thirty consecutive days.

After enrollment, all students must report any felony, misdemeanor, or court martial charges and convictions to the Director of Student Success, which occur during their enrollment within 10 business days of occurrence. For criminal charges, a review committee will consider the nature of the underlying conduct resulting in the charge and make the determination as to whether to suspend the student pending resolution of the criminal proceeding. Criminal charges, by themselves, will not necessarily warrant denial of continued enrollment.

Rationale

The SON requires CBC and drug screening for all students prior to enrollment. Background checks and drug screening are conducted to ensure that nursing students are competent, safe, and trustworthy to engage in clinical rotations and other critical aspects of the programs.

The SON also conducts the screenings to:

- Respond to regulatory mandates and the requirements of the School of Nursing's affiliated clinical facilities.
- Bolster the continuing trust of the public in the nursing profession.

Procedure

The CBC and drug screening are a mandatory component of the pre-matriculation process. The final decision regarding matriculation of an applicant will be based on the information in the CBC/drug screening reports.

Factors involved in the final decision may include, but are not limited to:

1. The nature, circumstances, and frequency of any reported offense(s).
2. The length of time since the offense(s).
3. Available information that addresses efforts at rehabilitation.
4. The accuracy of the information provided by the applicant.

Individuals who do not give permission to the conduct of the criminal background check/drug screening or who fail to provide the reports as required will not be allowed to matriculate in the School of Nursing.

- An independent vendor has been identified by the SON to provide the criminal background and drug screening. Each applicant will be responsible for requesting the report and submitting payment for the report.
- The CBC and drug screening report shall span the prior seven-year period, and shall include all convictions at a felony or misdemeanor level.
- The information obtained through the CBC and drug screening will not become part of a student's academic file and will remain confidential unless the findings result in an institutional action by the SON.

- The CBC and drug screening document will be destroyed upon the student's graduation/separation from the institution.
- The vendor sends the CBC and drug screening reports electronically to the Office of Enrollment and Student Services (OESS) in any decision that may adversely affect the individual.
- Validated background reports found to be in conflict with responses in the application may be grounds for withdrawal of an offer of enrollment based upon submission of false or misleading information on the application.
- The existence of a conviction or a positive drug screen will not necessarily result in a denial of enrollment to the School of Nursing. Instead each case will be reviewed by a committee other than the admissions committee and evaluated on its facts.
 - The admission of students with a conviction or a positive drug screen who are granted entry into VCUSON may not be able to complete the program if their conviction prevents securing of clinical practicum sites.
 - Additionally, students are advised that nursing licensure and subsequent prescription and DEA certification (for NP students) are not guaranteed upon graduation and board certification, but are considered by the state board of nursing in which the individual is applying.

Review Committee

The review committee shall include, but is not limited to the:

- Director of Student Success,
- Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (or other administrative dean),
- Two faculty members and,
- University attorney as needed to clarify legal processes.

The review committee is responsible for making determinations regarding acceptance or denial of enrollment and communicating the determination to the student.

- Any determination to deny enrollment will be communicated to the student in writing, giving the reason for the denial and allowing the student five business days from the date the communication was sent to respond to the determination before it becomes final.
- The student's response should be sent to the Director of Student Success and should include any relevant information concerning the CBC and/or drug screen to be considered by the committee, including any challenge to the accuracy of the report.
- The committee shall consider the response, and shall issue a final determination within 72 hours of receiving the student's response.

VCU School of Nursing Disqualifying Criminal Offenses

Felonies

1. A crime of violence.
2. Any felony offense involving unlawful sexual behavior.
3. Any felony, the underlying basis of which has been found by the court on the record to include an act of domestic violence.
4. Any felony of child abuse.
5. Any felony offense in another state, the elements which are substantially similar to the elements of any of the above offenses.

Misdemeanors

- C. Third degree assault.
- D. Any misdemeanor, the underlying factual basis of which has been found by the court on the record to include an act of domestic violence.
- E. A misdemeanor offense of child abuse.
- F. Any misdemeanor offense of sexual assault on a client by a psychotherapist.
- G. Any misdemeanor offense in another state, the elements of which are substantially similar to the elements of any of the misdemeanor offenses listed above.

Criminal Histories

1. Convictions/deferred adjudications involving crimes against persons (physical or sexual abuse, neglect, assault, murder, etc.).
2. Convictions related to moral turpitude (prostitution, public lewdness/exposure, etc.).
3. Convictions/deferred adjudications related to the sale, possession, distribution, or transfer of narcotics or controlled substances.
4. Registered sex offenders.

B. Student Verification Form

Prior to beginning their programs, students will read and sign the Student Verification Form that will remain in each student's file in the Office of Student Success. A copy of this form can be found in **Appendix A**.

C. Health and Certification Requirements

Students will comply with the immunization requirements outlined in the **VCU Health Science Certificate of Immunization**. Students are also required to present annual documentation of TB screening and flu vaccine to University Student Health Services by the published deadlines.

Additionally, all students must maintain current BLS certification for the duration of their programs.

See University Student Health Services/Immunizations for additional information (<http://www.students.vcu.edu/health/immunizations/>). All requirements apply to full- and part-time students and must be submitted to the University prior to enrollment.

Enrollment

A. Academic Advising

The advising/student partnership begins with the offer of admission. Students will receive regular emails from the Master's Program Coordinator related to enrolling in the M.S./Post-M.S. program. Students are encouraged to meet with the program coordinator prior to orientation. The program coordinator will also meet with new students at orientation.

Advising will be a joint effort between the Master's Program Coordinator and the coordinator of the concentration in which the student is enrolled. The Master's Program Coordinator will keep students apprised of pertinent registration, School of Nursing, and university information through the use of the Master's Student email group.

B. Degree Requirements

In addition to general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements, a candidate for the degree of Master of Science in Nursing must be recommended by the faculty and must:

1. Meet academic requirements of the Graduate School;
2. Complete all requirements for the prescribed curriculum within six calendar years of the first registration for work to be credited toward the degree;
3. Earn a minimum grade of B or pass grade in all nursing courses;

4. Earn a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in all work presented for graduation;
5. Conform to School of Nursing policies in respect to pass/fail grading for coursework.

The degree will be granted only after all requirements have been fulfilled and all fees to the university have been paid. Degrees are not granted in absentia unless written request is made to the dean and permission is granted.

Please see **Appendix B** for plans of study

C. Course registration

Students should be aware of registration dates set by the university. Students should register through VCU eServices for all courses on their plans of study each semester by the date communicated to them via email by the Master's Program Coordinator. See the [VCU Academic Calendar](#) for important drop and withdrawal dates.

D. Mobile Device Requirements

All graduate nursing students who are enrolled in the nurse practitioner concentrations are required to purchase a mobile device for convenient, portable and flexible use and accessibility of learning resources available through the school, university, and the internet.

E. Non-Degree Seeking Students

Students who have not been admitted to the School of Nursing may be allowed to enroll in selected some nursing courses. Permission to enroll in courses is granted by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs on a case by case basis. Only six credits earned as a non-degree seeking student can be used for the Master's degree or Post-Master's Certificate. Decisions for enrollment are based on permission of the instructor, space availability and designation of the course as open to non-degree seeking students.

F. Transfer Students.

The School of Nursing follows the university policy related to transfer students. A maximum of 50 percent of the didactic hours required for a graduate degree or any graduate certificate program may be transferred from another institution and, if not applied previously toward another degree, may be applied toward a degree. Prerequisite course work that does not count toward the VCU degree may not be transferred.

