



## Online Master of Science (MS) in Nursing Program Student Handbook



**2025-2026**

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## **Director's Welcome**

Welcome to the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth College of Nursing and Health Sciences! As Director for the Masters of Science in Nursing Program, I am excited to work with you in our two graduate study tracks, Nursing and Healthcare Education and Global Public Health. I am confident that, collectively, we will achieve our mission to advance nursing knowledge and maximize the health of the Commonwealth and beyond.

Our shared vision for the Masters of Science in Nursing Program is to prepare graduates with the competencies in nursing education and global public health to transform the health care environment. In joining the UMass Dartmouth College of Nursing and Health Sciences, you become a part of a community dedicated to scholarship and excellence. Together, faculty and students will amplify exemplary education, scholarship, and community engagement to shape the future of nursing.

On behalf of Dean Christopher, the entire graduate nursing faculty, and myself, I wish you success and happiness in all your academic and professional endeavors!

Warmly,  
Melissa D. Duprey EdD, MSN, RN, CNE  
Clinical Associate Professor  
Program Director, MS in Nursing Program

## Preface

The Masters of Science (MS) in Nursing program is a 39-credit degree program delivered in a fully asynchronous online format. This handbook supplements the UMass Dartmouth (UMassD) Graduate Catalog and addresses issues that are unique to the online MS Program in the College of Nursing (CNHS). The University Graduate Catalog offers a comprehensive guide to graduate student policies, program requirements, costs, academic calendar, and financial opportunities. Students are accountable for compliance with the University Graduate Catalog, this handbook, and the MS Community which is available to all students on the MyCourses webpage.

Due to regulations resulting from state legislation pertaining to the clinical experience requirement for this program, UMass Dartmouth MS Degree applicants with a permanent residence in Alabama, Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Nevada, New Mexico, Minnesota, North Carolina, Texas, Washington, and West Virginia are not being considered.

## Academic Accreditation

The Master's degree in nursing at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, One DuPont Circle, NW, Suite 530, Washington, DC 20036, 212-887-6791.

The CNHS is approved by the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing.

The CNHS is a member of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and the Council of Member Agencies for the Baccalaureate and Higher Degree Programs of the National League for Nursing.

## Important College of Nursing and Health Sciences Contacts

### **Kimberly Christopher, RN, PhD**

College of Nursing and Health Sciences Dean

To make an appointment with the Dean contact:

### **Nicole Gomez**

Administrative Associate  
Telephone: 508-999-8898  
E-mail: ngomez2@umassd.edu  
Office: Dion 202C

### **June Andrews Horowitz, PhD, RN, PMHCNS-BC, FAAN**

College of Nursing and Health Sciences Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research & Professor

To make an appointment with the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research contact:

### **Deanna Hoffman**

Administrative Assistant I, Nursing Graduate Programs  
Telephone: 508-910- 6487  
Fax: 508-910-6546  
E-mail: dhoffman@umassd.edu  
Office: Textiles Lower Level, 012

To make an appointment with the MS Program Director contact:

### **Melissa D. Duprey, EdD, MSN, RN, CNE**

Director, Master of Science in Nursing Program  
Clinical Associate Professor Telephone: 334-805-7047  
E-mail: mduprey1@umassd.edu  
Office: Remote

# UMassD College of Nursing and Health Sciences

## **Mission**

The mission of the UMassD CNHS is to advance nursing knowledge and maximize the health of the Commonwealth and beyond through exemplary nursing education, scholarship, and community engagement.

## **Vision**

To shape the health environment through transformative nursing education, leadership, and scholarship.

## **Core Values**

- Excellence
- Integrity
- Professionalism
- Respect
- Innovation
- Collaboration
- Community
- Diversity
- Equity
- Inclusion
- Social Justice
- Ethics
- Advocacy

Approved by Faculty Organization May, 2014; May 2023

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## **Philosophy**

Nursing faculty positively affect the health of persons, families, and communities by educating nurses to provide quality nursing care to diverse populations across care settings. The College is committed to providing an environment of scholarship and caring wherein the education of nurses will flourish. Critical judgment, research skills and leadership skills are fostered throughout the programs of study. The graduates of this College demonstrate a commitment to humanism and promote the achievement of healthful living for all people.

