

# Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) STUDENT HANDBOOK

## School of Nursing

**2023-2024**

*Revised February 2024*

The MSN Student Handbook outlines policies and processes specific to the University of St. Thomas, Morrison Family College of Health, and Susan S. Morrison School of Nursing that students need to know and understand as they enter, progress through, and complete the MSN program. Students **must understand and adhere to the policies** outlined in this handbook. As an attestation to this understanding, students sign and date an acknowledgment form during MSN orientation. Revisions to the MSN Student Handbook can occur anytime and intend to communicate program expectations supporting student success. Policies outlined in the most recent handbook version apply, and updates occur via Canvas and student emails.

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“Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.” – Harriet Tubman

## **Introduction**

Welcome to the Susan S. Morrison School of Nursing (SON)! The SON is housed within the Morrison Family College of Health (MFCOH) at the University of St. Thomas. The MFCOH was founded in 2019, under the leadership of Dr. MayKao Y. Hang, with the mission to prepare culturally responsive health care providers who proactively advance health equity and social justice. In striving to meet the mission of the MFCOH, all undergraduate and graduate programs in the college orient curricula, experiences, and opportunities for students around four guiding principles. The principles include attention to 1) whole person care that attends to needs of the mind, body, spirit and community; 2) social ingenuity and innovation, which focuses on identifying new and effective ways of delivering and promoting health and well-being to expand access and affordability; 3) excellence using science and humanities to provide exceptional applied learning opportunities in the community so graduates are prepared for complex health challenges; and 4) advocacy aimed at dismantling systemic health inequities by addressing root causes such as racism and poverty. The mission, vision, values, and guiding principles of MFCOH represent a robust effort to attend to the current and future needs of a diverse society and to work to be change agents who strive to eliminate structural oppression and inequities.

### **MFCOH Vision**

Informed by Catholic social teaching, the University of St. Thomas MFCOH will educate health providers and leaders to advance the physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being of individuals, families, and communities skillfully, compassionately, and collaboratively.

### **MFCOH Mission**

We will prepare highly skilled and caring professionals who are culturally responsive, practice with ingenuity, and proactively advance health equity and social justice.

### **MFCOH Values**

- Innovation
- Equity
- Collaboration

### **MFCOH Commitment to Diversity**

In alignment with our professional values and philosophies, the MFCOH is deeply committed to working together as one college, collegiately and collaboratively. In all that we do, we strive to actively create an environment of inclusivity by embracing and affirming our differences and by developing equitable practices and policies for all who study, teach, and work both within, and on behalf of, our college.

### **Diversity**

The university's internal work on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is coordinated through the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ODEI). ODEI ensures that our work within the University will make St. Thomas more inclusive. This happens at all levels and includes everyone. In

addition, Student Diversity and Inclusion Services (SDIS) directly supports students by offering programming that promotes diversity and social justice awareness and works to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students. For more information on the Office for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, click [here](#).

## **Discrimination**

The University of St. Thomas is committed to the principles of equal educational opportunity. St. Thomas does not unlawfully discriminate based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family status, disability, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. The university's [policy of nondiscrimination](#) extends to all aspects of its operations, including but not limited to, employment, educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs and all other educational programs and activities. Additional resources, including reporting information, can be found on the university's [Title IX website](#). For inquiries related to discrimination, please contact the university's AVP for Equity Compliance and Title IX Coordinator.

## **Sexual Misconduct**

The University of St. Thomas mission and convictions embody the University's commitment to promote and protect the personal dignity and well-being of every member of the St. Thomas community. Sexual harassment, sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct violate that commitment and are not tolerated in our community. Moreover, they constitute unlawful sex discrimination. All forms of sexual misconduct are prohibited by St. Thomas. The university's sexual misconduct policy and additional related resources can be found [here](#).

Additional resources, including reporting information, can be found on the university's [Title IX website](#). For inquiries related to sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence, please contact the university's AVP for Equity Compliance and Title IX Coordinator, which is listed on the Title IX website.

## **Disability Services and Access**

The University of St. Thomas is committed to compliance with the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008. The disability services office works with students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors on making all programs and activities offered by the University of St. Thomas, when viewed in their entirety, readily accessible to individuals with disabilities. Information relating to the existence, location or relocation of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities can be obtained upon request. Additional resources, including information on services provided and accommodations can be found on the university's [Disability Resources](#) website. To schedule an appointment with Disability Resources, please call 651-962-6315 or self-schedule your appointment via 'My Tommie Support Team' on your OneStThomas homepage.

## **Expectations for Student Conduct, Including Professional Conduct and Conduct as a Student**

The MFCOH relies on the University's Student Code of Conduct to provide a foundation for questions around student conduct. The [Student Code of Conduct](#) not only applies to conduct that occurs on



University property or at University sponsored activities, it also applies to off-campus conduct and behavior conducted online, via email, or other electronic mediums. Online postings such as blogs, web postings, chats, and social networking sites are in the public sphere and are not private. Online postings can subject a student to allegations of student misconduct if evidence of policy violations exist. The Student Code of Conduct states that “each student is responsible for their conduct from the time of application for admission through the awarding of a degree, even though conduct may occur before classes begin or after classes end.”

A violation of the Student Code of Conduct is defined as activity, whether on-campus, off-campus, or online, that adversely affects the St. Thomas community or is detrimental to the educational mission and/or interests of the University. Specific behaviors that violate the Student Code of Conduct are provided in the University policy.

While the University does not regularly search for online violations, it may take action as described in the [Student Code of Conduct](#) policy (see Conduct Procedures section) if such information is brought to the attention of University officials.

## **University of St. Thomas Student Rights and Responsibilities**

Read more about your [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

All University of St. Thomas students are expected to be familiar with and to comply with the university’s mission, convictions, university policies, and applicable law. We call these our “community standards.” University policies developed for students can be found in the [University’s Policy Repository](#).

As a diverse college with many academic units from different disciplines, the MFCOH also expects students and faculty to adhere to the professional codes of ethics and licensure requirements specific to respective fields. See the linked pages for professional nursing code of ethics [here](#).

The faculty and staff of the MFCOH are committed to making decisions that prioritize student needs and wellbeing in all aspects of the learning environment. Students of the MFCOH can expect that faculty will work to create a community that facilitates learner-centered development. They will support, teach, and engage MFCOH students with respect and support, and will strive to develop an inclusive climate which embraces the diversity of students’ lived experiences.

### **Pandemic Policy, Rules of Conduct**

The university’s COVID-19 Response Plan applies to all members of the St. Thomas community: students, faculty, staff and any campus visitors and licensees. The plan will be reviewed regularly and updated based on current conditions and public health guidance. [University of St. Thomas COVID-19 Response Plan](#)

## **Pre-Licensure Nursing Student Handbook Introduction**

### **Message to Student**

Welcome to the nursing program at St. Thomas. Members of the St. Thomas community are honored and excited to have you onboard! We look forward to partnering with you in your nursing education in preparing for entry into professional registered nurse practice. The faculty and staff will support your

success by creating a positive teaching/learning environment. As you become familiar with the information in this handbook, please do not hesitate to ask nursing faculty and staff questions. The student handbook includes important content that supports your journey to becoming a professional registered nurse.

## **Purposes of Pre-Licensure Nursing Education at St. Thomas**

St. Thomas offers a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), both of which are pre-licensure nursing education programs. Pre-licensure means the nursing education students receive prior to becoming licensed to practice as professional registered nurses. Students who successfully complete the BSN or MSN, and obtain a nursing degree from St. Thomas, become candidates for the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc., exam, or the NCLEX-RN®. Students who pass the NCLEX-RN® demonstrate they are competent to safely enter nursing practice. Depending on state regulations, students may practice nursing in a single state or in multiple states if the state of practice is part of the enhanced [Nurse Licensure Compact](#).

Students in the BSN program will be prepared for entry into professional registered nurse practice through integrating natural and social sciences with theories and concepts unique to the discipline of nursing. Students will learn to provide nursing care across the spectrum of health care settings, including community-based settings, hospitals, and clinics. The BSN's unique focus on whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration prepares students to provide culturally responsive care with clinical excellence and ingenuity.

The MSN is designed for those who hold a baccalaureate degree in a field other than nursing. This accelerated nursing program leverages students' previous education and/or career experiences, adding value to preparing them for entry into professional registered nurse practice. Like the BSN, the MSN focuses on clinical excellence and ingenuity and includes a set of interprofessional core courses centered on whole-person wellbeing, social determinants of health and health equity, interprofessional collaboration and integrative health care, and innovation, advocacy and systems change. This core set prepares students to address health care system issues that impede quality care and access to health care through improving and changing these systems. Students graduating with an MSN will be able to provide nursing care across the continuum of care and transition to some practice roles (e.g., nursing leadership) without returning to school for a graduate degree.

## **Vision, Mission, Principles, Philosophical Framework, and Charter**

As outlined below, the purposes of pre-licensure nursing education at St. Thomas are explicated in the SON vision and mission statements and the MFCOH principles. Also outlined below is the philosophical framework underpinning the programs, which are nursing's fundamental patterns of knowing (Carper, 1978; Chinn, Kramer, and Sitzman 2022), and the SON's Charter. The charter is the avenue through which students provide input for continuous quality improvement of the programs.

### **SON Vision**

The SON prepares highly skilled professional nurses who are culturally responsive, practice clinical excellence with ingenuity, and proactively improve whole-person healing to advance health equity and social justice.

### **SON Mission Statement**

Inspired by Catholic intellectual tradition, the University of St. Thomas SON embraces academic excellence through fostering a caring culture during students' preparation for entry into professional Registered Nurse practice. Our graduates will partner with others, serving as culturally responsive leaders who value intellectual inquiry to act wisely in the provision of ethical and compassionate whole-person and community engaged care that promotes human flourishing. They will provide this care with ingenuity, dignity, and respect for diverse populations to advance health equity and social justice.

## **SON Philosophical Framework**

At the St. Thomas SON, we believe that nursing occupies a unique presence amid an array of health care providers through caring for the whole person and whole community through nursing's fundamental patterns of knowing: empiric, ethical, aesthetic, personal, and emancipatory (Carper, 1978; Chinn, Kramer, and Sitzman 2022). These patterns of knowing provide students with the foundation to achieve our mission, vision, and program outcomes, as well as to exemplify the MFCOH Principles.

In facilitating learning about *empiric knowing*, we believe students gain the strong scientific foundation necessary to solve clinical problems through engaging in clinical reasoning, demonstrating sound clinical judgment, and developing an evidence-based practice. Under the auspices of Catholic intellectual tradition, we know that nursing is a fundamentally moral endeavor where students learn to embody *ethical knowing* as they understand their obligation to provide fair and just health care for the common good. We firmly embrace the important value of *aesthetic knowing* in all facets of nursing practice to aid in promoting health and healing. These facets include creating and engaging in interprofessional and relationship-based care milieus, using integrative nursing care practices, and incorporating forms of art into nursing care, such as stories and poetry. We believe in educating students to have a keen sense of *personal knowing*, especially self-awareness in providing safe, quality, and respectful care, including caring for cultures other than one's own culture. And, as aligned with Chinn, Kramer, and Sitzman, we believe in the intersection of *emancipatory knowing* with all the patterns of knowing so that students engage in critical reflection and ingenuity as they become professional nursing leaders, advocates, and change agents to bring about health equity and social justice for all people.

## **SON Charter**

The student voice is vital to the nursing education experience and the overall approach to continuous quality improvement in the SON. The SON Charter outlines the structures and operations of the school, which include obtaining student input. Faculty and staff gain student input in a variety of ways, including surveys and student representation on the SON's Pre-Licensure Nursing Program Committee (PLNPC). Faculty and staff will address findings from student feedback in the PLNPC and through other means as needed. They will record actions taken to address student feedback and make suggestions for quality improvement using a timetable and plan for further review. They will also document mechanisms for communicating outcomes to students.

## **Program Outcomes and Curricula**

The program outcomes for the BSN and MSN programs align with the vision, mission, and philosophical framework. They are based on evidence-informed standards of nursing practice and nursing education regulations and standards and reflect the competencies St. Thomas BSN and MSN students must achieve by the end of the nursing program.<sup>1</sup> The MSN program outcomes are listed below.

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<sup>1</sup> The BSN and MSN programs have similar program outcomes. However, given MSN students are second-degree seeking students, these program outcomes reflect higher order domains of learning to acknowledge the breadth and depth of academic and previous career experiences.

<b>MSN Program Outcomes</b>
Synthesizes knowledge from liberal education for the provision of professional nursing care for the whole person and whole community.
Creates person-centered plans of care through therapeutic relationship, respect, holistic assessment, prioritization, intervention, and evaluation to achieve dignified health outcomes.
Advances the common good through ethical, moral, and socially just nursing care for people and populations through health promotion, disease prevention, and emancipatory praxis.
Integrates clinical judgment, scholarship, and evidence-based nursing practice in the provision of care within complex systems.
Leads through ingenuity, innovation, and multiple ways of knowing to proactively and continuously improve quality and safety in nursing practice and health care systems.
Facilitates interprofessional teamwork that values similarities and differences to enhance and strengthen health outcomes.
Manages information and communication technologies and informatics processes to provide quality nursing care.
Creates change through advocacy, professionalism, and leadership skills within complex systems to address quality improvement, patient safety, and healthy workplace culture in the practice setting.

## **Accreditation and Licensure Statements and Disclosures**

### **Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Statement**

The University of St. Thomas is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (www.hlcommission.org; 312-263-0456), an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

### **Minnesota Office of Higher Education (MNOHE) Statement**

The University of St. Thomas is registered with the Minnesota Office of Higher Education pursuant to sections 136A.61 to 136A.71. Registration is not an endorsement of the institution. Credits earned at the institution may not transfer to all other institutions. Contact information for the Minnesota Office of Higher Education is: 1450 Energy Park Drive, Suite 350 St. Paul, MN 55108-5227 Phone: (651) 642-0567 Toll Free: (800) 657-3866 Fax: (651) 642-0675 <https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/>

### **Specialized Accreditation and Assessment**

The University of St. Thomas has maintained continuous accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) since 1916. HLC is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as an institutional accreditor.

Institutional accreditation by the HLC provides assurance to prospective students and other constituents that course credits and degrees earned from the institution meet quality standards of higher education.

