MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING ONLINE
Student
Handbook
2023-2024

WORCESTER
STATE
UNIVERSITY

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MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PROGRAM

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide the student with an overview of the mission and goals of the graduate department of nursing as well as a curricular overview of the Master of Science in Nursing Accelerated Online Program (AOP). This handbook also delineates relevant policies and procedures related the AOP. In addition, an overview of campus resources is provided. At the end of this handbook is a copy of appendices A-E that are referenced throughout this document. This information is valuable to the academic success of each student and will be referred to by the nursing graduate program faculty.

Introduction

The founding chair of the Nursing Department was Dr. Lillian R. Goodman. The program was initiated in 1974 as the first program designed specifically for Registered Nurses to earn their baccalaureate degree in nursing. The program for pre-licensure students was initiated in 1986. In 2001, under the leadership of Dr. Jean Campaniello, WSU began offering a Master of Science Degree in Community Health Nursing. In 2010, under the leadership of Dr. Stephanie Chalupka, the program became the Master of Science in Nursing program with two concentrations: Community and Public Health Nursing and Nursing Education. In Fall 2021, the Master of Science in Nursing program started offering fully online options: Nurse Educator and Population/Public Health.

Accreditation Status

The Master's degree program in nursing at Worcester State University is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) (ccneaccreditation.org). CCNE is an autonomous accrediting agency, contributing to the improvement of the public's health. CCNE ensures the quality and integrity of baccalaureate and graduate education programs preparing effective nurses. CCNE serves the public interest by assessing and identifying programs that engage in effective educational practices. As a voluntary, self-regulatory process, CCNE accreditation supports and encourages continuing self-assessment by nursing education programs and supports continuing growth and improvement of collegiate professional education.

THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING

Mission

Department of Nursing Mission and Goals:

The mission of the Department of Nursing is to educate professionals who are prepared to meet the nursing needs of the citizens of Worcester, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the global community. The health promotion needs of individuals, families, groups, and communities are emphasized. The Department develops and disseminates knowledge, and contributes service related to the discipline of nursing. The faculty, administration, staff, and students of the Department contribute to the realization of the mission by assuring the following:

1. Provide access to education in nursing for students from diverse backgrounds.
2. Promote excellence and innovation in teaching, service, and scholarship.
3. Provide public service related to nursing and public health.
4. Contribute to the economic development of the Commonwealth by helping to meet the health care industry's need for well-educated and highly skilled nurses.
5. Improve the quality of life of individuals, families and communities by fostering good health and by influencing health care policy.
6. Prepare graduates for participation in society as educated, socially-responsible individuals.
7. Prepare graduates of the Bachelor of Science Program in Nursing for:
   - entry into professional nursing practice
   - graduate level study in nursing
8. Prepare graduates of the Master of Science Program in Nursing for:
   - leadership roles as advanced public health nurses and nurse educators
   - doctoral level study in nursing

Department of Nursing Vision

To be a center for excellence in nursing education, research, and community service.

Graduate Program Outcomes

The WSU Graduate Program outcomes reflect the core knowledge for all master's programs in nursing as defined in The Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing (2011) by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. These Essentials are core for all master's programs in nursing and provide the necessary curricular elements and framework, regardless of focus, major, or intended practice setting.

Professional Behavior

Nursing students at Worcester State University are expected to model professional behavior as representatives of the nursing profession and the University. Consistent display of professional demeanor and appropriate interpersonal boundaries are expected with clients, staff, faculty, and peers in all settings.

Specific expectations are timeliness and adherence to identified practicum hours, prompt notification to faculty, agency, and/or preceptor of any lateness or absence, adherence to the Department of Nursing and specific course dress code guidelines and autonomy in meeting learning needs. In addition, strict adherence to rules of client/student confidentiality is expected in all settings.

As in all other areas of academic life, the use of technology, including but not limited to, hospital systems, personal computers, cell phones, should be undertaken in a manner consistent with high standards of professional conduct. In addition, the internet and electronic mail and texting may create additional challenges to health care professionals' responsibility for ensuring confidentiality. To protect this fundamental patient right, the nursing student should avoid using this medium to transmit information containing any patient/student information that may be used to identify individual patients/students.

When students are engaging in practicum experiences, compliance with strict confidentiality rules and regulations is expected, and lapses are subject to disciplinary procedures.

Caution is recommended as well in using social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or Snapchat. In the nursing program at Worcester State University, we believe students demonstrate that their behavior and their electronic presence reflects the maturity and professionalism that are the necessary underpinnings of the profession. We uphold the ANA principles for social networking as cited on the ANA webpage link:
https://www.nursingworld.org/social

Ongoing enrollment remains contingent on a continuation of this high standard of conduct. Any activity on the student's part that represent unprofessional behavior, including those that are posted on social networking sites, reflect poorly on the student, Worcester State University and the profession as a whole. Such items may become public and could subject the student to unintended exposure and consequences.

Professional Behavior Policy

The faculty of the Dr. Lillian R. Goodman Department of Nursing at Worcester State University (WSU) believes that professional behavior is an integral part of each student's nursing education. The purpose of this policy is to clarify behavioral expectations for nursing students and professional nurses enrolled in all nursing programs at WSU.

Nursing is a profession that has earned the public's trust. The importance of student integrity, trustworthiness, and honesty are very serious concerns due to the implications to patient safety. The Department of Nursing identifies unprofessional behavior as a cause for dismissal. A faculty member may refuse to have a student continue in their course, and the University may dismiss a student from the program, if the student's character does not uphold the professional standards of nursing (e.g. Positive drug screening test). This is a serious matter for both the University and the student.

The following professional guidelines serve as the basis for the Department of Nursing's expectations of professional behavior in both the classroom and practicum settings:

- Dr. Lillian R. Goodman Department of Nursing standards for academic integrity
- The American Nurses' Association Code of Ethics for Nurses
- Public Health Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice
- The Scope of Practice for Academic Nurse Educators

*All students enrolled are expected to maintain the following (but not limited to) **professional behaviors***:

- Students are required to abide by the Department of Nursing policies and procedure as stated in the MS student handbook, and the Department of Nursing Master's Program Student Handbook.
- Students are expected to exercise mature and responsible self-discipline, to behave with respect, civility, courtesy, and integrity.
- Students who exhibit disruptive behavior may be removed from the online classroom. Behavior is considered disruptive when it interferes with the opportunities of others to learn and of the instructor to teach. Examples of disruptive behavior include:
  - o Using profane or obscene language
  - o Using inappropriate body language/signals that are offensive or create an atmosphere of hostility
  - o Interrupting the educational process with inappropriate questions or comments in a way that interferes with other students' learning
  - o Being disrespectful, offensive, or threatening
  - o Becoming belligerent when asked about their behavior
  - o Sending verbally or physically threatening emails, texts, voice mails or letters to faculty, staff, or other students

Failure to comply with this policy will affect the student's final course grade

Please refer to Appendix C (Worcester State University Master of Science in Nursing Program Professional Competencies Contract) for additional information.

Online Netiquette Professionalism

1. Written communication
  ● Be professional and respectful. Social cues such as facial expression and body language are often missing in the online learning environment so be careful not to use sarcasm or humor that may be perceived as hurtful or offensive.
  ● Faculty should be addressed by their appropriate title, i.e. "Professor" or "Dr."
  ● Avoid the use of text or chat language
  ● Always show respect toward others and their opinions

2. Ensure you have the appropriate technology to support the class sessions, including reliable, high speed internet connection.

3. When meeting online with faculty, staff, peers, or preceptors:
  ● Ensure you have a quiet, private workplace
  ● Preferably in a room by yourself
  ● Try not to have anyone come on camera
  ● Coordinate your personal responsibilities to eliminate interruptions or distractions while in meetings
  ● Shut the door and place a sign on the door saying you are in a meeting. Ask people not to enter or knock on the door.

 Check your background
  ● Remove unmentionables
  ● Rid the space of any clutter or distractions
  ● Keep it simple

 Be mindful of your background lighting
  ● Double check the lighting once your video has started so you are easily seen

Check your camera framing
  ● You should be easily seen in the camera frame
  ● Any discussion in the chat feature should be professional and relate to course content. This is not a place for snide remarks, comments, or jokes.

All students enrolled are expected to maintain the following (but not limited to) **practicum professional behaviors**:

  ● Student behavior in practicum settings must be respectful of all individuals (patients, patients' families, members of the health care team, faculty, and other students) according to the patients' Bill of Rights, the ANA standards of care, the Lillian R. Goodman Department of Nursing standards, and the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses.