The concepts of person, health, environment, and nursing are the guiding concepts for the discipline of nursing and the education of students. The following summaries articulate the faculty's beliefs about these concepts.

## **PERSON**

A person is a unique, holistic being who is constantly interacting with the environment. The person may adapt to or alter this environment in an effort to maximize health. The person exhibits both unique and predictable behaviors influenced by antecedent factors, developmental patterns and the individual and situational context.

Nurses may engage with persons as individuals, families, communities, and populations, including the global community. Persons have the right to make decisions affecting their health. Nurses and persons collaborate to mobilize the strengths of persons to maximize health.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

The environment consists of all forces, both internal and external, that reciprocally influence and interact with individuals, families, communities, and populations. These forces produce a change or response in the person, which affects health status. Positive alterations in the environment, thinking abilities, repertoires of caring interventions, and understanding of self and persons from diverse cultural backgrounds will improve the person's health status while negative alterations present risks to health status. Faculty promote professional role development by structuring caring environments conducive to learning and by providing support and direction while challenging students to reach their full potential.

## **HEALTH**

Health is a holistic, dynamic state. The person maximizes health by personal reflection and growth, and active interaction with the multidimensional environment. Inherent in the concept of health is an environmental connectedness. Health is the actualization of inherent and acquired potential, either as an individual, family, community, or population, including the global community.

## **NURSING**

Nursing is a humanistic discipline that is both an art and a science. Professional nurses assist and collaborate with persons to maximize health. The focus of nursing enhances the strengths of a person by viewing the total person, family, community or population with respect, mutuality, and collaboration. Professional nursing care occurs in any setting and at any point on the life continuum. Considerations of social, legal, spiritual, cultural, ethical and economic issues are essential components in the planning and implementation of nursing care. Nursing assists persons to define health from their unique perspective. Changes in society have produced rapid changes in the health care delivery system. Nursing, as an integral part of the health care delivery system, shares the responsibility for effecting positive change within the health care system and global community.

## **EDUCATION**

Faculty and students collaborate in the educational experiences so that students are prepared to safely and knowledgeably provide nursing care to individuals, families, communities, and populations in a variety of settings. The nursing major incorporates a liberal arts foundation, including humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Students engage in didactic and experiential learning activities. Experiential learning occurs both in the laboratory and in regional health care settings. Through these learning activities students develop communication skills, critical thinking abilities, repertoires of therapeutic interventions, and understanding of self and persons from diverse cultural backgrounds. Faculty promote professional role development by structuring environments conducive to learning and by providing support and direction while challenging the student to reach their full potential.

Approved by Faculty Organization 2/15/95  
Revised by Faculty Organization 12/11/97  
Revised by Faculty Organization 5/30/01  
Revised and approved by Faculty Organization 10/20/2004  
Revised and approved by Faculty Organization 10/16/2019  
Revised and approved by Faculty Organization 5/8/2023

## **Curriculum Framework**

The curriculum framework is built upon the Philosophy of the College. The central concept is nurse-person engagement aimed at maximizing health. Nurse-person engagement is shaped by values, belief and knowledge. Nursing integrates empirical, ethical, aesthetic, personal, sociopolitical and cultural knowledge. Utilizing this knowledge with respect, mutuality, and collaboration with the person the nurse creates and maintains a caring environment. Three key processes are used by the nurse to achieve this goal of maximizing health. These three processes are equally important; thus they pervade the curriculum and direct nursing interventions. These processes are:

### **Promoting Health**

Promotion of health includes such activities as facilitating wellness and preservation of health within the illness experience. This occurs at all levels of being: Cellular, functional, intra-psychic, interactional, family unit, population, social aggregates, and systems.

### **Guiding Persons through the Health Care Experience**

Nursing actions are aimed at promoting the growth of the person within the health care experience. The nurse forms a therapeutic alliance with the person in order to protect the interest/wholeness of the individual and vulnerable groups as well as enhancement of humanity within the health care system.

