



School of Nursing

Graduate Nursing Student Handbook

Academic Year 2026–2027

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome from the Chief Nurse Administrator

Aloha and welcome to the Hawai'i Pacific University (HPU) School of Nursing (SON) graduate programs. Whether you are beginning the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), Post-Master's Certificate (PMC), or Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program, you are joining a community committed to excellence in nursing education, scholarship, leadership, and service. We are honored to be part of your professional journey and look forward to supporting your growth as an advanced practice nurse, nurse leader, educator, or scholar.

At the SON, we are guided by the values of Kuleana, Pono, and Aloha. Kuleana reminds us that learning is a shared responsibility. Students, faculty, staff, preceptors, and community partners each have an important role in creating an environment that supports learning, professionalism, and success. Pono calls us to act with integrity, accountability, and ethical decision-making in every interaction. Aloha reminds us to lead with kindness, humility, compassion, and respect for one another while honoring the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives that strengthen our profession.

Graduate education is challenging, and you will be expected to think critically, embrace lifelong learning, and continually develop as a nurse leader. This handbook is an important resource that outlines program expectations, academic policies, clinical requirements, and the support services available to you throughout your time at HPU. I encourage you to become familiar with its contents and to seek guidance whenever questions arise. Together, we will uphold the highest standards of nursing practice while preparing you to improve the health of the individuals, families, and communities you serve.

On behalf of our faculty and staff, welcome to the HPU SON. We are excited to work alongside you and wish you every success in your graduate education.

With Aloha,

Jessica Nishikawa
Chief Nurse Administrator

About This Handbook

This Graduate Nursing Student Handbook provides information about the Hawai'i Pacific University School of Nursing (SON), graduate nursing programs, academic and clinical policies, student resources, and program expectations. It serves as a guide for students enrolled in the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), and Post-Master's Certificate (PMC) programs.

Students enrolled in the nurse practitioner programs are academically prepared to apply for national certification and advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) licensure in their selected population focus upon successful completion of all program requirements.

This handbook supplements the Hawai'i Pacific University Academic Catalog, course syllabi, and other official University policies. Students are responsible for becoming familiar with the information contained in these resources and complying with all applicable University and SON policies. In the event of a conflict between this handbook and University policies or the Academic Catalog, the University policies and the Academic Catalog take precedence.

The SON reserves the right to revise this handbook as necessary to reflect changes in accreditation standards, regulatory requirements, or University policies. Students will be notified of substantive revisions through official University communication channels.

This handbook is organized into sections addressing program information, academic policies, clinical education, progression requirements, and student resources. Students should consult both this handbook and the HPU Academic Catalog throughout their enrollment.

Accreditation

Institutional Accreditation

Hawai'i Pacific University is accredited by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC).

Address:

WASC Senior College and University Commission

1080 Marina Village Parkway, Suite 500

Alameda, CA 94501

Phone: (510) 748-9001

Nursing Program Accreditation

The baccalaureate degree program in nursing, master's degree program in nursing, Doctor of Nursing Practice program, and post-graduate APRN certificate program at Hawai'i Pacific

University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) (<http://www.ccneaccreditation.org>).

Address:

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
655 K Street NW, Suite 750
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: (202) 887-6791

State Approval

The SON is approved by the Hawai'i Board of Nursing.

Address:

Hawai'i Board of Nursing
Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs
Professional and Vocational Licensing Division
335 Merchant Street, Room 301
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: (808) 586-3000

History of the SON

Hawai'i Pacific University (HPU) was founded in 1965 as Hawai'i Pacific College, an independent, nonsectarian liberal arts institution. The university received its initial accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in 1973 and was renamed HPU in 1990 to reflect its continued growth and expanding academic offerings.

In 1992, HPU merged with Hawai'i Loa College, adding several academic programs, including the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN). During this period, the nursing program expanded to include multiple BSN pathways and offered courses at clinical partner sites, including The Queen's Medical Center and Tripler Army Medical Center.

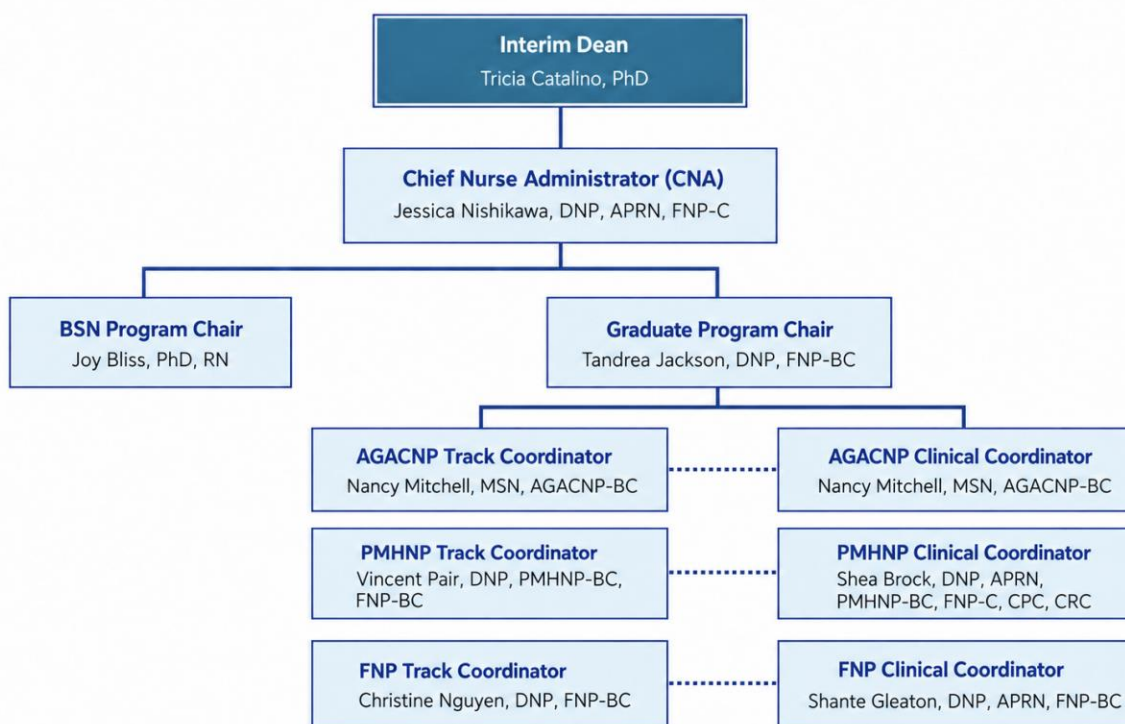
The nursing programs have maintained continuous national accreditation for more than three decades. The BSN program was first accredited by the National League for Nursing (NLN) in 1992, followed by accreditation of the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program in 2000. The SON subsequently achieved accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), with the BSN, MSN, and post-graduate APRN certificate programs most recently reaccredited through 2027.

The MSN program was established in 1998 to prepare advanced practice nurses and nurse leaders. In 2017, HPU admitted the inaugural cohort of students to its Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program following approval by the WASC Senior College and University Commission

In 2019, the SON relocated from the Hawai'i Loa campus in Kāne'ohe to HPU's downtown Honolulu campus at Waterfront Plaza. The move provided students with improved access to major clinical partners and a modern simulation center featuring health assessment and skills laboratories, high-fidelity simulation suites, and clinical examination rooms

In 2021, the SON launched fully online graduate nursing programs, expanding access to students across the United States while maintaining high academic and clinical standards. Today, the SON offers baccalaureate, master's, post-graduate APRN certificate, and doctoral nursing programs committed to preparing nurse leaders who advance health through excellence in education, clinical practice, scholarship, and service.

SON Organizational Chart



SON Directory

SON Administration and Staff

Name	Title	Email
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Jessica Nishikawa, DNP, FNP-C	Chief Nurse Administrator and Associate Professor	jnishika@hpu.edu
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Sharon Caldwell	Clinical Credentialing Assistant	Scaldwell@hpu.edu

SON Faculty

Name	Title	Email
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Mission, Vision, and Values

Hawai'i Pacific University

Mission

Hawai'i Pacific University is an international learning community set in the rich cultural context of Hawai'i. Students from around the world join HPU for an American education built on a liberal arts foundation. Our innovative undergraduate and graduate programs anticipate the changing needs of the community and prepare graduates to live, work, and learn as active members of a global society.

Vision

Hawai'i Pacific University provides a highly personalized, student-centered educational experience through innovative, applied, and experiential learning opportunities that prepare graduates to excel in their professions, contribute to their communities, and address the evolving needs of society.

Values

The HPU community is guided by three foundational Hawaiian values that shape our learning environment and our commitment to students, colleagues, and the communities we serve.

Aloha – We demonstrate kindness, compassion, humility, respect, and collaboration in our relationships with others.

Pono – We act with integrity, honesty, accountability, and respect while upholding the highest ethical standards.

Kuleana – We embrace our shared responsibility to our students, our profession, our communities, and one another through stewardship, service, and academic excellence.

School of Nursing

Mission

The Hawai'i Pacific University School of Nursing is committed to educating competent and caring professionals in the practice of health promotion and healthcare. Graduates are lifelong learners and leaders dedicated to delivering holistic care in the spirit of aloha for a global community.

Vision

The School of Nursing aspires to be recognized for excellence in nursing education by preparing compassionate, culturally responsive nurse leaders who improve the health of individuals,

families, communities, and populations through innovation, scholarship, service, and evidence-based practice.

Philosophy

The philosophy of the University School of Nursing is consistent with the mission and values of Hawai'i Pacific University and reflects the profession's commitment to excellence in nursing education, clinical practice, scholarship, leadership, and service. The School embraces the AACN The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education (2026) and prepares graduates who provide person-centered, evidence-based, culturally responsive care to diverse populations.

People - We believe every person possesses inherent dignity, worth, and the right to compassionate, respectful, and equitable healthcare. Nurses partner with individuals, families, communities, and populations to support informed decision-making, promote autonomy, and improve health outcomes across the lifespan.

Environment - We believe health is influenced by physical, social, cultural, economic, and environmental factors. Nurses create inclusive and supportive environments that foster collaboration, cultural humility, health equity, and respect for diverse perspectives while addressing the social determinants of health.

Health - We believe health is a dynamic state of physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being. Nursing promotes health, prevents illness and injury, manages acute and chronic conditions, supports recovery, and provides compassionate end-of-life care through evidence-based practice and health promotion.