- Students must adhere to the Department of Nursing dress code, presenting at practicum settings with professional attire and behavior.
- Students will NOT smoke or chew gum while on the premises of any clinical agency.
- Worcester State University name badge will be worn at all times.
  - Failure to comply with this policy will affect the student's practicum grade and final course grade.
- Students should arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of their scheduled practicum time.
- Students will give prior notification in writing or voice mail to the preceptor when they are unable to meet commitments and detail how and when they will make up requirements.
- The faculty acknowledges that true life emergencies do exist and will work with students in these situations should they arise. Please note: True life emergencies do NOT include: Scheduling work or vacation during class, practicum or exam times or lack of preparation.
  - All course work is due by the assigned due date. Extensions may be granted by course faculty at their discretion. It is strongly advised that students communicate any issues prior to missing the assigned due date rather than after the due date has passed.

Consequences of Unprofessional Behavior
When unprofessional or problem behaviors are identified, the involved faculty will:
- Issue a verbal warning that includes counseling the student regarding the unacceptable behavior, the type of behavioral change that is expected, and the timeframe in which the behavior change is expected to be made.
- The student's unacceptable behavior and the specific counseling will be documented by the faculty in the student's file. In addition, the involved faculty will notify the appropriate Graduate Coordinator and the Department Chair. The student will be given a copy of the documentation that was placed in his/her file.
- If the unacceptable behavior is a minor infraction such as continued disruption to the class that does not change within the given time frame, the faculty member will document the repeated incidents and attempted interventions and prepare a formal warning. In addition, the involved faculty will notify in writing the appropriate Graduate Coordinator, and the Department Chair. Failure to adhere to the above will result in course failure.
- If the unacceptable behavior is a major infraction that may affect the safety of patients, preceptors, or students, the student will be asked to leave the practicum setting. If necessary, Campus Security or police will be called. The student is subject to course failure.
- Refer to Appendix E, drug screen policy.

Basis for the Master of Science in Nursing Curriculum
(Education and Public/Population Health)

The nursing department derives and interprets its mission relative to the standards and values of the profession. The goals of the nursing education unit reflect awareness of the future health care needs of society and the richness of nursing's historical past in order to prepare undergraduate and graduate students to function in a broader and diverse society. Thus, the nursing department incorporates the American Nurses Association (ANA) *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements (2015)* within the framework of Nightingale's beliefs about professional nursing practice.

Nightingale's Framework

The nursing department's application of Nightingale's framework extends from the undergraduate to the graduate program. Nightingale's theory, with its environmental focus, is a logical framework for and provides a sound linkage to advanced community and public health and nursing education. The graduate program provides experiences for students to develop a population-focused perspective of health care with a high level of expertise in the diagnosis and treatment of complex responses of individuals, aggregates, and communities to actual or potential health problems. The master's-prepared nurse partners with individuals, communities, and populations to reduce health risks and to promote, maintain, and restore health, advocating for system-level changes to improve health.

Major Themes

Major themes flow throughout the programs offered by the WSU Department of Nursing. The same themes are consistently carried through the undergraduate programs including the pre-licensure and RN-to-BS baccalaureate tracks and the Master of Science in Nursing program.

Themes include NURSING PROCESS, COMMUNICATION, PROFESSIONALISM, RESEARCH, THEORY, and CULTURAL DIVERSITY. POPULATION-FOCUS and ENVIRONMENT have been added to major themes to reflect the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's *Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing* (2011). The integration of these themes into the graduate program courses is illustrated in the following table.

Integration of Major Themes into Nursing Graduate Courses

THEMES	COURSES
Professionalism	NU 908; NU 920; NU 925; NU 930; NU 936; NU 937; NU 938; NU 943; NU 946; NU 951; NU 952; NU 953; NU 954; NU 955; NU 956; NU 957; NU 958; NU 959; NU 962; NU 963; NU 964

Research	NU 908; NU 920; NU 925; NU 930; NU 936; NU 938; NU 939; NU 941; NU 942; NU 943; NU 946; NU 951; NU 952; NU 953; NU 954; NU 955; NU 956; NU 957; NU 958, NU 959; NU 962; NU 963, NU 964
Theory	NU 908; NU 920; NU 925; NU 930; NU 936; NU 938: NU 941; NU 942; NU 943; NU 946; NU 951; NU 952, NU 953, NU 954; NU 957; NU 958; NU 961; NU 962; NU 963; NU 964
Nursing Process	NU 908; NU 920; NU 925; NU 936; NU 937; NU 943; NU 946; NU 951; NU 952; NU 953; NU 954; NU 956; NU 957; NU 958; NU 962; NU 963; NU 964
Cultural Diversity	NU 908; NU 925; NU 930; NU 937; NU 938; NU 939; NU 943; NU 946; NU 951; NU 952; NU 953; NU 954; NU 958; NU 959; NU 962; NU 963; NU 964
Communication	NU 908; NU 925; NU 930; NU 937; NU 942; NU 943; NU 946; NU 951; NU 952; NU 953: NU 954; NU 956, NU 958; NU 961; NU 962; NU 963; NU 964
Population-Focus	NU 908; NU 920; NU 925; NU 930; NU 936; NU 942; NU 943; NU 946; NU 951; NU 952; NU 953; NU 954; NU 958; NU 959; NU 961; NU 962; NU 963; NU 964
Environment	NU 908; NU 920; NU 925; NU 930; NU 936; NU 937; NU 946; NU 952, NU 953; NU 954; NU 958; NU 961; NU 962; NU 963; NU 964

Nursing Department Faculty & Staff

Faculty	Phone	Email
Dr. William Chadbourne Department Chair, Assistant Professor	508-929-8685	wchadbourne@worcester.edu
Staff		
Dr. Catherine Thomas Associate Dean of Nursing	508-929-8192	cthomas15@worcester.edu
Dr. Amanda Cornine Coordinator for Master's in Nursing Program		acornine@worcester.edu
Laura Berg Online Graduate Nursing Clinical Resource Coordinator	508-929-2483	AOPcoordinator@worcester.edu
Amy Poehler, Administrative Secretary Administrative Resource Person	508-929-8192	apoehler@worcester.edu

Responsibilities of the Student

Students of the Master of Science in Nursing programs are responsible for knowing and fulfilling program and university requirements and for following the policies and procedures as delineated in this handbook. Specific responsibilities include the following:

1. The student will register for courses in the recommended sequence as advised by the Master of Science in Nursing Program Coordinator.

2. The student will schedule and meet with the Master of Science in Nursing Program Coordinator for assistance with academic planning as needed throughout the program.

3. The student will petition, by writing a letter addressed to the Graduate Coordinator, to receive approval before pursuing any deviation from any stated policy, curriculum sequence, or program requirement.

4. The student will provide proof of current unencumbered license to practice as a registered nurse, professional liability insurance coverage, immunization status, CPR certification, and physical exam. A copy will be uploaded to CastleBranch prior to beginning their first practicum course.

5. The student will submit an Intent *to Graduate* form and required fees to the Office of Graduate and Continuing Education. Detailed information about deadlines for filing and fees are available in the Worcester State University Catalogue.

6. The student will behave in a professional manner in their interaction with faculty, peers, and members of the outside community.

7. The student is responsible for obtaining and maintaining a Worcester State University email account. **THIS IS THE ONLY RECOGNIZED EMAIL ACCOUNT.** The student is further responsible to check the account daily. The WSU email account is the only acceptable account to be used for course communication.

8. The student is responsible for identifying appropriate preceptor(s) who meet WSU's requirements and are willing to precept the student. Submit the required Practicum Application with preceptor information at least 14 weeks prior to beginning each practicum course. WSU provides support in helping students identify appropriate preceptors. Students who need support should contact the Clinical Resource Coordinator (AOPcoordinator@worcester.edu or 508-929-2483). Additional information about practicum can be found in the Practicum Handbook.