Academic Policies

A. Attendance at Class Meetings and On-Campus Immersions

All Master's students are required to attend class meetings (on campus or online) and on-campus immersions as scheduled. Refer to individual syllabi for course attendance requirements.

For specific dates, contact the Master's Program Coordinator.

Link to the University's Attendance and enrollment policies:

<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/general-academic-regulations-graduate-students/attendance-enrollment-policies/>

B. Paper Format

Unless otherwise stated by instructor, the most recent *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)* is to be used for all papers written in the School of Nursing.

C. Grading Scale

A ten-point grading scale will be used in graduate courses receiving a letter grade, and is as follows:

- A 90 - 100
- B 80 - 89
- C 70 - 79
- D 60 - 69
- F Below 60

Practicum and select graduate courses may be designated as “Pass” or “Fail.” The requirements of each course are listed in the respective syllabi.

D. Testing Procedures

Examinations and standardized tests are essential measures of competence and knowledge and integral to assuring that students provide safe and effective patient care. The School of Nursing has established the following requirements to assure integrity of the testing environment.

Students sitting for in-person examinations are expected to:

- Arrive at the designated room on time.
- Place all books, coats, purses, etc. at the front of the classroom.
- Turn cell phones off and place securely in backpack or purse.
- Remove virtual reality glasses/goggles or electronic “smart” watches
- Remove hats, hoodies, and jackets with large pockets.
- Leave bottled beverages with labels with backpack/purse (only bottled water is allowed).
- If calculators are permitted, only freestanding pocket calculators are allowed. Cell phones cannot be used as a calculator. In computer based examinations, a calculator is embedded within the software.
- If computer based examination, refrain from opening any computer program other than the one to take the examination.
- Report any misconduct or annoying behavior to the faculty/ proctor during the examination so appropriate action may be taken.
- If provided with a GradeIt type paper test, credit is given to the answers on the answer sheet and will not be given for any item erroneously transposed
- Place name and VCU student identification number (vID) on the answer sheet and the test booklet when paper is used and return it to the faculty or proctor.
- Use the restroom prior to sitting for the examination. Students who must use the restroom during an examination will be accompanied by a proctor at all times.
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity and not utilize textbooks, notecards or personal assistance during the examination process.

If suspected of cheating, the student’s examination will be removed. In accordance with VCU policy, students suspected of cheating will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.

Missed Examinations

In the event of a personal emergency (e.g., unexpected illness, death in the family) or participation in a required University activity, students must notify the course faculty in advance. In advance is defined as **prior to the beginning of the examination** for a personal emergency or **at least 2 weeks in advance** if the student is participating in a required University activity. Students should notify the course faculty using the method preferred by course faculty (e.g., phone call, email).

Examinations will not be given to students who have not provided timely notification of a SON-accepted absence and will result in a grade of "0" on that examination.

Examinations may be made up only in the case of absences for reasons acceptable to the course faculty.

The make-up examination will be taken within one week of the scheduled examination or at the discretion of the course faculty. The student must make arrangements for the make-up examination with the course faculty. Exception may be made for student absences of one week or more with the concurrence of faculty and program director. Make-up examinations may be a different version of the original examination.

***Standardized examinations (e.g., HESI) can only be administered at the designated time and cannot be made-up.**

Online Testing

Quizzes and examinations will be administered online unless otherwise specified by faculty. At course faculty discretion, quizzes and examinations may be administered in a proctored learning environment.

- Unless otherwise specified by course faculty, students may not use textbooks, notebooks, or audio, visual, or written input from others.
- Students taking quizzes and examinations online are required to work independently. Work submitted online must be work completed by the student only. Students should not take quizzes or examinations with a partner or receive input or assistance from another student or individual.
- Quizzes and examinations that are given online will have date and time limitations for when the examination will be available. Any student who fails to take the quiz or examination during the time frame allotted will receive a grade of "0" for that assessment.
- All examinations and quizzes must *only* be taken by the student enrolled in the course.

Students Requiring Testing Accommodations

Students who have been granted a letter of testing accommodations in accordance with Federal Laws,* will generally take all scheduled *in person* examinations at the Division of Academic Success offices (VMI Building 1000 E. Marshall St). This will assure a testing environment that addresses the student's specific accommodation need.

*American Disabilities Act 1990, amended 2008; Rehabilitation Act 1977

E. Course Grades of "C" or "Fail" in a pass/fail course

A student who receives a first grade of "C" or below, or a "Fail" in a pass/fail course in any graduate course required for graduation must repeat the course. The course must be repeated before taking any courses for which the course in question is a prerequisite. A student who receives a second course grade of "C" or "Fail" in any graduate course is terminated from the graduate program.

Students should be aware that following any failure to meet progression standards, placement in clinical courses is not guaranteed and is made on a space-available basis.

Students will receive official communication from the school related to course grades of "C" or below, or a "Fail" in a pass/fail course. The Master's Program Coordinator will request a meeting with

students who earn a grade of “C” or below, or a “Fail” in a pass/fail course to help them make plans for continuing in the program.

F. Grade Appeals

The School of Nursing follows the university guidelines with the exception of spring grades. For grades awarded in the spring semester, the written appeal must be submitted no later than 14 days after the beginning of the summer semester. Refer to the VCU Grade Review Procedure for additional information.

G. Separation from the School of Nursing

Before separating from the School of Nursing, the student must drop/withdraw from all nursing courses. The student should contact the University registrar for any additional guidance and requirements for separation from the school.

H. Readmission after Dismissal from the Graduate Program

Following dismissal from the Master’s program, a student may not be readmitted for two consecutive semesters. In order to be considered for possible readmission, a student must submit a personal statement with the admission packet that demonstrates insight into the reasons for the dismissal and presents a thoughtful, reasoned plan for success, if readmitted. All courses required for the Master’s Program and taken after a student is readmitted must be completed with a grade of "B"/satisfactory or better. After readmission, if a student is unsuccessful in one course (“C” or below or “Fail” in a pass/fail course), the student may not proceed in the Master’s Program and is dismissed from the School of Nursing.

Additional information relevant to the student's particular situation also may be required by the Master’s Program Committee. Re-application to the Master’s Program does not guarantee a readmission. When available, faculty of the courses for which students received a grade that was the basis for the original dismissal will be involved in the evaluation of the readmission packet.

I. Timeline from Admissions to Graduation

The time limit for completion of the Master’s and Post-Master’s programs is six years.

J. Withdrawal from Courses

Refer to university policy (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/general-academic-regulations-graduate-students/leave-absence-withdrawal-policies/>). Students should consult with course faculty and Master’s Program Coordinator prior to withdrawing from a course.

K. Leave of Absence

See the university policy (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/general-academic-regulations-graduate-students/leave-absence-withdrawal-policies/>). Students should meet with the Master’s Program Coordinator to request a leave of absence. Students should be aware that following a leave of absence, placement in clinical courses is not guaranteed and made on a space-available basis. In addition, the student will be following the plan of study for the new cohort.

L. Change in Concentration

Students are admitted to a specific concentration. A request for a concentration change will require reapplication to the VCU Graduate School and the School of Nursing. Students should contact the Master’s Program Coordinator for more information.

M. Communicating Issues and Concerns

The School of Nursing strives to create an atmosphere that facilitates communication between students and faculty and maximizes student learning and achievement. If students have issues/concerns regarding their courses, clinical experiences or any aspect of their academic program, they are expected to demonstrate professionalism in addressing their issues/concerns to the appropriate person(s). The academic advisor (for undergraduate students) or appropriate Program Director can assist students in navigating the appropriate steps.