In addition, institutional accreditation assures quality by verifying that an institution is engaged in continuous improvement. HLC evaluates each institution on its academic offerings, governance and administration, mission, finances, and resources.

### **Professional Licensure Disclosures for Nursing**

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program at the University of St. Thomas is designed to meet the licensure standards set by the Minnesota Board of Nursing. The MSN has received initial approval from

the Minnesota Board of Nursing and will be granted continuing approval upon receiving initial accreditation by a national nursing accrediting body. The program cannot make a determination that its curriculum meets requirements for licensure outside of the State of Minnesota until CCNE accreditation is awarded. Visit our website at <https://www.stthomas.edu/academics/accreditation/licensure-disclosures/nursing/index.html> for more information.

### **Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) Accreditation Statement**

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program at the University of St. Thomas Morrison Family College of Health is pursuing initial accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) (<http://www.ccneaccreditation.org>). Applying for accreditation does not guarantee that accreditation will be granted.

### **Technical Standards**

Technical standards (see below) are required abilities for effective performance in the Susan S. Morrison School of Nursing. The standards are compatible with the scope of practice for which nursing students will seek licensure as defined by the [Minnesota State Board of Nursing; Nurse Practice Act: 148.171, Subd. 15](#). Examples show how a standard may be applied in an entry-level nursing education program. The examples listed are for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to be a complete list of all tasks required in an entry-level nursing program.

These technical standards are essential program requirements, and School of Nursing students must demonstrate that they can meet these technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodations, throughout their time in the program. Reasonable accommodations to meet standards may be available for otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities. Contact the office of [Disability Resources as soon as possible for more information if you think you may need an accommodation for a disability](#).

Email: [disabilityresources@stthomas.edu](mailto:disabilityresources@stthomas.edu)

Phone: (651) 962-6315

### **Sensing/Observing**

- Observe and assess a patient accurately, through visual, auditory, and tactile abilities
- Ability to monitor and assess health needs
- Examples (not all inclusive):
- Interpret and respond to monitors, alarms, emergency signals and cries for help
- Interpret and differentiate heart, lung, and bowel sounds
- Observation and assessment necessary in nursing care, both at a distance and close at hand.
- Observe patient responses
- Observe small calibration markings and numbers (e.g., on syringes)
- Assess color change in skin and fluids

### **Motor**

- Possess psychomotor skills necessary to provide holistic and safe nursing care and perform or assist with procedures, treatments, and medication administration
- Operate equipment typically found in the health care environment (IV pumps, cardiac monitor, and electric blood pressure equipment, safe patient handling equipment, etc.)
- Practice in a safe manner and appropriately provide care in emergencies and life support procedures and perform universal precautions against contamination

- Examples (not all inclusive):
- Maintain sterile technique
- Transfer and position patients
- Position and re-position self around patients in their room or other workspaces
- Perform assessment and therapeutic procedures such as inspection, palpation, percussion, auscultation, and other diagnostic maneuvers and procedures

### **Communication**

- Communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and families
- Communicate effectively with faculty, preceptors, and all members of the healthcare team during practicum and other learning experiences
- Accurately elicit information including a medical history and other information to evaluate a client or patient's condition adequately and effectively
- Examples (not all inclusive):
- Concisely and accurately explains treatments and procedures as well as other health education
- Documents clearly and concisely, within legal guidelines

### **Cognitive/Intellectual Ability**

- Use and apply information acquired from various sources, including written documents and computer systems (e.g., lectures, demonstrations, written documents, literature searches and data retrieval)
- Identify and interpret information presented in images from paper, slides, videos, and screens that are presented in various formats
- Recognize and assess client changes in mood, activity, cognition, verbal, and non-verbal communication
- Use and interpret information from assessment techniques/maneuvers
- Measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize data related to patient diagnosis and treatment of patients
- Exercise proper judgment and complete nursing responsibilities in a timely and accurate manner.
- Synthesize information, problem solve, and think critically to judge the most appropriate theory or assessment strategy
- Ask for help when needed and make proper judgments of when a nursing task can or cannot be carried out alone
- Exhibit a level of consciousness and attentiveness that guarantees patient safety
- Expeditiously incorporate data from multiple patient sources (e.g., physical assessment, vital signs, lab values, interdisciplinary documentation) in providing appropriate, safe patient care
- Examples (not all inclusive):
- Identify cause-effect relationships in clinical situations
- Recognize and respond rapidly and safely to changes in patient status based on a variety of sources such as physical assessment and pertinent laboratory findings
- Revise care to promote appropriate patient outcomes
- Access electronic health records using health agency-approved device
- Safely monitor and respond to alarms, emergency signals, cries for help, heart, lung, and bowel sounds
- Assess respiratory and cardiac function, blood pressure, blood sugar, neurological status, etc.

### **Behavioral**

- Behave professionally and maintain mature, sensitive, effective relationships with clients/patients, families, students, faculty, staff, preceptors, and other professionals under all circumstances
- Exercise skills of diplomacy to advocate for patients in need
- Able to function under stress and adapt to classroom and practice setting environments
- Must be able to meet University of St. Thomas School of Nursing attendance requirements, including timeliness
- Examples (not all inclusive):
- Arrives on time, prepared to fully participate
- Manages work to meet deadlines
- Student must be able and willing to examine their behavior when it interferes with productive individual or team relationships

**Character**

- Concern for others, integrity, accountability, interest, and motivation are necessary personal qualities
- Demonstrate intent and desire to follow the ANA Standards of Care and Nursing Code of Ethics
- Examples (not all inclusive):
- Is honest in all communications with others
- Has a positive attitude to ensure teamwork
- Maintains confidentiality

**Master of Science in Nursing Differentiators**

The MSN programs is differentiated from the BSN program through higher level program outcomes, course learning outcomes, curriculum content, assessment methods, and four interprofessional core courses, reflective of the MFCOH (MFCOH) principles:

- Nursing 515: Whole Person Wellbeing
- Nursing 535: Health Equity & Social Determinants of Health
- Nursing 560: Interprofessional Collaboration & Integrative Health Care
- NRSNG 590: Innovation: Advocacy through Systems Change

Additionally, to assure compliance with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing’s 2011 *Essentials of Master’s Education*, there is additional coursework in physiology/pathophysiology, health assessment, and pharmacology and organizational leadership.

**Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Degree Plan (20 months)**

The MSN program is an accelerated program designed to prepare highly qualified entry-level nurses in 20 months. The program is 56 total credits, including 4 credits in interprofessional education. Students work closely with advisors to ensure appropriate progression through the programs. The catalog and syllabi contain full course descriptions.

	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>
<b>Summer</b>	Outstanding Pre-Requisites (a)  <b>TOTAL CREDITS: Varies</b>	<b>NRSNG 600: Perinatal Nursing &amp; Childbearing Families (4)</b> <b>NRSNG 605: Nursing Care for Children &amp; Families (4)</b> <b>TOTAL CREDITS: 8</b>

<b>Fall</b>	NRSRG 515: Whole Person Wellbeing‡ (1) NRSRG 510: Foundations of Nursing Practice (2) <b>NRSRG 520: Nursing Clinical Skills and Health Assessment (4)</b> NRSRG 540: Pathophysiology & Pharmacology for Nursing Practice I (3)  <b>TOTAL CREDITS: 10</b>	NRSRG 560: Interprofessional Collaboration & Integrative Health Care‡ (1) <b>NRSRG 570: Complex Nursing Care II (4)</b> <b>NRSRG 620: Population Health Nursing (4 cr.)</b> NRSRG 610: Pathophysiology & Pharmacology for Nursing Practice III: Advanced Assessments and Interventions (3)  <b>TOTAL CREDITS: 12</b>
<b>J-Term</b>	NRSRG 525: Nursing Research & Evidence-Based Practice (3)  <b>TOTAL CREDITS: 3</b>	<b>TOTAL CREDITS: 0</b>
<b>Spring</b>	NRSRG 535: Health Equity & Social Determinants of Health‡ (1) <b>NRSRG 530: Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing (4)</b> <b>NRSRG 550: Complex Nursing Care I (4)</b> NRSRG 541: Pathophysiology & Pharmacology for Nursing Practice II (3)  <b>TOTAL CREDITS: 12</b>	NRSRG 590: Innovation: Advocacy through Systems Change‡ (1) <b>NRSRG 650: Capstone: Complex Nursing Care III (4)</b> NRSRG 640: Informatics & Healthcare Technologies in Nursing Practice (3) NRSRG 670: Nursing Leadership in Complex Health Care Systems (3)  <b>TOTAL CREDITS: 11</b>

**Total Credits Required Nursing Credits: 56**

**Total Clinical/Lab Hours: 570**

‡ **Interprofessional core courses; bold black font indicates nursing clinical/lab/simulation course**

## Advising and Student Supports

The University of St. Thomas is dedicated to helping students reach their goals and provides a variety of resources to help support students. The MSN program will provide opportunities and programs such as tutors, mentors, and academic skills workshops to help students succeed. Other opportunities will include programs that focus on mental health and wellness, as well as a graduate student nursing association. The SON also has a Nursing Student Success Director who provides individualized support and will be in contact with all MSN students about important opportunities.

There are other staff members to help you as well along your journey to becoming a nurse, including:

- Assistant Director of Nursing, Simulation Education
- Assistant Program Director, Nursing Operations
- Student Success Director
- Clinical Placement Specialist
- Simulation Operations Coordinator

An Academic Advisor is assigned to every student and will be a nursing faculty member. They will play a significant role in your success, including keeping you on track as you complete your coursework, guiding you as you begin to think about your career as a nurse and developing your professional identity.



Other faculty members will also be able to guide you along your way if you have questions.

## **MSN Graduate Faculty Advising**

All MSN students in the Susan S. Morrison School of Nursing are assigned a Graduate Faculty Advisor. Students are not required to obtain advising as a condition of registration. The nature of a Graduate Faculty Advisor is to serve primarily as a mentor who will work to empower students to become autonomous learners and agents of their professional development. Additionally, Graduate Faculty Advisors may serve as an advocate, and will provide students with accurate information about departmental and institutional policies, procedures, and resources.

Students who actively engage in a relationship with their Faculty Advisor will:

Solicit feedback and engage in self-reflection.

Incorporate feedback when developing short and long-term goals for personal and professional learning.

Reflect on how experiences in the MSN program can lead to opportunities to advance health equity.

Students can anticipate their Graduate Faculty Advisor to:

- Be a responsive listener
- Provide constructive feedback
- Stimulate reflection
- Offer alternative perspectives
- Serve as an advocate and system navigator/connector
- Make referral to support offices/people when appropriate

Students and Graduate Faculty Advisors meet (in-person or virtually) at least once per semester, typically within the first few weeks. Additional meetings can be requested as needed. It is the student's responsibility to guide all meetings with an informally prepared agenda. Agenda items might include program questions, goal guidance, or discussion about areas of concern.

The advising relationship is a mutually beneficial endeavor and, as with any relationship, requires open, honest, and ongoing communication. Graduate students are expected to take ownership for their own personal growth and learning and are responsible to refine goals and follow-up on referrals based on the recommendations of the Graduate Faculty Advisor.

Students needing advisor support while faculty are unavailable for an extended period (e.g., sabbatical, off-contract summers) should contact the Student Success Director for assistance and/or referral. Students wishing to change their Graduate Faculty Advisor should contact the School of Nursing Student Success Director.

## **Course Descriptions**

### **NRSG 510: Foundation of Nursing Practice (2 credits)**

In this course students will apply strategies for improving the health of the public within the context of nursing's metaparadigm: person, environment, health, and nursing. Emphasis is on recognizing nursing as a profession, person-centered care, and issues and trends in health and health care. The course will include examination of nursing care within health care systems and nurses' roles in influencing health outcomes. Students will address whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration.

**Co-requisites:** NRSG 515, NRSG 520, NRSG 540

### **NRSG 515: Whole Person Wellness (1 credit)**

This course will offer MSN students the opportunity to learn and reflect upon the risk factors in society

that influence health equity, and identify barriers, and solutions that can improve overall health and well-being. Students will examine various conceptualizations of social determinants of health, including those explained and addressed within regional, state, national and international organizations dedicated to addressing health equity. Special emphasis will be placed on initiatives aimed at mitigating factors impacting health equity, specifically for marginalized populations and the master's prepared nurse's role in mitigation.

**Co-requisites:** NRS 510, NRS 520, NRS 540

**NRS 520: Nursing Clinical Skills and Health Assessment (4 credits)**

In this course, students will develop person-centered skills and health assessment techniques. Emphasis is on whole-person wellness, understanding person in the context of their environments, clinical judgment, and safety and quality. Students will analyze the influence of social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration in the provision of clinical skills and health assessment.

**Co-requisites:** NRS 510, NRS 515, NRS 540

**NRS 525: Nursing Research and Evidence-Based Practice (3 credits)**

In this course, students will integrate research and evidence-based practice in providing nursing care and refine their critical thinking skills to incorporate innovative perspectives. Emphasis will be on interrelationships between professional, scholarly nursing practice, health systems and the spheres of care, whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration.

**Prerequisites:** C- or better in NRS 510, NRS 515, NRS 520, NRS 540

**NRS 530: Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing (4 credits)**

Students will ascertain the concepts and theories related to the provision of psychiatric/mental health nursing practice. Emphasis will be on nursing therapeutic interventions created for mental health and the care of persons with mental illnesses within the context of disease prevention/promotion of health and well-being, chronic disease care, and hospice/palliative/supportive care, whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration. The course includes integration of didactic and clinical learning in a variety of settings.

**Prerequisite:** C- or better in NRS 525

**Co-requisites:** NRS 535, NRST 541

**NRS 535: Healthy Equity and Social Determinants of Health (1 credit)**

This course will offer MSN students the opportunity to learn and reflect upon social determinants of health and their impact on health equity. Students will examine various conceptualizations of social determinants of health, including those explained and addressed within regional, state, national and international organizations dedicated to addressing health equity. Special emphasis will be placed on initiatives aimed at mitigating factors impacting health equity specifically for marginalized populations and the master's prepared nurse's role in mitigation.