The student is expected to review the Practicum Handbook (including immunization and health requirements, and background check requirements) at least 14 weeks prior to their first practicum course.
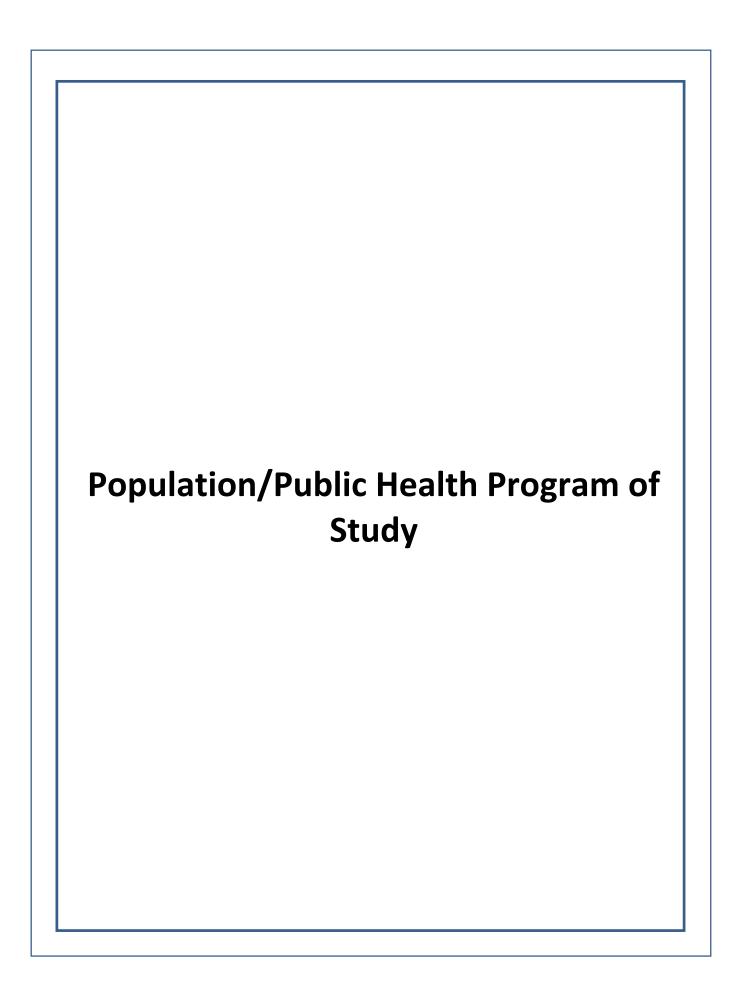
Responsibilities of the Program

The Master of Science in Nursing program has a commitment to excellence graduate nursing education. The Master in Science in Nursing Program is responsible for maintaining and promoting the professional, curricula, and ethical standards listed below.

1. In the process of recruiting and advising students, the program will be represented accurately.

2. A learning environment will be provided which is safe and conducive to learning.

3. **Population/Public Health Nursing Specialty Track:** The curriculum will be consistent with the current practice standards and philosophy as defined by the *ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* (ANA, 2015), *Scope and Standards of Practice: Public Health Nursing, 2nd edition* (ANA, 2013), *Scope and Standards of Practice: Nursing* (ANA, 2021), *Community/Public Health Nursing [C/PHN] Competencies* (Quad Council Coalition, 2018) and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) accreditation standards and the standards of Worcester State University.

   Nurse Educator Specialty track: The curriculum will be consistent with the current American Association for Colleges of Nursing (AACN) *Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing* (2011), the *ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* (ANA, 2015), *Scope and Standards of Practice: Nursing* (ANA, 2021)*, The Scope of Practice for Academic Nurse Educators, 3rd Edition (NLN, 2019)*, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) accreditation standards and the standards of Worcester State University.

4. The program will attempt to respond to changing patterns and concepts in health care delivery, public health, and nursing education, while adhering to its stated philosophy.

5. The faculty will be competent educators in their discipline.

6. Procedures used to evaluate students will be fair and clearly presented to the student at the beginning of each course and throughout the program.

Grade appeal procedures for students follow the process described in the current Worcester State University Catalogue.

Population/Public Health Program of Study

Population/Public Health Nursing Program of Study Overview:
The Department of Nursing offers a graduate program leading to a Master of Science in Nursing with a focus on advanced public/population health nursing practice. Graduates of this program are prepared to practice as expert clinicians in a community environment. Graduate study prepares the student to be an independent practitioner through immersion in course work, application of the research process and integration of acquired knowledge into fieldwork and internships. The curriculum provides the educational basis for graduates to provide quality service to residents of the greater community.

Master's degree program outcomes are formulated on the clear assumption that graduate education builds upon undergraduate education. Graduate education is an intensive and analytic expansion of knowledge, enabling the perception and development of new and more complex relationships that affect nursing. Graduate education provides and ensures further opportunity for our students to think conceptually, to apply theory and research to practice, and to develop in-depth knowledge in a specialized area of advanced nursing.

Outcomes for the Population/Public Health Nursing Specialty Track:
Upon successful completion of the Worcester State University Population/Public Health Nursing graduate program in nursing, graduates are prepared to:

- Integrate nursing, related sciences and humanities to analyze, design, implement, and evaluate nursing care across diverse settings at the Master's Level.
- Provide leadership in the delivery and evaluation of strategies for improving delivery of high quality and safe patient care by using ethics, critical decision-making, and effective working relationships from a systems perspective.
- Direct continuous quality improvement methods and initiatives to promote a culture of safety, professional accountability, and evidence-based patient care.
- Participate, leading when appropriate, in collaborative teams to improve care outcomes and support policy change through translational research and knowledge dissemination by generating meaningful evidence for nursing practice.
- Integrate emerging informatics, health care technologies, and related ethical principles into clinical decision-making processes.
- Advocate for policies that improve the health of the public and the profession of nursing.
- Participate, lead and coordinate when appropriate, inter-professional teams across care environments to reduce barriers, facilitate access, and improve health outcomes.
- Synthesize broad ecological, global, biological, and socio-cultural determinants of health to assess the profession's leadership role and accountability toward improving the population's health.
- Demonstrate Master's Level Professional Practice through the development of nursing interventions and advocacy to implement safe, quality care to diverse populations in a variety of settings and roles.
- Integrate clinical prevention and population health concepts in the development of

culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate health education, communication strategies, and interventions.

Population/Public Health Nursing: The Graduate Program in Population/Public Health Nursing is built upon the foundation of the *Scope and Standards of Practice: Public Health Nursing, 2nd edition* (ANA, 2013) and *Community/Public Health Nursing [C/PHN] Competencies* (Quad Council Coalition, 2018)

Guided by these standards, departmental and university mission and goals, the master's program provides advanced Population/Public Health nursing education which focuses on:

- Population health and population-focused health promotion
- Management of health problems in collaboration with aggregates and communities
- Leadership in the profession
- Research utilization for practice and for effecting change

Population/Public Health Nursing Specialty Track:

The nursing graduate program (Population/Public Health Nursing Specialty Track) provides a course sequence that allows the student to develop a population-wide perspective of health encompassing knowledge and skills applicable to community or defined populations within the community. This graduate program educates nurses to use preventive and health promoting interventions, to counsel and communicate with communities and aggregate populations in a creative, collaborative practice within the community health environment/public health sector. Students apply theoretical knowledge to professional practice, incorporating areas of research, leadership, management and education. The graduate of this program will function as an *Advanced Public Health Nurse* who influences policies and standards that affect the delivery of care and ultimately human health and wellness.

The Population/Public Health curriculum is designed to meet the learning needs of the students who are working full-time. All courses are conducted online; each course is seven weeks asynchronous. The online platform does not require campus interaction with faculty or fellow students.

Population/Public Health Nursing Specialty Track: Required Courses for the Master of Science Degree in Nursing

NU 952   Public and Population Health Nursing Theory and Practice
NU 953   Public and Global Health Policy, Politics, and Progress
NU 954   Essentials of Evidence-Based Practice in Public and Population Health
NU 955   Epidemiology and Population Health
NU 956   Informatics and Data Science for Population and Public Health
NU 957   Public and Population Health Nursing Leadership
NU 958   Global Perspectives on Health and Environment
NU 959   Genetics and Genomics in Public and Population Health
NU 962   Program Planning and Evaluation for Public and Population Health
NU 963   Population-Based Public Health Nursing Interventions
NU 964   Applied Project in Public and Population Health
Note: NU 963 and NU 964 are the last two courses in the program.
[*] *Course descriptions for all courses may be found in the Worcester State University catalog.*

Clinical Practica for the Population/Public Health Nursing Program of Study

Please refer to the ***Population/Public Health Online Practicum Handbook.*** This handbook also includes information on required background checks, health clearances, other requirements, and associated fees.

Nurse Educator Program of Study

Nurse Educator Program of Study Overview:

Nurse educators are the key resource in preparing a nursing workforce that will provide quality care to meet the health care needs of our population. They practice in academic and clinical settings, and they must be competent clinicians. However, while being a good clinician is essential, it is not sufficient for the educator role.

The Nurse Educator Specialty track is designed to expand the knowledge base of registered professional nurses to prepare them for the role of nurse educator in four areas:

- ●Higher education
- ●Vocational education
- ●Staff education
- ●Patient education

The program will provide theoretical and practical knowledge in the areas of curriculum development, instructional design, advanced teaching methods, and program evaluation.