The following steps will aid in effectively communicating issues and concerns.

1. The student should first meet with and discuss the issue/concern with the faculty member directly related to the issue/concern. (If the student feels uncomfortable addressing the issue/concern directly with that individual, the student may proceed to step 2. However, faculty have a right to be informed of student issues/concerns that involve them.)
2. If the issue/concern remains unresolved after step 1, the student should meet with the Program Director to discuss the issue/concern. The Program Director will review the issue/concern and a) facilitate a resolution with course faculty for course-related issues/concerns and/or b) refer the issue/concern to the appropriate Department Chair for faculty related issues.
3. If the issue/concern remains unresolved after step 2, the student should meet with the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs to discuss the issue/concern.
4. If additional actions are indicated, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs will direct the student to the Dean and other university-level processes, as appropriate.

N. Unprofessional Conduct

In addition to those standards of conduct described in the Rules and Procedures of Virginia Commonwealth University and the VCU Medical Center Code of Conduct, a student may be suspended or dismissed from the school for failure to meet academic requirements or failure to exhibit the attitudes and skills deemed necessary to function as a professional nurse. The School of Nursing recognizes its responsibility to the nursing profession and to the health care consumer. Therefore, any action by a nursing student considered to be unprofessional conduct shall be deemed cause for disciplinary action.

Unprofessional conduct may be defined as, but is not limited to:

- Fraud or deceit in filing application for admission to school such as false representation on the application.
- An act that violates the accepted social norms regarding conduct of one person towards another.
- Social norms refer to the laws, written or unwritten, that protects the individual and/or his/her property from unwanted acts of another such as stealing, lying, cheating and slander.
- Conviction of a felony.
- Honor code violation (See “VCU Honor System” on page 23)

O. Retention of Course/Clinical Materials

Students are strongly encouraged to keep a record of course and clinical materials from each course taken throughout your program of study. Information from such courses may be valuable in seeking certification, licensure, and employment after graduation. Some states require detailed information about course and clinical work including course outlines for licensure. Some examples of

information that may be useful to keep includes course syllabi, evaluations from both instructors and preceptors, logs, major papers, and case studies.

Practicum Policies

A. Enrollment Restrictions for Practicum Nursing Courses

Enrollment in practicum courses is restricted to students admitted to the School of Nursing or those enrolled in an international exchange program with VCU School of Nursing. Enrollment in all practicum courses is based on availability of space in these courses.

B. Practicum Placements

Student practicum assignments are based on course objectives, faculty/student assessment of individual learning needs, preceptor availability, resources, and availability of sites with established affiliation agreements. To ensure quality practicum experiences, the School manages all practicum placements. Practicum sites are thoroughly vetted by the faculty and an Affiliation Agreement between the school and the site must be established. Therefore, students should not contact potential preceptors directly, but rather discuss practicum placement opportunities with their Concentration Coordinator.

Students will complete an electronic practicum application the semester before each practicum course. The Clinical Placement Coordinator will send this application to students via email.

All students are required to travel throughout the state of Virginia to the practicum site as assigned. If a student is unable to travel due to personal or health reasons, the student will need to withdraw from the practicum course. Additionally, the School does not pay student costs related to the practicum. Out of state practicum placement requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Practicum schedules are based on preceptor availability, which is unpredictable. Preceptors' schedules may not be available until the beginning of the semester.

Furthermore, there are conditions set forth in affiliation agreements including onboarding paperwork, compliance documentation, and/or applications set by the facility. **It is the student's responsibility to ensure all practicum requirements are met and to provide the proper documentation by the posted due dates.** If the student fails to comply with these conditions, then the student will not be allowed to participate in the practicum; the student will not successfully complete the course.

C. Student Responsibilities

Students will adhere to the following expectations:

1. The student is expected to attend an information session conducted the semester before their first practicum placement. This session will include information about onboarding requirements, professional attire, and other expectations of the practicum experience.
2. The student is expected to have working knowledge of Typhon NPST, the VCU SON electronic student tracking system. Training is provided during a Practicum 101 information session. It is mandatory for students to attend the presentation or view the presentation video prior to practicum courses.
3. The student will place a current Curriculum Vitae (CV), CPR certification, and a record of up-to-date immunizations in Typhon. This documentation is due one full semester prior to practicum courses.
4. The student will complete the Graduate Practicum Placement Application by the due date.

5. The student will complete necessary onboarding paperwork and requirements before the first day of any practicum experience or as required.
6. All required practicum hours must be completed during the semester in which the practicum course is offered.
7. The student will review the electronic preceptor orientation information with their preceptor on the first day of the practicum experience. Additionally the student will:
 - Orient the preceptor to Typhon – to view the student CV, log clinical hours bi-weekly, and to complete the mid-term and final *Preceptor Evaluation of Student* form.
 - Assist with the Affiliate Faculty paperwork if desired by the preceptor
8. The student will ensure the preceptor is using Typhon to approve clinical hours and to complete midterm and final evaluations (see dates in syllabus).
9. Scores of “2” or less on the “Preceptor Evaluation of Student” at midterm require an improvement or remediation plan. The remediation plan will be made by the student and preceptor, and discussed with the faculty for final approval. Course faculty will determine student’s pass or fail of the clinical component of practicum courses.
10. The student will complete a *Student Evaluation of Preceptor* form and *Student Evaluation of Clinical Site* form prior to the end of the semester.
11. The student will hand-write a thank you note to preceptor.

D. Practicum Evaluations

Course faculty of record will conduct an evaluation of the student, site, and preceptor. The evaluations will include direct observation of the student in a clinical setting (real or simulation) and/or telecommunication with student-faculty-preceptor as needed.

The student will conduct an evaluation for the clinical site and preceptor. The preceptor will conduct a mid-term and final evaluation of the student. Midterm evaluations will be available in Typhon two weeks before the midterm of the semester and final evaluations will be available four weeks before the final day of the semester. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that the preceptor has completed in Typhon the mid-term and final evaluation, and approved the clinical time log.

E. Required Certification

CPR

All students entering the School of Nursing must have current certification in Basic Life Support (BLS) for Health Care Providers from the American Heart Association before they begin their first clinical nursing course and maintain certification throughout enrollment in VCU School of Nursing. Students with expired BLS certification will be unable to enroll in practicum courses.

CPR certification must include:

- One and two-rescuer CPR
- CPR for infants, children and adults
- Rescue breathing for choking infants, children and adults

Students must upload current CPR cards into Typhon. CPR cannot expire in the middle of any semester and must be current in order for you to register for clinical sections. The Master’s Program Coordinator will send reminders and may provide available classes, but recertification courses can always be found through the American Heart Association website: www.heart.org. Additionally, the student must have the CPR card with them during practicum experiences.

HIPAA

All students must complete **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)** training prior to enrollment in their first practicum course.

ACLS

All students in the Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner concentration must successfully complete Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) certification prior to beginning Acute Care practica.

F. Tracking of Practicum Learning Experiences

All graduate nursing students are required to use the student tracking system (Typhon NPST) approved by School of Nursing at the time of enrollment. Typhon NPST is an electronic system used to track practicum experiences and compliance with required School of Nursing health and certification records. All certifications listed in section E. above as well as a current, unrestricted RN license and University Immunization Requirements will be uploaded to Typhon.