Learning - We believe learning is a lifelong, collaborative process that promotes inquiry, critical thinking, clinical judgment, innovation, and professional growth. Faculty facilitate active, experiential learning while students assume responsibility for their education through integrity, accountability, reflection, and continuous self-improvement.

Nursing - We believe nursing is both a science and an art grounded in caring, evidence-based practice, ethical decision-making, and collaboration. Nurses integrate clinical expertise, research, informatics, quality improvement, leadership, and interprofessional partnerships to provide safe, person-centered care and improve the health of individuals, families, communities, and populations. Guided by the values of Aloha, Pono, and Kuleana, graduates are prepared to lead positive change and advance the nursing profession in Hawai'i and beyond.

GRADUATE PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

Graduate Nursing Program Learning Outcomes

The Graduate Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) provide the foundation for the MSN and Post-Master's Certificate (PMC) curricula. Each course includes course learning outcomes that align with one or more program learning outcomes. Because courses address different content and competencies, not every program learning outcome is addressed in every course.

The Graduate Program Learning Outcomes are derived from and aligned with the following:

- HPU Mission, Vision, and Values
- HPU SON Mission, Vision, and Philosophy
- American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education (2026)
- National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF) Nurse Practitioner Role Competencies (2022)
- NONPF Population-Focused Competencies for the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP), Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (AGPCNP), and Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) specialties (2022)
- Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification, and Education (2008)
- National Task Force Standards for Quality Nurse Practitioner Education (6th ed., 2022)

AACN Domain	Graduate Program Learning Outcome (MSN, PMC, DNP)
1. Knowledge for Nursing Practice	Integrate advanced scientific knowledge, the humanities, nursing history, and clinical expertise to design, implement, lead, and evaluate innovative, evidence-based interventions that optimize individual and population health outcomes.
2. Person-Centered Care	Lead partnerships with individuals, families, and communities to create compassionate, culturally responsive, person-centered plans of care that respect patient values and promote health and well-being across the lifespan while addressing physical, spiritual, emotional, and psychosocial needs.
3. Population Health	Design, implement, and evaluate evidence-based strategies that improve the health of populations through health promotion, disease prevention, systems thinking, and advocacy to address social determinants of health and advance health equity.
4. Scholarship for the Nursing Discipline	Contribute to the advancement of nursing science through scholarly inquiry, critical appraisal of evidence, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination of evidence-based practice.
5. Quality and Safety	Lead and evaluate evidence-based quality improvement initiatives that enhance healthcare safety, effectiveness, efficiency, and equity while promoting a culture of continuous improvement.
6. Interprofessional Partnerships	Collaborate with and lead interprofessional teams to improve patient outcomes through respectful communication, shared decision-making, advocacy, and coordinated care.

7. Systems-Based Practice	Influence and transform complex healthcare systems through leadership, policy advocacy, systems thinking, and resource stewardship to improve access, quality, and sustainability of healthcare.
8. Informatics and Healthcare Technologies	Integrate informatics, data science, and emerging technologies to enhance clinical decision-making, care coordination, patient safety, quality improvement, and patient education.
9. Professionalism	Demonstrate integrity, accountability, ethical leadership, cultural humility, and professional responsibility while advocating for social justice and advancing the nursing profession.
10. Personal, Professional, and Leadership Development	Engage in lifelong learning, reflective practice, leadership development, resilience, and professional growth to meet the evolving needs of individuals, communities, and healthcare systems.

Assessment of Program Learning Outcomes

Student achievement of the Graduate Nursing Program Learning Outcomes is assessed throughout the curriculum using direct and indirect measures, including course assignments, examinations, simulation, practicum performance evaluations, scholarly activities, the DNP Project (as applicable), and program evaluation processes. Assessment results are used for continuous program improvement.

GRADUATE NURSING PROGRAMS

Overview of Graduate Programs

The SON offers Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), and Post-Master's Certificate (PMC) programs. Students may enroll on a full-time or part-time basis, depending on the program.

Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)

The online Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program is designed for registered nurses who hold a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and seek preparation for advanced practice as a nurse practitioner. All didactic coursework is delivered online, while clinical practicum experiences are completed in person at approved healthcare agencies under the supervision of qualified preceptors.

Students select one of three nurse practitioner specialties:

Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (AGACNP)

Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)

Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP)

The curriculum includes graduate core courses in advanced pathophysiology, advanced pharmacology, advanced health assessment and diagnostic reasoning, evidence-based practice, healthcare policy, and advanced nursing practice. Students also complete specialty-specific didactic and clinical practicum courses that prepare them for advanced practice within their selected population focus.

The MSN program may be completed in approximately 6 semesters of full-time study.

Nurse Practitioner Specialty Tracks	Credits	Clinical Hours	Typical Length
Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (AGACNP)	46	630	6 semesters
Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)	45	624	6 semesters
Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP)	48	630	26 semesters

Upon successful completion of all program requirements, graduates are awarded the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree. Graduates are academically prepared to apply for national certification in their respective nurse practitioner specialty and for Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) licensure, consistent with the requirements of the applicable certifying organization and state board of nursing.

Doctor of Nursing Practice (BSN-to-DNP)

The online Doctor of Nursing Practice (BSN-to-DNP) program is designed for registered nurses who hold a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and seek preparation for advanced practice as a nurse practitioner while earning the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree. All didactic coursework is delivered online, while clinical and practicum experiences are completed in person at approved healthcare agencies under the supervision of qualified preceptors.

Students select one of three nurse practitioner specialties:

Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (AGACNP)

Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)

Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP)

The curriculum integrates advanced practice nursing preparation with doctoral-level coursework in evidence-based practice, systems leadership, quality improvement, population health, healthcare informatics, healthcare policy, finance, and clinical scholarship. Students also complete a scholarly DNP Project that addresses a practice or systems-level healthcare problem.

The program may be completed in approximately 8 semesters of full-time study or 11 semesters of part-time study. Students complete more than 1,000 post-baccalaureate practicum hours, including concentration-specific clinical experiences and DNP Project practicum hours.

Nurse Practitioner Specialty Tracks	Credits	Full-Time	Part-Time
Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (AGACNP)	73	8 semesters	11 semesters
Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)	72	8 semesters	11 semesters
Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP)	75	8 semesters	11 semesters

Upon successful completion of all program requirements, graduates are awarded the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree. The BSN-to-DNP program does not confer a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree. Graduates are academically prepared to apply for national certification in their respective nurse practitioner specialty and for Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) licensure, consistent with the requirements of the applicable certifying organization and state board of nursing.

Doctor of Nursing Practice (Post-Master's DNP)

The online Post-Master's DNP program is designed for APRNs who have earned a master's degree in nursing and seek to expand their expertise in systems leadership, evidence-based practice, quality improvement, healthcare systems, and population health.

All didactic coursework is delivered online in an asynchronous format. Students complete doctoral coursework and a scholarly DNP Project that addresses a practice or systems-level healthcare problem through the application of evidence-based practice.

The program may be completed in approximately five semesters (20 months). Students complete DNP Project practicum hours in an approved practice setting under the guidance of a DNP Project Chair and a qualified site mentor.

Upon successful completion of all program requirements, graduates are awarded the DNP degree.

Post-Master's Certificate

The online PMC program is designed for APRNs who have earned an MSN or DNP degree and wish to complete the educational requirements for an additional nurse practitioner population focus.

The program builds upon previous graduate nursing education by providing specialty-specific didactic coursework and supervised clinical practicum experiences that prepare graduates for national certification and APRN licensure in an additional population focus. All didactic

coursework is delivered online, while clinical practicum experiences are completed in person at approved healthcare agencies under the supervision of qualified preceptors.

Students may select one of the following nurse practitioner specialties:

Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (AGACNP)

Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)

Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP)

Because each student's previous graduate education and clinical experiences are individually evaluated, the number of required credits and clinical practicum hours varies. An individualized plan of study is developed based on prior academic preparation, completed clinical experiences, and the selected nurse practitioner specialty.

Upon successful completion of all program requirements, graduates are awarded a Post-Master's Certificate in their selected nurse practitioner specialty. Graduates are academically prepared to apply for national certification in the selected specialty and for APRN licensure, consistent with the requirements of the applicable certifying organization and state board of nursing.

Certification and Licensure

Graduates of the HPU SON graduate programs are academically prepared to pursue national certification and, where applicable, Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) licensure upon successful completion of all program requirements.

Students enrolled in the MSN, BSN-to-DNP, and PMC programs who complete a nurse practitioner specialty are academically prepared to apply for national certification in their respective specialty. The SON prepares graduates for the following national certification examinations:

Nurse Practitioner Specialty	National Certification Organization(s)
Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)	American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board (AANPCB) or American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)
Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (AGACNP)	American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) or AACN Certification Corporation
Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP)	American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)

Graduates who obtain national certification may apply for APRN licensure in the state or territory where they intend to practice. Licensure requirements are established by individual state boards of nursing and vary by jurisdiction.

Graduates of the Post-Master's DNP program may already be licensed APRNs. Completion of the Post-Master's DNP program does not, by itself, qualify graduates for an additional nurse practitioner specialty certification or APRN licensure in another population focus.

Certification and licensure requirements are established by national certifying organizations and state boards of nursing and may change over time. Students are responsible for reviewing the current requirements of the applicable certifying organization and state board of nursing in the jurisdiction where they intend to practice.

Completion of a graduate nursing program at HPU does not guarantee eligibility for national certification or APRN licensure.

GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Official graduate nursing course descriptions, including prerequisites and credit hours, are maintained in the Hawai'i Pacific University Academic Catalog. Students should refer to the catalog for the most current course information. Linked here: [Nursing Course Catalog](#)

TECHNOLOGY AND LEARNING RESOURCES

The SON utilizes a variety of technology platforms and University resources to support teaching, learning, communication, and clinical education. Students are responsible for maintaining access to required technology systems, monitoring official communications, and using University resources in accordance with SON and University policies.

HPU Email

Official HPU email is the primary method of communication between the SON and students. Students are responsible for monitoring their HPU email regularly and responding promptly to communications from faculty, staff, and the University. Failure to review official email communications does not excuse students from complying with University or SON requirements, deadlines, or policies.

Blackboard

Blackboard is the University's learning management system and is used to deliver course materials, assignments, examinations, grades, announcements, and other course communications. Students are responsible for accessing Blackboard regularly, monitoring course announcements, and completing all required coursework by established deadlines. Course-specific requirements, grading policies, and assignment expectations are provided in individual course syllabi.