### **Shaping the Health Environment**

Shaping occurs through maximum interdisciplinary collaboration, effective utilization of information technology, effective, efficient use of resources, analysis and evaluation of nursing indicators, consideration of ethical and legal issues, standards of practice, and health policy.

Approved by Faculty Organization 10/16/2020  
Approved by Faculty Organization 05/08/2023

# Master of Science in Nursing Program Goals and Outcomes

## Goals

The goal of the Master of Science (MS) in Nursing program is to prepare the nursing graduate to be a leader in nursing education and/or in global public health.

The nursing and healthcare education concentration prepares the individual for the nurse educator role in academic, clinical, or staff development settings. The concentration reflects the nurse educator and professional development competencies developed by national organizations. The graduate is prepared to design, implement, evaluate and revise academic and continuing education programs for nurses.

The global public health concentration prepares the socially accountable individual to apply skills and knowledge using an ecological framework to improve health outcomes of individuals, families, groups, and populations. The graduate is prepared to work in various domestic and global settings, with diverse individuals, families, and populations, to improve healthcare outcomes through illness prevention, health promotion and health policy.

Both concentrations provide the student with the foundational knowledge of healthcare systems, healthcare policy, nursing research methods and healthcare informatics. Advanced courses in the concentration allow the application of knowledge to be applied in various practice settings. The final capstone project prepares the student for a career using advanced nursing skills.

The MS program prepares the student, depending on the concentration, with sufficient content to sit for the following certifications post-graduation (students may have to meet other certifications guidelines such as number of hours employed in a given nursing role):

- NLN Certified Nurse Educator (CNE)
- NLN Certified Nurse Educator, clinical (CNEcl)
- NLN Certified Nurse Educator, novice (CNE-n)
- Certified in Public Health National Board of Public Health Examiners (NBPHE)

## Program Outcomes

The graduate of the MS in nursing program:

1. Integrate, translate, and apply established and evolving disciplinary nursing knowledge, as well as knowledge from other disciplines to the practice of advanced specialty nursing.
2. Integrate person-centered care that is culturally congruent, holistic, just, respectful, compassionate, coordinated, and evidence-based.
3. Apply the principles of public health prevention and disease management and evaluation to populations with both traditional and non-traditional partnerships from affected communities, public health, industry, academia, health care, local government entities, and others to shape care delivery to individuals, families, groups, and populations across the lifespan.
4. Evaluate, synthesize, translate, apply, and disseminate nursing knowledge to improve health, transform health care, and guide nursing practice.
5. Implement established and emerging principles of safety and improvement science as core values of nursing practice to enhance quality and minimize risk of harm to patients and providers through both system effectiveness and individual performance.
6. Engages in intentional collaboration with care team members, patients, families, communities, and other stakeholders to promote health, guide clients through the illness experience, and improve the health system.
7. Apply systems-based practice to influence health policy and care in the proactive coordination of resources to provide safe, quality, and equitable care.
8. Utilize information and technology processes in gathering data and forming information to drive decision making in the support of professional nurses to manage and improve the delivery of safe, high-quality, and efficient healthcare services in accordance with best practice and professional and regulatory standards.
9. Cultivate a professional identity that embraces integrity, accountability, compassion, altruism, courage, humility, inclusivity, and caring that exemplifies professional nursing.
10. Participates in activities that build resilience, support personal health and wellbeing, and foster personal, professional, and leadership development through lifelong learning, self-reflection, the acquisition of nursing expertise, and the assertion of leadership.

Revised & Approved by Faculty Organization 05/08/2023

## Curriculum Structure

The MS curriculum builds on foundational baccalaureate nursing education. The graduate core courses (NUR 500, 511, 520, 547, and 605) are completed in the first year of academic study. The student must complete all of these courses before moving onto the second- and third-year courses. In the second year and the first semester of the third year, the curriculum integrates core level concepts to teach advanced role foundations of the MS prepared nurse, as well as prepare the graduate to practice in a role related to the selected concentration. During the program of study, the student will complete one three-credit graduate level elective. This course should supplemental and enhance the content already offered in the program of study in the concentration selected. The program of study culminates in an intensive individualized practicum (minimum of 126 practicum hours) in which each student collaborates with an experienced professional to implement a role congruent in the concentration of study.