There is a one-time fee of \$80 upon registration. This fee covers the entire Master's/Post-Master's program, and the portfolio may be accessed a determined period of time after graduation. There are video tutorials available in the Typhon database for instructions on how to upload. All requirements must be kept current in Typhon. The Master's Program Coordinator will perform a monthly audit of Typhon to confirm students' compliance. An advising hold that restricts registration will be placed on students' accounts if they fail to keep their health and certification documents current.

G. Professional Appearance and Attire in Practicum Settings

The Faculty of the School of Nursing believes that an image of professional competence, self-respect and respect for others is conveyed, in part, by one's appearance and attire. In addition, certain aspects of one's appearance and attire have implications for patient safety and the ability to perform one's duties effectively. To address these professional concerns, the School of Nursing has adopted the following policy, which outlines requirements and expectations with respect to professional appearance and attire while in practicum settings.

General guidelines

The School of Nursing expects students in any of its programs to consistently present, through appearance and attire, a positive public image of both nursing and the VCU School of Nursing.

General appearance should contribute to effective educational and patient care environments and reflect a high standard of personal cleanliness and hygiene at all times.

Clothing (including uniforms, lab coat and street clothes) must be clean, neat, free of wrinkles and well-fitted.

Regardless of attire, VCU ID badge must be worn in all practicum or practicum related situations (including but not limited to pre-practicum assessment, patient care situations, observational experiences and simulation settings such as the VCU SON Clinical Learning Center).

Students are expected to adhere to this policy. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from the practicum agency and is evidence of unprofessional behavior.

Professional attire

Professional attire consists of clothes that are consistent with "business casual".

- For men, trousers worn at or near the waist and shirts with sleeves and collars which are buttoned so that the chest is covered.
- For women, slacks or moderately cut dresses or skirts around knee length. Modestly constructed tops that have sleeves and do not reveal cleavage should be worn with slacks or skirts.
- For all, shoes should be low-heeled with closed toes, and of non-porous material. Socks or stockings must be worn as appropriate.
- For all, fingernails should be trimmed and without nail polish. Please note nail polish and/or artificial nails including extensions, tips, gel overlays, resin wraps, silks, paper UVC polish and acrylic fingernails all pose unacceptable infection risks to patients.

Professional judgment and discretion should be exercised in selecting street clothing for wear in clinical situations when a uniform is not required. To assist in the development of a professional wardrobe, the following list is provided to describe types of clothes and shoes that do not convey a professional image:

- Any item of clothing constructed of see-through fabrics
- Jeans and other items constructed of denim
- Tee shirts
- Sweatshirts or sweatpants
- Tight fitting pants or tops
- Slogan imprinted items
- Shorts, skorts and Capri-length pants
- Short or slit skirts
- Clothing which exposes midriffs, back, chest or underwear
- Low rise pants or rolled-down waist band of scrub pants
- Flip-flops or slides
- Open-toed sandals
- Hats or headdresses of any sort, unless worn for medical or religious purposes

Graduate student uniform

Nurse practitioner graduate students should wear appropriate professional attire in practicum settings as per dress code of the practicum site. The lab coat must provide the following information which is visible at all times when in a practicum setting: student's name, credentials (RN, BSN), and SON Graduate Student. This information can be embroidered directly on the lab coat or students can wear a name tag on the lab coat. Students must also wear a yellow hangtag identifying them as a Nurse Practitioner student.

Faculty or practicum agencies will provide information when modifications apply to this expectation.

Students may purchase a lab coat and name tag at the MCV campus bookstore prior to their first clinical practicum course. The Master's Program Coordinator will provide students with the yellow NP student hangtag before the first practicum course.

Students in all practicum experiences are expected to present a professional appearance that reflects the standards of Virginia Commonwealth University School of Nursing.

H. Attendance

Students are responsible for informing preceptors of any unavoidable absence or arrival delay from the agreed-upon schedule with their preceptor. In the event of severe weather, students should check with course faculty, preceptor, and/or placement site to determine a contingency plan.

Graduation and Commencement

At the start of the final semester of the program, students will receive details via email regarding the initiation of the graduation check out process, along with specifics for the ceremonies. The University and the School of Nursing hold ceremonies in May and December. There is no August ceremony, but August graduates are invited to participate in December's ceremonies. School of Nursing Recognition Ceremonies typically take place on the Friday evening before the university's graduation ceremony. Students are also encouraged to attend the university-wide ceremony on the following Saturday morning, where the nursing graduates will be recognized as a whole.

More information regarding graduation and commencement can be found on the university's website: <http://www.commencement.vcu.edu/Graduation-Info/>

Tuition Support and Scholarship

VCU School of Nursing is committed to investing in the future of our nursing students. As a result of generous contributions from donors and alumni, we are able to support students' academic study through various scholarship awards. School of Nursing scholarships are designated only to students admitted into the Undergraduate, Master's, DNP or Ph.D. nursing program.

All interested applicants must submit a complete online School of Nursing scholarship application. Eligibility for scholarship support will vary according to the outlined criteria. Consideration is given only to applicants who meet the minimum requirements specific to the scholarship for which they are applying.

Scholarship funds established by the School of Nursing are intended to supplement other University-level sources, and awarded based on a variety of factors, including donor-directed criteria, need, merit, or merit paired with demonstrated financial need. Scholarship funds do not require repayment. See each scholarship description for any special conditions.

Scholarship cycles, eligibility requirements and application processes are published on the VCU School of Nursing website. Unless stated otherwise, scholarship awards are for the current academic year.

Please note: Need-based scholarships require a complete Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) on file with the VCU Financial Aid Office for the upcoming academic year. Recipients of Need-based scholarships must remain in good academic standing and provide stewardship as indicated, by writing "Thank You" letters, attending scholar/donor luncheons, participating in programs/events, etc. or otherwise delineated according to the donor's request. Merit-based scholarships require students to remain in good academic standing and provide stewardship as indicated, by writing "Thank You" letters, attending scholar/donor luncheons, participating in programs/events, etc. or otherwise delineated according to the donor's request.

Temple Memorial Award

Initiated in 1977, this award honors the memory of Dr. T. Edward Temple, second President of VCU, and Mrs. Temple. This award is given at the School of Nursing Recognition Ceremony to a graduating student in the Master's Program. The person selected to receive the award possesses

characteristics that demonstrate exemplary performance in the advocacy role for the consumer of health care services and for the profession of Nursing.

School of Nursing Organizations

A. Sigma Theta Tau Honor Society of Nursing

The Gamma Omega Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing was established at Virginia Commonwealth University in 1978. Chapter membership is open to current nursing students as well as nurse clinicians and nurse researchers. Review the membership guidelines and view networking opportunities at their webpage: <http://nursing.vcu.edu/about-us/sigma-theta-tau/>

B. Student Leadership Council

The Student Leadership Council seeks to establish a strong sense of community within the School of Nursing through student, faculty, and staff interactions. The members of the Student Leadership Council provide advice and the student perspective to School of Nursing leadership on a variety of topics and they serve as ambassadors of the School of Nursing among their peers and in their communities. Student membership consists of class directors from each program and leaders of School of Nursing student organizations. The council meets three times per semester during the regular academic year.

VCU Honor System

Virginia Commonwealth University is committed to the intellectual and academic success of a diverse student body; research and discovery that advances knowledge, inspires creativity, and improves human health; and the global engagement of students, faculty, and staff that transforms lives and communities. In pursuit of these goals, the university's core values are accountability, achievement, collaboration, freedom, innovation, service, diversity, and integrity.