**Prerequisite:** C- or better in NRS 525

**Co-requisites:** NRS 530, NRS 541, NRS 550

**NRS 540: Pathophysiology and Pharmacology for Nursing Practice I (3 credits)**

In this course, students will analyze the integration of pathophysiology and pharmacology. Emphasis is on mechanisms underlying disease and concomitant therapeutic agents to treat disease. This course will encompass pathophysiology and pharmacology in the context of whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration.

**Co-requisites:** NRS 510, NRS 515, NRS 520

**NRSG 541: Pathophysiology and Pharmacology for Nursing Practice II (3 credits)**

Students will expand their knowledge of the integration of pathophysiology and pharmacology in this course. Emphasis is on the examination of multifaceted disease processes and concomitant pharmacotherapies. This course is a continuation of Pathophysiology and Pharmacology for Nursing Practice I and will continue to illustrate pathophysiology and pharmacology within the context of whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration.

**Prerequisite:** C- or better in NRSG 525

**Co-requisites:** NRSG 530, NRSG 535, NRSG 550

**NRSG 550: Complex Nursing Care I (4 credits)**

In this course, students will discover the spheres of care essential for entry-level nursing practice. The examination and application of the spheres of care are within the context of whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change and interprofessional collaboration. This course integrates didactic and clinical learning in a variety of settings across the lifespan within families and communities.

**Prerequisites:** C- or better in NRSG 530

**Co-requisites:** NRSG 535, NRSG 541

**NRSG 560: Interprofessional Collaboration and Integrated Healthcare (1 credit)**

This course will offer MSN students the opportunity to learn and reflect upon the role of nursing and nurses in myriad interprofessional health care contexts. Students will learn about the importance of interprofessional healthcare teams who understand and invite the contributions of others, while working collaboratively toward optimized patient outcomes in different settings, specifically those that ensure quality and safety. Special emphasis will be placed on the exploration of social identity and the role of assumptions, biases and perceptions, and as well as, microaggressions in nursing and interprofessional teams.

**Prerequisite:** C- or better in NRSG 605

**Co-requisites:** NRSG 570, NRSG 610, NRSG 620

**NRSG 570: Complex Nursing Care II (4 credits)**

This course enhances students' knowledge and skills of the spheres of care essential for entry-level nursing practice. Emphasis is on restorative care, including critical/trauma care, complex acute care, chronic disease care, and hospice/palliative/supportive care. The examination and application of the spheres of care are within the context of whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration. An integration of didactic and clinical learning will occur in a variety of settings across the lifespan within families and communities.

**Prerequisite:** C- or better in NRSG 605

**Co-requisites:** NRSG 560, NRSG 610, NRSG 620

**NRSG 590: Innovation: Advocacy Through Systems Change (1 credit)**

This course will offer MSN students the opportunity to learn and reflect upon the role of nursing and nurses in identifying important health policy issues as well as becoming agents of change, devising innovations to meet the health care needs of the persons/families/communities they serve, and using program evaluation, data analysis, and information to advance social justice. Special emphasis will be placed on students' ability to position themselves to be effective in orchestrating policy and regulatory changes at local, state, and national levels. Special emphasis will be placed on developing students' understanding of themselves as leaders in policy formation, and how current policies affect the practice of nursing and the delivery of healthcare regionally, statewide, nationally and internationally.

**Prerequisites:** C- or better in NRS 560, NRS 570, NRS 610, NRS 620

**Co-requisites:** NRS 640, NRS 650, NRS 670

**NRS 600: Nursing Care for Women and Childbearing Families (4 credits)**

This course prepares students to care for women, infants, and childbearing families across the spheres of care (disease prevention/promotion of health and well-being, chronic disease care, restorative care, and hospice/palliative/supportive care). The examination and application of these spheres are within the context of maternal-newborn nursing, women's health, care of families, whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration. This course integrates didactic and clinical learning in a variety of settings.

**Prerequisites:** C- or better in NRS 530, NRS 535, NRS 541, NRS 550

**NRS 605: Nursing Care for Children and Families (4 credits)**

In this course, students will examine care for children and families across the spheres of care (disease prevention/promotion of health and well-being, chronic disease care, restorative care, and hospice/palliative/supportive care). The analysis and application of these spheres are within the context of pediatric nursing, care of the family, whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration. An integration of didactic and clinical learning in a variety of settings will prepare students to lead care for children and families.

**Prerequisite:** C- or better in NRS 600

**NRS 610: Pathophysiology and Pharmacology for Nursing Practice III: Advanced Assessments and Interventions (3 credits)**

In this course, students will obtain advanced integration of pathophysiology, pharmacology and health assessment concepts to enhance preparation for direct care roles for complex cases. This course will build on Pathophysiology and Pharmacology for Nursing Practice I and II as well as health assessment throughout the curriculum. There will be special emphasis on hospice/supportive/palliative care, whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration.

**Prerequisite:** C- or better in NRS 605

**Co-requisites:** NRS 560, NRS 570, NRS 620

**NRS 620: Population Health Nursing (4 credits)**

This course illustrates concepts and theories related to the provision of public health nursing practice. The promotion and protection of the health of the public will be emphasized within the context of disease prevention/promotion of health and well-being, chronic disease care, hospice/palliative/supportive care, whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration. An integration of didactic and clinical learning will occur in a variety of community and public health settings.

**Prerequisite:** C- or better in NRS 605

**Co-requisites:** NRS 560, NRS 570, NRS 610

**NRS 640: Informatics and Healthcare Technologies in Nursing Practice (3 credits)**

Students will examine informatics concepts, theories, and practices to enable them to incorporate technology responsibly, ethically, and creatively to meet the health care needs of patients, families, and communities. Emphasis will be on technology tools, technological systems, informatics processes, and care documentation processes across the spheres of care within the context of whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration.

**Prerequisites:** C- or better in NRS 560, NRS 570, NRS 610, NRS 620

**Co-requisites:** NRSRG 590, NRSRG 650, NRSRG 670

**NRSRG 650: Capstone: Complex Nursing Care III (4 credits)**

In this course, students will transition to professional Registered Nurse practice through a synthesis and implementation of program outcomes. Consideration of the spheres of care, whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration will be emphasized. This course includes a precepted practicum with final preparation for the NCLEX-RN examination.

**Prerequisites:** C- or better in NRSRG 560, NRSRG 570, NRSRG 610, NRSRG 620

**Co-requisites:** NRSRG 590, NRSRG 640, NRSRG 670

**NRSRG 670: Nursing Leadership on Complex Health Care Systems (3 credits)**

Students will apply leadership concepts and theories to skillfully practice as a leader to achieve clinical excellence, improve nursing care and health outcomes. Professional Registered Nurse leadership role development will be emphasized through understanding of complexity theory as well as assumption of principles of innovation and ingenuity, courage and resilience within the context of the spheres of care, whole-person wellness, social determinants of health and health equity, health care advocacy and systems change, and interprofessional collaboration.

**Prerequisites:** C- or better in NRSRG 560, NRSRG 570, NRSRG 610, NRSRG 620

**Co-requisites:** NRSRG 590, NRSRG 640, NRSRG 650

## Getting Started

### Canvas Learning Management System

Canvas is an essential personal online platform that students need to use with all courses. Canvas allows students to see their current grades, submit assignments, and communicate with faculty and staff. Because Canvas is integral to teaching/learning practices, it is very important to monitor this site regularly.

### Ethics, Health, and Safety

FERPA stands for the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and was established in 1974. As amended, FERPA prohibits postsecondary educational institutions from disclosing the education records of students to most third parties without the student's written consent.

The rights afforded to all St. Thomas students through FERPA, as well as the student's consent to release education records, are detailed [here](#).

### Licensure

Students who successfully complete the MSN, and obtain a nursing degree from St. Thomas, become candidates for the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc., exam, or the NCLEX-RN®. Students who pass the NCLEX-RN® demonstrate they are competent to safely enter nursing practice. Depending on state regulations, students may practice nursing in a single state or in multiple states if the state of practice is part of the enhanced [Nurse Licensure Compact](#). SON faculty and staff will orientate students to licensure examination requirements prior to graduation. For specific information regarding nursing licensure in Minnesota, contact the Minnesota Board of Nursing by mail: 1210 Northland Drive Suite 120 Mendota Heights, MN 55120-phone: (612) 317-3000 (main), [Nursing.Board@state.mn.us](mailto:Nursing.Board@state.mn.us) (email) or fax: (651) 688-1841. Their website is <https://mn.gov/boards/nursing/>

### Background Study

Minnesota law requires background studies on individuals who provide direct contact services to patients and residents in facilities and programs approved by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) or the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). Students must comply with these requirements. An individual who is disqualified because of the study may not be allowed to participate in clinical activities at the discretion of clinical facilities, regardless of whether the disqualification is set aside by the Commissioner of Health. If the disqualification is not set aside, the student will not be permitted to participate in any clinical activities in a Minnesota licensed health care facility. The MFCOH follows the requirements of our clinical sites. Students not in compliance with due dates for background study completion will lose their place in the program. Additionally, students who are disqualified or fail to participate in the background study process will not be eligible to progress in the program.

### **Student Responsibility: Minnesota Department of Health Services (DHS) Background Study**

A background study is a requirement for nursing students who have direct access to patient care. Students must provide a PDF copy of their DHS-issued clearance letter to the Clinical Placement Specialist, who shares this documentation with clinical partners via a SON-designated clinical placement system. The initial background study is completed upon admission to the nursing program and repeated annually throughout program enrollment.

DHS and a designated individual within the University of St. Thomas capture and monitor background studies via DHS's website.

Depending on clinical site placement, students may be subject to additional background check requirements beyond the DHS Caregiver Study. Students are responsible for paying fees associated with all background check requirements.

### **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Policy**

Maintaining confidentiality is an essential part of ethical nursing practice. Information accessed by students for patient care and for educational purposes is of a private nature and must be protected. Health information must be accessed and handled according to federal HIPAA standards and specific institutional policies. Special care must be taken to delete identifiers before using any private health information. During every clinical rotation all students must follow the institution/agency HIPAA policy as outlined in orientation at the respective institution/agency. Breach of the HIPAA policy could result in federally mandated fines or civil penalties as well as dismissal from the nursing program. Some simple guidelines to follow include:

Follow all policies and procedures about protecting the confidentiality of patient/family information. Be sure to de-identify patient information when reporting cases during care conferences or in writing papers for courses.

- Keep patient information out of public traffic areas. For example, do not leave paper containing patient information where others can see it. Be responsible when disposing of patient/client information.
- Do not discuss clinical cases in public spaces. This includes in the unit hallways, hospital hallways, elevators, outside of the hospital on the way to your car, or the cafeteria.
- Discussion of clinicals cases should only occur in dedicated spaces as outlined by your clinical instructor.
- Be cautious when discussing patient/family information so others do not overhear these exchanges. Look for a private place to speak. If overhearing others inappropriately discussing a patient/family, respectfully remind individuals of the obligation to maintain confidentiality.

If in doubt about privacy and professional communication, talk to the clinical instructor or to a member of

the SON staff.

The policy on social networking will be adhered to as it relates to HIPAA and confidentiality. Students may not discuss or post any information about faculty, peers, patients, family members, or any clinical facility on any electronic venue (e.g., TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, cell phones). Students must refrain from taking photos with patients, even when asked by the patient.

Students may not leave/save any patient, family, faculty, clinical facility, or student information on any open access desktop or hard drive.

## **National Code of Ethics and Social Media Guidelines**

Student must adhere to the [National Student Nurses' Association Code of Ethics](#) (which represents the industry standard for student nurses) and the [Social Media Guidelines for Nurses](#).

# **Academics**

## **Attendance Policy**

Attendance is required for every course session, including clinical, simulation, and laboratory experiences to ensure that students meet course and program learning outcomes. Students must arrive at class (and clinical) on time and remain for the entirety of their scheduled learning activity. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange for anticipated absences with course faculty **before** the day of absence and provide appropriate documentation, as required, in a timely fashion. If a student is going to be tardy to class (or clinical), the student must be in contact with the faculty of record prior to any academic experience.

Excused absences include documented illness and injury, death of an immediate family member, religious occurrences, student athletic events, and military service. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange for anticipated excused absences with course faculty **before** the day of absence and provide appropriate documentation, as required, in a timely fashion. Even if an excused absence is approved, students are required to meet all course deadlines and requirements, including additional assignments at the instructor's discretion. Even with approval to miss class, point deductions, penalties, or correctives are possible, such as missed in-class participation points. Recurrent absences (defined as 10% or greater of the course), whether excused or unexcused, may result in a loss of points and potential for failure as course objectives need to be met. Absences considered unexcused include wedding-related events, planned vacations, and family events (i.e., birthday parties, graduations). Students missing class are at risk of not progressing in the nursing program; any make-up work is at the discretion of the course coordinator. In the event of illness or an unanticipated excused absence, the student must personally notify their faculty prior to the class. Additional policies related to absences are located here: [MSN: Student Data & Registrar - Class Attendance | Student Data & Registrar \(stthomas.edu\)](#)

## **Assignment Policy**

Students are expected to complete all course assignments and learning activities. Assignments must be submitted on time unless a different date is approved by course faculty in advance of the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted unless students notify their course instructor **prior** to the assignment due date. Late work may result in a 10% deduction per day from the final assignment grade.

## **Communication Policy**

Students are required to check their St. Thomas email and Canvas site at least once per day during the work week and once on weekends for messages and program updates. Email messages and voice mail messages will be responded to within 48 hours, except on holidays. Students are encouraged to discuss optimal means of communication with course faculty. In the event of severe weather on a scheduled class day or learning event, students are asked to monitor their email and Canvas closely for alternative assignments or plans.

## **Pregnancy and Childbirth**

While pregnancy is not considered a disability, it may impact a student's educational progression. The SON recognizes that pregnancy is protected under Title IX. Students may voluntarily request accommodations related to pregnancy and childbirth. Students will not be penalized for absences related to pregnancy and childbirth if the student's medical provider deems the absences medically necessary. However, students must meet applicable academic standards to complete the program, so any such absences, missed content, assignments, exams, or clinical experiences need to be made up as they would for any other approved absence. Medical provider clearance may be required to return to the patient care setting, and extended absences may affect program progression. Due to the program requirements such as the sequential nature of courses, and clinical placement, students are encouraged to inform the Nursing Student Success Director of pregnancy as soon as possible so a support plan can be developed in collaboration with the student, faculty, and the Clinical Placement Specialist. Students are also encouraged to contact the University [Title IX Coordinator](#) for more information about rights and responsibilities.