The MS curriculum uses the following documents to guide curriculum creation, evaluation, and revision.

- AACN (2021) Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing
- The Council on Linkages between Academia & Public Health Practice (2014) Core Competencies for Public Health Practice
- National League for Nursing (2012) The Scope of Practice for Academic Nurse Educators
- QSEN Institute (2012) QSEN-Level Graduate Competencies, Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes

## Course Descriptions

Students are referred to the Graduate Catalog for course descriptions. Descriptions are also found in COIN.

### Scholarly Work

Students are required to submit all assignments in Microsoft format, for example: Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, or Microsoft PowerPoint.

### End of Course Evaluations

At the end of each course, the student is provided the opportunity to evaluate the course and course faculty. The University and College use these data to review the effectiveness of the course delivery and the faculty of record in achieving the course outcomes. In some semesters, the student will receive an additional evaluation with more specific questions about the course. These evaluations are required by the accrediting body and data gathered in the aggregate are used by the College to inform program revision. These evaluations are available through web links and students are required to complete the evaluation process.

### Pre-requisites

Please note that the program has rolling admissions, however many of the courses have pre-requisites. It is important to meet with the assigned advisor each semester to ensure graduation requirements are being fulfilled. Following the program plan as directed by the advisor prevents students from having problems registering for classes due to not meeting pre-requisite requirements. Examples of pre-requisites in the program of study includes:

- Completion of the graduate core (NUR 500, 511, 520, 547, 605) before moving onto second year courses.

- Practicum courses will be the last course of the program of study (with exception of elective).

#### **Capstone Practicum Project**

MS students must complete a capstone practicum project. The capstone practicum assignment is completed in the last semester practicum course (NUR 646 or NUR 684).

All graduate students are required to secure their own practicum placements and preceptors in quality health care agencies, practices, or educational settings, as appropriate to the MS course and/or track.

The MS program is an online program, with students located in communities throughout the United States, and abroad. College of Nursing and Health Sciences faculty will assist students in facilitating practicum placements and identifying appropriate, qualified preceptors. Before a student can begin a practicum experience, the respective practicum course faculty must approve the practicum site and preceptor. Students may propose their current employer organization as a potential practicum site, however cannot complete hours with a known supervisor, co-worker, or colleague. The respective practicum course faculty member must approve the site and mentor. Approval will be based on goodness of fit for meeting student learning outcomes.

Preceptors are required to hold advanced degrees (a graduate degree) in nursing, public health, medicine, or a health-related field. Preceptors and agencies should be selected based upon their fit with the course objectives and practicum focus as outlined in the respective program practicum guide.

Please note that state and local regulations have limited the states where you may participate in a practicum experience. If you move after you have been admitted to the MS in Nursing Program, the MS Program Director must be notified immediately to advise you of your options. You are not guaranteed to be able to complete your practicum experiences in all states.

**Approved revision 2/18/2020;** updated 4/3/2023. Reviewed 12/2024

## Program of Study

The program of study defines for the student and the Graduate Admissions and Progression Committee each student's plan to complete the academic requirements for the master's degree. The program of study is subject to change; however, the student will remain on their admitted program plan.

### Program of Study - Nursing and Healthcare Education concentration

Summer Year 1	Fall Year 1	Spring Year 1
NUR 605 Statistical Analysis Data (3cr) – <i>Course offered during Summer Intersession ONLY IN PROGRESS</i>	NUR 500 Theoretical Foundations for Advancing Nursing Practice (3cr)  NUR 520 The US Health Care Delivery System (3cr)	NUR 511 Translating Research Evidence for Advancing Nursing Practice (3cr)  NUR 547 Promoting the Health of Populations (3cr)
Summer Year 2	Fall Year 2	Spring Year 2
	NUR 510 Healthcare Informatics (3cr)  NUR 644 Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation in Nursing (3cr)	NUR 512 Integrated Physiologic Knowledge in Patient Care (3cr)  NUR 642 Curriculum Development in Nursing (3cr)
Summer Year 3	Fall Year 3	Spring Year 3
	NUR 645 Teaching in the Clinical and Technology Enhanced Environments (3cr)  NUR 615 Organizational Behavior and Leadership in Healthcare (3cr)	NUR 646 Practicum- Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation in Nursing (3cr) 126 practicum hours.  Elective (3cr) – any graduate level course numbered 500 and higher  Total: 39 credits