Exxat

Exxat is the SON's clinical education management system and is used to manage clinical placements, compliance documentation, clinical schedules, and practicum records. Students are responsible for maintaining current information in Exxat, completing required documentation, and responding promptly to requests related to clinical education.

Additional information regarding clinical placements, documentation, and compliance requirements is provided in the Practicum Policies and Procedures chapter of this handbook.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools may support learning when used responsibly and in accordance with course expectations. Students are responsible for ensuring that all submitted academic work accurately reflects their own knowledge and complies with University academic integrity policies and course requirements.

Faculty may establish course-specific expectations regarding the appropriate or prohibited use of AI tools. Students are expected to follow these requirements and acknowledge AI use when required.

Additional information is provided in the Academic Integrity policy in the Academic Policies and Procedures chapter of this handbook, as well as in individual course syllabi.

Technology Expectations

Students are responsible for maintaining reliable access to the technology necessary for successful participation in graduate nursing courses. This includes access to a computer, internet connectivity, required software, and other technologies identified by the SON or course faculty.

Students are expected to maintain basic technology proficiency, safeguard University accounts and passwords, and promptly report technology issues that may affect course participation.

Additional technology requirements may be identified in individual course syllabi.

Library Services

HPU Library Services provides access to print and electronic collections, research databases, scholarly journals, eBooks, multimedia resources, and other materials that support graduate nursing education and evidence-based practice. Library services are available to students both on campus and online.

Students are encouraged to utilize library resources and consult with library faculty for assistance with literature searching, database navigation, evidence synthesis, citation management, and

scholarly research. Research consultations and additional library support services are available to assist students throughout their graduate studies.

Current information regarding library locations, hours, research assistance, online resources, and library services is available on the HPU Libraries website.

Writing Center

The HPU Writing Center provides academic writing support through consultations and educational resources. Graduate nursing students are encouraged to utilize Writing Center services to strengthen scholarly writing, organization, citation, and academic communication skills.

Information Technology Support

Information Technology (IT) Support provides assistance with University technology resources, including HPU accounts, email, Blackboard, software, network access, and other technology-related services. Students experiencing technical difficulties should contact the HPU Help Desk promptly to minimize disruptions to academic progress. Graduate nursing students also have access to 24/7 technical support through resources available within Blackboard.

Current information regarding technology resources, Help Desk services, and technical support is available through the HPU Help Desk.

PRACTICUM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Clinical Education Overview

Clinical education is an integral component of the HPU SON's graduate nursing programs. Practicum experiences provide students with opportunities to integrate advanced nursing knowledge, clinical reasoning, and evidence-based practice in a variety of healthcare settings under the supervision of qualified preceptors and SON faculty.

Clinical practicum experiences are designed to facilitate the progressive development of competencies required for advanced practice nursing within the student's selected nurse practitioner specialty. Through direct patient care, interprofessional collaboration, clinical decision-making, and reflective practice, students apply knowledge acquired through didactic coursework to the care of individuals, families, and populations across diverse practice environments.

Clinical education is conducted in approved healthcare agencies that provide learning experiences consistent with course and program outcomes. Students are expected to demonstrate professional accountability, ethical practice, effective communication, cultural humility, and

adherence to all SON, clinical agency, and regulatory requirements throughout each practicum experience.

Successful completion of all required clinical practicum experiences, including the required number of supervised clinical hours and achievement of course competencies, is necessary for progression and graduation from the graduate nursing program.

Clinical Placement Process

The SON (SON) is responsible for coordinating clinical practicum placements in collaboration with qualified clinical agencies and approved preceptors. Clinical placements are selected to provide learning experiences that support course objectives, program outcomes, and the development of advanced practice nursing competencies.

Students are expected to participate actively in the clinical placement process by responding promptly to requests for information, submitting required documentation by established deadlines, and maintaining compliance with all SON and clinical agency requirements. Failure to complete required documentation or maintain clinical compliance may delay or prevent participation in clinical practicum experiences.

Clinical placements are contingent upon the availability of qualified clinical sites, preceptors, and fully executed affiliation agreements between HPU and the clinical agency. Although the SON makes every effort to accommodate students' educational needs, placement at a specific clinical site, healthcare organization, geographic location, or with a requested preceptor cannot be guaranteed.

Students are encouraged to identify potential clinical sites and qualified preceptors and discuss these opportunities with the SON. All proposed clinical sites and preceptors are subject to review and approval by the SON. Students should not independently finalize clinical placements or make commitments with clinical agencies or preceptors without prior authorization from the SON.

New clinical placements require sufficient time for site review, preceptor approval, execution of affiliation agreements, and completion of other required documentation. Early communication with the SON is strongly encouraged to facilitate timely placement.

Students may be required to travel to approved clinical sites to meet course and program requirements. Travel, parking, lodging, and other expenses associated with clinical education are the responsibility of the student.

Once a clinical placement has been confirmed, changes may be made only with approval from the SON. Requests for placement changes will be considered only under exceptional circumstances and are subject to the availability of alternative clinical sites and qualified preceptors.

Clinical Site and Preceptors

Clinical practicum experiences are completed in healthcare settings approved by the SON and supervised by qualified preceptors. Clinical sites and preceptors are selected to provide learning experiences that support course objectives, program outcomes, and the development of advanced practice nursing competencies. All clinical sites and preceptors must meet SON requirements and receive approval before a student may begin a practicum experience.

Clinical Site Requirements

Clinical practicum experiences must be completed at clinical sites approved by the SON. Clinical sites are selected to provide learning experiences that support course objectives, program outcomes, and the development of advanced practice nursing competencies within the student's nurse practitioner specialty.

Approved clinical sites must:

- Provide learning experiences that align with course and program objectives.
- Offer access to an appropriate patient population and clinical experiences consistent with the student's specialty and level of preparation.
- Maintain a safe, professional, and ethical learning environment.
- Comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and accreditation requirements.
- Have a current affiliation agreement with HPU before the student begins any clinical activities.

Students may recommend potential clinical sites for consideration by the SON. However, all clinical sites are subject to review and approval by the SON and must meet program requirements before a placement can be confirmed.

Questions regarding clinical placements, affiliation agreements, clinical site approval, preceptor approval, or other practicum-related requirements should be directed to the Graduate Nursing Practicum Team at **practicum@hpu.edu**. Students may also consult their track-specific Clinical Coordinator regarding specialty-specific practicum requirements and clinical learning experiences.

Preceptor Qualifications

The SON reviews all proposed preceptors to ensure they meet course, program, accreditation, and regulatory requirements. Preceptor eligibility is determined based on the provider's qualifications, scope of practice, clinical expertise, and alignment with the required clinical experiences. Final approval is determined by the appropriate Track Coordinator and Clinical Coordinator.

Preceptors are expected to:

- Hold a current, unrestricted license in the appropriate healthcare profession and jurisdiction.
- Maintain national board certification, when applicable, in the specialty area in which they practice.
- Demonstrate education, clinical expertise, and experience appropriate to the student's nurse practitioner specialty and course objectives.
- Practice in a clinical setting that provides appropriate patient populations and learning experiences consistent with program outcomes.
- Be available to supervise, mentor, and evaluate student performance throughout the practicum experience.
- Comply with all SON and clinical agency requirements for serving as a preceptor.

The SON reviews all proposed preceptors to ensure they meet program, accreditation, and regulatory requirements. Approval of a proposed preceptor is at the discretion of the SON.

Questions regarding preceptor eligibility or approval should be directed to the Graduate Nursing Practicum Team at practicum@hpu.edu or the appropriate track-specific Clinical Coordinator.

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for actively participating in all aspects of the clinical practicum experience and demonstrating professional, ethical, and accountable behavior consistent with the standards of the nursing profession. Students are expected to comply with all HPU SON course, and clinical agency policies and procedures throughout each practicum experience.

Students are expected to:

- Complete all clinical compliance requirements and maintain eligibility to participate in practicum experiences.
- Participate in the clinical placement process by responding promptly to communications, submitting required documentation by established deadlines, and maintaining accurate information in Exxat.
- Attend all scheduled practicum experiences and notify the preceptor, clinical faculty, and SON of any absence or schedule change as soon as possible.
- Arrive prepared for each practicum experience, demonstrate professional conduct, and practice within the scope of a graduate nursing student under appropriate supervision.
- Adhere to all policies, procedures, and professional standards established by the clinical agency, including requirements related to confidentiality, patient privacy, infection prevention, and workplace safety.

- Demonstrate respect, professionalism, and effective communication when interacting with patients, families, preceptors, faculty, clinical staff, and other members of the healthcare team.
- Accurately document clinical hours, required patient encounters, evaluations, and other practicum activities in Exxat by established deadlines.
- Seek guidance from the preceptor and clinical faculty whenever patient care situations exceed the student's knowledge, skills, or authorized scope of practice.
- Immediately report any incident, injury, patient safety concern, or other significant event occurring during the practicum experience to the preceptor and clinical faculty.
- Complete all required course assignments, evaluations, and practicum requirements necessary for successful course completion.

Students are responsible for monitoring communications from the SON and their HPU email account and responding promptly to requests from faculty and the Graduate Nursing Clinical Team. Questions regarding practicum requirements should be directed to practicum@hpu.edu.

Faculty Responsibilities

SON faculty are responsible for facilitating and evaluating student learning throughout the clinical practicum experience. Faculty collaborate with students, preceptors, and clinical agencies to ensure that practicum experiences support course objectives, program outcomes, and the development of advanced practice nursing competencies.

Clinical faculty are responsible for:

- Providing guidance and support throughout the practicum experience.
- Reviewing and approving clinical placements in collaboration with the Graduate Nursing Clinical Team.
- Communicating course expectations, clinical objectives, and evaluation criteria.
- Maintaining regular communication with students and preceptors regarding student progress and clinical performance.
- Evaluating student achievement of course learning outcomes and clinical competencies.
- Providing timely feedback regarding student performance and identifying areas requiring improvement.
- Addressing concerns related to student performance, patient safety, or professional conduct in collaboration with the student, preceptor, Track Clinical Coordinator, and Graduate Nursing Clinical Team, as appropriate.
- Determining successful completion of clinical course requirements and assigning the final clinical evaluation in accordance with SON and University policies.

Faculty serve as educational partners throughout the practicum experience and are available to provide consultation, support, and guidance to promote student success while ensuring safe, ethical, and competent patient care.

Practicum Requirements

Successful completion of the clinical practicum requires students to meet all course, program, and SON requirements. Practicum experiences are designed to promote the integration of advanced nursing knowledge, clinical reasoning, and professional practice through supervised patient care in approved clinical settings.