Outcomes for the Nurse Educator Program of Study:

Upon successful completion of the Worcester State University graduate program in Nursing Education, graduates are prepared to:

- Integrate nursing, related sciences and humanities to analyze, design, implement, and evaluate nursing care across diverse settings at the Master's Level.
- Provide leadership in the delivery and evaluation of strategies for improving delivery of high quality and safe patient care by using ethics, critical decision-making, and effective working relationships from a systems perspective.
- Direct continuous quality improvement methods and initiatives to promote a culture of safety, professional accountability, and evidence-based patient care.
- Participate, leading when appropriate, in collaborative teams to improve care outcomes and support policy change through translational research and knowledge dissemination by generating meaningful evidence for nursing practice.
- Integrate emerging informatics, health care and educational technologies, including related ethical principles into clinical decision-making processes.
- Advocate for policies that improve the health of the public and the profession of nursing.
- Participate, lead and coordinate when appropriate, inter-professional teams across care environments to reduce barriers, facilitate access, and improve health outcomes.
- Synthesize broad ecological, global, biological, and socio-cultural determinants of health to assess the profession's leadership role and accountability toward improving the population's health.
- Demonstrate Master's level professional practice through the development of nursing interventions and advocacy to implement safe, quality care to diverse populations in a variety of settings and roles.
- Integrate clinical prevention and population health concepts in the development of culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate nursing education, communication

strategies and interventions.

In addition to the knowledge and practice components of the outcomes listed above, the behavior of graduate students should reflect an internally consistent value system. It is expected that graduates will value scientific inquiry as a basis for professional practice and will seek to increase their contributions to the nursing profession.

Nurse Educator Program of Study: The Nurse Educator Specialty curriculum is based on the practice dimensions of the nurse educator role, recommendations of the National League for Nursing (NLN), and the AACN Essentials of Master's Education (2011). Graduates of the Nurse Educator Specialty track are eligible to sit for the NLN Certified Nurse Educator®. Graduates of the Nurse Educator Specialty track are eligible to sit for the National League for Nursing Certified Nurse Educator Novice, Certified Nurse Educator, and Certified Academic Clinical Nurse Educator certification examinations. With appropriate experience, graduates are also eligible to sit for the Nursing Professional Development Certification (NPD-BC) examination.

The curriculum includes coursework related to patient simulation strategies, as well as other emerging technologies and related teaching methodologies to improve education outcomes.

Nurse Educator Program: Required Courses for the Master of Science Degree in Nursing

To be taken at the beginning of the program
NU 908 Professional Role Development: Philosophical & Curricular Development in Nursing Education

Additional required courses
NU 920 Conceptual Foundations of Nursing
NU 925 Research for Evidence-Based Practice (must take NU 946 before taking NU 925)
NU 951 Nursing Leadership and Administration
NU 930 Social Policy and the Economics of the Health Care Delivery System
NU 946 Biostatistics (this must be taken before NU 925)
NU 937 Advanced Health Assessment
NU 938 Advanced Concepts in Physiology and Pathophysiology
NU 939 Advanced Concepts in Pharmacology

To be taken at the end of the program
NU 942 Practicum in Teaching and Learning I – 60 practicum hrs (4 credits)
NU 943 Practicum in Teaching and Learning II - 65 practicum hrs (4 credits)
[*] *Course descriptions for all courses may be found in the Worcester State University catalog.*

Clinical Practicum for Nurse Educator Program of Study

Please refer to the Nurse Educator Online Practicum Handbook. This handbook also includes information on required background checks, health clearances, other requirements, and associated fees.

Master of Science Programs: Nursing Policies
Population/Public Health Nursing & Nurse Educator Tracks

Academic Dismissal Appeal Procedure

If dismissed for academic deficiency, students may appeal for reinstatement. Appeals must be made in writing to the Chair of the Graduate Education Council, and must be submitted within ten working days following notification of dismissal. Students will be notified in writing of the decision of the Council.

1. A student's written appeal to the Council must include: the student 's name/identification number/program; a discussion of the circumstances contributing to the academic deficiency; and permission for Graduate Education Council to review academic records.
2. The Graduate Council will consider the appeal at its next scheduled meeting.
3. In a written response to the student, the Council will outline the conditions rationale of its action:
   a. If the appeal is granted, Council will outline conditions of reinstatement and time frame for program continuation/completion
   b. If the appeal is denied, the student is administratively withdrawn from the program; he/she may not re-apply to the same program; and cannot apply for re-admission to another program for 12 months.
4. A second dismissal for academic deficiency is not subject to appeal.
5. Evaluation of academic standing will take place after each semester/session.

Non-Academic Dismissal Appeal Procedure

After the Dean has sent the decision of the Graduate School as to dismissal for non- academic reasons, the student may appeal using the following process. A student dismissed for non-academic reasons may appeal the decision of the Graduate School to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. This appeal must:

a) Be in writing,
b) Be submitted within 10 business days of receiving the Graduate School's decision,
c) The decision of the Provost is final.

Address appeal to:
Provost
Worcester State University
486 Chandler Street
Worcester, MA 01602

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to maintain standards of honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic careers. Academic dishonesty violates the very nature of our profession. Its scope includes plagiarism, lying, tampering and falsifying reference materials, and theft. Plagiarism and cheating consist of any attempt by a student to represent the work of someone else as his or her own. It includes, but is not limited to submitting, copying, or substantially restating the work of another person or persons in an oral or written work without citing the appropriate source; "self-plagiarism:" submitting, copying, or substantially restating the work of oneself in an oral or written work without citing the appropriate source ;collaborating with someone else in an academic endeavor without acknowledging that contribution; copying the answers of another student in an examination; purchasing written documents and representing them as your own; using artificial intelligence (like ChatGPT) to produce written work. Worcester State University will not tolerate plagiarism or cheating in the classroom in any fashion. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and unawareness is not an acceptable justification. The instructor may fail the student or enforce another appropriate penalty concerning academic dishonesty. Safe Assign reports $\geq$ to 30% will not be accepted. Students will be required to resubmit assignment. Student may incur point deductions.

Academic and Professional Integrity

Students are expected to have high standards of integrity in both the academic and practicum settings. Integrity reflects the respect that one holds for oneself and others. It is reflected by student behavior in the school, practicum setting, and other environments. Unprofessional conduct is considered serious and may result in dismissal from the graduate nursing program.

Expected ethical behavior in practicum situations is based on the American Nurses' Association *Code of Ethics for Nurses*. Students are expected to protect patients'/students' confidentiality, and to be honest in any documentation regarding the patient's/students' condition and their own assessments and interventions. Students are expected to maintain high professional standards, including being physically, intellectually, emotionally, and academically prepared when caring for patients or interacting with students.

Academic Progression

Academic Standing Matriculated students will be dismissed from their graduate program if they do not maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0, or if they receive two grades of C+ or lower. In addition, grades below a B- are not acceptable for degree credit.
Dismissal requires absence from the College for one semester, pending action on an appeal, if submitted.

Appeal: A student may appeal any action concerning academic probation or dismissal by petitioning the Graduate Admissions and Progression Committee within the Department of Nursing. Approval of petitions is not guaranteed.

Academic Probation: Academic Probation**:** Students with 15 or fewer credits and no failing grades (C- or below) who fall below a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or who fail to complete more than

one of the courses that they take are placed on academic probation. While on probation, students must meet with their advisor to create a plan for improved performance and degree progression, and monitor satisfactory progression on that plan on a monthly basis. Registration in future nursing courses must be approved by the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Admission Criteria

In addition to Worcester State University Graduate admission criteria, applicants to the Master of Science in Nursing Program must:
● Have achieved a GPA of 2.75 in undergraduate study. Applicants may seek conditional admission with a GPA of 2.5 if they have demonstrated substantive growth as a professional nurse.
● Have Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from an accredited program.
● Hold a current unencumbered license to practice professional nursing in one of the states where practicum is approved, which include MA, RI, CT, ME, NH, NY (contact nursing@worcester.edu if you would like to complete practicum in another state).

Advising

At the time of admission to the Master of Science in Nursing program, the program coordinator/academic advisor will meet with the student to review the program and required courses.   Program coordinators/academic advisors will assist students in preparing their Program of Study and selecting courses for each semester of study.

Each student should communicate with their program coordinator/academic advisor for academic advising if they have questions regarding planning a course of study and to review academic progress.

Faculty will address problems that arise within their own courses. If the problem persists, a meeting will be arranged for the student, faculty member, and Graduate Program Coordinator. Documentation of any meeting will be kept in the student's file.