VCU recognizes that honesty, truth, and integrity are values central to its mission to advance knowledge and student success both in the world VCU students will enter, or return to, once they have graduated and in the university community as a microcosm of that world. In a community devoted to learning, a foundation of honor must exist if that community is to thrive with respect and harmony. Therefore, all members of the university community must conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty, ethics, and integrity at all times. Additional standards of academic and professional integrity consistent with this Honor System may apply to students in professional programs.

Because academic dishonesty is a violation of the profound trust of the entire academic community, the Honor System intends to:

- Foster an environment at VCU where academic dishonesty is not tolerated;
- Prevent any student from gaining, or attempting to gain, an unfair advantage over other students through academic misconduct;
- Define what constitutes academic misconduct and what conduct is expected of all members of the university community;
- Cultivate a centralized system of education and awareness of the Honor System; and
- Instill in members of the university community their responsibility for upholding academic integrity by recognizing that:
 - There is NO neutral stance when dishonesty occurs;
 - Apathy or acquiescence in the presence of academic dishonesty is not a neutral act;

- Failure to take action detracts from a community of trust; and
- Knowingly allowing others to represent the work of others as their own is as serious an offense as submitting another's work as your own.

It is important to report EVERY suspected incident of academic misconduct to ensure consistency across courses and departments, due process rights, appropriate response to repeated academic misconduct, and protection from unfounded allegations of misconduct.

More information can be found on the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at <https://students.vcu.edu/studentconduct/vcu-honor-system/> .

Use of Social Media

Patient confidentiality is fundamental to professional nursing practice.

Please remember the following:

- Patient information learned by the nursing student during the course of treatment must be safeguarded by the nursing student.
- You may not take, send, or receive oral recordings, pictures, or videos of patients, family members, or colleagues in the clinical setting.
- You cannot discuss (orally or in writing) your patients, family members, health care providers, healthcare personnel, or your clinical experiences on any social media site.
- You must promptly report any breach of confidentiality or privacy to your course or clinical faculty.

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) has published an excellent white paper on the Nurse's Guide to Social Media available on their website: <https://www.ncsbn.org/3739.htm>

Non-Academic Policies and Information

A. Inclement Weather and Disaster Response

The School of Nursing follows the University Office Closings Policy and other policies that relate to disasters and emergencies will be followed.

Information Related to Inclement Weather and Disaster Response

The VCU Office Closings Policy and other policies and procedures relating to disasters and emergencies are located on the University web site.

The telephone number for the VCU Inclement Weather and Information Hotline is (804) 828-6736. Any university emergencies or notifications of inclement weather will be announced on the main university website, <http://alert.vcu.edu> and the local news. In the event that there are detailed announcements to augment the information provided by the University, they will be disseminated to School of Nursing employees and students via e-mail.

B. Emergency Preparedness Procedures

For the university: Current operating conditions for the university are posted at the VCU Alert Website <http://alert.vcu.edu>. The website provides resources for emergency contacts and what to do in the event of an emergency. This website is where students, faculty and staff can sign up for text alerts. VCU's text message alert system is used to provide immediate information about campus emergencies, weather delays and cancellations. **When the university is closed, practica are cancelled.

Specific to the School of Nursing: In the event that there is an emergency that is specific to the School of Nursing, an email will go out to faculty, staff and students, information will be posted on the School of Nursing main webpage, and information will be posted on the SON Blackboard portal for School of Nursing students, faculty and staff. Faculty, staff and students can contact the SON emergency phone number at 804-828-1307. This message will be updated in the event that there is a situation that closes the School of Nursing building when the university remains open.

Fire: Follow the VCU “RACE” procedure.

- Remove anyone in danger.
- Activate the alarm.
- Close the doors to contain the smoke as the building is being evacuated.
- Extinguish the fire, if trained.

Earthquake

- Do not set off the fire alarm.
- Do not exit the building.
- Do shelter in place.

Tornado

- Move to the lowest level and interior space or along a corridor wall away from windows and glass in shelter.
- Close all doors, including main corridors.
- If outside, quickly move to nearest sturdy building.

Hazardous Materials

- Call 804-828-1234
- Evacuate and designate someone to talk with the Fire Department.
- Notify emergency personnel if exposed, or have details on the spill.

Assembly Areas: There are two designated assembly areas for the School of Nursing. One area is the loading zone located directly adjacent to the building. The second area is the sidewalk near the Martin Luther King Bridge.

Floor Wardens: The School of Nursing Floor Wardens are responsible for coordinating the evacuation of the floors during a fire or other evacuation emergency. Additionally, floor wardens are responsible for assisting any evacuees located in the “Areas of Rescue Assistance” or notifying emergency responders of their location.

C. Food and Beverages Policy

Food and beverages (with the exception of bottled water) can be consumed only in designated areas of the building. It is the responsibility of all members of the School of Nursing community to assist with enforcement of this policy. Designated areas in which food and beverages are allowed are the 1st floor student lounge, quiet study area and doctoral student area, third floor faculty/administrative professional lounge, Dean’s conference room, conference rooms 3038, 3001f and 4001c and private offices. Permission for use of classrooms 1013 and 2001d for functions that include consumption of food and beverages may be requested. Requests for permission for these special functions must be made to the Office of the Dean and scheduled through the room scheduling office of the School of Nursing. Scheduled classes will have priority for use of these specially designated classrooms.

When a room is used for a function that involves food and beverages, it carries with it the responsibility of the users to clean the room entirely of any food or containers and dispose of in appropriate receptacles. If it is necessary for the School of Nursing to contract professional cleaning for any debris, spills or stains that resulted from the special event, costs will be charged to the sponsor of the event.

D. Building Access

The School of Nursing building is open Monday – Friday from 7:00 am – 5:00 pm. Students must use their ID badge to access the building after hours, including weekends.

E. Student Identification Cards/Badges

All faculty and staff at the university and medical center are required to carry an identification card. ID cards are required to access the School of Nursing after business hours and are needed to obtain a discount (10%) at the campus bookstores, hospital cafeteria and various other dining locations on campus (see Places to Eat). The first ID card is provided at no charge. Replacement cards (lost or stolen) are provided for a fee which is due at the time the new card is obtained. For more information, consult the Card Office website (<http://vcucard.vcu.edu/>).

F. Student Lounge

The Student Lounge on the first floor is open to all students. If food and/or drinks are being consumed, students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves as necessary. The kitchen that is located off of the student lounge is equipped with microwaves and a refrigerator. The refrigerator is purged every Friday afternoon and all remaining items are discarded.

G. Quiet Study Room

The Quiet Study Room is open during building operating hours and can be accessed through the Student Lounge. No food or drink are allowed in the Quiet Study Room.

H. Photocopying

There is a photocopier for student use available at the top of the stairs on the second floor.

I. Technology

There are both Windows and Apple computers available for student use on the first floor in the quiet study lounge, located adjacent to the student lounge.

There are two pay for print stations located near the vending machines on the first floor and at the top of the stairs on the second floor. Students can go to: <http://go.vcu.edu/p4p> to download the drivers on their personal laptops so that they can print to the pay for print stations from their laptops. Sending a job to pay for print allows access to the print job from any pay for print printer on campus.

Pay for print requires RamBucks which can be used for goods and services at VCU. To find out how to obtain and use RamBucks, please go to: <http://vcucard.vcu.edu/myrambucks.html>

J. Parking

Visit the VCU parking website at <http://www.parking.vcu.edu>

K. Name and Address Changes

Students must ensure that their name and addresses (local, mailing, permanent and remit to) are up-to-date in eServices at all times. For name changes, students must submit to the Office of Records &

Registration a copy of their new Social Security card (or applicable documentation) and an updated Personal Update Form. Additional procedural information can be found in the student's eServices account, under the "Personal Information" tab.