Students are expected to complete all required clinical hours, participate in scheduled practicum experiences, maintain required documentation, comply with SON and clinical agency policies, and demonstrate professional and ethical conduct throughout the practicum experience. Failure to meet practicum requirements may result in remediation, delayed progression, course failure, or other academic action in accordance with University and SON policies.

The following sections outline the requirements and expectations for successful participation in graduate nursing practicum experiences.

Practicum Attendance

Regular attendance and active participation in all scheduled practicum experiences are essential components of graduate nursing education. Students are expected to attend every scheduled clinical experience, arrive on time, remain for the duration of the scheduled clinical hours, and participate fully in learning activities under the supervision of the approved preceptor.

Students are responsible for communicating promptly with their preceptor and clinical faculty if illness, emergency, or other unforeseen circumstances prevent attendance or require a change to the clinical schedule. Missed clinical experiences must be rescheduled in consultation with the preceptor and approved by clinical faculty. All required clinical hours must be completed before the end of the course unless otherwise approved by the SON.

Students may not independently cancel, reschedule, or substitute clinical experiences without prior approval from the preceptor and clinical faculty. Excessive absences, repeated tardiness, failure to communicate appropriately, or failure to complete required clinical hours may result in remediation, delayed progression, course failure, or other academic action in accordance with SON and University policies.

Students are responsible for documenting attendance and completed clinical hours in Exxat in accordance with SON requirements.

Clinical Hours

Students are required to complete the minimum number of supervised clinical practicum hours established by the curriculum, accreditation standards, and state and national regulatory requirements. Clinical hour requirements vary by graduate program, specialty track, and practicum course and are identified in the applicable curriculum and course syllabus.

Only clinical hours completed under the supervision of an approved preceptor at a SON-approved clinical site may be counted toward practicum requirements. Clinical hours must be directly related to course objectives and provide learning experiences appropriate to the student's specialty track and level of preparation.

Students are responsible for accurately documenting all completed clinical hours in Exxat and submitting documentation in accordance with SON deadlines and procedures. Clinical hours are subject to review and verification by the preceptor, clinical faculty, and the SON. Students must successfully complete all required clinical hours for their program and specialty track before receiving a passing grade in the practicum course. Clinical hours not completed during the scheduled course may delay course completion, progression in the program, or graduation.

Clinical Documentation

Accurate and timely clinical documentation is an essential component of graduate nursing practicum education. Students are responsible for maintaining complete and accurate records of all required practicum activities in accordance with SON, course, and clinical agency requirements.

Students are expected to:

- Document clinical hours, patient encounters, clinical activities, and other required practicum experiences accurately and completely.
- Submit all required clinical documentation by established course and SON deadlines.
- Ensure documentation is truthful, complete, and consistent with actual clinical experiences.
- Obtain required preceptor verification or approval of clinical documentation, as applicable.
- Maintain the confidentiality and privacy of patients in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), applicable laws and regulations, and clinical agency policies. Patient identifiers must never be included in student documentation submitted to the SON.
- Retain copies of required documentation when instructed by the SON.

Failure to maintain accurate, complete, and timely clinical documentation may result in delayed verification of clinical hours, remediation, delayed course progression, course failure, or other academic action in accordance with SON and University policies.

Exxat Requirements

Exxat is the SON's clinical education management system used to support graduate nursing practicum education. Students are required to use Exxat to manage clinical placement activities, maintain compliance records, document clinical experiences, record clinical hours, and complete other practicum-related requirements as directed by the SON.

Students are responsible for:

- Maintaining an active Exxat account throughout enrollment in clinical courses.
- Completing all required profile information and submitting required documentation by established deadlines.
- Monitoring Exxat regularly for placement information, compliance requirements, announcements, and other practicum-related communications.
- Accurately documenting clinical hours, patient encounters, evaluations, and other required practicum activities in accordance with SON and course requirements.
- Ensuring all information entered into Exxat is accurate, complete, and submitted in a timely manner.
- Responding promptly to requests from the SON regarding incomplete or expired compliance items or required documentation.

Students are responsible for maintaining current clinical compliance documentation in Exxat throughout each practicum experience. Failure to maintain required compliance or complete required Exxat documentation by established deadlines may result in delayed clinical placement, inability to participate in practicum experiences, delayed program progression, or other academic action in accordance with SON and University policies.

Questions regarding Exxat, clinical compliance, or practicum documentation should be directed to the Graduate Nursing Practicum Team at practicum@hpu.edu.

Clinical Evaluation

Clinical practicum performance is evaluated throughout each clinical course to determine students' achievement of course learning outcomes, program outcomes, and advanced practice nursing competencies. Evaluation is an ongoing process that incorporates feedback from clinical faculty, preceptors, and the student's demonstrated performance in the clinical setting.

Students are expected to demonstrate safe, ethical, professional, and competent practice while progressively achieving the knowledge, skills, and clinical judgment required for advanced nursing practice. Successful completion of all clinical evaluation requirements is necessary to pass the practicum course and progress in the program.

Clinical Evaluation Process

Student performance is evaluated throughout each practicum experience using course objectives, program learning outcomes, and established clinical competencies. Evaluation is based on direct observation, preceptor feedback, faculty assessment, clinical documentation, required assignments, and other course-specific evaluation methods.

Clinical faculty maintain primary responsibility for evaluating student performance and assigning the final course grade. Preceptors provide ongoing supervision, guidance, and feedback regarding the student's clinical performance; however, the final evaluation and determination of successful course completion remain the responsibility of the clinical faculty.

Students are expected to participate actively in the evaluation process by seeking and responding to feedback, completing required self-assessments and evaluations, and addressing identified areas for improvement. Students who do not demonstrate satisfactory progress toward achieving required clinical competencies may be required to complete remediation or other corrective actions as determined by the SON.

Clinical Performance Concerns

The SON is committed to protecting patient safety and maintaining high standards of professional nursing practice. Students are expected to provide safe, competent, ethical, and professional care appropriate to their level of education and under the supervision of an approved preceptor.

Unsafe clinical performance includes, but is not limited to:

- Actions or omissions that place patients, families, staff, or others at risk for harm.
- Practicing beyond the student's knowledge, competence, or authorized scope of practice.
- Failure to follow clinical agency, SON, or course policies and procedures.
- Unprofessional, unethical, or inappropriate conduct in the clinical setting.
- Failure to maintain patient confidentiality or comply with HIPAA and other applicable privacy requirements.
- Inaccurate, incomplete, or falsified clinical documentation.

Students whose clinical performance raises concerns related to patient safety or professional practice may be removed from the clinical setting pending review by the clinical faculty and the SON. Academic consequences will be determined in accordance with the SON's Unacceptable Practice Policy, Professional Progression Policy, Dismissal Policy, and other applicable University policies.

Clinical Compliance

Students must maintain compliance with all SON, clinical agency, and applicable regulatory requirements throughout enrollment in clinical practicum courses. Students are responsible for

submitting and maintaining current compliance documentation by established deadlines. Failure to maintain required compliance may result in delayed clinical placement, inability to participate in clinical experiences, delayed program progression, or other academic action in accordance with SON and University policies.

Immunizations

Students must maintain all immunization and health screening requirements established by the SON and assigned clinical agencies. Documentation must be current and maintained throughout enrollment in clinical courses. Additional immunizations, testing, or health documentation may be required by individual clinical agencies.

CPR Certification

Students must maintain current cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification at the healthcare provider level throughout all clinical practicum experiences. Certification must remain current without lapse and meet SON and clinical agency requirements.

RN Licensure

Students must maintain a current, unrestricted registered nurse (RN) license in the state where clinical experiences are completed or as otherwise required by the clinical agency and applicable regulations. Students are responsible for notifying the SON immediately of any change in licensure status.

Background Check

Students must successfully complete criminal background screening as required by the SON and assigned clinical agencies before participating in clinical experiences. Additional or repeat background checks may be required by individual clinical agencies.

Drug Screening

Students must complete drug screening in accordance with SON and clinical agency requirements. Additional drug screening may be required before or during clinical placements based on agency policies.

Health Insurance

Students are required to maintain current health insurance coverage throughout enrollment in clinical practicum courses. Proof of health insurance must be submitted and maintained in Exxat in accordance with SON requirements. Additional documentation may be required by assigned clinical agencies.

Students are responsible for ensuring that health insurance coverage remains current throughout each clinical term. Failure to maintain required health insurance may result in delayed clinical placement or inability to participate in practicum experiences.

Professional Liability Insurance

Professional liability (malpractice) insurance is required for all students participating in graduate clinical practicum experiences. Coverage is provided by HPU as part of student tuition and fees and applies only while students are functioning in their role as HPU nursing students during approved educational activities. This coverage does not extend to employment, volunteer activities, or any clinical practice outside of approved SON educational experiences.

HIPAA Compliance

Students are required to comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), all applicable federal and state privacy laws, and the policies of the SON and assigned clinical agencies regarding the protection of patient health information.

Students may access, use, or disclose protected health information (PHI) only as necessary to fulfill approved educational activities and in accordance with applicable laws and clinical agency policies. Patient identifiers must not be included in assignments, clinical documentation submitted to the SON, presentations, or other educational materials unless expressly authorized.

Additional information regarding privacy, confidentiality, and the appropriate use of social media is provided in the HIPAA and Use of Social Media policy in the Academic Policies and Procedures chapter of this handbook.

OSHA Requirements

Students are required to comply with applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations, SON policies, and clinical agency requirements related to workplace safety, infection prevention, exposure control, and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Students are expected to follow established safety protocols, report occupational exposures, injuries, or safety incidents promptly to the preceptor and clinical faculty, and comply with all clinical agency procedures for incident reporting and follow-up.

Additional safety requirements, including OSHA-related education and clinical agency-specific training, may be required before or during clinical practicum experiences.

Confidentiality

Students are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all information obtained through their academic and clinical experiences, including information related to patients, classmates,

faculty, the SON, and clinical agencies. Confidential information may be used only for authorized educational purposes and in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and institutional policies.

Students are responsible for safeguarding confidential information in all forms of communication, including verbal, written, electronic, and social media. Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information may result in academic or disciplinary action in accordance with SON and University policies.

Additional guidance regarding the protection of patient information and the appropriate use of social media is provided in the HIPAA and Use of Social Media policy in the Academic Policies and Procedures chapter of this handbook.