Blood Borne Pathogen Policy

All Worcester State University (WSU) nursing students must be in compliance with health policies as required by the Department of Nursing. The student is responsible for providing the Department with evidence of immunity, health status, and acknowledgement of the Department's universal precautions and reporting requirements for any exposure incident *(Appendix B).*

Rationale:
WSU Department of Nursing students have clinical experiences in settings involving patient care, increasing their risk for both exposure to and transmission of communicable diseases and blood borne pathogen (BBP). BBP includes but is not limited to Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) and Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) which can be transmitted via exposure to infected blood or body fluids.

These policies are needed to:
- Protect the patients and other health care providers with whom students interact
- Decrease the health risks to students
- Comply with Department of Nursing agency contracts, OSHA regulations and CDC guidelines.

Procedure:

1. All students will demonstrate compliance with the mandatory immunization requirements as noted in the Student Hand book entitled "Agency Health Requirements for Clinical Placement".
2. All students will be educated regarding current OSHA guidelines regarding the prevention of occupational exposure to BBP and the use of universal precautions during orientation. In addition, the use of universal precautions and personal protective equipment (PPE) is presented and reinforced throughout the curriculum. The use of PPE and universal precautions is mandatory for all students.
3. Documentation of student exposure to BBP and actions taken must be recorded on a WSU Department of Nursing Incident Report form. This form will be filled out by the student and clinical instructor. Copies of the incident form will be forwarded to the course coordinator and Nursing Department Chairperson within 24 hours of the incident (Appendix A).

Procedure for Blood Borne Pathogen Exposure Reporting
Exposure Response

Eye Splashes	Splashes on Oral or Nasal Mucosa	Skin Exposure or Needlestick injury
● Remove Contacts ● Immediately flush with cold water for 15 minutes	● Flush vigorously with cold water for 15 minutes	● Immediately flush wash thoroughly with soap and water

NOTIFY - AFTER INITIAL FIRST AID IS ADMINISTERED

1. IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY your preceptor and WSU Faculty.
   - The student notifies the agency at the time of the occurrence and follows agency protocols.
   - DO NOT WAIT TO HEAR BACK FROM WSU FACULTY- PROCEED DIRECTLY TO EMERGENCY ROOM or EMPLOYEE HEALTH!

GO

2. **Non-Hospital Event**: Immediately go to the nearest Hospital Emergency Department
   Hospital Event: GO to Employee Health (during the day) or the Emergency Department

IDENTIFY

3. **Identify yourself as a WSU Nursing Student who has been exposed to BBP**
   - CDC guidelines recommend Rapid HIV test and labs within **2 hours** of exposure
   - Baseline labs include: HIV antibody, HBV, HCV, and a pregnancy test (for women)

4. **Identify the source**
   - Faculty/Preceptor will assist the student in determining the source of exposure, including contact with the source, testing the source and notifying the source's health care provider in cooperation with the facility or agency in which the exposure occurred and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

STOP

5. Before leaving the facility, obtain copies of the following:
   - Facility incident report from preceptor or Charge nurse
   - Lab results
   - Emergency room discharge paperwork

6. Complete the WSU Department of Nursing Incident report form and submit it to your Faculty member along with the facility incident report (Appendix A).
7. Follow up health services as instructed by Employee Health/Emergency Department. Follow up can be done with your primary care health provider or arranged with WSU Student Health Services.
8. Completed Incident Report forms will be kept in a locked cabinet in the Nursing Department.

Celebration of Scholarship and Creativity

Students are encouraged to present their scholarly work at Worcester State's annual Celebration of Scholarship and Creativity, held every April: https://www.worcester.edu/academics/additional-learning-opportunities/scholarship-research/celebration-of-scholarship-creativity/ In particular, work from NU 920, NU 925, NU 963, and NU 964 may be amenable to presentation. Students who are interested should speak with their course faculty member about this possibility.

Career Services

Career services offers students and alumni resume and cover letter critiques, assistance in preparing a portfolio, guidance on doctoral studies, mock interview practice, and career guidance and planning. Additional information can be found at https://www.worcester.edu/campus-life/student-services/career-services/student-and-alumni-services/

Counseling Services

Counseling services are available to matriculated graduate students free of charge via two avenues of approach — on-campus clinicians (available during regular business hours and on-call after hours), and "Resilient U" (services accessible anywhere, anytime). Counseling services can support you while you resolve a psychosocial issue, enhance your personal growth, and strengthen your academic skills and performance. Additional information can be found at https://www.worcester.edu/campus-life/counseling-services/

Course Repeat Policy

Students in the Master of Science in Nursing program are allowed to repeat and pass only one failed nursing course. The course must be repeated at WSU. A second failure in that course, or a failure in any other course, will result in dismissal from the program.

Only the higher of the two grades for a repeated course is computed in the cumulative GPA. A course may be repeated only once. Both the old and the new grade will appear on the transcript.

An exception to the course repeat policy is in force for any graduate student in violation of the

drug screening policy (refer to Appendix E). The graduate student will NOT have an opportunity to repeat the course associated with the drug screening violation. Furthermore, the graduate student will be dismissed from the WSU Graduate Program.

In the event that a student wishes to appeal the Course Repeat Policy, the student would petition the nursing faculty by writing a letter to the program coordinator requesting an exception to the policy. The petition should contain a statement of any extenuating circumstances, and a short explanation of how the student plans to complete the remaining requirements for the degree (i.e., which courses during which semesters).

CPR/BLS Certification
One of the following is required:

American Heart Association BLS for Healthcare Providers course OR American Red Cross CPR/AED for Professional Rescuers course. The front AND back of the card must be submitted at the same time and the "Holders Signature" line must be signed. eCard is also acceptable and if submitted eCard does not have to be signed. Temporary approval will be granted for 30 days with the submission of either a certificate of completion, or letter stating course completion from the provider. A new requirement will be created for you to upload your certification card within 30 days.

Drug Screen Policy:
Refer to Appendix E

Email
The student is responsible for obtaining and maintaining a Worcester State University email account (www.worcester.edu). There is no charge for the account. Your admission information from the Graduate School will contain information regarding your email account. The Nursing Department and faculty will use this account as a primary means of communication. It is the student's responsibility to check this account and ensure it is in working order. **Personal email accounts, other than WSU, will not be used to communicate with students.**

Exams and Quizzes
Students are responsible for taking all tests, quizzes, and examinations when they are given and have no automatic right as students to be given a make-up examination. Therefore, students should pay special attention to the announced dates and double check the time, date, and place of the final examination.

Exit and Alumni Surveys
Every year, the Department of Nursing evaluates data obtained from several surveys. Around the time of graduation, students are expected to evaluate the curriculum of the Master of Science Program in the Exit Survey. These surveys provide information to help the plan for future students and strengthen the program.

Governance of Master's Program: Student Participation Opportunity

We value student input into the Master's program. Formal participation in program governance is available to student through membership in the Graduate Program Committee (GPC), on which at least two students sit as non-voting members. Not only does membership in the GPC allow for student input into the program, but it also provides valuable professional leadership/service experience to be noted on the students' resume/CV. Students may be eligible for practicum hours for NU 942 and/or 943 for their service on the GPC. Students interested in serving on the GPC should contact their Program Coordinator. Informal avenues for student input are available through conversations with faculty, staff, and the Program Coordinator (whether via phone, Zoom, email, or other means). From time to time, the Program Coordinator may offer "open houses" for students to drop in and converse about the program with the coordinator and other students.

Grading

The grading system for graduate studies employs the letter grades A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, U (unsatisfactory work no credit awarded), W (withdrawn), and I (incomplete).

Quality of achievement is represented by the following grades:

Letter Grades	Number Grades	Quality Points
A	95-100	4.0
A-	90-94.$\overline{99}$	3.7
B+	87-89.$\overline{99}$	3.3
B	84-86.$\overline{99}$	3.0
B-	80-83.$\overline{99}$	2.7
C+	77-79.$\overline{99}$	2.3
C	74-76.$\overline{99}$	2.0
C-	70-73.$\overline{99}$	1.7
U	<70	0.0

All courses in the program of study must be completed with a "B-" or above. A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 must be maintained in order to progress to the next semester.

Change of Grade

Once a grade has been posted to a student's transcript, that grade may be changed if, and only if, an error has been made in the calculation or transcription of the original grade. Under no circumstances will a change in grade for a student be allowed because of the submission of additional work after the course has ended. No grade change may be made after the conclusion of the semester following the semester in which the grade was originally submitted.

Grade Appeals

The Nursing Department adheres to the Graduate School wide appeal procedure outlined in the Graduate School catalogue. If a student is experiencing academic difficulty in any course, the

first step should be to request a meeting with the course faculty to discuss the problem and explore possible solutions.