## **Clinical Placements**

Student clinical placement assignments are secured and managed by the Clinical Placement Specialist in collaboration with faculty and clinical education partners. The Clinical Placement Specialist works with various constituents to identify appropriate clinical sites meeting institutional and regulatory requirements, program and course goals, and student learning outcomes. To preserve and maintain positive relationships with clinical partners, students must follow placement protocols set forth by Clinical Placement Specialist. Students are not allowed to contact clinical sites directly and any communication with sites must occur through the Clinical Placement Specialist. Students receive an orientation to the clinical placement process after admission to the SON, and ongoing updates throughout the program as necessary.

The clinical assignment-making process is intricate and complex, requiring careful pre-planning where multiple factors are considered, such as securing legal and valid affiliation agreements and negotiating placements in a healthcare environment that have limited resources. Clinical learning intends to provide students **with opportunities to apply concepts learned in the classroom based on** various patient experiences in multiple settings **to achieve** program outcomes. Students are empowered to make the most of each learning experience while participating in providing feedback about the quality of the clinical experience using established feedback processes.

## **Capped Reimbursements for Select Clinical Placements**

Students who meet specific criteria are eligible to receive a capped reimbursement to offset costs associated with lodging, travel, and meal expenses. The cap for reimbursement is up to a maximum of \$100 per day. Students can submit itemized receipts for the following expenses: lodging, meals, parking, bus fare, and/or ride share (uber/taxi) with the following limitations:

- A maximum of \$10 for breakfast, \$15 for lunch, \$25 for dinner will be allowed for the capped



- reimbursement. Students can purchase groceries instead of dining out for every meal if desired.
- Clinicals sites must be more than 150 miles round trip calculated from the University of St. Thomas to clinical site.
  - The standard mileage reimbursement rate for University of St. Thomas business use of personal vehicles can be found on the [UST Milage reimbursement website](#).
  - Students must follow the [Travel Policy](#). If students carpool, it is the responsibility of drivers to determine how travel costs are shared.
  - If students share a hotel room, receipts must have the name of the person (can be handwritten) for the other student to get credit in their reimbursement of their half of the room.
  - No alcohol can be on the itemized receipts. [Student Reimbursement Form](#)

## **Absences from Clinical Policy**

Attendance is required for every clinical, simulation, and laboratory experience to ensure that students meet course and program learning outcomes. Students must arrive at clinical (i.e., in-facility, simulation, and community experience) on time and remain for the entirety of the scheduled learning activity. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange for anticipated absences with course faculty **before** the day of absence and provide appropriate documentation, as required, in a timely fashion. If a student is going to be tardy to clinical, the student must be in contact with the faculty of record prior to this experience. Students are not to leave the clinical site until dismissed by their instructor.

Excused absences include documented illness and injury, death of an immediate family member, religious occurrences, student athletic events, and military service. Even if an excused absence is approved, students are required to meet all clinical deadlines and requirements, including additional assignments at the instructor's discretion. Even with approval to miss clinical, point deductions, penalties, or correctives are possible. Recurrent absences (defined as 10% or greater), whether excused or unexcused, may result in a loss of points and potential for failure as course objectives need to be met. Absences considered unexcused include wedding-related events, planned vacations, and family events (i.e., birthday parties, graduations). Students missing clinical experiences are at risk of not progressing in the nursing program and clinical make-ups are at the discretion of the course coordinator, clinical faculty, clinical placement specialist, and site availability. In the event of illness or an unanticipated excused absence, the student must personally notify their faculty and clinical site prior to the assigned clinical time. Additional policies related to absences are located here: MSN: [Student Data & Registrar - Class Attendance | Student Data & Registrar \(stthomas.edu\)](#)

### **COVID-19 Vaccine Requirements**

With the end of the federal Public Health Emergency for COVID-19, the University of St. Thomas announced in May 2023 that the university suspended its COVID-19 requirements for all students, faculty, and staff (<https://www.stthomas.edu/covid19/>). In alignment with CDC recommendations, many health systems revised their COVID policies; however, depending on the site and patient population served, some variation may still exist. Since many clinical partners still require COVID-19 vaccinations, the current policy outlined in this MSN Student Handbook remains in effect.

## **Academic Standards**

### **Academic Integrity**

MSN students are responsible for following the [Graduate Student Academic Integrity Policy](#).

### **Academic Progression Policy Overview**

MSN Students must adhere to the following academic progression policies to ensure program completion and conferral of their professional nursing degree:

- Adhere to the [National Student Nurses Association Code of Ethics](#) and [Social Media Guidelines for Nurses](#)
- All St. Thomas student codes of conduct and academic policies as outlined here: [Student Policies](#) and the [University Policy Repository](#). Failure to meet these codes, principles, and guidelines may result in course failure or dismissal from the nursing program or university.
- Earn a minimum grade of C- (74%) in all nursing courses.
- In courses with clinical requirements, students must earn a minimum grade of C- (74%) in the theory portion of the course *and* a "Satisfactory" rating on the clinical practice evaluation. Any student earning less than a C- in the theory portion of the course or an unsatisfactory clinical practice evaluation rating will not pass the course.
- Many courses require a 74% average on all exams to pass the course. Students who earn less than 74% on exam averages will receive a D+ or lower as their final course grade, as posted in Murphy. Nursing courses with this requirement include NRSG 530, NRSG 540, NRSG 541, NRSG 550, NRSG 570, NRSG 600, NRSG 605, NRSG 610, NRSG 620, and NRSG 650. Courses requiring a 74% average on all exams to pass the course are identified in the syllabus at the start of the semester.
- Students who do not meet grading criteria or withdraw from a course(s) complete a progression plan (see Progression Plan Policy). A progression plan outlines requirements and expectations for repeated coursework. Since SON coursework is sequential with courses offered once per academic calendar, re-taking failed courses will extend program length by another academic year. Prerequisites must be completed before proceeding in program of study as outlined below. Dismissal from the nursing program occurs if a student fails any nursing course twice; however, students are permitted to reapply to the nursing program within one academic year (see Reinstatement to Nursing Program policy).
- Maintain an overall GPA of 2.0 each semester (unless students' scholarship criteria state differently). Students who maintain a GPA of 2.0 or greater and achieve a grade of C- or greater in nursing courses cannot retake classes to increase their GPA.
- Maintain an acceptable level of health and wellness ensures quality and safety. Verification from an appropriate healthcare provider may be required to validate health and safety.

### MSN Course Prerequisites and Co-Requisites

COURSE	PREREQUISITES	CO-REQUISITES
NRSG 510: Foundations of Nursing Practice (2)		<b>NRSG 515</b> <b>NRSG 520</b> <b>NRSG 540</b>
NRSG 515: Whole Person Wellbeing (1)		<b>NRSG 510</b> <b>NRSG 520</b> <b>NRSG 540</b>
NRSG 520: Nursing Clinical Skills and Health Assessment (4)		<b>NRSG 510</b> <b>NRSG 515</b> <b>NRSG 540</b>
NRSG 525: Applied Research	<b>Earned C- or better in:</b>	

& Evidence-Based Practice (3)	<b>NRSG 510 NRSG 515 NRSG 520 NRSG 540</b>	
NRSG 530: Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing (4)	<b>Earned C- or better in: NRSG 525</b>	<b>NRSG 535 NRSG 541</b>
NRSG 535: Health Equity & Social Determinants of Health (1)	<b>Earned C- or better in: NRSG 525</b>	<b>NRSG 530 NRSG 541 NRSG 550</b>
NRSG 540: Pathophysiology & Pharmacology for Nursing Practice I (3)		<b>NRSG 510 NRSG 515 NRSG 520</b>
NRSG 541: Pathophysiology & Pharmacology for Nursing Practice II (3)	<b>Earned C- or better in: NRSG 525</b>	<b>NRSG 530 NRSG 535 NRSG 550</b>
NRSG 550: Complex Nursing Care I (4)	<b>Earned C- or better in: NRSG 530</b>	<b>NRSG 535 NRSG 541</b>
NRSG 560: Interprofessional Collaboration & Integrative Health Care (1)	<b>Earned C- or better in: NRSG 605</b>	<b>NRSG 570 NRSG 610 NRSG 620</b>
NRSG 570: Complex Nursing Care II (4)	<b>Earned C- or better in: NRSG 605</b>	<b>NRSG 560 NRSG 610 NRSG 620</b>
NRSG 590: Innovation: Advocacy through Systems Change (1)	<b>Earned C- or better in: NRSG 560 NRSG 570 NRSG 610 NRSG 620</b>	<b>NRSG 640 NRSG 650 NRSG 670</b>
NRSG 600: Perinatal Nursing and Childbearing Families (4)	<b>Earned C- or better in: NRSG 530 NRSG 535 NRSG 541 NRSG 550</b>	
NRSG 605: Nursing Care for Children & Families (4)	<b>Earned C- or better in: NRSG 600</b>	
NRSG 610: Pathophysiology & Pharmacology for Nursing Practice III: Advanced Assessments and Interventions (3)	<b>Earned C- or better in: NRSG 605</b>	<b>NRSG 560 NRSG 570 NRSG 620</b>
NRSG 620: Population	<b>Earned C- or better in:</b>	<b>NRSG 560</b>

Health Nursing (4 cr.)	<b>NRSG 605</b>	<b>NRSG 570</b> <b>NRSG 610</b>
NRSG 640: Informatics & Healthcare Technologies in Nursing Practice (3)	<b>Earned C- or better in:</b> <b>NRSG 560</b> <b>NRSG 570</b> <b>NRSG 610</b> <b>NRSG 620</b>	<b>NRSG 590</b> <b>NRSG 650</b> <b>NRSG 670</b>
NRSG 650: Capstone: Complex Nursing Care III (4)	<b>Earned C- or better in:</b> <b>NRSG 560</b> <b>NRSG 570</b> <b>NRSG 610</b> <b>NRSG 620</b>	<b>NRSG 590</b> <b>NRSG 640</b> <b>NRSG 670</b>
NRSG 670: Nursing Leadership in Complex Health Care Systems (3)	<b>Earned C- or better in:</b> <b>NRSG 560</b> <b>NRSG 570</b> <b>NRSG 610</b> <b>NRSG 620</b>	<b>NRSG 590</b> <b>NRSG 640</b> <b>NRSG 650</b>

### Course Registration by Degree Program Policy

MSN students need to adhere to graduate registration policies as described here on the [Graduate/Undergraduate Registration](#) page. Once students are determined eligible to progress in the program, the Assistant Program Director, Nursing Operations will manage course registration.

### Grading Scale Policy

The grading scale for the nursing sequence is more rigorous than some grading scales. The reason for this rigor is to facilitate students' preparation for the NCLEX-RN® examination and assure they provide quality and safe nursing care. Courses with a clinical component require students receive satisfactory for the clinical component to pass the course. The SON grading scale is as follows:

#### School of Nursing Grading Scale\*

<b>94.0% and above</b>	<b>A</b>
92.0 - 93.9%	A-
89.0 - 91.9%	B+
86.0 - 88.9%	B
83.0 - 85.9%	B-
80.0 - 82.9%	C+

77.0 - 79.9%	C
74.0 - 76.9%	C-
71.0 - 73.9%	D+
68.0 - 70.9%	D
65.0 - 67.9%	D-
<b>64.9% and below</b>	<b>F</b>

\*Whatever percentile is achieved reflects the grade that has been earned. Grades will not be rounded up (e.g., 73.9% remains at 73.9% as opposed to be rounded to 74%).

To clarify grading requirements, in courses that specify a 74% exam average to pass, students in these designated courses must 1) achieve a 74% average on all exams, 2) a minimum grade of 74% on overall course points and 3) if applicable, a satisfactory rating on their clinical performance evaluations. In courses where the exam average requirement does not apply, grading depends on overall course points

and a minimum grade of 74%. For more information about university GPA calculations see: MSN: [GPA Calculations](#)

## **Incomplete Grades Policy**

The mark of I is used if the student has not completed the work of the course, has good reason for delay, and arranged an incomplete with the instructor before grades for the course are due. The request for an “I” must be initiated by a student maintaining an average of “C-” or better prior to the last scheduled course date; if a student has not made the request, the instructor will record the grade earned to that point. Ordinarily, good reason will involve matters not wholly within the control of the student such as illness. Students must have at least 2/3 of the course completed to get an incomplete and just 30 days to make up missing work. The mark may not be used to allow a student to improve a grade by completing additional work over and above that ordinarily expected for the course or by repetition of work already submitted to the instructor. The mark of I should not be used without prior arrangement between instructor and student.

If a mark of I is assigned, an [Incomplete Form](#) must be submitted to the office of Student Data Registrar. This form includes a description of work left to complete, a deadline for completion, the option for an instructor to provide a provisional grade based on work the student has completed to date, and signatures of both the student and instructor. The student must complete the designated work and submit it to the instructor by the date designated by the instructor on the incomplete form.

If a final grade is not submitted by the faculty member before the deadline, the mark of I will change to the provisional grade assigned on the form, or to a grade of F or R if no provisional grade was assigned. The deadline may not be extended. The instructor may change a resulting F or R by means of university grade change policies and procedures. In an instance where a grade has not been assigned at the end of the term, a designation of Not Recorded (NR) will be assigned to the student’s academic record. The NR must be changed to a grade by May 1 for the fall semester or January term; by December 1 for the spring semester or summer session. These changes require approval of the department chair/director and dean or dean's designee. In the absence of a final grade on or before the deadline, the mark of NR will be changed to a grade of F or R. This deadline may not be extended. The instructor may change a resulting F or R by means of the university “Grade Change” forms, policies and procedures listed above. Additional policies related to grade changes are located here: [Grade Changes](#)

## **Grade Change Policy**

Grade changes must be submitted using St. Thomas approved procedures:

- An instructor must use an approved “Grade Change” form for a grade change to be processed.
- The instructor must sign the form that is submitted with the grade change.
- Grade change forms must also be signed by the department chair/director and dean or dean's designee.
- An instructor may change a grade only if there has been an error in the computation, transcription, or reporting of the grade.