Identification and Professional Appearance

Students participating in clinical practicum experiences are required to maintain current licensure, insurance, and identification requirements and to comply with SON and clinical agency standards for professional appearance. These requirements must be maintained throughout enrollment in clinical courses.

Student Identification

Students are required to carry official HPU identification while participating in clinical practicum experiences and present it upon request by SON faculty or clinical agency personnel. Clinical agencies may require additional identification or security credentials, which students are responsible for obtaining and displaying in accordance with agency policies.

Name Badge

Students must wear the official SON name badge while participating in clinical practicum experiences unless otherwise directed by the clinical agency. The name badge must be clearly visible at all times and worn in accordance with SON and clinical agency requirements. Replacement of lost or damaged name badges is the responsibility of the student. Clinical agencies may require additional identification badges or credentials, which must be displayed in accordance with agency policies.

Dress Code

Students are expected to comply with the SON Dress Code and any additional dress or appearance requirements established by the assigned clinical agency. When clinical agency requirements differ from SON requirements, the clinical agency's policies take precedence. Professional attire is required for all clinical and simulation experiences, as applicable. Failure to comply with dress code requirements may result in removal from the clinical setting or inability to participate in

scheduled learning activities. Additional requirements are provided in the Dress Code policy in the Student Conduct and Expectations chapter of this handbook.

DNP PROJECT

The DNP project is the culminating scholarly experience of the DNP program. The project provides students with the opportunity to integrate evidence-based practice, quality improvement, systems leadership, and clinical scholarship to address a significant healthcare issue and demonstrate achievement of the DNP program learning outcomes. The DNP Project is completed through a sequence of doctoral project courses under the guidance of SON faculty and qualified content experts.

Purpose

The purpose of the DNP Project is to synthesize knowledge acquired throughout the DNP curriculum through the design, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination of an evidence-based practice or quality improvement initiative. The project demonstrates the student's ability to translate evidence into practice, improve healthcare outcomes, lead practice change, and contribute to nursing scholarship and healthcare improvement.

Project Requirements

Successful completion of the DNP Project is required for graduation from the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program. The project is completed through the designated DNP Project course sequence under the guidance and oversight of SON faculty, the Scholarly Project Committee, and the student's Content Expert.

Students are expected to:

- Successfully complete all required DNP Project courses.
- Successfully complete all required DNP Project milestones.
- Complete and document the required academically supervised DNP practice hours.
- Obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) and/or organizational approval before project implementation when required.
- Comply with all applicable ethical, regulatory, institutional, and clinical site requirements.
- Demonstrate satisfactory achievement of all project and program outcomes.

Course-specific assignments, project milestones, submission requirements, deadlines, and evaluation criteria are provided in the applicable DNP Project course syllabi and Blackboard course sites.

DNP Practice Hours

Students enrolled in the DNP program must complete the required academically supervised DNP practice hours in accordance with SON requirements and applicable accreditation standards. Students are responsible for accurately documenting practice hours throughout the DNP Project sequence and submitting required documentation as directed. Practice hours are reviewed and validated by the DNP Project Chair and Content Expert, as applicable.

Scholarly Project Committee

Each DNP student is responsible for establishing a Scholarly Project Committee in consultation with the DNP Project Chair. The committee provides academic guidance, mentorship, and evaluation throughout the development, implementation, and completion of the DNP Project. The committee consists of the DNP Project Chair and the Content Expert. Additional committee members may be appointed when appropriate or at the student's request.

DNP Project Chair

The DNP Project Chair serves as the student's academic advisor and primary faculty mentor throughout the development, implementation, evaluation, and completion of the DNP Project. The Chair provides academic guidance, oversees the development of the project proposal, monitors student progress, coordinates committee review and evaluation, and supports the successful completion of the DNP Project.

Content Expert

The Content Expert is an individual with expertise relevant to the student's DNP Project topic or practice setting. Working collaboratively with the DNP Project Chair, the Content Expert provides mentorship during project development and implementation, advises on project content and practice relevance, and validates required DNP practice hours, as applicable.

Proposal

Students must develop and successfully obtain approval of a DNP Project proposal before beginning project implementation. The proposal demonstrates the significance of the practice problem, supporting evidence, project methodology, implementation plan, and evaluation strategy. Institutional Review Board (IRB) and/or organizational approval must be obtained before project implementation when required.

Detailed proposal requirements, submission procedures, and evaluation criteria are provided in the applicable DNP Project course syllabus and Blackboard course site.

Implementation

Following approval of the DNP Project proposal and completion of all required approvals, students implement the project under the guidance of the DNP Project Chair and Content Expert. Students are expected to adhere to the approved project plan, maintain professional and ethical standards, complete required project activities, and document project progress throughout implementation.

Course-specific implementation requirements and project activities are provided in the applicable DNP Project course syllabus and Blackboard course site.

Final Presentation

Successful completion of the DNP Project includes a formal final presentation in which students present the completed project, findings, outcomes, and implications for nursing practice. The final presentation serves as the culminating scholarly evaluation of the DNP Project and is conducted as part of the final DNP Project course.

Dissemination

Students are required to complete and submit a final scholarly manuscript documenting the DNP Project in accordance with SON requirements. Students are also expected to disseminate the results of the DNP Project through appropriate scholarly or professional venues, such as presentations, professional posters, manuscripts, quality improvement reports, or other methods appropriate to the project and practice setting.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS

Graduate nursing students are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, ethical conduct, and accountability in all academic, clinical, research, and professional activities. As members of the SON and the nursing profession, students represent both HPU and the profession of nursing. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes patient safety, fosters respectful and collaborative relationships, and reflects the values and standards of advanced nursing practice.

Students are responsible for understanding and complying with all SON, University, clinical agency, and professional standards applicable to their educational experiences. Failure to meet these expectations may result in academic or disciplinary action in accordance with SON and University policies.

Professional Behavior

Professional behavior is expected in all learning environments, including the classroom, clinical settings, simulation experiences, online courses, research activities, and all interactions with faculty, staff, peers, patients, preceptors, and community partners.

Graduate nursing students are expected to:

- Demonstrate honesty, integrity, accountability, and ethical decision-making.
- Treat others with dignity, respect, and professionalism.
- Maintain patient safety and confidentiality at all times.
- Accept responsibility for personal actions and professional conduct.
- Communicate respectfully and collaborate effectively with patients, peers, faculty, staff, preceptors, and members of the healthcare team.
- Demonstrate reliability by meeting academic, clinical, and professional responsibilities.
- Seek guidance when situations exceed personal knowledge, experience, or scope of practice.
- Comply with SON, University, and clinical agency policies and applicable laws and regulations.
- Demonstrate professional judgment consistent with the responsibilities of advanced nursing practice.

Professional behavior extends to all forms of communication, including written, verbal, electronic, and social media interactions. Students are expected to maintain professional boundaries and conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the nursing profession and HPU.

ANA Code of Ethics

Graduate nursing students are expected to practice in accordance with the principles and values outlined in the American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses. The Code of Ethics serves as the profession's ethical standard and guides professional conduct, clinical decision-making, leadership, advocacy, and accountability.

Students are expected to integrate ethical principles into all academic, clinical, scholarly, and professional activities by:

- Respecting the dignity, rights, and autonomy of every individual.
- Promoting patient safety, well-being, and equitable access to quality care.
- Maintaining honesty, integrity, confidentiality, and accountability in professional practice.
- Demonstrating cultural humility and respect for diverse populations.

- Advocating for patients, families, communities, and the nursing profession.
- Upholding professional standards and accepting responsibility for ethical decision-making and professional conduct.

Failure to uphold professional and ethical standards may result in academic or disciplinary action in accordance with SON and University policies.

The current ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses is available through the American Nurses Association at: [ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses](#).

Professional Boundaries

Graduate nursing students are expected to establish and maintain professional boundaries in all academic, clinical, scholarly, and professional relationships. Professional boundaries promote patient safety, preserve public trust, and support ethical nursing practice.

Students are expected to:

- Maintain therapeutic and professional relationships with patients, families, faculty, staff, preceptors, peers, and members of the healthcare team.
- Avoid relationships or activities that could create actual or perceived conflicts of interest or impair professional judgment.
- Refrain from accepting gifts, favors, or personal benefits that could influence professional decision-making.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries when using electronic communication and social media.
- Protect patient privacy and confidentiality in all interactions.

Boundary violations or unprofessional relationships may result in academic or disciplinary action in accordance with SON and University policies.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to professional nursing practice and scholarly achievement. Graduate nursing students are expected to demonstrate honesty, accountability, and ethical conduct in all academic activities.

Students are responsible for submitting original work, appropriately acknowledging the contributions of others, and complying with all University policies related to academic integrity. Acts of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, falsification, unauthorized collaboration, and misuse of artificial intelligence or other technologies when prohibited by course or University policy.

Violations of academic integrity may result in academic or disciplinary action in accordance with HPU policies and SON requirements.

Students should also refer to the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use section of this handbook and the applicable course syllabus for course-specific expectations regarding the use of AI technologies.

Scholarly Conduct

Graduate nursing students are expected to engage in scholarly inquiry with honesty, professionalism, and intellectual integrity. Graduate education requires the critical evaluation of evidence, respectful academic discourse, and a commitment to lifelong learning.

Students are expected to:

- Engage in scholarly discussions in a respectful and professional manner.
- Support ideas, opinions, and clinical decisions using current evidence and scholarly sources.
- Demonstrate openness to constructive feedback and differing perspectives.
- Contribute meaningfully to collaborative learning activities and professional dialogue.
- Uphold ethical standards in scholarship, research, and dissemination of knowledge.

Scholarly conduct complements the principles of academic integrity and reflects the expectations of advanced nursing practice and leadership.

Professional Communication

Effective communication is an essential component of advanced nursing practice. Graduate nursing students are expected to communicate professionally, respectfully, and collaboratively in all academic, clinical, scholarly, and professional settings.

Students are expected to:

- Communicate respectfully with faculty, staff, peers, patients, preceptors, and members of the healthcare team.
- Use professional, courteous, and inclusive language in verbal, written, and electronic communications.
- Address concerns or conflicts in a timely, respectful, and constructive manner using appropriate channels.
- Maintain confidentiality and professionalism in all communications.
- Demonstrate active listening, openness to feedback, and respectful engagement with differing perspectives.

Professional communication standards apply to classroom discussions, clinical settings, email, telephone conversations, videoconferencing, text messaging, social media, and all other forms of communication.