**Program of Study - Global Public Health concentration**

<b>Summer Year 1</b>	<b>Fall Year 1</b>	<b>Spring Year 1</b>
NUR 605 Statistical Analysis Data (3cr) – <i>Course offered during Summer Intersession ONLY IN PROGRESS</i>	NUR 500 Theoretical Foundations for Advancing Nursing Practice (3cr)  NUR 520 The US Health Care Delivery System (3cr)	NUR 511 Translating Research Evidence for Advancing Nursing Practice (3cr)  NUR 547 Promoting the Health of Populations (3cr)
<b>Summer Year 2</b>	<b>Fall Year 2</b>	<b>Spring Year 2</b>
	NUR 510 Healthcare Informatics (3cr)  NUR 540 Principles of Biostatistics and Epidemiology (3cr)	NUR 512 Integrated Physiologic Knowledge in Patient Care (3cr)  NUR 673 Global Health Perspectives (3cr)
<b>Summer Year 3</b>	<b>Fall Year 3</b>	<b>Spring Year 3</b>
	NUR 615 Organizational Behavior and Leadership in Healthcare (3cr)  NUR 681 Assessment and Planning for Population Health Practice (3cr)	NUR 684 Practicum in Global Public Health Nursing Practice (3cr) 126 practicum hours.  Elective (3cr) – any graduate level course numbered 500 and higher  Total: 39 credits

## Admissions

### Application Deadline:

Rolling admissions

### Admission Criteria

In addition to UMassD admission criteria, applicants to the Master's program in the CNHS must also meet the following criteria:

- Statement of purpose (Minimum 300 words),
- Resume
- Official transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended (regardless if a credential is earned or not)
- Hold a current license to practice professional nursing **where you live**
- Hold a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from a program accredited by the NLNAC or CCNE. Registered Nurses with a bachelor degree in a related field may seek admission through the GAP program
- Have a minimum GPA of 3.0 in undergraduate study
- Submit two references that document competence and leadership in professional integrity in nursing practice. If the applicant recently completed undergraduate studies, a reference from a former nursing professor who could speak to the applicant's potential for success in graduate study would be appropriate.

### Alternative Programs of Study

#### RN-BS-MS in Nursing Fast Track

RN-BS students are eligible to enroll in up to nine (9) credits of graduate level nursing courses. Students may choose from the following courses (pre-requisites must still be met) - NUR 500, 511, 520, 547, 605. The following conditions must be met prior to enrolling in these courses:

- All 200 & 300 level nursing courses completed,
- A 3.3 GPA in all nursing courses,
- Recommendation from the RN-BS Program Director,
- Approval of Master's Program Director.

These nine (9) graduate credits fulfill both undergraduate elective, bachelor's degree requirements, and graduate degree requirements. Students pay undergraduate tuition rates for the courses and must get a grade

of B or better for the course to count for graduate credit. In addition, students must apply for admission in spring for matriculation into the consecutive summer.

#### **BS - MS Fast Track**

Senior nursing students may enroll in up to nine (9) credits of graduate level nursing courses. Students may choose from the following courses (pre-requisites must still be met) - NUR 500, 511, 520, 547, 605.

The following conditions must be met prior to enrolling in these courses:

- All 300 level nursing courses are completed,
- Maintain a 3.3 GPA in all nursing courses,
- Recommendation of their faculty advisor,
- Approval of Master's program director.

These nine (9) graduate credits fulfill both undergraduate elective, bachelor's degree requirements, and graduate degree requirements. Students must get a grade of B or better for the course to count for graduate credit. In addition, students must apply for admission in spring for matriculation into the consecutive summer. Tuition rates for these graduate classes will be directed by University Extension.