After one year, grade changes are not allowed.

## **Independent Study Course Policy**

An independent study course provides an opportunity for students who wish to undertake a well-defined research project or clearly outlined and carefully delineated course of study. Independent study courses are restricted to students of proven ability who have sufficient background in the subject and can complete their work under the guidance of a faculty member. They conduct the project in an independent

manner without attending regular class meetings. Independent study is characterized by a reduction in formal instruction and an increase in the individual student's responsibility and initiative in the learning process.

Approval of an independent study course by the faculty sponsor and Director of Nursing attests to the academic value of the study and to the ability of the student to master a body of knowledge with minimal faculty guidance. Independent studies may not substitute for required courses.

Approval for an independent study is complete when the faculty sponsor and Director of Nursing have signed and approved the "Independent Study" form, which may be obtained from the Assistant Program Director, Nursing Operations. Registration for an independent study course is done through the Assistant Program Director, Nursing Operations who maintains a copy of the completed Independent Study form.

## **Examination Policy**

Students must attend all scheduled exams at specified dates and times. Make-up exams are prohibited except in unusual or unexpected circumstances where appropriate documentation might be required. Students must follow the specific policies regarding exam procedures as described below:

- Students must arrive on time to sit for examinations; failure to do so could result in a missed opportunity to complete the exam and impact the overall course grade.
- Students arriving late must complete the exam within the scheduled start and end times. Late arrivers cannot request extended testing time.
- Students who arrive late should enter the space quietly and respectfully. Entering an exam room late is disruptive, and minimizing distractions demonstrates respect for other students. Distracting behavior may result in dismissal from the exam space, thus earning a zero on the exam.
- Students requesting or receiving accommodations must follow all [procedures outlined by Disability Services](#).
- During test administration, students must:
- Turn all forms of electronic communication off except for faculty-determined electronic testing provisions.
- Place items such as book bags, electronic devices not being used to take the exam (including cell phones and smart watches), coats, brimmed hats, food, and drinks in a designated room area. Exception: students can have water in a clear bottle/container without a label.
- Use nonprogrammable calculators at the discretion of the faculty.
- Stay in the room while completing the examination. If a student needs to leave the room, they must seek special permission from the faculty or proctor.
- Sit in assigned seating at the direction of faculty or the test proctor
- Limit questions about the examination to typos or other exam mechanics not announced or addressed at the beginning of the exam. Faculty and testing proctors will not answer questions about exam content or clarify exam questions.
- Protect the integrity of the examination by avoiding behaviors that raise suspicion of cheating, such as talking, glancing around the room, signaling, or looking at another student's exam. Keep all examination content confidential.
- Students submitting exams through an online platform (e.g., ExamSoft, Exemplify) must share their submission verification screen with the faculty or proctor before exiting the testing area. Should a student fail to do so, and the exam is not submitted when the exam period ends, a score of zero may be given on the exam.
- Students needing to schedule an alternative testing time must contact course faculty as soon as they know they cannot take the exam; however, this cannot occur after the exam's start time. If a makeup exam is deemed necessary, it will be conducted at a time and location determined by the

faculty, preferably within four days of the initial test administration. Faculty reserve the right to administer an alternative test version for the make-up exam.

### Exam or Quiz Question Clarification Process

Students are permitted to seek clarification about an exam or quiz question following testing, but must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Exam challenges must occur within 48 hours (about 2 days) after test grades appear on Canvas; beyond this specified time frame, course faculty will not consider additional appeals.
- Decisions are final once the course faculty review and consider the student’s test question appeal.
- Any appeal that is approved applies to all students. Questions that did not perform well are removed from the test bank; this review process focuses more on test analysis and the ability of test questions to adequately measure student knowledge.
- For any appeal submitted, students must provide a rationale, with citations, as evidence to demonstrate how a test answer contradicts course readings or in-class presentations. Support must come from course materials (lecture slides, course readings with page numbers, etc.).
- Students must engage in professional behavior and avoid argumentative engagement.

### Health Education Systems, Inc.© Policy

Health Education Systems, Inc© (HESI) specialty exams are administered throughout the MSN program and each cohort of students completes eight examinations throughout their degree plan, with course placement as outlined below:

#### Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Degree Plan (20 months) and HESI Exam Placement \*Denotes planned HESI Examination

	Year One	Year Two
<b>Summer</b>	Outstanding Pre-Requisites (a)  <b>TOTAL CREDITS: Varies</b>	NRSG 600: Perinatal Nursing & Childbearing Families (4) NRSG 605: Nursing Care for Children & Families (4) <b>*Maternity/Pediatric Nursing</b>
<b>Fall</b>	NRSG 515: Whole Person Wellbeing (1) NRSG 510: Foundations of Nursing Practice (2) NRSG 520: Nursing Clinical Skills and Health Assessment (4) <b>*Math</b> NRSG 540: Pathophysiology & Pharmacology for Nursing Practice I (3) <b>*Fundamentals</b>	NRSG 560: Interprofessional Collaboration & Integrative Health Care (1) NRSG 570: Complex Nursing Care II (4) <b>*Medical Surgical</b> NRSG 620: Population Health Nursing (4) NRSG 610: Patho/Pharm III (3) <b>*Pharmacology</b>
<b>J-Term</b>	NRSG 525: Applied Research & Evidence Based Practice (3)	
<b>Spring</b>	NRSG 535: Health Equity & Social Determinants of Health (1) NRSG 530: Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing (4) <b>*Psychiatric/Mental Health</b>	NRSG 590: Innovation: Advocacy through Systems Change (1) NRSG 640: Informatics & Healthcare Technologies in Nursing Practice (3)

	<p><b><u>Nursing</u></b>  NRSG 550: Complex Nursing Care I (4)  NRSG 541: Pathophysiology &amp;  Pharmacology for Nursing Practice II (3)</p>	NRSG 650: Capstone: Complex Nursing Care III (4) <b><u>*Health Assessment</u></b> NRSG 670: Nursing Leadership in Complex Health Care Systems (3) <b><u>*Exit Exam</u></b>
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### HESI Course Point Policy

HESI exam points are calculated as a percentage of total course points and contribute to overall grading. In courses that require earning 74% average on all exams to pass the course, this language does not apply to HESI exams; HESI exam points are not included in the 74% average. Based on the table below, student performance is measured according to interval levels, and scores of  $\geq 900$  fall within the recommended performance range. In courses where HESI exams are administered, points contributing to overall course grades are as follows:

#### *HESI Exam Preparation*

HESI Exam Preparation: students must complete all assigned Elsevier Adaptive Quizzing (EAQ) quizzes to receive a passing grade (pass/fail)

#### *HESI Exam Completion*

Exam completion consists of between 3-5% of course grade. All students who take and complete the exam *will receive the minimum number of points allotted* per the course syllabus. Students who score in the acceptable range or above will receive additional points. Points are distributed as follows:

- 3% exam completion (any score up to 849)
- 4% scores between 850- 899
- 5% scores above 900
- 2% - for completing exam remediation requirements outlined above (all students are eligible to receive additional points).

Note: The combined the HESI exam preparation and the HESI exam completion contribute up to 7% of students' final course grade. The current (2023) HESI exams include "Legacy Items" and "Next Generation (NGN) items". Students' final HESI score will be based on legacy items only. Students' scores for each question type will be delineated in students' HESI exam report. Enrollment in local colleges, 2005

<b>HESI Scoring Interval</b>	<b>Performance Level</b>
> 1050	Recommended Performance
1001-1050	Recommended Performance
Recommended Performance	Recommended Performance
900-949	Recommended Performance
875-899	Acceptable Performance
850-874	Acceptable Performance
800-849	Below Acceptable Performance
750-799	Below Acceptable Performance
700-749	Needs Further Preparation and Retesting
<b>≤ 699</b>	<b>Needs Further Preparation and Retesting</b>



### *HESI Exam Remediation*

All students are required to develop and submit a remediation plan based on any identified deficiencies highlighted in the HESI proctored exam report.

Students scoring below 750 are required to complete the following remediation requirements within two weeks following their initial HESI examination:

- Develop and submit a remediation plan based on any identified deficiencies highlighted in the HESI proctored exam report
- Complete remediation within timeline as defined by course syllabus

Although **remediation requirements are not optional for students scoring below 750**, all students have an opportunity to earn extra points contributing to their overall course grade, regardless of HESI score:

- 3% exam completion (any score up to 849)
- 4% scores between 850- 899
- 5% scores above 900
- 2% - for completing exam remediation requirements outlined above (all students are eligible to receive additional points).

### *HESI Exit Exam*

The HESI Exit Exam, Version 1, is administered early in the final semester of the MSN program. All students are required to develop and submit a remediation plan based on any identified deficiencies highlighted in the HESI proctored exit exam report.

Two weeks after the HESI Exit Exam, Version 1, is administered and students have an opportunity to remediate, all students are required to attend a 3-day live review session. Following this review, HESI Exit Exam, Version 2, is administered.

After the last exit exam is complete, students are required to revise their remediation plan as a study guide useful for preparing for the NCLEX examination.

Grading criteria:

- 3% of total course points: HESI Exit Exam, Version 1
- 3% of total course points: HESI Exit Exam, Version 2
- 5% of total course points: attendance at 3-day live review session
- 3% of total course points: Remediation Plan

## **Progression Plan Policy**

### **Notice of Concern and Success Plan Policy**

At times students benefit from a collaborative effort while striving to succeed. The Notice of Concern and Success Plan (Appendix B) is intended to facilitate student growth toward achieving program outcomes by providing honest, direct, and timely feedback to students about areas of concern.

The Success Plan is co-developed, meaning the relevant faculty, the faculty advisor, the student, and those involved in the student's educational success create the plan collaboratively. Any relevant individual may request the development of a Success Plan, including the student. After

meeting with a faculty or staff member to create a Success Plan, the student must return a signed copy to the Student Success Director within 8 business days of its creation. Failure to do so may result in a Student Progression Report and Remediation plan. The plan may be shared with relevant faculty and staff to ensure continuation of identified resources to facilitate success.

### **Student Progression Report and Remediation Plan**

Students who are not meeting program requirements (i.e., grading, professionalism, attendance) will require a Student Progression Report and Remediation Plan (Appendix A). The Student Progression Report and Remediation Plan is an official notice intended to address area(s) of academic and/or clinical concern(s) that are severe enough to indicate that they may impact the student's ability to progress, or to document concerns that have already resulted in an inability to progress. The Student Progression Report and Remediation Plan does not necessarily follow a Success Plan, as some concerns are more consequential than others. The progression plan is co-developed, meaning the relevant faculty, the faculty advisor, the student, and those involved in the student's educational success create the plan collaboratively. The plan must adhere to university and program requirements and policies, and include:

A statement(s) of the areas of concern.

- Document the areas of concern as it aligns with course and program outcomes.
- Outline of student success plan targeted to address areas of concern.
- Assessment plan to evaluate progress toward resolution of areas of concern (when, what, and how progress will be measured).
- Additional support and resources.
- The Director of Nursing reviews progression plans to provide for a systematic process for evaluating continued progress to make recommendations for further assistance, progression, retention, withdrawal, or dismissal.

Students receiving a Student Progression Report and Remediation Plan must deliver a completed, signed copy to the Student Success Director within 8 business days of its creation. Failure to do so may result in an inability to progress in the program. The plan may be shared with relevant faculty and staff to ensure continuation of identified resources to facilitate success.

### **Voluntary Withdrawal Policy**

#### **Course Withdrawal**

Students who wish to withdraw from a course are strongly encouraged to meet with their faculty advisor to discuss reasons for withdrawing and outline retention options. Students may withdraw from courses at any time. If a course is dropped prior to the deadline identified for the term in the course schedule, no record of the course appears on a student's transcript. If a course is dropped after that deadline, a record of the class does appear on a student's transcript with a notation of "W".

#### **Program Withdrawal**

Students who wish to withdraw from the professional nursing sequence are strongly encouraged to meet with their faculty advisor to discuss reasons for withdrawing and discuss and document retention efforts. Prior to withdrawing, students must provide written notification to the Director of Nursing. Students who voluntarily withdraw and wish to return to the professional nursing program at a later point need to follow

the Reinstatement to the Nursing Program Policy.

Students who decide to withdraw from the program and have no intention of continuing later are required to email the Assistant Program Director, Nursing Operations, and indicate their desire to formally withdraw from the MSN program and School of Nursing. The formal withdrawal will remove a student from active distribution lists to eliminate unwanted mail and communication from the SON.

### **Program Interruption**

Students experiencing extreme circumstances beyond their control may request a formal Program Interruption. An approved formal Program Interruption temporarily freezes the time limit for up to one calendar year. Students who interrupt their programs for one calendar year or more without an approved Program Interruption are subject to “Deactivation/Reinstatement.”

### **Financial Aid Implications**

Course withdrawal, program interruption, and/or program withdrawal may impact a student’s financial aid package. It is advised that a student check with the Financial Aid Office to determine the level of impact (<https://www.stthomas.edu/financialaid/graduate/contact/>)

### **Additional withdraw policies are located here**

- [Student Data & Registrar - Cancellation of Registration for Non-attendance | Student Data & Registrar \(stthomas.edu\)](#)
- [Student Data & Registrar - Dropping from Courses | Student Data & Registrar \(stthomas.edu\)](#)

### **Leave of Absence Policy**

MSN students will adhere to the “Attendance and Excused Absence Policy” as delineated in the Undergraduate Catalog page [Attendance and Excused Absences](#)

### **Admissions Deferment**

In exceptional circumstances, after acceptance into the MSN program, a student can request an admission deferral for one year based on unforeseeable circumstances (i.e., illness, family emergency, unavoidable events, or circumstances). Students wanting to defer admission for one academic year must write a letter to the Nursing Director, formally requesting a program deferment. Notification of deferment approval is communicated to the applicant by the Nursing Director, and if the student does not enroll in the MSN program with the incoming cohort, they are required to complete another application and participate in the holistic admission process.