Conflict Resolution

Professional nurses are expected to address conflict in a respectful, timely, and constructive manner. Graduate nursing students share responsibility for maintaining positive working relationships with faculty, staff, classmates, preceptors, and members of the healthcare team.

Students who experience academic, clinical, or interpersonal concerns are encouraged to address issues directly with the individual involved whenever appropriate. Concerns should be addressed at the lowest appropriate level and through the established SON and University chain of communication. If a concern cannot be resolved informally, students should follow the applicable SON and University policies and procedures for formal resolution.

Students are expected to:

- Communicate respectfully and professionally during disagreements.
- Seek clarification before making assumptions.
- Address concerns promptly and constructively.
- Follow the appropriate SON and University chain of communication when seeking resolution.
- Maintain confidentiality and professionalism throughout the resolution process.

Retaliation against any individual who, in good faith, raises a concern or participates in the resolution of a concern is inconsistent with the values of the SON and will not be tolerated.

Email Expectations

Official communication from the SON and HPU is sent to the student's HPU email account. Students are responsible for activating, maintaining, and regularly monitoring their HPU email throughout their enrollment.

Students are expected to:

- Read HPU email regularly and respond to communications in a timely manner.
- Use professional etiquette and appropriate language in all email correspondence.
- Include sufficient information to identify themselves and the purpose of the communication.
- Communicate respectfully with faculty, staff, preceptors, and classmates.

Faculty response times may vary based on business hours, weekends, holidays, University closures, and clinical or teaching responsibilities. Course-specific communication expectations are outlined in the applicable course syllabus.

Civility

The SON is committed to maintaining a learning environment that promotes mutual respect, professionalism, collaboration, and psychological safety. All members of the SON community share responsibility for fostering a culture of civility and respect.

Students are expected to:

- Treat others with dignity, courtesy, and respect.
- Foster an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.
- Engage in respectful dialogue, even when opinions differ.
- Accept constructive feedback professionally and provide feedback respectfully.
- Refrain from behaviors that disrupt learning or undermine the educational or clinical environment.

Incivility—including bullying, intimidation, harassment, discrimination, retaliation, threatening behavior, or other unprofessional conduct—is inconsistent with the values of the nursing profession and will not be tolerated. Such behaviors may result in academic or disciplinary action in accordance with SON and University policies.

Social Media

Graduate nursing students are expected to use social media and other electronic communication platforms responsibly and professionally. Online conduct should reflect the ethical standards of the nursing profession and uphold the reputation of HPU and the SON.

Students are expected to:

- Maintain professionalism in all online communications and social media activities.
- Protect the privacy and confidentiality of patients, classmates, faculty, staff, and clinical partners.
- Refrain from posting photographs, videos, or information obtained in clinical or educational settings without appropriate authorization.
- Avoid posting content that violates patient privacy, professional standards, or University policies.
- Recognize that online activities may have professional, legal, and academic consequences.

Students are responsible for complying with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), clinical agency policies, and all applicable federal and state laws when using social media or electronic communication. Violations may result in academic or disciplinary action and may also carry legal or professional consequences.

HIPAA

Graduate nursing students are required to comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and all applicable federal, state, University, and clinical agency policies governing patient privacy and confidentiality.

Students are expected to:

- Protect the confidentiality of all patient health information.
- Access patient information only as necessary to fulfill assigned educational responsibilities.
- Safeguard electronic and printed records containing protected health information (PHI).
- De-identify patient information used for educational assignments, presentations, or scholarly work.
- Immediately report suspected breaches of confidentiality or unauthorized disclosure of protected health information in accordance with clinical agency and SON policies.

Failure to comply with HIPAA requirements may result in removal from the clinical setting, academic or disciplinary action, and potential civil or criminal penalties under applicable law.

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the privacy of student education records. Graduate nursing students are expected to respect the confidentiality of educational records and comply with all applicable federal laws and University policies governing student privacy.

Students are responsible for protecting their own educational records and respecting the privacy of classmates. Information regarding grades, academic performance, accommodations, or other protected educational records should not be shared without appropriate authorization.

The SON communicates directly with students regarding academic, clinical, and professional matters. Parents, spouses, family members, employers, or other third parties may not discuss or receive information about a student's educational record from SON faculty or staff unless the student has provided appropriate written authorization or disclosure is otherwise permitted by law.

Additional information regarding student privacy rights is available through HPU and applicable federal regulations.

Attendance

Regular attendance and active participation are essential to academic success and professional development. Graduate nursing students are expected to attend and actively participate in all required classroom, laboratory, simulation, clinical, and other educational activities.

Students are responsible for:

- Attending all required learning activities.
- Arriving prepared and on time.
- Notifying the appropriate faculty member and, when applicable, the clinical preceptor of any anticipated absence or tardiness as soon as possible.
- Completing required coursework or clinical requirements associated with approved absences in accordance with course and SON policies.

Attendance requirements and consequences for absences or tardiness may vary by course and are described in the applicable course syllabus. Clinical attendance requirements are described in the Clinical Education chapter of this handbook.

Classroom Expectations

Graduate nursing students are expected to contribute to a professional, respectful, and collaborative learning environment that supports academic excellence, scholarly inquiry, and the respectful exchange of ideas. These expectations apply to all learning environments, including asynchronous and synchronous online courses, discussion boards, virtual meetings, activities, and any in-person learning experiences.

Students are expected to:

- Prepare for learning by completing assigned readings, activities, and coursework.
- Participate actively and professionally in course discussions, learning activities, and other required course engagements.
- Communicate respectfully with faculty, classmates, guest speakers, and others, recognizing and valuing differing perspectives.
- Demonstrate professionalism in all written, verbal, and electronic communications.
- Use technology responsibly and in accordance with course and University expectations.
- Obtain faculty permission before recording lectures, presentations, or other instructional activities.
- Maintain academic integrity during all coursework, examinations, assessments, discussions, and collaborative learning activities.

Students are responsible for regularly monitoring Blackboard, HPU email, and other course communication platforms, meeting established deadlines, and participating in required course activities as outlined in the course syllabus.

Professional standards of conduct apply to all educational settings, including asynchronous and synchronous online learning environments, simulation activities, clinical experiences, and any in-person educational events.

Clinical Expectations

Clinical education is an essential component of graduate nursing education and provides opportunities to integrate knowledge, develop advanced clinical skills, and demonstrate professional competencies. Students are expected to provide safe, ethical, and evidence-based care while complying with all SON, clinical agency, and preceptor requirements.

Students are expected to:

- Arrive prepared, on time, and ready to participate in all scheduled clinical experiences.
- Practice within the scope of their educational preparation and assigned clinical responsibilities.
- Demonstrate professional behavior, sound clinical judgment, and accountability for patient care.
- Maintain patient confidentiality and comply with all applicable privacy, safety, and regulatory requirements.
- Communicate effectively and respectfully with patients, families, preceptors, faculty, and members of the healthcare team.
- Seek guidance whenever clinical situations exceed their knowledge, experience, or scope of practice.
- Complete required clinical documentation and assignments in accordance with SON and course requirements.
- Comply with all clinical agency policies and procedures.

Students must maintain all required clinical compliance documentation throughout the program. Additional information regarding clinical placement, compliance requirements, and clinical performance expectations is provided in the Clinical Education chapter of this handbook.

Use of Electronic Devices

Electronic devices support learning, communication, and clinical practice when used appropriately. Graduate nursing students are expected to use computers, tablets, mobile phones, and other electronic devices responsibly and professionally in all academic and clinical settings.

Students are expected to:

- Use electronic devices in a manner that supports learning and professional responsibilities.
- Comply with SON, University, and clinical agency policies governing the use of personal electronic devices.
- Protect patient privacy and maintain the confidentiality of all protected health information.
- Obtain permission before recording lectures, presentations, meetings, or other educational activities.
- Refrain from photographing, video recording, or sharing information from clinical settings unless expressly authorized for educational purposes and permitted by applicable laws and policies.

The inappropriate use of electronic devices, including activities that compromise professionalism, patient privacy, academic integrity, or the learning environment, may result in academic or disciplinary action.

Fitness for Learning and Clinical Practice

Graduate nursing students are responsible for maintaining their physical, mental, and emotional well-being to safely participate in academic and clinical activities. Students must be able to perform the essential functions of their educational program and provide safe patient care in accordance with SON and clinical agency requirements.

Students are expected to report any condition that may affect their ability to participate safely in classroom, simulation, or clinical learning activities. Students must not participate in clinical experiences or other educational activities while impaired by illness, fatigue, alcohol, illegal drugs, misuse of prescription medications, or any other condition that could compromise patient safety or academic performance.

Faculty may restrict a student's participation in online coursework, simulation activities, clinical experiences, or other educational activities when the student's condition raises concerns regarding safety, professional conduct, or the ability to meet program requirements. Students may resume participation only after meeting SON requirements and, when applicable, clinical agency requirements.

Unacceptable Practice

Graduate nursing students are expected to demonstrate safe, competent, legal, and ethical nursing practice in all academic, clinical, simulation, practicum, and professional settings. The SON has an ethical and legal responsibility to protect patients, healthcare organizations, students,

faculty, and the public from unsafe nursing practice. Accordingly, students are expected to practice within the scope of their education, demonstrate sound clinical judgment, and uphold the standards of the nursing profession at all times.

Unacceptable practice is defined as any action, behavior, omission, or pattern of conduct that is unsafe, unethical, illegal, or inconsistent with the professional standards expected of graduate nursing students. Unacceptable practice may consist of a single serious incident or a pattern of behaviors that demonstrates an inability to practice safely or professionally.

Examples of unacceptable practice include, but are not limited to:

- Violating the Hawai'i Nurse Practice Act or other applicable federal, state, or local laws and regulations.
- Violating the American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses or other applicable professional standards.
- Providing care that threatens, or has the potential to threaten, the safety or well-being of patients, families, peers, faculty, healthcare personnel, or oneself.
- Performing nursing skills or procedures for which the student has not received appropriate instruction, authorization, or supervision.
- Falsifying clinical, academic, or patient documentation.
- Violating patient privacy or confidentiality, including unauthorized access to or misuse of electronic health records or protected health information.
- Demonstrating dishonest, unethical, or illegal behavior in academic or clinical settings.
- Repeated failure to prepare for clinical, practicum, or simulation experiences or failure to demonstrate safe clinical judgment.
- Failure to comply with faculty or preceptor instructions necessary to maintain patient or environmental safety.