L. Recycling and Trash Receptacles

The VCU campus is an environment of sustainability. As such, there are specially-marked containers in the School of Nursing building and around campus for specific salvageable materials. There are separate trash containers for "organic items" such as food and liquid and for all other items such paper, plastic, metal, and glass.

M. Library Services

The VCU Library has many resources to assist you in meeting your academic goals. The library has a School of Nursing liaison who can assist students with educational and research needs. The following is the link to the VCU Library: www.library.vcu.edu.

Nationally, Tompkins-McCaw Library for the Health Sciences is a top-tier health sciences library. It holds one of the largest and most extensive collections of health sciences literature in North America. The library primarily serves the MCV Campus, which houses one of the oldest medical schools in the South, founded in 1838. The library, in one form or location or another, has been a part of the medical campus since 1897. Located on 12th Street—two blocks north of the Gateway Building at the VCU Medical Center and within easy walks to the schools of Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Nursing and Allied Health Professions—the library is physically central to today's health sciences campus. It provides access to affiliated students, faculty, clinicians and practicing health care professionals on and off campus.

N. Division for Academic Success (DAS)

The Division for Academic Success provides academic support for students who need assistance with test-taking skills, study strategies and preparation for board/licensing exams. DAS also provide disability support services to students on the MCV Campus who have a documented disability. The following is a link to the DAS website: <http://das.vcu.edu>

O. VCU Writing Center

The Writing Center is a peer-based learning support service for currently-enrolled VCU students. Their primary focus is to help students become the strongest writers possible. The Writing Center does not edit or proofread papers, but rather discusses big picture issues such as structure, organization, and how to best articulate ideas. For more information, the Writing Center's website is: <http://writing.vcu.edu/>.

Appendix A: Student Verification Form



2017-18 MS Student Verification Form

Name (please print): _____

I certify that I have carefully read and I am responsible for all of the following:

- I acknowledge that email is the official mode of communication for the university and school and that I am responsible for using my VCU.edu email address for university/school related communication.
- I acknowledge that I am responsible for knowing the requirements and the policies of the University and School of Nursing as published in the policies on the school's web page, the University Bulletin, and my program specific SON Student Handbook
 - o Background/Drug Screening Policy and related items:
 - All students must report any felony or misdemeanor charges and convictions, which occur during their enrollment within 10 business days of occurrence to the Director of Student Success.
 - Students are also required to complete the Background/Drug Screening process upon re-entry subsequent to a leave of absence, program withdrawal or program separation greater than thirty consecutive days.
 - I acknowledge that some clinical agencies with which I work as a student may have policies including but not limited to additional drug testing, immunizations, criminal background checks, and manner of dress or appearance and that I am responsible for knowing and following these policies and am responsible for any associated cost.
 - I give permission to the VCU SON to release relevant information if required by the clinical agency. I understand the information may be released orally or in the form of copies of written records, as preferred by the requestor. The information released could contain, but is not limited to, such non directory information as: work history, clinical rotation/practicum history, last four digits of my social security number, previous educational institutions, copies of my BLS/ACLS, copies of my immunization history, and copies of my nursing license.
 - It is possible that I may have to withdraw from the School of Nursing if my criminal background check or a positive drug test makes me ineligible for placements at clinical sites because of contractual agreements between the school and the agency.
- I acknowledge that practicum placements may be anywhere in Virginia and on any day of the week including evening or weekend hours in addition to the regular day hours and that specific placement requests are not guaranteed. I acknowledge that I am responsible for my own transportation to practicum sites as well as the associated costs related to these experiences.
- I acknowledge that professional nursing ethics prohibits posting photographs or any information about a patient or staff through any electronic or non-electronic means including, but not limited to social networking sites, blogs, and tweeting. Violation may result in disciplinary and/or legal action.
- I acknowledge that I must register for all nursing courses by the required date. I am responsible for reviewing the VCU academic calendar and course schedule.
- I acknowledge and understand that should I become out of step with my plan of study due to voluntary or medical withdrawal, leave of absence, suspension, or failure that I will be permitted to return to my program of study pending space availability.
- I acknowledge that I must send my **Certificate of Immunization for VCU Health Science Students** to the School of Nursing prior to the first day of class. I acknowledge that University Student Health Services will review my record and will place a hold on my account if I am not in compliance with university requirement.
- I acknowledge that I have read, understand and am compliant with the Technical Standards. I am responsible for informing the Master's Program Director and pertinent course faculty immediately if my compliance with the Technical Standards changes during the course of the program.
- I certify that my license to practice as a Registered Nurse is current and that failure to renew my RN license will result in removal from all nursing courses.

My signature indicates that I am in compliance with all of the conditions stated above.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B: Plans of Study

2 yr Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner

Course #	Course Title	Credits	Term Planned	Term Completed	
NURS 501	Advanced Professionalization I	1 (1d)	Fall 1		
NURS 504	Advanced Nursing Practice: The Biological Basis of Health & Illness Across the Lifespan	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
NURS 511	Health Assessment for Advanced Practice Nursing (with lab)	3 (2d/1c)	Fall 1		
NURS 512	Evidence-Based Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
		10			
NURS 502	Advanced Nursing Practice: Pharmacotherapeutics	3 (3d)	Spring 1		
NURS 507	Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Across the Lifespan	4 (4d)	Spring 1		
NURS 611	Primary Care Advanced Practice Clinical Procedures	1 (0.5d/0.5c)	Spring 1		
NURS 612	Acute Care Advanced Practice Clinical Procedures	1 (0.5d/0.5c)	Spring 1		
NURS 618	Diagnosis & Management in Adult-Gerontology Acute Care I	3 (3d)	Spring 1		
		12			
NURS 503	Ethics, Advanced Nursing Practice & the Health Care Environment	3 (3d)	Summer 1		
NURS 678	Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Practicum I	3 (3c)	Summer 1		
NURS 619	Diagnosis & Management in Adult-Gerontology Acute Care II	3 (3d)	Summer 1		
		9			
GRTY 610	Geropharmacology	1 (1d)	Fall 2		
NURS 662	Diagnosis & Management in Adult-Gerontology Critical Care	4 (4d)	Fall 2		
NURS 669	Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Practicum II	4 (4c)	Fall 2		
		9			
NURS 508	Policy, Process & Systems for Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Spring 2		
NURS 601	Advanced Professionalization II	1 (1d)	Spring 2		
NURS 679	Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Practicum III	5 (5c)	Spring 2		
		9			
	TOTAL	49			