### **Reinstatement to the Nursing Program Policy**

Students seeking reinstatement to the MSN program must meet with the Director of Nursing and faculty advisor to discuss the reinstatement. The discussion will involve the following:

- Review of circumstances leading to withdrawal or dismissal.
- Motivation for seeking reinstatement.
- Development of goals for success; goals are developed collaboratively among the student, director, and faculty advisor.
- Upon completion of the meeting, the student will complete a one-page letter summarizing the

points above. The Director of Nursing and faculty advisor will review the letter and, in collaboration with program faculty, inform the student in writing of the reinstatement decision. The reinstatement decision will be one of the following:

- The student will be reinstated to the nursing program.
- The student will be denied reinstatement with accompanying rationale for the denial provided.
- The student will be reinstated for a probationary period, with specific conditions in writing documented in the student success plan.
- All final reinstatement decisions will include rationale and be dependent on clinical site availability.

## **Schedule Changes**

The SON reserves the right to change the schedule of class offerings at any time during the registration period and reserves the right to cancel any class that has insufficient enrollment. Students should work with their advisor to enroll in other class sections, if available.

# **Policy Appeals and Student Grievances**

## **The Distinction Between Appeals and Grievances**

A **policy appeal** is a student request for an exemption from a particular SON policy. Students making such appeals should cite compelling reasons as to why a policy should not apply to them. SON policy exemptions are not made routinely. Students making appeals must cite serious circumstances beyond their control.

Reasons such as getting settled in a career, heavy workloads, or beginning a family are not, in themselves, compelling reasons. The MFCOH Associate Dean in consultation with the Director of Nursing generally considers policy appeals. The request should first be addressed to the Founding Director of Nursing

**Student grievances** are petitions brought by students who believe that one or more of their student rights have been denied because of an arbitrary or capricious decision or action. SON student grievances that relate to the SON are handled within the Student Grievance Process cited below.

## **Student Grievance Process**

Students who believe their rights have been denied due to an arbitrary or capricious decision or action may file a grievance following sequence outlined in the Appeal/Grievance Process (Appendix G). Students must follow the appeal/grievance process as written because not doing so will likely increase the time required to resolve the grievance. University administrators involved in this process will only address a grievance once it has gone through the appropriate steps. The relevant administrator(s) will consider the grievance at the designated step and, if possible, attempt to resolve it. A student may opt to move to the next step if a resolution is not satisfactorily reached.

## **Grievance Against SON Program Staff or Faculty, Including Related to Assessments of Student Performance**

A student may file a grievance against a SON staff or faculty member only if it is asserted that a specific decision or action that adversely affected the student has violated the student's rights because it was arbitrary or capricious. A student grievance against SON program staff or faculty must follow the sequence identified in the Appeal/Grievance Process (Appendix G). The grievance process starts with the most immediate person involved and moves (if the student finds initial resolutions unsatisfactory and

wishes to pursue the matter) to the Director of Nursing, MFCOH Dean's Office, University Grievance and Discipline Committee, and Provost.

The formal grievance process is initiated when a written grievance is presented to the pertinent SON staff or faculty member. The written grievance must identify the specific decision or action that is being protested and clearly explain which rights were violated and how the decision or action was arbitrary or capricious. If the grievance involves a course grade, the grievance also must present verifiable evidence of bias.

### **Grievances Against Another Student**

Student grievances against another student are handled through the University student grievance processes or, when deemed appropriate, by the Dean of Students. Students contemplating a grievance against other students should contact the [Dean of Students](#).

### **Military Withdraw Policy**

Students who are called to active duty can reference military withdraw policy here: [Military Withdraw](#)

## **Clinical Experience Policies**

### **Clinical Experience Policies Overview**

Clinical experiences are a significant and exciting element of a student's nursing education experience. Clinical experiences (which include "in field" and simulation experiences) allow students to apply classroom learning to real-world nursing practice and begin to embrace nursing as a vocation. These experiences entail protecting the health and safety of those for which students are learning to provide care and themselves. As such, students must adhere to the following policies. Failure to comply with these policies can result in a need for a progression plan.

**The faculty have the right to dismiss a student from clinical areas if the student is ill, unprepared (e.g., per defined course and clinical site expectations), late, or deemed to be a risk to patient safety. In some cases, dependent on the nature of an infraction, students can be dismissed from the course, program, or university. Depending on individual faculty requirements, students may be required to review and sign a clinical contract prior to engaging in a specific field placement (Appendix H).**

### **Attire and Uniform Policy**

The SON values the professional image portrayed by nursing students and the attire and uniform policy was formally evaluated by faculty because of the school's belief that the appearance and attitude of nursing students has a direct impact on the public's perception of professionalism, competency, and quality of care. The following uniform policy ensures students' attire and attitude reflect the professional image of nursing and applies to in-facility, simulation, and community experiences (may be adapted to align with individual community settings and the patient population served). If students do not adhere to the uniform policy, it may result in an unsatisfactory grade for that clinical day and possible clinical dismissal. The SON Student Uniform consists of:

- University of St. Thomas branded purple scrub pants (2 required).
- University of St. Thomas branded purple scrub jacket with patch (1 required).
- University of St. Thomas branded gray scrub top with patch (2 required).
- University of St. Thomas branded gray polo shirt with logo and black dress pants (not cargos) (2

required)

- Solid black shoes (no open backs or Crocs).
- School of Nursing ID badge and/or facility required badge
- Required equipment includes a watch with a second hand and a stethoscope with diaphragm and bell function.
- Fingernails must be short and trimmed, no nail polish or artificial nails.
- Jewelry is restricted to a watch and plain wedding band.
- Clinical sites will have different policies regarding body piercings (ear, nose, etc.). Students need to follow site policy. It is recommended to limit to one small post in each ear.
- Undergarments must not be visible through the uniform.
- Hair must be neat, simply styled and should not touch the collar of the uniform. Long hair should be tied or pinned up appropriately. Facial hair must be neatly trimmed.
- Students should always exhibit good personal hygiene. This means clean nails, teeth, hair, shoes, body, and clothes. Students must remain free of odors or scents that might be offensive or unhealthy to others, including, but not limited to, cigarette smoke, body odor, bad breath, and excessive use of perfume or cologne.
- Students may wear religious head garments such as hijab and yarmulke.
- Tattoos must be non-offensive and covered whenever possible.

When the uniform is worn, it must be neat, clean, and complete as described above. This includes clean shoes and shoelaces. The scrub jacket is to be worn instead of sweaters. If another layer of clothing is needed, a short or long sleeved plain white t-shirt may be worn.

### **Clinical Evaluation Policy**

Faculty evaluate students' clinical course competencies using clinical evaluation tools at faculty specified times during clinical courses. Faculty will rate students' performance as Satisfactory (S) level and/or Unsatisfactory (U). Unsatisfactory performance may constitute failure of a clinical course. Students **MUST** receive a Satisfactory (S) rating on final clinical evaluation to pass clinical courses.

### **Absence from Clinical**

Attendance is required for every clinical, simulation, and laboratory experience to ensure that students meet course and program learning outcomes. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange for anticipated absences with course faculty **before** the day of absence and provide appropriate documentation, as required, in a timely fashion (see attendance policy for full description).

### **Personal Health Insurance Policy**

All University of St. Thomas students are required to carry health insurance coverage. Most St. Thomas students can obtain coverage through age 26 under health care policies purchased by their parents. Those who do not have health insurance are urged to consider applying for insurance through Minnesota's health insurance marketplace (MNsure), where Minnesotans can shop, compare, and choose health insurance coverage that meets their needs. Learn more about the features of MNsure [here](#).

### **Health and Immunization Policy**

Nursing students are required to supply health maintenance information prior to enrollment in the nursing program and keep health maintenance records current until graduation from the SON.

Nursing students are required to follow all health/immunization requirements, criminal background

checks, American Heart Association BLS certification, blood-borne pathogen training, HIPAA training, and any other applicable agency or clinical specific requirement while in the nursing program.

All students are required to provide proof of immunity (proper vaccination or evidence by titer) per the clinical partner requirements and current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines for Vaccination of Healthcare Workers.

The following are required (some clinical partners may have additional requirements for clinical placement):

<b>Immunization/Vaccination</b>	<b>Requirement</b>
Tuberculosis	Documentation of a negative TB symptom screen (e.g., no symptoms of active TB disease) and a negative TB blood test (e.g., QuantiFERON blood test [QFT); T-Spot) or TST (e.g., Mantoux, first step). The second TST may be performed after the Health Care Worker starts working with patients Persons with prior positive TST or QFT: documentation of subsequent negative CXR completed following positive TST or QFT, and no signs and symptoms of pulmonary TB Newly positive TB test: evidence of negative CXR (recent CXR- e.g., previous month, can be used), no signs or symptoms of pulmonary TB, and annual symptom questionnaire, see Appendix C.
Varicella (Chicken Pox)	Documentation of two doses of varicella vaccine on or after first birthday; laboratory evidence of immunity; or laboratory confirmation of disease
Mumps	Documentation of two doses of MMR or mumps vaccine on or after first birthday; laboratory evidence of immunity; or laboratory confirmation of disease
Rubella (German Measles)	Documentation of one MMR or Rubella vaccine on or after first birthday; laboratory evidence of immunity; or laboratory confirmation of disease
Rubeola (Red Measles)	Documentation of two doses of MMR or measles vaccine on or after first birthday; laboratory evidence of immunity; or laboratory confirmation of disease
Hepatitis B	Required only if duties put person at risk of exposure to blood or body fluid. Documentation of a completed series and a post-series serology indicating immunity; laboratory evidence of past infection; signed waiver declining vaccination.
Pertussis (Tdap)	Documentation of 1 Tdap immunization as an adult >18 years if working with or around patients
Seasonal Influenza	An influenza vaccination must be received prior to working between October 1 and March 31. Exemptions are granted for medical contraindication or sincerely held religious beliefs, practices, or observances.
COVID-19	Per current affiliation agreements, this requirement is still in place. Documentation of completed COVID-19 vaccination series. Exemption for medical contraindication or sincerely held religious beliefs, practices, or observances.

### **Medical/Religious Exemptions**

Immunization/Vaccination	Allowed Medical Exemptions	Allowed Religious Exemptions
Influenza	Severe allergic reaction (e.g., anaphylaxis) or hypersensitive to the vaccine or vaccine component(s) Guillain-Barre syndrome within six weeks of a prior influenza vaccine Bone marrow transplant within the past 6 months	Sincerely held religious belief, practice, or observance that conflicts with Influenza immunization
COVID-19	Documented history of severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to a component of each currently available COVID-19 vaccine Receiving immunosuppressive treatment and advised by a medical provider to defer vaccination until a future date Another medical condition recognized by the CDC as posing more risk than benefit for administering vaccination.	Sincerely held religious belief, practice, or observance that conflicts with COVID-19 immunization

Students will be considered out of compliance if a designated immunization or other item required to be submitted to the Clinical Placement Specialist or other agency is not updated by the designated deadline. Students enrolled in any nursing (NRSNG) course(s) who are out of compliance will receive a 1% reduction to the overall course grade for each item out of compliance during the course. If an item is not brought into compliance within one week, an additional 1% reduction will be taken for each week the student is out of compliance. All reductions will be applied at the end of the semester.

Additionally, nursing students enrolled in clinical courses who are identified as out of compliance will not be permitted to attend clinical until documentation has been submitted to the Clinical Placement Specialist. Clinical absences that result from out of compliance status may affect the ability of the student to successfully meet student learning objectives, which may result in course failure.

### **CPR Certification Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Providers**

All students are required to provide evidence of successful completion of the American Heart Association's BLS for Healthcare Providers CPR course prior to starting the professional nursing sequence.

- CPR training must be renewed every two years (expiration date noted on documentation of successful completion).
- CPR training must be current through-out any semester that you are registered for courses.
- CPR training renewal certificate is due three weeks before the current expiration date and handed to the Clinical Placement Specialist.
- SON suggests that CPR training is completed before the start of Fall Semester.

If your CPR certification expires during a semester, and you have not renewed in the proper timing, you will be removed from Clinical Site and fail the clinical course. Then placed on a Progression Plan for failing a course.



## **Invasive Procedure Policy**

Students will not perform invasive procedures (i.e., blood draw, injection) on other students for practice.

## **Incident Reports**

The SON embraces the principles and practices of a fair and just culture. This culture is one of understanding that students, faculty, and staff are part of a learning organization. In such an organization, shame and blame are replaced with examining areas for improvement and reporting errors or mistakes in an atmosphere of safety, respect, and trust (Barnsteiner & Disch, 2017). To this end, the SON requires students to report incidents that may or did harm a patient/family or oneself and will follow fair and just principles and practices to ensure system improvements. See Appendix C.

## **Fit for Duty Policy**

Because adequate sleep is essential to providing safe, high-quality care, students must arrive at clinical well-rested. Nurses have a professional responsibility to be aware of the effects of sleep deprivation and take steps to limit these effects. Faculty reserve the right to dismiss a student from a clinical learning experience (in-facility, simulation, or community) if they are deemed unsafe for practice because of fatigue, sleep deprivation, or participation in night shift work. To clarify, students are not allowed to participate in overnight work prior to clinical learning experiences, including in-facility, simulation, or community assignments. Students are encouraged to schedule seven hours of uninterrupted sleep and arrive at clinical well rested. Any student deemed unfit for duty due to fatigue, sleep deprivation, or participation in night shift work will be dismissed from clinical with an unexcused absence, thus jeopardizing their progression in the nursing program.

# **Support Services**

## **Athletic Facilities**

The athletic facilities available to students are at the [Anderson Athletic and Recreation Complex \(AARC\)](#) and include a weight room, swimming pool, racquetball courts, squash courts, and field house, which includes volleyball, badminton, tennis, basketball, a jogging track, cardio equipment, and fitness classes. Graduate students are charged a membership fee to use the AARC. For more information, call (651) 962-5900.

## **Bookstores**

The [Campus Store](#) is located on the lower level of Murray-Herrick Campus Center. In addition to books needed for classes, the Campus Store carries a wide variety of office supplies, clothing, cards, and gifts, as well as magazines and best-selling novels. When commencement is held at St. Thomas, caps and gowns are picked up at the bookstore. For hours of operation, call: (651) 962-6850.

## **Box Office**

A sampling of the ticket offerings includes but is not limited to: General Cinema, Mann and United Artist movie tickets, Guthrie Theatre, Ordway, Timberwolves, Hey City Theatre, Valleyfair, Renaissance Festival, Minnesota State Fair, Minnesota Twins, Science Museum, and Children's Museum, plus numerous St. Thomas campus events.