Graduate Grade Appeal Procedure

Prior to invoking the use of the graduate grade appeal procedure, individuals should exhaust all informal means available to resolve questions concerning specific grades. The graduate grade appeal procedure is designed to resolve questions regarding student grades when one or more of the following is at issue:

1. There is reason to believe that a mechanical error in calculating a grade has occurred;
2. There is reason to believe that a grade has been calculated in a manner which is inconsistent with the stated grading policy.

The appeal procedure may not be used to challenge a grade which results from a faculty member exercising usual and customary professional judgment in the evaluation of student work.

Step 1
Within ten working days of the availability of the grade in question, the student shall request in writing a meeting with the instructor. In the case of an end-of-semester grade, the student shall request such a meeting no later than ten working days after the beginning of the next semester. The instructor shall arrange to meet with the student within ten working days of the receipt of the request.

Step 2
If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the student at Step 1, then, within ten working days of the meeting in Step 1, the student shall file a written request to review the matter with the appropriate Department Chair.

Step 3
If, within ten working days of the receipt of the request in Step 2, the Department Chair is unable to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of all parties, then either party may, within ten working days, file a written request to review the matter with the Dean of Graduate and Continuing Education.

Step 4
If, within ten working days of the receipt of the request in Step 3, the Dean of Graduate and Continuing Education is unable to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of all parties, then either party may, within ten working days, file a written request to review the matter with the Academic Vice President.

Step 5
Within ten working days of the receipt of the request in Step 4, the Academic Vice President shall inform the student, faculty member, Department Chair, and Dean of Graduate and Continuing Education of the results of the Vice President's review.
The appeal process ends at this point.

Graduation

Students must complete all specified course work within 6 years of matriculation and have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 to graduate from the program.

All requirements for a graduate program must be completed within six years of the effective term of admission to a program.

Candidates eligible for graduation must:
- Signify their intention by completing and submitting an Intent-To-Graduate form to The Graduate School*

- Complete the Graduate Student Portfolio and submit it to the Graduate Program Coordinator 2 weeks before the end of classes.

The Graduate School traditionally sends out a reminder to file the Intent to-Graduate Form early in the spring semester. However, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to file this form.

Group Work

Group projects are included as part of the required coursework for several courses. While working in groups poses challenges, this is an important real-life skill that allows for deeper learning for all group participants. When group work is required, all group members are expected to contribute equally to the final product and to communicate promptly with other group members. If conflict arises within the group, group members are expected to attempt to address the conflict with each other as a first step. If resolution does not occur, the course faculty member should be notified and they may request a meeting with the group members. Faculty notification of potential group conflict or unequal participation must be made before the due date for any group project. Additional tips for working in groups can be found at https://uwaterloo.ca/student-success/sites/ca.student-success/files/uploads/files/TipSheet_GroupWork_0.pdf

Health Services Requirements- Examination and Immunizations

In accordance with WSU policy and the records of the University Health office, all full-time students, **part-time health majors**and any students attending on a student visa are required to submit proof of immunization to Worcester State University Student Health Services. Please note this is separate from the Department of Nursing requirements. Additional details can be found in the graduate catalog: catalog.worcester.edu
   * **Health requirements for the nursing tracks must be met additionally to any University requirements (see Practicum Handbook).**
Generally, students are required to have:
- Annual Physical Exam
- Annual Tuberculin Skin Test- 2-step test
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) two doses or titers verifying immunity to each
- Hepatitis B vaccine and positive titer (or negative antigen)

- Tetanus/Diphtheria or Tdap booster within 10 years
- Varicella titer or vaccine (two doses)
- Seasonal influenza vaccine
- COVID 19 vaccine fully completed

Additional details can be found once a student registers for the CastleBranch tracking system. Any questions about health requirements should be directed to the Clinical Resource Coordinator (508-929-2483 or AOPcoordinator@worcester.edu)

HIPAA

All students must be trained in and comply with the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996,* the federal law that addresses patient rights and ethics by mandating the confidentiality and privacy of patient information.

Independent Study

No more than three semester hours of credit in independent study may be applied to the satisfaction of requirements of any graduate degree program. It is the student's responsibility to complete independent study contracts (available in the Office of Graduate Studies), along with required signatures and file with the Registrar by the last day of registration for a semester. Independent studies are granted only in extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the Course Professor.

Incomplete Grades

When circumstances prevent a student from completing a course on time (e.g., illness), the student is responsible for requesting an "incomplete." The professor *may* grant an incomplete provided the student had completed a *substantial portion* of the course requirements. The student must make arrangements with the professor to complete the course within six weeks of the beginning of the next semester.

The official calendar for the year indicates the date to resolve incompletes from the previous term; this calendar may be found at https://www.worcester.edu/academics/catalogs-calendars/. If the requirements are not met within the appropriate period, the incomplete will automatically become a "U," and is so recorded on the student's permanent record. An extension of an incomplete for one semester may be granted if circumstances still prevent the student from completing the course. In such cases, the student is responsible for obtaining the approval of the professor who must notify the Registrar in writing of his/her approval prior to the end of the initial six-week period. With regard to the extension of an incomplete grade, the required course work must be completed by the student prior to the beginning of the final examination period of the semester immediately following the one in which the incomplete was originally issued. The instructor will then have five working days within which to submit a final grade to the Registrar.

Information Technology

Worcester State's Information Technology's (IT) goal is to support teaching and learning through

technology. Please note IT's hours and services here: https://www.worcester.edu/information-technology/. IT can also be reached at 508-929-8856.

Leave of Absence

Matriculated students may request a leave of absence for up to one year by completing a leave of absence request form available in the Office of Graduate Studies. In extenuating circumstances, at the discretion of the Dean of Graduate and Continuing Education, a student may be granted an extension. Approved leave time is not counted against allowable program length. Students found in violation of drug screen policy (see Appendix E) do not qualify for a leave of absence.

Library

Online student have the same access to the university library as those on campus. The library offers a wealth of information and services to help you with your academic work.

Find Library Materials
The WSU Library provides access to a wide variety of full-text online resources including e-books, article databases, journals, newspapers, and magazines via the Library's website.
E-Books - search title, author or subject keywords through the HELM Catalog.
Journals, newspapers or magazines
Course E-Reserves
Subject Guides - access article databases by subject: Nursing
Off-campus Access: EZ Proxy allows authorized users to access licensed resources off campus without installing additional software.

Interlibrary Loan (ILL): Articles and book chapters not available from the Library may be obtainable from other libraries https://www.worcester.edu/Interlibrary-Loan-Desk/

Get Help from a Librarian
WSU librarians can help you identify researchstrategies, develop research questions, search for sources, and citation information via email/online form, phone, videoconferencing, or chat through the Ask Us research help page.
Subject librarians can provide in-depth research consultation when needed:
Nursing librarian: William Lundmark, wlundmark@worcester.edu or 509-929-8897

Library Online Tutorials
Library Online Tutorials can help you learn the library basics in your own pace. The topics include how to find a variety of library resources and how to use some essential library services.

Professional Liability Insurance and Licensure

Prior to participating in fieldwork/clinical practica, graduate students are required to upload evidence of current unencumbered licensure to practice as a registered nurse and documentation of current professional liability insurance in the amount of $1,000,000/$3,000,000 to Castlebranch.

Portfolio for Masters of Science in Nursing Degree

You will be required to develop a professional e-portfolio. This e-portfolio may be used for subsequent employment interviews, as well as in the application process for a doctoral program.

The e-portfolio is a purposeful collection of your work that illustrates efforts, progress, and achievement in one or more areas over time.

Your standards-based portfolio should clearly show the relationship between standards or goals, artifacts, and reflections. The learner's reflections are the rationale that specific artifacts are evidence of achieving the stated standards or goals. Your working portfolio will be a collection of evidence indicating how learning or skills acquisition is taking place throughout your program of study.

Program of Study

The Program of Study is completed by the student and the Master of Science Program Coordinator before the student registers for classes (usually immediately upon admission). The Program of Study defines for the student and the Graduate Admissions and Progression Committee the plan to complete the academic requirements for the Master of Science in Nursing degree. The official Program of Study reflects the course work which contributes to the student's knowledge base for advanced nursing practice. A copy is kept on file in the student's records in the Department of Nursing.

Registration

Registration for graduate nursing classes is accomplished online through Self Service (selfservice.worcester.edu) during the time periods indicated by Department of Graduate and Continuing Education (DCGE). It is essential that students register for courses in a timely fashion to ensure that desired courses are available and because undersubscribed courses (<4 students) may be cancelled.