c=clinical hours (1 clinical hour=45 clock hours) **d=didactic**

3 yr Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner

Course #	Course Title	Credits	Term Planned	Term Completed	
NURS 501	Advanced Professionalization I	1 (1d)	Fall 1		
NURS 504	Advanced Nursing Practice: The Biological Basis of Health & Illness Across the Lifespan	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
NURS 512	Evidence-based Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
		7			
NURS 502	Advanced Nursing Practice: Pharmacotherapeutics	3 (3d)	Spring 1		
NURS 507	Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Across the Lifespan	4 (4d)	Spring 1		
		7			
NURS 503	Ethics, Advanced Nursing Practice & the Health Care Environment	3 (3d)	Summer 1		
		3			
NURS 511	Health Assessment for Advanced Nursing Practice (with lab)	3 (2d/1c)	Fall 2		
		3			
NURS 508	Policy, Process & Systems for Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Spring 2		
NURS 611	Primary Care Advanced Practice Clinical Procedures	1 (0.5d/0.5c)	Spring 2		
NURS 612	Acute Care Advanced Practice Clinical Procedures	1 (0.5d/0.5c)	Spring 2		
NURS 618	Diagnosis & Management in Adult-Gerontology Acute Care I	3 (3d)	Spring 2		
		8			
NURS 678	Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Practicum I	3 (3c)	Summer 2		
NURS 619	Diagnosis & Management in Adult-Gerontology Acute Care II	3 (3d)	Summer 2		
		6			
GRTY 610	Geropharmacology	1 (1d)	Fall 3		
NURS 662	Diagnosis & Management in Adult-Gerontology Critical Care	4 (4d)	Fall 3		
NURS 669	Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Practicum II	4 (4c)	Fall 3		
		9			
NURS 601	Advanced Professionalization II	1 (1d)	Spring 3		
NURS 679	Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Practicum III	5 (5c)	Spring 3		
		6			
TOTAL		49			

c=clinical hours (1 clinical hour=45 clock hours) d=didactic

2 yr Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner

Course #	Course Title	Credits	Term Planned	Term Completed	
NURS 501	Advanced Professionalization I	1 (1d)	Fall 1		
NURS 504	ANP: The Biological Basis of Health & Illness Across the Lifespan	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
NURS 511	Health Assessment for Advanced Practice Nursing (with lab)	3 (2d/1c)	Fall 1		
NURS 512	Evidence-based Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
		10			
NURS 502	ANP: Pharmacotherapeutics	3 (3d)	Spring 1		
NURS 507	Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Across the Lifespan	4 (4d)	Spring 1		
NURS 611	Primary Care Advanced Practice Clinical Procedures	1 (0.5d/0.5c)	Spring 1		
NURS 615	Diagnosis & Management in Adult-Gerontology Primary Care I	3 (3d)	Spring 1		
		11			
NURS 503	Ethics, Advanced Nursing Practice & the Health Care Environment	3 (3d)	Summer 1		
NURS 676	Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Practicum I	3 (3c)	Summer 1		
NURS 616	Diagnosis & Management in Adult-Gerontology Primary Care II	3 (3d)	Summer 1		
		9			
GRTY 610	Geropharmacology	1 (1d)	Fall 2		
NURS 675	Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Practicum II	4 (4c)	Fall 2		
NURS 617	Advanced Gerontology Primary Care Across the Care Continuum	4 (4d)	Fall 2		
		9			
NURS 508	Policy, Processes and Systems for Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Spring 2		
NURS 601	Advanced Professionalization II	1 (1d)	Spring 2		
NURS 677	Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Practicum III	5 (5c)	Spring 2		
		9			
	TOTAL	48			

c=clinical hours (1 clinical hour=45 clock hours) d=didactic

3 yr Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner

Course #	Course Title	Credits	Term Planned	Term Completed	
NURS 501	Advanced Professionalization I	1 (1d)	Fall 1		
NURS 504	ANP: The Biological Basis of Health & Illness Across the Lifespan	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
NURS 512	Evidence-based Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
		7			
NURS 502	ANP: Pharmacotherapeutics	3 (3d)	Spring 1		
NURS 507	Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Across the Lifespan	4 (4d)	Spring 1		
		7			
NURS 503	Ethics, Advanced Nursing Practice & the Health Care Environment	3 (3d)	Summer 1		
		3			
NURS 511	Health Assessment for Advanced Practice Nursing (with lab)	3 (2d/1c)	Fall 2		
		3			
NURS 508	Policy, Processes and Systems for Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Spring 2		
NURS 611	Primary Care Advanced Practice Clinical Procedures	1 (0.5d/0.5c)	Spring 2		
NURS 615	Diagnosis & Management in Adult-Gerontology Primary Care I	3 (3d)	Spring 2		
		7			
NURS 676	Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Practicum I	3 (3c)	Summer 2		
NURS 616	Diagnosis & Management in Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Management II	3 (3d)	Summer 2		
		6			
GRTY 610	Geropharmacology	1 (1d)	Fall 3		
NURS 675	Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Practicum II	4 (4c)	Fall 3		
NURS 617	Advanced Gerontology Primary Care Across the Care Continuum	4 (4d)	Fall 3		
		9			
NURS 601	Advanced Professionalization II	1 (1d)	Spring 3		
NURS 677	Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Practicum III	5 (5c)	Spring 3		
		6			
	TOTAL	48			

c=clinical hours (1 clinical hour=45 clock hours) d=didactic

2 yr Family Nurse Practitioner

Course #	Course Title	Credits	Term Planned	Term Completed	
NURS 501	Advanced Professionalization I	1 (1d)	Fall 1		
NURS 504	Advanced Nursing Practice: The Biological Basis of Health & Illness Across the Lifespan	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
NURS 511	Health Assessment for Advanced Practice Nursing (with lab)	3 (2d/1c)	Fall 1		
NURS 512	Evidence-Based Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
NURS 627	Foundational Perspectives Of Family-Centered Care	2 (2d)	Fall 1		
		12			
NURS 502	Advanced Nursing Practice: Pharmacotherapeutics	3 (3d)	Spring 1		
NURS 507	Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Across the Lifespan	4 (4d)	Spring 1		
NURS 629	Diagnosis & Management in Family Primary Care I	4 (4d)	Spring 1		
NURS 611	Primary Care Advanced Practice Clinical Procedures	1 (0.5d/0.5c)	Spring 1		
		12			
NURS 503	Ethics, Advanced Nursing Practice & the Health Care Environment	3 (3d)	Summer 1		
NURS 630	Diagnosis & Management in Family Primary Care II	4 (4d)	Summer 1		
		7			
NURS 631	Primary Care of Select Populations	2 (1d/1c)	Fall 2		
NURS 643	Family Primary Care Practicum I	6 (6c)	Fall 2		
NURS 644	Family Primary Care Seminar	1 (1d)	Fall 2		
		9			
NURS 508	Policy, Process & Systems for Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Spring 2		
NURS 601	Advanced Professionalization II	1 (1d)	Spring 2		
NURS 645	Family Primary Care Practicum II	6 (6c)	Spring 2		
NURS 646	Family Primary Care Final Synthesis Seminar	1 (1d)	Spring 2		
		11			
	TOTAL	51			

c=clinical hours (1 clinical hour=45 clock hours) **d=didactic**

3 yr Family Nurse Practitioner

Course #	Course Title	Credits	Term Planned	Term Completed	
NURS 501	Advanced Professionalization I	1 (1d)	Fall 1		
NURS 504	Advanced Nursing Practice:: The Biological Basis of Health & Illness Across the Lifespan	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
NURS 512	Evidence-Based Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
		7			
NURS 502	Advanced Nursing Practice:: Pharmacotherapeutics	3 (3d)	Spring 1		
NURS 507	Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Across the Lifespan	4 (4d)	Spring 1		
		7			
NURS 503	Ethics, Advanced Nursing Practice & the Health Care Environment	3 (3d)	Summer 1		
NURS 511	Health Assessment for Advanced Nursing Practice (with lab)	3 (2d/1c)	Fall 2		
NURS 627	Foundational Perspectives Of Family-Centered Care	2 (d)	Fall 2		
		5			
NURS 508	Policy, Process & Systems for Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Spring 2		
NURS 629	Diagnosis & Management in Family Primary Care I	4 (4d)	Spring 2		
NURS 611	Primary Care Advanced Practice Clinical Procedures	1 (0.5d/0.5c)	Spring 2		
		8			
NURS 630	Diagnosis & Management in Family Primary Care II	4 (4d)	Summer 2		
NURS 631	Primary Care of Special Populations	2 (1d/1c)	Fall 3		
NURS 643	Family Primary Care Practicum I	6 (6c)	Fall 3		
NURS 644	Family Primary Care Seminar	1 (1d)	Fall 3		
		9			
NURS 601	Advanced Professionalization II	1 (1d)	Spring 3		
NURS 645	Family Primary Care Practicum II	6 (6c)	Spring 3		
NURS 646	Family Primary Care Final Synthesis	1 (1d)	Spring 3		
		8			
	TOTAL	51			