In addition to ticket sales, [Tommie Central](#) also rents – at very minimal cost – outdoor and recreational

equipment. A sampling of the rental offerings includes but is not limited to camping tents, backpacks, snowboards, in-line skates, golf clubs, basketballs, and mountain bikes. Tommie Central is located at the main information desk in Anderson Student Center. Contact Tommie Central by phone (651) 962-6137.

## **Business Office – Tuition Payments and Refunds**

Questions about the student payment agreement should be directed to the [Business Office](#) (Murray Herrick, 105). Refunds are made on a pro-rated basis, depending upon the date in which a course is dropped. Complete information for SON students about refunds and deadlines is noted on the refund schedule available in the Business Office. Check ahead for acceptable forms of payment (e.g., check, credit cards). For more information, please call (651) 962-5816.

## **Campus Maps**

A campus map for St. Thomas can be found at [Campus Maps](#)

## **Career Development**

[Career Development](#) serves students and alumni with their vocational and career learning. Services have been designed to assist students in all stages of career planning, including internships, employment, or graduate education. St. Thomas Career Development also maintains a job bank database where students can search for jobs and internships.

## **Center for Campus Ministry**

The mission of the [Office for Pastoral Care & Worship](#) is to invite and encourage all to encounter the presence of God in the world. Marked by faith, hope, and charity, the center invites people of all faiths to join in prayer and worship to move and act to transform themselves and the world. Rooted in the Roman Catholic tradition, the center worships as a eucharistic community and works to connect those of other faiths to worship opportunities that feed them.

## **Center for Well-Being**

[The Center for Well-Being](#) is an integrated health care model partnering with the following for services:

- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#)
- [Health Services](#)
- [Health Promotion, Resilience, and Violence Prevention](#)
- [Violence Prevention and Awareness](#)

By integrating services, the center can better support students, faculty, and staff from a single location. The Center for Well-Being provides compassionate care, expertise, and resources to help members of the community thrive in and out of the classroom. Students can access the center by calling (651) 962-6750.

## **Computing Services/Tech Help**

The university's [Innovation & Technology Services](#) provides a variety of computing services free to students, faculty, and staff. Through computer labs on all campuses, Innovation & Technology Services makes a combination of hardware and software packages available for word processing, spreadsheets, database management, statistics, electronic mail, and computer assisted instruction. Computing labs are in the libraries on the St. Thomas campus. Labs vary in the equipment they offer and the hours they are

open. For hours of computer labs, call the Tech Desk at (651) 962-6230.

## **iPad Program**

The SON is committed to using innovative educational technology, including the iPad. Every student will receive a set of Apple tools as determined by the SON. Students will receive the latest generation iPad and Apple Pencil, and a keyboard/case. Students should NOT buy these tools in advance.

The cost will be split into a special Apple iPad Fee over several semesters so that students will have paid off the iPad and accessories by graduation and keep the technology. While in the program, the iPads are managed via JAMF (software managed by University of St. Thomas ITS).

Students must:

- **Bring the iPad to every nursing course activity on campus (class, lab, simulation).**
- **Bring the iPad charged to at least 90% before the course activity begins.**
- *Note: Students without charged iPads jeopardize their ability to successfully complete online examinations, required for achievement of student learning objectives and program outcomes.*
- **Follow clinical site policies regarding use of mobile devices, including the iPad (Appendix J)**

*Note: Some clinical sites do not allow the use of mobile devices during clinical. Your clinical instructors will inform students of clinical site policy.*

## **Copy Machines**

Students will receive a supplied print/copy quota for each semester of the academic year (Fall, J-term/Spring, Summer). Copiers are in the Summit Classroom Building (lower level) and O'Shaughnessy-Frey Library Center (lower level, level one, and level two). Other machines are located throughout campus.

## **Counseling and Psychological Services**

[Counseling & Psychological Services](#) promotes the mental health, interpersonal relationships, and academic performance of University of St. Thomas students. These services contribute to a healthy campus learning environment by providing psychological services to all who work, train, and study at the university. The staff includes psychologists, counselors, doctoral interns, and counseling practicum interns. Services include individual and group counseling, crisis counseling, intervention, alcohol assessment, consultation/outreach, and referrals. Crisis services are available 24 hours/day and can be accessed by calling (651) 962-6750.

## **Disability Resources**

The mission of [Disability Resources](#) at the University of St. Thomas is to make a reasonable effort to provide all qualified students with disabilities equal access to all university courses, services, programs, employment, and facilities. The goal of Disability Resources is fully to enable students with disabilities to maximize their educational potential and to develop their independence and self-advocacy skills within the standard university curriculum.

Students qualify for services through Disability Resources upon self-disclosure of a disability and the presentation of documentation. Reasonable academic accommodations are arranged on an individual basis to provide students with disabilities equal access to all university programs. The University of St. Thomas is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the

Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Disability Resources is in the Academic Counseling & Support suite in Murray-Herrick 110 and can be reached by calling (651) 962-6315.

### **Email (See Communication Policy)**

Students must activate and use their St. Thomas e-mail account upon admission to and throughout the program. The SON uses e-mail as an official method of communication and students are expected to respond and communicate through their St. Thomas account. Students need to monitor their St. Thomas email and respond to emails within a timely fashion (within one business day). Activating an email account allows access to OneSt.Thomas for access to technology such as the Canvas Learning Management System.

Please note: Communication in Canvas does not eliminate the expectation for student monitor their St. Thomas email.

All codes of conduct, including those related to plagiarism and harassment, apply also to all technology resources including student email. These policies are based on respect and privacy of St. Thomas community members.

### **Financial Aid**

All financial aid for students is allocated and administered through the Financial Aid office at the University of St. Thomas, (651) 962-6550. When a student withdraws from a course or from the program, the student should check with the University of St. Thomas Financial Aid Office to determine how withdrawal affects financial aid status. Students who receive financial aid are responsible for knowing and complying with all relevant policies. Any questions should be addressed directly to the University of St. Thomas Financial Aid Office. The web address for financial aid is [Graduate Financial Aid](#)

### **Graduation, Commencement, and Diplomas**

MSN students will receive their MSN diploma when all requirements for the degree are completed, verified, and posted to their record, approximately four weeks after the end of the term. Final transcripts are not available until degrees are posted. Official transcripts provided for licensure must be ordered through the Registrar's Office. Any transcripts ordered before the degree posting will not have an award date.

The University of St. Thomas holds one ceremony per year in May. Degrees are awarded in the months of May, August, and December. In some cases, students are eligible to participate in commencement prior to completing all course requirements. Also, students with three credits or less left to complete are eligible to participate in the May ceremony. Students are eligible to participate in one commencement ceremony.

### **ID Cards**

Students obtain their [St. Thomas Photo ID Card](#) at the Card Office, Room 101, Murray-Herrick Campus Center, University of St. Thomas. This ID card is required for libraries, athletic facilities, purchasing parking permits, check cashing, and any shuttles. St. Thomas ID numbers are randomly generated and include a nine-digit number that appears on the front of each ID card. The number listed on the back of the ID card is the student's library identifier. Students can charge purchases on their St. Thomas ID card at the University of St. Thomas bookstore. To do so, students must open an "EXpress Account" at St. Thomas, which works like a debit card and bills the student account. EXpress.

Nursing students obtain a separate nursing student ID badge with their first name and last name initial.

This student ID is required for clinical rotations and is part of the uniform standards. To participate in clinical experiences, all nursing students must be wearing their ID badge while attending any clinical experience.

### **Inclement Weather Policy**

When weather causes unsafe travel conditions, and the university remains open, clinical may be cancelled by the faculty in consultation with the Course Coordinators, Clinical Placement Specialist, and Founding Director of Nursing. In such cases, there will be alternate or make-up clinical experiences.

### **Intercampus Shuttle Information**

St. Thomas operates a [Shuttle Service](#) between the St. Paul and Minneapolis campuses. Students are required to show their ID card. Shuttle schedules are available by calling (651) 962-5100 or checking the website.

### **Libraries**

The locations of the libraries are as follows:

- O'Shaughnessy-Frey Library Center, St. Paul, main campus
- (651) 962-5494 (circulation), (651) 962-5001 (reference), (651) 962-5400 (hours)
- Charles J. Keffer Library, Minneapolis campus
- (651) 962-4642 (circulation), (651) 962-4664 (reference), (651) 962-4640 (hours)
- Archbishop Ireland Memorial Library, St. Paul, south campus
- (651) 962-5450
- For assistance in searching electronic databases and for further information regarding services available, please consult the reference librarians.
- The SON librarian liaison is Karen Brunner. Her office is located in the O'Shaughnessy-Frey Library on the St. Paul campus.

### **Lost and Found**

For lost and found items, students can contact the [Public Safety Office](#) located on the first floor of Morrison Hall or call (651) 962-5100.

### **Student Diversity & Inclusion Services**

The [Student Diversity & Inclusion Services](#) exists to enhance the campus climate and holds deep commitment to developing and sustaining a diverse campus community. This commitment is broad, and includes diversity and inclusion related to, but not limited to, gender, race, ethnicity, generational history, culture, socioeconomic class, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, citizenship status, political perspectives, geographic origin, and physical ability, through programs and initiatives. This office's work is based on four pillars: education, leadership, advocacy, and community. The office is located in room 224 of Anderson Student Center. For more information, call (651) 962-6460 or visit

### **Parking**

If students choose to forego a St. Thomas parking permit, they should be aware of the city of St. Paul and Minneapolis residential permit regulations in the neighborhoods surrounding both campuses.

### **Security**

For safety and security needs, students can contact [Public Safety Office](#) (651) 962-5100 or stop by the Public Safety office on the first floor of Morrison Hall. Public Safety is open 24 hours per day, 365 days a year. For emergencies, call (651) 962-5555.

Additionally, safety and security personnel provide the following services:

- **Emergencies and First Aid:** A security officer will be dispatched to all emergency situations. All security officers are trained in First Aid and CPR and can administer aid until further help arrives. The security dispatcher will call 911 to summon police, fire, and ambulance as needed. Emergency call boxes are located throughout campus and are denoted by a tall blue light on top of the call box. Students are encouraged to use the call boxes in times of emergency. A security officer will respond immediately to a call from any of these locations. For calling in an emergency from a cell phone on campus, dial (651) 962-5555.
- **Escort Service:** Escorts are provided upon request for students and employees on campus or to an adjacent street during the hours of darkness.
- **Registration of Cell Phones:** Students are urged to register cell phone numbers with [St. Thomas's Emergency Notification](#) system. This system will only be used by the department of public safety to notify the community during weather closings or extreme cases involving the safety of the university community.

## Student Nursing Organizations

### Nursing Student Association

The National Student Nurse Association (NSNA) is the only national organization for students of nursing. According to the NSNA, its mission is to “mentor students preparing for initial licensure as registered nurses, and to convey the standards, ethics, and skills that students will need as responsible and accountable leaders and members of the profession.” St. Thomas nursing students are encouraged to join NSNA and avail themselves of the many resources this organization provides to support them in their journey to become a professional Registered Nurse. See the [NSNA](#) web site for more information.

## References

Barnsteiner, J., & Disch, J. (2017). Creating a fair and just culture in schools of nursing. *American Journal of Nursing, 117*, 42-48.

Carper, B.A. (1978). Fundamental patterns of knowing in nursing. *ANS Advances in Nursing Science, 1*, 13-23.

Chinn, P.L., & Kramer, M.K. (2018). *Knowledge development in nursing: Theory and process* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Elsevier.

# Appendix A: Student Progression Report and Remediation Plan

## Student Progression Report and Remediation Plan

The Student Progression Report and Remediation Plan is an official notice intended to address area(s) of academic and/or clinical concern(s) that are severe enough to indicate that they may impact the student's ability to progress, or to document concerns that have resulted in an inability to progress. The purpose of the progression plan is to facilitate opportunities for student success and determine specific steps necessary for student progression.

<b>Student Name</b>		<b>Faculty/ Staff Name</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> BSN	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	MSN		
<b>Course Number (If applicable.)</b>		<b>Creation Date</b>	
Student must retake course in order to progress? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If yes, which course number(s)?			
<b>Area(s) of concern (select all that apply)</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> SON Academic Standards as outlined in the student handbook and/or course syllabus <i>If the area of concern is related to academic integrity, the processes outlined by the SON and relevant institutional policies and procedures will be followed.</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> SON Clinical Experience Policies as outlined in the student handbook and/or course syllabus (Please describe.)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Critical thinking/clinical reasoning		<input type="checkbox"/> Organizational skills/time management	
<input type="checkbox"/> Writing proficiency			
<input type="checkbox"/> Other			

### Area(s) of Concern

*Detail the concern as it aligns with course and program outcomes. Attach documentation if needed.*

### Outline Remediation Requirements

*Outline a plan of action for the student to address the area(s) of concern including a plan and timeframe for following up to determine that the area(s) of concern has been satisfactorily addressed. Specify consequences if area(s) of concern is not resolved.*

### Resources Provided to Facilitate Success (advising, tutoring, etc.)

### Additional Referrals

### Student's Plan of Action (What strategies or changes will you employ?)

### Assessment Plan of Progress (When, what, how the plan will be measured.)

Student Signature / Date	Faculty/ Instructor/Staff Signature	Date

*A completed, signed copy of this form must be delivered to the Student Success Director, no later than 8 business days from the Creation Date. Information in this plan may be shared with relevant faculty and staff to ensure continuation of resources identified to facilitate success.*



## Appendix B: Notice of Concern and Success Plan

### Notice of Concern and Success Plan

The Notice of Concern and Success plan is intended to facilitate student growth toward achieving School of Nursing (SON) program outcomes by providing honest, direct, and timely feedback to students about areas of concern and to collaboratively develop an action plan to foster student success.