A schedule of classes for the next semester will be posted on Self Service. Students are advised to to consult with their Master of Science in Nursing Program Coordinator in order to plan appropriately. The following websites contain planned course offerings for the next several years:
Public/Population Health: Worcester-State-University-Accelerated-Online-Graduate-Public-and-Population-Health-Program-Four-Year-Course-Offerings_June2021.pdf
Nurse Educator: https://webcdn.worcester.edu/continuing-education/wp-content/uploads/sites/29/2023/02/Nurse-educator-two-year-planning-guide.pdf

Statute of Limitations

All requirements for a graduate program must be completed within six years of the effective term of admission to a program.

Student Contact Information

It is the responsibility of graduate students to keep a **current address and telephone number** on file with the department administrative assistant, graduate program coordinator, and the Department of Graduate and Continuing Education. It is important that students receive mail from both the department and graduate office. If students do not notify the department of a change of address, **they are responsible for any errors due to not receiving mail.**

Students with Disabilities

Any student with conditions listed under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), will be considered for the following policy and procedure. Students with disabilities must present clinical documentation to the Student Accessibility Services Office (SAS) in order to receive special services. Once documentation has been filed with SAS, that office will advise the student of services available on campus. SAS will also advise faculty of conditions and accommodations, which should be allowed. Students with disabilities who are challenged by traditional teaching styles are expected to make themselves known to their advisors and/or individual course faculty. Faculty members are expected to assist such students in adapting class assignments and examinations, if reasonable and appropriate. Without notification from the SAS, no faculty member is required to make accommodations for a student.

Student Complaint and Resolution Request Policy

WSU Nursing Department offers students a prompt and equitable seeking of resolutions by either informal or formal means. Grade appeals should follow the Graduate *Grade Appeal* Procedure*.*

Student Resolution: A student may seek resolution of concerns either by speaking with their advisor or a faculty member through an informal or formal process:

- An I*nformal process* is a series of conversations to resolve a concern with a student's advisor or faculty member.
- A *formal process* is one that is typed and submitted via email or as a hard copy letter by the student to their advisor or faculty member. The first line of the letter or subject line of the email should indicate that the student is seeking formal resolution for a concern. In the letter or email, the student shall include: (1) student name, date, email address, phone number; (2) a detailed description of the concern (3) the specific resolution that they are seeking.

Resolution Procedure
Informal
- Step 1: The student is strongly encouraged to attempt to resolve the concerns on an informal basis by meeting with the individual involved (instructor, faculty, chair, etc.). Many problems can be resolved by having an open discussion.
- Step 2: If the matter is unresolved with the informal process, the student may proceed to the formal resolution process.

Formal
- Step 1: The student, within 10 days of the concern, will submit the formal request of resolution to the Chair of the department.
- Step 2: If resolution is not achieved at step 1, the student then has 10 days to submit a formal request of resolution to the Dean of the School of Science, Technology, and Health.

Recording and Photography
Recording devices and camera use must be approved by the faculty member prior to use in the classroom setting (virtual or in person). Verbal consent must be obtained prior to photographs or video recording.

Transfer Credit
Only credits for which students have earned a grade of "B-" or higher within a two-year period immediately prior to the effective term of admission are transferable from an accredited institution, including credits earned at Worcester State University. A maximum of 12 such graduate credits may be accepted.

Acceptance of transfer credits is the responsibility of the Master of Science in Nursing Program Coordinator in conjunction with the Graduate Education Council. Except in very rare instance, *no transfer credits* will be allowed after matriculation in the Master of Science in Nursing Program. Any courses proposed to replace courses offered at Worcester State University must be approved by the appropriate Master of Science in Nursing Program Coordinator. Any

petition for transfer credit approval by the Department of Nursing must be submitted with a copy of the syllabus from the course to be considered.

Writing Center

A Writing Center is located on campus, which is available for students needing writing assistance. Online help is available. The Writing Center has a wide collection of resource material on a wide range of technology-based subjects. The Writing Center is typically available in the Spring and Fall semesters only.

Written Coursework:

All writing assignments are required to incorporate the most current APA (American Psychology Association) format. When a student does not follow these guidelines, a faculty member may either reduce the grade or not accept the assignment. Additionally, all safe assign submissions must be <30% for graduate work. Safe assign reports >30% will be returned to the student for revisions. Resubmissions are subject to point deduction as indicated by course syllabus and/or faculty.

All written work must be submitted as a Word document unless the course faculty specifically indicates otherwise.

Course work is to be submitted at the times specified on the course syllabus or course guidelines. Faculty, at their discretion, may allow an extension of the time. A request for extension of time should be made *prior* to the due date for the coursework whenever possible. Unless additional time has been granted by faculty for the completion of an assignment, a maximum achievable grade will be calculated upon receipt of the late assignment. Refer to course syllabus for written work guidelines.

General Information

Nursing Honor Society: Sigma Theta Tau International

The mission of the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International is to support the learning, knowledge, and professional development of nurses committed to making a difference in health worldwide.

The vision of the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International is to create a global community of nurses who lead in using knowledge, scholarship, service, and learning to improve the health of the world's people.

Membership is by invitation to baccalaureate and graduate nursing students who demonstrate excellence in scholarship, and to nurse leaders exhibiting exceptional achievements in nursing.

The *Iota Phi Chapter-At -Large of Sigma Theta Tau International* is comprised of members from the following higher education institutions Central Massachusetts:

- Worcester State University
- Anna Maria College
- University of Massachusetts, Worcester, Graduate School of Nursing
- Assumption University

The eligibility committee of the Iota Phi Chapter-At -Large of Sigma Theta Tau International invites applications for membership each year from those students who have demonstrated academic excellence. If invited to join Sigma Theta Tau, International, it is the student's responsibility to complete the application process and return it in a timely fashion. Specific membership criteria are available from Prof. William Chadbourne wchadbourne@worcester.edu.

A new member induction ceremony is held annually in the spring. For more information about membership in the Iota Phi Chapter-At –Large, contact Professor William Chadbourne wchadbourne@worcester.edu.

Important Telephone Numbers

Bookstore	(508) 754-3448
Bursar	(508) 929-8051
Campus Police Department	(508) 929-8044
Emergency	(508) 929-8911
Information	(508) 929-8886
Counseling Services	(508) 929-8072
Financial Aid Office	(508) 929-8056
Graduate and Continuing Education	(508) 929-8127
Health Services	(508) 929-8875
University Technology Services	(508) 929-8856
Registrar/Student Records	(508) 929-8035; (508) 929-8036
Student Accessibility Services*	(508) 929-8733
Writing Center	(508) 929-8112
Worcester Area Cooperating Libraries	(508) 929-8544; (508) 754-3964

If students have any special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and need assistance/ accommodation, they must register with Student Accessibility Services.
Reasonable effort will be made to accommodate special needs.

Appendices

Appendix A: Incident Report Form

Appendix B: Blood Borne Pathogens Acknowledgement Form

Appendix C: WSU Professional Competencies Contract

Appendix D: Handbook Acknowledgement Form

Appendix E: Drug Screen Testing Policy

Appendices B-E are required to be signed by students by completing this form:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf9sxgr2jlGWRwy6OJvJZt1m9ndAW
iu3J5mAEHowBTf9Bi2Pg/viewform?usp=sf_link

Appendix A

Worcester State University Department of Nursing
Incident Report Form

STUDENT NAME	
ADDRESS	
BIRTH DATE	
E-MAIL	
PHONE	
PROGRAM (BSN/RN-BSN/GRAD)	

Date of Incident:＿＿/＿＿＿/＿＿＿Time:＿＿＿＿/＿＿＿＿＿AM PM

Location/Facility Name:＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿Department/Unit＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

Site Preceptor＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿Work Phone & Cell #＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

Site contact for follow-up:＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿Title＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿ Phone＿＿＿

Type of Incident

€ Sharps injury   Type of needle＿＿＿   was the needle/syringe equipped with a safety
   device? ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

€ Other sharp object

€ TB exposure

Type of Exposure

€ Body fluid splash   Blood   Urine   Saliva   Wound drainage

€ Mucous membrane   Eye   Mouth   Nose

€ Broken skin   Location＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

€ Intact skin

€ Inhalant

€ Animal/human scratch

€ Animal/human bite

€ Other＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

Other Incident (describe) ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

Who witnessed the incident?＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

When was WSU faculty notified? ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

Was an incident report created by the site?＿＿＿＿＿＿＿ (Please attach copy)

Where you treated for the exposure? Facility name: _____

Please attach a copy of the Emergency Center report.

Were baseline labs obtained from the source or source patient? If no, why?