c=clinical hours (1 clinical hour=45 clock hours) **d=didactic**

2 yr Nursing Administration and Leadership

Course #	Course Title	Credits	Term Planned	
NURS 512	Evidence-based Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Fall 1	
NURS 609	Health Care Delivery & Reimbursement Systems for Nurse Leaders	3 (3d)	Fall 1	
NURS 613	Organizational Behavior & Leadership for Nurse Leaders	3 (3d)	Fall 1	
NURS 508	Policy, Process & Systems for Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Spring 1	
NURS 614	Organizational Systems & Leadership for Nurse Leaders	3 (3d)	Spring 1	
NURS 651	Decision Analysis for Quality Outcomes Across Populations	3 (3d)	Spring 1	
NURS 639	Health Informatics for Nurse Leaders	3 (3d)	Summer 1	
NURS 696	Practicum I, Comparative Health Care Delivery Systems for Nurse Leaders	2 (2c)	Summer 1	
NURS 652	Health Care Managerial Finance I: For Nurse Leaders	3 (3d)	Fall 2	
NURS 666	Strategic and Change Management for Quality Outcomes for Nurse Leaders	2 (2d)	Fall 2	
NURS 668	Human resource (HR) and Customer Relationship Management for Nurse Leaders	3 (3d)	Fall 2	
NURS 697	Practicum II, Comparative Interdisciplinary Health Care Leadership Roles	1 (1c)	Fall 2	
NURS 653	Health Care Managerial Finance II: Economic Evaluation and Analysis	3 (3d)	Spring 2	
NURS 695	Managing for Performance and Health Care Outcomes	3 (3d)	Spring 2	
NURS 698	Practicum III, Applied Integrative Health Care Delivery Leadership	3 (3c)	Spring 2	
	TOTAL	41		

c=clinical hours (1 clinical hour = 45 clock hours) d=didactic

3 yr Nursing Administration and Leadership

Course #	Course Title	Credits	Term Planned	Term Completed
NURS 512	Evidence-based Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Fall 1	
NURS 609	Health Care Delivery & Reimbursement Systems for Nurse Leaders	3 (3d)	Fall 1	
NURS 508	Policy, Process and Systems for Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Spring 1	
NURS 614	Organizational Systems and Leadership for Nurse Leaders	3 (3d)	Spring 1	
NURS 639	Health Informatics for Nurse Leaders	3 (3d)	Summer 1	
NURS 613	Organizational Behavior and Leadership for Nurse Leaders	3 (3d)	Fall 2	
NURS 668	Human resource (HR) and Customer Relationship Management for Nurse Leaders	3 (3d)	Fall 2	
NURS 651	Decision Analysis for Quality Outcomes Across Populations	3 (3d)	Spring 2	
NURS 695	Managing for Performance and Health Care Outcomes	3 (3d)	Spring 2	
NURS 696	Practicum I, Comparative Health Care Delivery Systems for Nurse Leaders	2 (2c)	Summer 2	
NURS 652	Health Care Managerial Finance I: For Nurse Leaders	3 (3d)	Fall 3	
NURS 666	Strategic and Change Management for Quality Outcomes for Nurse Leaders	2 (2d)	Fall 3	
NURS 697	Practicum II, Comparative Interdisciplinary Health Care Leadership Roles	1 (1c)	Fall 3	
NURS 653	Health Care Managerial Finance II: Economic Evaluation and Analysis	3 (3d)	Spring 3	
NURS 698	Practicum III, Applied Integrative Health Care Delivery Leadership	3 (3c)	Spring 3	
	TOTAL	41		

c-clinical hours (1 clinical hour = 45 clock hours) d-didactic

2 yr Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Course #	Course Title	Credits	Term Planned	Term Completed	
NURS 501	Advanced Professionalization I	1 (1d)	Fall 1		
NURS 504	Advanced Nursing Practice: The Biological Basis of Health & Illness Across the Lifespan	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
NURS 511	Health Assessment for Advanced Practice Nursing (with lab)	3 (2d/1c)	Fall 1		
NURS 512	Evidence-Based Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
		10			
NURS 502	Advanced Nursing Practice: Pharmacotherapeutics	3 (3d)	Spring 1		
NURS 507	Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Across the Lifespan	4 (4d)	Spring 1		
NURS 657	Advanced Practice Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing: Theory & Practice Across the Lifespan	4 (4d)	Spring 1		
		11			
NURS 503	Ethics, Advanced Nursing Practice & the Health Care Environment	3 (3d)	Summer 1		
NURS 656	Diagnosis & Management of Psychiatric Disorders Across the Life Span	4 (4d)	Summer 1		
		7			
NURS 635	Advanced Practice Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Practicum I	6 (6c)	Fall 2		
NURS 636	Advanced Practice Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Seminar	3 (3d)	Fall 2		
		9			
NURS 508	Policy, Process & Systems for Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Spring 2		
NURS 601	Advanced Professionalization II	1 (1d)	Spring 2		
NURS 637	Advanced Practice Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Practicum II	6 (6c)	Spring 2		
		10			
	TOTAL	47			

c-clinical hours (1 clinical hour = 45 clock hours) d-didactic

3 yr Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Course #	Course Title	Credits	Term Planned	Term Completed	Comments
NURS 501	Advanced Professionalization I	1 (1d)	Fall 1		
NURS 504	Advanced Nursing Practice: The Biological Basis of Health & Illness Across the Lifespan	3 (3d)	Fall 1		
		4			
NURS 502	Advanced Nursing Practice: Pharmacotherapeutics	3 (3d)	Spring 1		
NURS 507	Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Across the Lifespan	4 (4d)	Spring 1		
		7			
NURS 503	Ethics, Advanced Nursing Practice & the Health Care Environment	3 (3d)	Summer 1		
		3			
NURS 511	Health Assessment for Advanced Nursing Practice (with lab)	3 (2d/1c)	Fall 2		
NURS 512	Evidence-Based Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Fall 2		
		6			
NURS 508	Policy, Process & Systems for Advanced Nursing Practice	3 (3d)	Spring 2		
NURS 657	Advanced Practice Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing: Theory & Practice Across the Lifespan	4 (4d)	Spring 2		
		7			
NURS 656	Diagnosis & Management of Psychiatric Disorders Across the Life Span	4 (4d)	Summer 2		
		4			
NURS 635	Advanced Practice Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Practicum I	6 (6c)	Fall 3		
NURS 636	Advanced Practice Psychiatric Mental Health Seminar	3 (3d)	Fall 3		
		9			
NURS 601	Advanced Professionalization II	1 (1d)	Spring 3		
NURS 637	Advanced Practice Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Practicum II	6 (6c)	Spring 3		
		7			
TOTAL		47			

c=clinical hours (1 clinical hour=45 clock hours) **d=didactic**