Students who demonstrate unacceptable practice may be immediately removed from the clinical, practicum, simulation, or educational setting pending review by the SON. Depending on the nature and severity of the incident, outcomes may include remediation, academic probation, course failure, withdrawal, dismissal from the graduate nursing program, or other disciplinary action consistent with SON and University policies.

Students are entitled to due process and may appeal academic or disciplinary decisions in accordance with applicable SON and HPU policies.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

The SON is committed to fostering a learning environment where every individual is treated with dignity, respect, and compassion. Diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging are fundamental to

professional nursing practice and support excellence in education, scholarship, leadership, and patient care.

Graduate nursing students are expected to:

- Foster an inclusive and respectful learning environment.
- Demonstrate cultural humility and respect for the diverse identities, backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of others.
- Promote equitable, person-centered care that is responsive to the unique needs and values of individuals, families, and communities.
- Engage in respectful dialogue and collaborate effectively with individuals whose perspectives, beliefs, or experiences differ from their own.
- Contribute to a learning and practice environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, and retaliation.
- Recognize the influence of personal biases and commit to ongoing self-reflection, professional growth, and lifelong learning.

The SON is committed to providing equal educational opportunities and maintaining an environment that supports the success and well-being of all students, faculty, staff, patients, and community partners.

Dress code

Professional appearance reflects the values of the nursing profession and promotes patient confidence, safety, professionalism, and infection prevention. Graduate nursing students are expected to maintain a neat, clean, and professional appearance during all clinical experiences, simulation activities, and any SON activity requiring professional attire.

General Expectations

Students are expected to maintain personal hygiene and present a professional appearance appropriate to the learning environment. Clothing should be clean, well maintained, and appropriate for the assigned educational or clinical setting. Professional appearance is an extension of the professional behavior expected of all graduate nursing students and should reflect the standards of the nursing profession.

Clinical Attire

Students must comply with the SON dress code and all requirements established by the assigned clinical agency. Clinical agencies may establish attire, grooming, or identification requirements that are more restrictive than SON expectations. When differences exist, students are expected to comply with the more restrictive requirement.

Identification

Students must wear their HPU identification card, SON name badge, or agency-issued identification, as required, while participating in clinical experiences or other activities requiring identification.

Grooming and Professional Appearance

Students are expected to maintain grooming and appearance that support professionalism, patient safety, and infection prevention. Hair, jewelry, fragrances, artificial nails, and other aspects of personal appearance must comply with SON expectations and clinical agency requirements.

Safety Requirements

Students must wear attire and personal protective equipment appropriate to the clinical environment and comply with all infection prevention and workplace safety requirements established by the SON and the clinical agency.

Failure to comply with dress code requirements may result in removal from the clinical or educational setting until the deficiency has been corrected.

See also: Professional Behavior, Clinical Expectations, Clinical Compliance Requirements, and Fitness for Learning and Clinical Practice for additional expectations related to professional conduct, safety, and participation in clinical education.

PROGRESSION IN THE GRADUATE NURSING PROGRAM

The SON is committed to supporting graduate nursing students in achieving academic success and professional development. Progression through a graduate nursing program requires students to demonstrate satisfactory academic performance, professional conduct, ethical practice, and compliance with all SON and University requirements.

Students are responsible for maintaining the academic, clinical, and professional standards required for progression and graduation. Progression in the program is contingent upon satisfactory completion of coursework, fulfillment of clinical and program requirements, and continued compliance with SON and University policies.

Failure to meet academic, professional, clinical, or program requirements may affect a student's ability to progress in the curriculum and may result in academic probation, remediation, withdrawal, dismissal, or other actions in accordance with SON and University policies.

Academic Progression

Graduate nursing students are expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress throughout their program of study. Progression is based on successful completion of required coursework, achievement of established academic standards, fulfillment of clinical and practicum requirements, demonstration of professional and ethical conduct, and compliance with all SON and University policies.

To remain in good academic standing, students are expected to:

- Successfully complete all required courses in the approved program of study.
- Maintain the minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) required by the SON and HPU.
- Earn the minimum required grade in each graduate nursing course.
- Meet all clinical, practicum, and DNP Project requirements, as applicable.
- Demonstrate professional behavior consistent with the standards of the nursing profession.
- Maintain compliance with all required clinical documentation and program requirements.
- Meet progression requirements within the established time allowed for degree completion.

Students who do not meet progression requirements may be subject to academic probation, remediation, withdrawal, dismissal, or other actions as outlined in this handbook and University policies.

Minimum Grade Requirements

Graduate nursing students are expected to maintain the academic standards established by the SON and HPU. Satisfactory academic performance is required for progression, continued enrollment, and graduation.

Students must:

- Earn a minimum final course grade of 80% in each graduate nursing course.
- Maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0.
- Successfully complete all required clinical, practicum, and DNP Project requirements, as applicable.

A final course grade below 80% does not meet the minimum standard for progression in the graduate nursing program. Students who fail to meet the minimum academic requirements may be

subject to academic probation, remediation, course repetition, withdrawal, dismissal, or other academic action in accordance with SON and University policies.

Students are responsible for monitoring their academic progress and seeking assistance promptly if academic difficulties arise.

Academic Standing

The SON maintains academic, clinical, and professional standards that reflect the responsibilities of graduate nursing education and the nursing profession. Because graduate nursing students are preparing for advanced practice, leadership, scholarship, and the delivery of safe, high-quality patient care, the SON may establish academic and professional standards that exceed the minimum requirements of HPU.

Students are expected to maintain good academic standing throughout their enrollment in the graduate nursing program. Good academic standing requires continued demonstration of academic achievement, professional behavior, ethical conduct, and compliance with SON and University policies.

Students in good academic standing are expected to:

- Meet the minimum academic requirements for progression in the graduate nursing program.
- Maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of **3.0** or higher.
- Earn a minimum final course grade of **80%** in each graduate nursing course.
- Successfully complete all required clinical, practicum, and DNP Project requirements, as applicable.
- Demonstrate professional, ethical, and safe conduct in academic and clinical settings.
- Maintain compliance with all SON, University, and clinical agency requirements.

Failure to maintain good academic standing may result in academic probation, remediation, withdrawal, dismissal, or other academic action in accordance with SON and University policies.

Academic standing is reviewed throughout the program, and students are responsible for meeting all progression requirements necessary for continued enrollment and graduation.

Academic Probation

The SON determines academic standing and progression based on the standards established for graduate nursing education. These standards are separate from, and may be more rigorous than, the academic standing requirements of HPU or the satisfactory academic progress requirements established for financial aid eligibility. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with all applicable University, SON, and financial aid requirements.

Academic probation is intended to notify students that their academic performance or progression no longer meets the standards required for good academic standing in the graduate nursing program. Probation provides students with an opportunity to improve their academic performance while demonstrating the knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors necessary for successful progression.

A student may be placed on academic probation when they fail to meet the academic or progression requirements established by the SON.

Students placed on academic probation are expected to:

- Meet all conditions established by the SON for continued enrollment.
- Demonstrate satisfactory academic improvement within the designated probationary period.
- Successfully complete any required remediation or academic success plan, if applicable.
- Maintain professional, ethical, and safe conduct in all academic, clinical, and practice settings.
- Comply with all SON and University policies.

Failure to satisfy the conditions of academic probation may result in additional academic action, including continued probation, withdrawal, or dismissal from the graduate nursing program.

Removal from academic probation occurs when the student has successfully met all conditions established by the SON and has returned to good academic standing.

Dismissal

Students who fail to meet the academic, clinical, professional, or ethical standards established by the SON may be dismissed from the graduate nursing program.

Grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- Failure of a required clinical (practicum) course.
- Failure of any two didactic graduate nursing courses.
- Failure to regain and maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of **3.0** or higher while on academic probation.
- Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress or successfully complete required coursework, practicum experiences, or the DNP Project.
- Demonstration of unsafe or unacceptable practice as defined in this handbook.
- Serious or repeated violations of professional, ethical, or legal standards.

- Failure to comply with SON or University policies when such noncompliance affects progression or professional practice.

Students who are dismissed from the graduate nursing program will receive written notification of the dismissal decision. Students may appeal dismissal decisions in accordance with applicable SON and HPU policies.

Withdrawal

Graduate nursing students who are considering withdrawing from a course or from the graduate nursing program are strongly encouraged to discuss their decision with their Student Success Coach and Track Coordinator before initiating the withdrawal process. These discussions provide an opportunity to review available resources, understand the potential impact on academic progression, financial aid, clinical placement, and graduation, and explore alternative options when appropriate.

Students who discontinue enrollment at HPU must officially withdraw from the University in accordance with University policies and procedures. Students are responsible for completing all required withdrawal procedures before discontinuing enrollment.

Students should be aware that withdrawal from a course or the graduate nursing program may affect academic progression, financial aid eligibility, clinical placement, and anticipated graduation timelines.

Students who are under investigation for unsafe or unacceptable practice or who are subject to pending disciplinary action may not be permitted to withdraw until the matter has been resolved in accordance with SON policies.

Students should refer to the HPU Academic Catalog and consult the Office of the Registrar for current withdrawal procedures and deadlines.

Leave of Absence

Graduate nursing students who need to temporarily interrupt their program of study for personal, medical, military, or other appropriate reasons are encouraged to discuss their circumstances with their Student Success Coach and Track Coordinator before requesting a leave of absence. These discussions help students understand the potential impact on curriculum sequencing, clinical placement, financial aid, and anticipated graduation timelines.

Students requesting a leave of absence must submit their request through the University's established process and comply with all applicable HPU policies and procedures.

Students returning from an approved leave of absence must satisfy all SON and University requirements in effect at the time of their return before resuming coursework or clinical experiences.

Students who do not return from an approved leave of absence within the approved timeframe may be administratively withdrawn from the University and may be required to apply for readmission to the graduate nursing program.

Readmission

Students who have withdrawn from the graduate nursing program or who are required to reapply following an extended leave of absence must apply for readmission in accordance with HPU and SON policies.

Readmission is not guaranteed and is based on factors that may include, but are not limited to:

- Previous academic performance.
- Clinical and professional standing at the time of withdrawal.
- Length of absence from the program.
- Availability of space, clinical placements, and faculty resources.
- Satisfaction of all current admission, compliance, and progression requirements.

Graduation Requirements

Graduate nursing students must satisfy all degree requirements established by HPU and the SON before a degree can be conferred. Degree requirements vary by graduate nursing program and are published in the applicable HPU Academic Catalog.