_____

_____

Follow up planned with who and where? _____

FULLY describe the incident/injury/exposure and explain in detail what you were doing when the incident/injury/exposure occurred, including the use of tools, equipment or materials.

Please use additional sheets if necessary.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Student Signature_____ Date _____

To be completed by WSU Nursing Clinical Faculty:

Date & Time you were notified of event: _____

Faculty Report:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Faculty Signature_____

Date _____

Appendix B

BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT FORM

Each student must sign and return this form prior to any fieldwork/practicum placement affiliated with their educational preparation at Worcester State University Nursing Program. The policies have been developed for your safety and that of the clients for whom you care. You are in also following requirements put forth in the Department of Nursing, the Department's contracts with clinical agencies and Occupational Health and Safety rules. If you have questions, please schedule an appointment with your academic advisor to discuss them.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

I have been provided a copy of the Worcester State University Department of Nursing Blood Borne Pathogen Policy for my current and future reference. This policy has been explained to me and I have had an opportunity to ask questions about this information. I have read the policy and shall retain it for future reference.

Appendix C

Worcester State University Master of Science in Nursing Program

Professional Competencies Contract

COMPETENCIES: All students taking nursing courses are expected to adhere to the following *Essential Professional Competencies* in both clinical and/or didactic settings.

1. Demonstrates effective affective responses
2. Assumes responsibility for own actions and outcomes
3. Demonstrates acceptance of limited knowledge and experience
4. Follows through on commitments, is dependable and punctual
5. Demonstrates self-direction in seeking learning opportunities
6. Shows respect for others in the classroom.
7. Accepts constructive feedback when offered
8. Seeks validation of clinical judgments with faculty and/or preceptor
9. Able to separate personal issues from professional responsibilities
10. Keeps the patient/client/resident as the priority
11. Respects cultural and personal differences of others; is not judgmental about patients', clients', or residents' lifestyles
12. Sets priorities and reorganizes as necessary
13. Projects professional image/demeanor

GRADING: Grading of the Essential Professional Competencies is Pass/Fail. Successful demonstration of these competencies is essential for passing any clinical or didactic course. **Any student who is not demonstrating these competencies by the conclusion of the semester will fail the course**. Warnings may be given at any point throughout the semester.

CONTRACT: "I have read the 13 professional competencies that are required for all nursing courses. I agree that successful demonstration of these competencies is essential for my passing any graduate nursing course at Worcester State University."

Appendix D

Acknowledgement Form

Graduate Student Policy Handbook
Worcester State University
Master of Science in Nursing Program

I,_____have received a copy of the Master

of Science in Nursing Graduate Student Handbook for the 2022-23 academic year. I

understand that I am responsible for the information in the Handbook and will adhere to the

policies and procedures. I also understand that these policies and procedures may change

and I am responsible for the new material that will be given to me in writing.

IMPORTANT

Please initial that you have read and understand the Graduate Appeal Procedure as written in the Student Handbook.

Appendix E

DRUG SCREEN TESTING POLICY

The Department of Nursing is committed to educating professional nurses and is obligated to provide safe and effective care to the clients we serve. We also have an obligation to those agencies with whom we contract, to comply to various clinical requirements. These requirements include, but are not limited to, student health status, specific immunizations, BLS certification, completion of online orientation, criminal background searches, and drug screening.

Agencies have the prerogative to add any additional requirements during the school year, therefore, you may be subject to random drug screening or other requirements.

The bulleted items reflect the drug screening policy for the graduate program. The nursing program is not responsible for alternate clinical placements for students who cannot be placed in an agency related to drug screening results or refusal to submit to a drug screening. Failure to pass a drug screen or refusal to submit to screening will make the student ineligible to remain in the Nursing Program. Failure and/or refusal for drug screening are grounds for immediate removal from the Nursing Program. All screening will be at the student's own expense.

Procedure:
Initial testing
- The Department of Nursing will send an email to students with instructions on how to order the drug screening and the time frame the drug screening must be completed. After notification of initial drug screening the student has one week (7 days including weekend days) to complete testing (i.e provide specimen).
- Drug screening is ordered online through CastleBranch at students' expense. When you register for testing you will be given a location of a QuestLab that is closest to the address (zip code) you provide on the order form. Within 24 - 48 hours after you place your order the electronic chain of custody form (echain) will be placed directly into your CastleBranch account. You will receive an email that your chain of custody form is ready to print. You will need to print the echain and take with you to do the test. Testing must occur at the facility designated by Castlebranch.
- Students must provide a viable urine specimen to be tested for substances consistent with industry standards in the health care field.
- Refusal to provide a specimen during the prescribed time will be considered a failure and subject to program dismissal.
- If a student provides a specimen that is rejected, the student must stay at the testing site to complete the test requirement.
- The specimens will be sent to the laboratory for testing. The laboratory will test the primary specimen for Drugs, and if it tests positive based on cut-off levels established by the lab. If the test is positive, the lab will report the positive test result to the Medical Review Officer (MRO) describing which Drugs were detected. The MRO will contact the Student who tested positive, and the Student may provide an explanation for the positive test result. The MRO may request verification for any prescription medications. If the Student declines the opportunity to discuss

a positive test result with the MRO or fails to contact the MRO within three days of notification, the MRO may report the Drug test as positive to the Department of Nursing. If a student provides an explanation for a positive Drug test result, the MRO will determine whether a valid medical explanation exists. If a determination is made in the MRO's discretion that there is a legitimate medical explanation, the Drug test results will be recorded as negative and reported to the Department of Nursing. If the MRO determines that there is not a legitimate medical explanation, the Drug test results will be recorded as positive and reported as such. By participating in the Drug screening process, the Student is authorizing release of the Drug test results in accordance with this policy.

- Your drug screening results will be posted to your CastleBranch account. The Department of Nursing will have access to the results.
- When final report is posted to your CastleBranch account the results must be negative. Drinking large amounts of water may cause a dilute negative result. If you have a dilute negative result you will be required to retest. You will need to order another drug screening and pay an additional fee to retest.

All fees associated with drug screening will be at the expense of the student.

Review of Results:

Please note, CastleBranch notifies students via email the day results are posted. It is the students' responsibility to log into their CastleBranch account to view results at the time they are notified. Retesting timeframes are based on CastleBranch notifications (timestamped and recorded electronically).

Negative Test Result:

If the drug test is negative, and pending all other requisite acceptances and approvals, the student will be allowed to participate in clinical activities.

Positive Test Result:

Any student who tests positive for drugs, or who does not comply with any notice, request, or procedure provided for hereunder, shall be withdrawn from all clinical courses and dismissed from the Program, on the basis that the student is not able to meet course objectives for classroom and/or clinical requirements.

Result other than Positive or Negative:

If the student's drug screen results in a result that is neither positive nor negative, then the test must be repeated (at the students' expense). A test result that is neither positive nor negative includes but is not limited to a Dilute negative, Positive Dilute, Positive No Contact, or Cancelled.

Retesting:

- DILUTE NEGATIVE is treated as a positive result and the student will have 48 hours from the time initial results are posted to complete a second test. Students will need to refer to original instructions for ordering a drug screen. Retesting must occur at the facility designated by CastleBranch and at student's expense.

- Dispute Testing of Positive Results: Students have the right to dispute positive results. CastleBranch will create a new package and contact students for consent and payment for dispute testing, at the students request. The original specimen is retested. Currently the cost for dispute testing is $250 and is incurred by the student. Requests and payment for dispute testing must be completed within 48 hours of notification of initial test results.

All testing fees and expenses are the student's responsibility.
It is understood that there are circumstances where students may need to take medications due to medical conditions which may possibly impair their performance. Students in a clinical setting are required to be aware of the effect that all medications may have on performance and must notify their instructor and receive confirmation of approval to attend clinical assignments prior to attendance in the clinical setting.

Effective: January 1, 2020

Worcester State University
Lillian R. Goodman Department of Nursing
Acknowledgement and Consent - Drug Testing Policy

By signing below, I (print) name_____ acknowledge that:
· I have received a copy of the WSU Dept. of Nursing Drug Testing Policy which explains that a drug test is required to be negative before commencement of clinical activities in the nursing program.
· I agree to be tested for drugs as set forth by the WSU Dept. of Nursing Drug Testing Policy: I understand that Initial Screening, Retesting and Random screening will be a cost to me. I understand that I may be screened if I exhibit behaviors that give cause for reasonable suspicion of drug/alcohol use (for cause) and I will be responsible for the cost of this screening.
· In order to be eligible to participate in practicum courses, my drug screen must be negative; and;
· If my drug test result is positive or if I refuse to screen, I will be dismissed from the graduate program.