<b>Student Name</b>		<b>Faculty/ Staff Name</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> BSN	<input type="checkbox"/> MSN		
<b>Course Number (If applicable.)</b>		<b>Creation Date</b>	
<b>Area(s) of concern (select all that apply)</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> SON Academic Standards as outlined in the student handbook and/or course syllabus <i>If the area of concern is related to academic integrity, the processes outlined by the SON and relevant institutional policies and procedures will be followed.</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> SON Clinical Experience Policies as outlined in the student handbook and/or course syllabus (Please describe.)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Critical thinking/clinical reasoning		<input type="checkbox"/> Organizational skills/time management	
<input type="checkbox"/> Writing proficiency			
<input type="checkbox"/> Other			

**Area(s) of Concern**

*Detail the concern as it aligns with course and program outcomes. Attach documentation if needed.*

**Outline Success Plan**

*Outline a plan of action for the student to address the area(s) of concern including a plan and timeframe for following up to determine that the area(s) of concern has been satisfactorily addressed. Specify consequences if area(s) of concern is not resolved.*

**Resources Provided to Facilitate Success (advising, tutoring, etc.)**

**Additional Referrals**

**Student's Plan of Action (What strategies or changes will you employ?)**

**Assessment Plan of Progress (When, what, how the plan will be measured.)**

Student Signature / Date	Faculty/ Staff Signature	Date

*A completed, signed copy of this form must be delivered to the Student Success Director, no later than 30 days from the Creation Date. Information in this plan may be shared with relevant faculty and staff to ensure continuation of resources identified to facilitate success.*

## Appendix C: Health Care Occurrence Report Involving Student

**Morrison Family College of Health  
Susan S. Morrison School of Nursing  
Health Care Occurrence Report Involving Student**

	Month	Date	Year	Time
Date and Time of Occurrence				
Date and Time Occurrence Reported				
Location (Name/Address of Clinical Setting)				
Specific Department/Area Within Location				
Student Last Name	First Name	Date of Birth		
BSN		MSN		
Brief Factual Narrative/Description of Occurrence:				
Action/Steps Taken After Occurrence:				
	Yes	No		
Any Injury to patient (check one)				
If yes, describe:				
	Name	Email	Phone No.	Organization
Persons Notified of Occurrence				
This Form Completed By:	Signature	Print Name	Phone No.	
Faculty Member				
Nursing Student				

Distribution: (1) School of Nursing Director of Nursing (2) MFCOH Founding Dean (3) Risk Management

## Appendix D: Tuberculosis (TB) Questionnaire

Morrison Family College of Health  
School of Nursing  
Tuberculosis (TB) Questionnaire\*

**Purpose:** This form serves as documentation of health status following a positive screening tuberculosis test.

**Background:** If a screening test for tuberculosis is positive, students must submit the following: Documentation of a negative chest x-ray taken after the positive screening test. Students with a positive screening test with an initial negative chest x-ray will be allowed to attend clinical experiences. These students will require a negative annual symptom survey from a health care provider. Approved health care providers include APRNs, MDs, DOs, and PAs.

**Initial Data:** Date of positive screening test: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of tests (e.g., skin test, blood test): \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of negative chest-x-ray (student must submit copy of x-ray result): \_\_\_\_\_

### Serial Follow-up:

If your health care provider has a symptom assessment they use for tuberculosis, this form should be completed and signed by the provider and submitted annually. If your provider does not have a symptom assessment form for tuberculosis, the following assessment adapted from the Minnesota Department of Health TB Guidelines for Health Care Workers may be submitted to meet requirements. The symptom assessment must be signed by an approved health care provider as noted above and submitted annually.

### Annual TB Symptom Survey

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (printed)

Check if any of the following symptoms are present:

Coughing (> 3weeks)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weight Loss	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor Appetite	<input type="checkbox"/>
Night Sweats	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chest Pain	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fever/Chills	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fatigue	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coughing up blood	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Note: A person with a past positive TB screening test and any of the above symptoms should be evaluated for active TB.

I certify by my signature that the above individual has no symptoms of active tuberculosis noted above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Health Care Provider

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*\*Form adapted from Metro State University MANE Program*

## Appendix E: Student Handbook Acknowledgement

Susan S. Morrison School of Nursing  
Student Handbook Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received, reviewed, and understand the policies and guidelines within the 2023 – 2024 MSN Student Handbook. I understand it is my responsibility to comply with and implement all policies and procedures including in the Susan S. Morrison School of Nursing MSN Student Handbook.

I understand that revisions to the MSN Student Handbook can occur anytime and intend to communicate program expectations supporting student success. Policies outlined in the most recent handbook version apply, and updates occur via Canvas and student emails.

---

Print Full Name (First Name, Last Name)

---

Signature

---

Date

## Appendix F: Program Interruption

Susan S. Morrison School of Nursing  
Program Interruption

Students experiencing extreme circumstance beyond their control may request a formal Program Interruption using this form. If approved, this program interruption temporarily freezes your program time limit for up to one year.

Student ID#:	Today's Date:
--------------	---------------

Last Name	First Name	M.I.
-----------	------------	------

Program:	Term(s) of Interruption (e.g., Fall, Spring, J-term, Summer and Year)
----------	---

Reason for interruption:
--------------------------

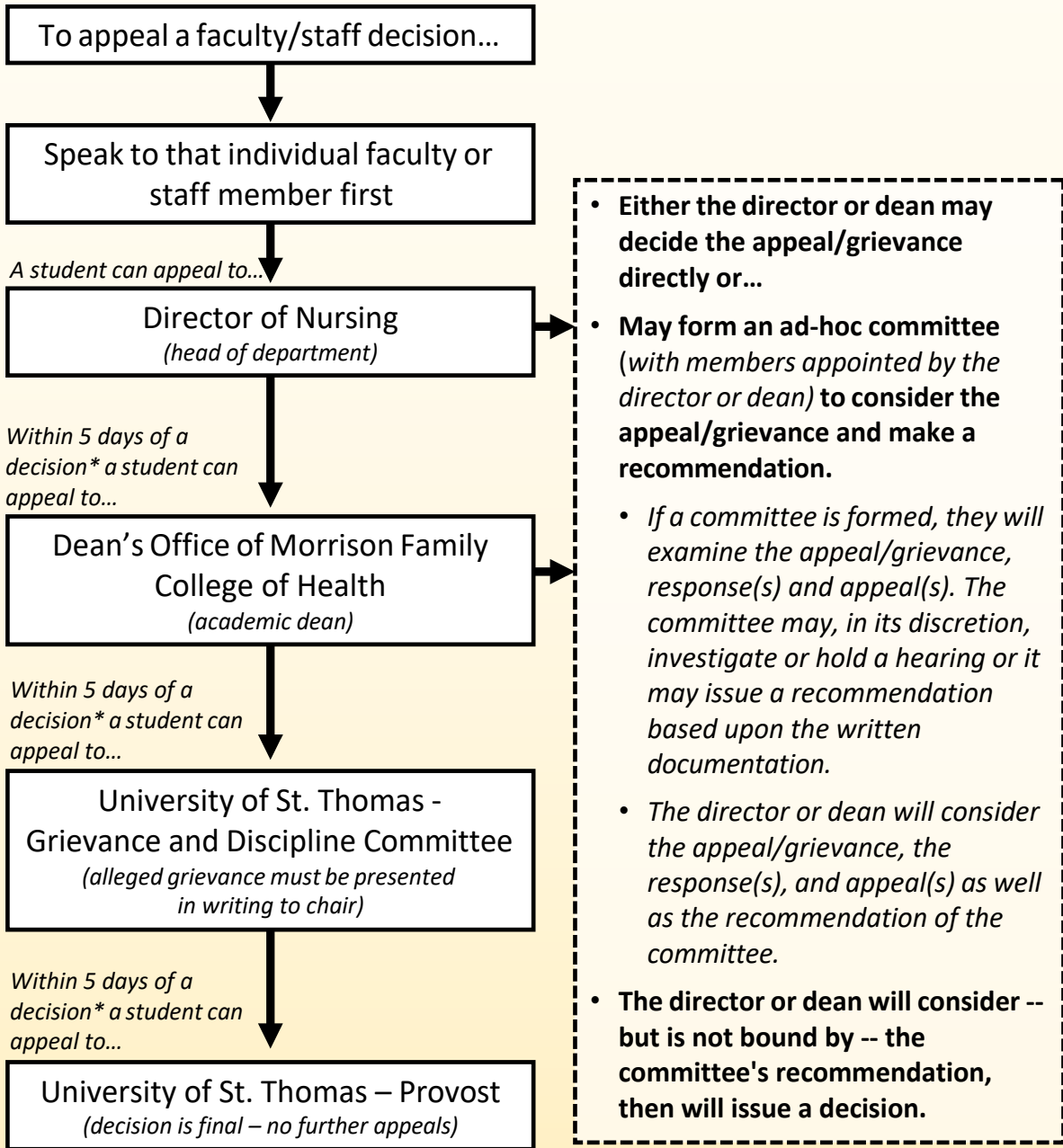
Student Signature:	Date:
--------------------	-------

Program Chair:	Date:
----------------	-------

Associate Dean Signature:	Date:
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# Appendix G: The Appeal / Grievance Process

## The Appeal/Grievance Process



## Appendix H: Clinical Norms

This agreement reiterates professional expectations for students participating in clinical activities (including in-facility, simulation, or community experience). Expectations align with the MSN Student Handbook, National Student Nurses' Association Code of Ethics, and Social Media Guidelines for Nurses.

**Arrive at the clinical site and unit on time** as your clinical instructor outlines. Please remember to anticipate the time from parking to the facility/unit. If you are running late, contact your clinical instructor at least 30 minutes before the start of your clinical via their provided cell phone number.

**Arrive at your clinical site prepared for the day.** Be sure to bring a pencil or pen, required paperwork, scrubs, hospital shoes, a badge, and medical instruments (stethoscope) as outlined by your clinical instructor.

**Wear appropriate attire to all clinical sites.** Review the uniform policy outlined in your MSN Handbook for each type of clinical site, including in-facility, simulation, and community. The uniform policy is an enforceable expectation. If you have long hair, it should be tied back to avoid contact with patients.

**Excused absences from clinical, including simulation, are outlined in the MSN Handbook.** There may not be make-up days for clinical, and not showing up to clinical days may result in an inability to pass the course. A provider's note may be required to document an excused absence.

**Focus on safety first.** Supervision is required for all initial patient assessments. If you have abnormal patient vital signs, you must immediately report them to your primary nurse and then to your clinical instructor. Do not administer high-risk medications alone; your primary nurse or clinical instructor must supervise them.

**Communicate using appropriate spoken/written language** and nonverbal communication as required by the profession.

**Establish and maintain** appropriate professional boundaries.

**Clinical sites are fragrance, artificial nails (including gel nails), and jewelry free.** Please respect the specific clinical site's unique rules. Do not wear perfume; use highly fragranced shampoo/conditioner/body wash or essential oils. Do not have artificial or painted nails while on the unit. Do not wear jewelry below the elbows (bracelets or rings) to prevent infection.

**Do not discuss clinical cases in public spaces,** including unit hallways, hospital hallways, elevators, outside the hospital on the way to your car, or the cafeteria. Discussion of clinical cases should only occur in dedicated spaces as outlined by your clinical instructor.

**Shred all items containing PPI.** All documents that include protected patient information, such as sign-out sheets, must be placed in a secure shredding bin designated by the unit at the end of each day.

**Do not post on social media** while at clinical experiences, including pictures of yourself inside the hospital or posts discussing (even vaguely) what you saw during your clinical experiences. Please refrain from taking photos with patients, even when the patient asks.

**Do not bring technology to the unit.** Cell phones, iPad, or other technology are prohibited. Typically, there is a space that is locked to keep your valuables, but this is not guaranteed. If someone needs to contact you at clinical, provide them with the unit clerk's number, information that is shared during orientation. Please print whatever clinical documents you may need before arriving at the unit.

**Do not make derogatory remarks** about patients, patient experiences, or family members.

Violating any clinical expectation may result in a subsequent course of action determined by the Clinical Instructor and the Course Coordinator and depends on the severity of the violation.

*By signing this form, you acknowledge that you have received this information and understand the importance of adhering to clinical expectations.*

**Student Name:**

**Student Signature:**



# Appendix I: Permission to Use Work

## Susan S. Morrison School of Nursing Permission To Use Work

Students own their student works. Signed, written permission is required to use a student's work for reasons unrelated to the evaluation of a student's academic performance.

By signing this form, I agree to allow:

Use of my student work into perpetuity.

Display my student work online for teaching for teaching purposes.

Use of my student work for program accreditation or curriculum planning.

I understand that:

Any identifying information will be removed prior to displaying my student work.

It is my right to rescind permission for use of my student work at any time, and that,

I am the owner of my student work and that,

All aspects of my student work are original and have not been copied or adapted from other sources.

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Student Printed Name

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Date

---

Student Signature

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Student ID number

## Appendix J: iPad Program Welcome Message

August 1, 2023

Dear Nursing Student:

Welcome to the University of St. Thomas! We are excited to share that the School of Nursing has implemented an iPad program as part of their undergraduate and graduate level nursing programs. The iPad program is designed to create equitable access to educational technology for every nursing student.

The iPad program will consist of a 10.9-inch iPad Air Wi-Fi 64GB, a 3-year AppleCare warranty, Logitech Keyboard, and Apple Pencil (2<sup>nd</sup> generation). The iPad will be your one-stop for all course materials (including eBooks, electronic health record, and NCLEX-RN test preparation software.)

The cost of the device is \$905 and will be charged as a nursing iPad program fee on your student account. The cost will be divided over the course of 6 payments. Upon graduation, the iPad is yours to keep. If you choose to withdraw or transfer from the program, you can either return the iPad in good condition, or be billed for the remaining cost. If the iPad is lost or stolen, you will be responsible for the cost of replacement.

Please read and sign the Student Technology and Liability Agreement, which outlines the terms and conditions of the iPad program.

We are also pleased to offer complimentary technical support to help make the most of your experience. If you need technical support, please contact the ITS Tech Desk at (651) 962-6230 or [techdesk@stthomas.edu](mailto:techdesk@stthomas.edu) to speak to a technician or arrange for an appointment. For more information, including office hours, please visit <https://www.stthomas.edu/its/techdesk/>

We wish you our best as you embark upon your educational endeavors. If you have any questions, please contact Russell Waisanen, Assistant Director of Nursing Operations at [rwaisanen@stthomas.edu](mailto:rwaisanen@stthomas.edu)

Best Regards,

Nan Hoerr, Ed.D., DNP, RN



Interim Director, School of Nursing