To be eligible for graduation, students must:

- Successfully complete all required coursework with a minimum final course grade of 80% in each graduate nursing course.
- Maintain a cumulative graduate nursing grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher.
- Successfully complete all required clinical or practicum experiences.
- Successfully complete the DNP Project and all required practice hours, if applicable to the student's program of study.
- Satisfy all SON and University academic, financial, and administrative requirements.

Students who expect to complete their degree requirements must submit a Petition to Graduate (PTG) by the deadline established by the University. Submission of the PTG is required for degree conferral, regardless of whether a student plans to participate in a commencement ceremony. Students are responsible for reviewing current Petition to Graduate deadlines and procedures published by the Office of the Registrar.

Participation in a commencement ceremony does not constitute conferral of a degree. Degrees are awarded only after the University has verified that all graduation requirements have been successfully completed.

Time to Degree Completion

Graduate nursing students are expected to make satisfactory progress toward completion of their degree requirements. Consistent with HPU policy, students should complete all degree requirements within seven (7) years of their first enrollment in the graduate nursing program, unless otherwise approved by the SON.

Students who experience circumstances that may delay progression are encouraged to consult with their Student Success Coach and Track Coordinator as early as possible to discuss available options and develop an academic plan.

Leaves of absence, course withdrawals, course failures, remediation, or other interruptions in enrollment may affect a student's anticipated graduation timeline but do not automatically extend the maximum time allowed for degree completion.

Students are responsible for complying with all SON and HPU requirements for degree completion.

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The SON follows the academic policies and procedures established by HPU. This chapter highlights academic policies that are particularly relevant to graduate nursing students and provides guidance on SON expectations. Students are responsible for complying with all current University policies, procedures, deadlines, and requirements published in the HPU Academic Catalog and by the appropriate University offices.

Advising

Graduate nursing students are assigned a Student Success Coach, who serves as the student's primary point of contact for advising, academic planning, registration support, and University resources. Students are also assigned a Track Coordinator, who serves as the faculty advisor for the student's specialty track and provides guidance regarding curriculum, progression, and specialty-specific academic requirements.

Students are encouraged to communicate regularly with their Student Success Coach and Track Coordinator, particularly when considering changes to their academic plan, experiencing academic or personal challenges, or anticipating delays in program progression.

While advising provides guidance and support, students are ultimately responsible for understanding and meeting all SON and HPU degree requirements, policies, deadlines, and graduation requirements.

Registration

Graduate nursing students are responsible for registering for courses each academic term in accordance with HPU registration policies and published deadlines.

Students are encouraged to consult with their **Student Success Coach** and **Track Coordinator** before registering to ensure that planned coursework aligns with their program of study, curriculum sequence, and anticipated graduation timeline.

Registration in clinical, practicum, or other designated courses may require completion of prerequisite coursework, compliance requirements, or approval by the SON. Failure to satisfy these requirements may delay registration or progression in the program.

Students are responsible for verifying their registration, monitoring their enrollment status, and complying with all University registration deadlines, including those related to course adds, drops, and withdrawals

Transfer Credit

Graduate nursing students seeking to transfer graduate-level coursework completed at another institution should consult with their Student Success Coach and Track Coordinator as early as possible. Transfer credit is evaluated in accordance with HPU and SON policies and is not automatically granted.

A maximum of 12 semester credits may be accepted for transfer into a graduate nursing program when all of the following criteria are met:

- The coursework was completed at an accredited institution.
- Official transcripts and course syllabi are provided for review.
- The coursework is determined to be equivalent in level, content, learning outcomes, and competencies to the HPU graduate nursing course for which credit is requested.
- A grade of B or higher was earned in the course.
- The coursework was completed within five years of admission to the graduate nursing program.

The following coursework is not eligible for transfer credit:

- Final project, capstone, or DNP Project courses.
- Coursework that was applied toward a previously conferred degree.

Graduate-level coursework evaluated through the American Council on Education (ACE) may be considered for transfer credit in accordance with University policy. The amount of transfer credit awarded is determined by the SON and will not exceed applicable ACE credit recommendations.

Course Withdrawal

Graduate nursing students who are considering withdrawing from a course are encouraged to discuss the decision with their Student Success Coach and Track Coordinator before initiating the withdrawal process. These discussions help students understand the potential impact on academic progression, curriculum sequencing, financial aid, clinical or practicum requirements, and anticipated graduation timelines.

Students who withdraw from a course must comply with HPU policies, published deadlines, and established withdrawal procedures. Students are responsible for understanding the academic, financial, and progression implications of course withdrawal.

Withdrawal from a required graduate nursing course may delay progression in the program and may affect a student's ability to meet prerequisite, clinical, practicum, or graduation requirements.

The HPU Academic Calendar publishes important registration and withdrawal deadlines, including deadlines for course withdrawal, tuition refunds, and withdrawal grading. Students are responsible for reviewing and complying with all published deadlines.

For additional information regarding course withdrawal policies and procedures, students should refer to the [HPU Academic Catalog](#) and consult the Office of the Registrar.

Incomplete Grades

An Incomplete (I) grade is intended for exceptional circumstances in which a student is unable to complete course requirements because of military service or another documented emergency. Incomplete grades are rarely granted in the Graduate Nursing Program and are awarded only in accordance with HPU policy.

To be considered for an Incomplete grade, a student must:

- Be earning a passing grade in the course.
- Have completed at least 51% of the course requirements.

- Be unable to complete the remaining course requirements because of documented extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control.
- Obtain approval from the course faculty and all required University approvals.

Students requesting an Incomplete grade should notify the course faculty as soon as possible and may also consult with their Student Success Coach and Track Coordinator regarding the potential impact on academic progression, course sequencing, clinical or practicum requirements, and anticipated graduation.

Students are responsible for completing all remaining course requirements within the timeframe established by HPU. A student may not graduate with an outstanding Incomplete grade.

Grade Appeals

The assessment of a student's academic performance and the assignment of a final course grade are the responsibility and professional judgment of the course faculty. It is presumed that the final course grade assigned is correct; therefore, the burden of demonstrating that a grade was assigned improperly rests with the student.

Only a final course grade may be appealed.

A final course grade may be appealed only on one or more of the following grounds:

- A mathematical or clerical error in calculating or recording the final grade.
- Arbitrary or capricious grading without a reasonable basis.
- Assignment of a grade that is inconsistent with those assigned to other students in the same course.
- Assignment of a grade that deviates significantly from the grading criteria published in the course syllabus without appropriate notification to students.
- Failure of the faculty member to follow published course policies.

The following are not grounds for a grade appeal:

- Disagreement with published course policies or grading methods.
- Disagreement with the faculty member's professional academic judgment.
- Differences in grading practices among courses or instructors.
- The impact of a grade on academic progression, scholarships, financial aid, athletic eligibility, veterans' benefits, or other academic or personal circumstances.

Students are expected to first seek informal resolution by discussing the concern with the course faculty. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, students may pursue a formal grade appeal in accordance with HPU policy. Grade appeals must be initiated within the timelines established by the University.

Students should refer to the HPU Academic Catalog for the complete [Grade Appeal Procedures](#), including submission requirements, review process, and applicable deadlines.

Student Grievance Procedure

The SON is committed to fostering a learning environment that promotes professionalism, respect, fairness, and open communication. Students are encouraged to address concerns promptly and, whenever appropriate, seek informal resolution at the lowest appropriate level.

Students with academic concerns other than final course grades should address the concern through the following chain of communication:

- Course Faculty
- Course Coordinator
- Program Chair
- Chief Nurse Administrator

Students are expected to make a good-faith effort to resolve concerns at each level before advancing the matter, unless the nature of the complaint makes doing so inappropriate.

If the concern cannot be resolved through the SON chain of communication, students may submit a formal written grievance in accordance with HPU policy. The written grievance should describe the nature of the concern, summarize the efforts made to resolve the issue through the SON chain of communication, and include any supporting documentation.

Complaints involving discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, or retaliation may also be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Information regarding reporting options, supportive measures, and Title IX policies is available through the HPU Title IX Office and the Student Handbook.

Students should refer to the HPU Student Handbook and the Academic Catalog for complete grievance procedures, reporting options, and applicable timelines.

Student Records

The SON maintains student records in accordance with HPU policies and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Student education records are confidential and are accessible only as permitted by applicable law and University policy.

Students are responsible for maintaining accurate personal and academic information with the University, including current contact information. Changes to a student's name, address, telephone number, or other personal information should be submitted through the appropriate University office.

Students have the right to inspect and review their education records and to request amendment of records as provided by FERPA and HPU policy.

Official academic records, including transcripts and enrollment records, are maintained by the Office of the Registrar. Students should refer to the HPU Academic Catalog and the Office of the Registrar for policies regarding access to educational records, transcript requests, and release of information.

Changes to Handbook Policies

The SON reserves the right to revise, amend, or modify the policies, requirements, and information contained in this handbook at any time to ensure compliance with University policies, accreditation standards, regulatory requirements, and professional practice standards.

Students are responsible for remaining informed of current SON and HPU policies. The most current version of the Graduate Nursing Student Handbook supersedes all previous editions.

RESOURCES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

Graduate nursing education is academically rigorous and professionally demanding. HPU provides a variety of academic, professional, wellness, and student support services designed to promote student success throughout the graduate nursing program. Students are encouraged to seek assistance early whenever academic, personal, financial, or other challenges may affect their educational progress.

The resources listed below are among those commonly used by graduate nursing students. Additional information regarding available services, contact information, website links, and instructions for accessing these resources is provided through the HPU website, individual course syllabi, and the appropriate University offices.

Available student support resources include:

- **Academic Advising** – Graduate nursing students are assigned a Student Success Coach and Track Coordinator who provide guidance regarding academic planning, curriculum progression, registration, and degree completion.
- **Accessibility Services** – Provides reasonable accommodations for qualified students with documented disabilities in accordance with University policy.
- **Counseling Services** – Offers mental health and wellness resources to support student well-being.
- **Financial Aid** – Assists students with financial aid programs, eligibility, and educational funding.

- Career Development – Provides career planning, professional development, and employment preparation resources.
- Library Services – Offers library collections, nursing databases, research assistance, and scholarly support.
- Writing Center – Provides assistance with scholarly writing, APA style, organization, and academic communication.
- Veteran Services – Supports veterans, active-duty service members, reservists, National Guard members, and eligible dependents receiving educational benefits.
- Campus Safety – Provides emergency preparedness information and resources that promote a safe learning environment.
- Student Health Resources – Offers health and wellness resources that support students' physical and emotional well-being.