#### ***The Graduate Admission Program (GAP) for RNs with Non---Nursing Baccalaureate Degree***

This program provides Registered Nurses who hold an Associate Degree in Nursing and a BA or BS in a field other than Nursing with the opportunity to enter and complete the MS program at UMassD.

The program prepares GAP students for MS level work by assuring that they have achieved the CNHS baccalaureate program outcomes.

GAP students:

- Take NUR 503 Transitions Advancing Nursing Practice in the summer. Students are allowed to take NUR 503 along with NUR 605,
- Compile a portfolio that documents how they have achieved the UMD CNHS baccalaureate program outcomes,
- Successful completion of the course allows the student to progress in graduate level courses,

## General Information

### Advisement

At the time of admission to the Master's program of the CNHS, students are assigned a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor will prepare and maintain the students' Program of Study. Every semester, the student and adviser will discuss course registration for the following semester. The advisor will work with students throughout the program to support success in the program.

### Registration

Registration for classes is accomplished online within the UMassD COIN system.

Master's degree nursing students, like all university students, register during the intervals indicated by Student Enrollment Services. It is essential that students register for courses in a timely fashion because the student will incur a late fee of \$100.00 and undersubscribed courses will be cancelled.

Frequently, courses offered by the College and other academic units require pre- or co-requisites for enrollment. Students are advised to refer to the current Graduate Catalog and to consult with their advisor in order to plan appropriately.

### Failure to Register or Maintain Continuous Enrollment

*Refer to Graduate Catalogue.*

Master's degree students must be continually enrolled in course work in their program of study. Failure to enroll results in automatic withdrawal from their program. To restart their studies, the student will have to reapply to the university and to the program.

### Leave of Absence

*Refer to Graduate Catalog*

A request for a leave of absence (LOA) for one semester or one year may be made in cases when serious illness or injury or another major event prevents the student from participating in his/her program of study for an extended period of time. To receive permission for a LOA, the student must apply in writing (by mail or e-mail) to the MS Program Director stating the reason the LOA is needed and the anticipated length of the LOA (one semester or one year). A student who fails to return from a LOA after one year will be dismissed from the program and must reapply to the University and College continue in their program of study.

### Readmission

Any former graduate student must submit an application for readmission to the Office of Graduate Studies. The application should be submitted at least one month before the beginning of the semester in which the

student plans to return. The decision to readmit is based on student's GPA (3.0) or better, recommendation of the MS Program Director, and space availability.

## **Transfer to the other MS Concentration**

Students are admitted directly into a concentration (Nursing and healthcare Education or Global Public Health). Students who wish to transfer to the other concentration should work with their academic adviser and Graduate Program Administrative Assistant to complete the necessary paperwork. Transfer requests must be approved by the Program Director and are based on several factors, including but not limited to, space available in the receiving concentration.

## **Transfer to another Graduate Program in the CNHS**

Students who wish to transfer from one graduate program to another must submit a formal request in writing to the respective Program Director. The request is reviewed for approval by the appropriate committee(s). Transfer is dependent on available space in the program requested and the student's good academic standing (Cumulative GPA of 3.2 or better). Program changes require completing a new program of study with a new academic advisor.

## **Capstone Practicum**

### **Health Requirements**

Master's degree nursing students must comply with university health services policies. In the fall semester (deadline October 15) prior to the practicum course the student must submit to the Graduate Program Administrative Assistant a copy of the following:

- Required immunizations and current TB / Flu vaccination,
- Proof of CPR Certification (Health Care Provider)
- CORI
- Copy of personal malpractice insurance (please note that this is an individual policy not your place of employment policy)
- Drug screens and other testing as required by specific clinical agencies

This information is a necessary pre-requisite for practicum placements. Students are responsible for assuring that current information is on file with the Graduate Program Administrative Assistant. Students who do not comply, cannot participate in practicum placements.

### **Dress Code**

The student will wear a University-issued name badge when conducting CNHS practicum experience outside of the College. This name badge will identify the individual as a Graduate Student Nurse. Badges are available for order at the University Campus Store. Business casual is acceptable dress for practicum placements however, students will always defer to the dress code requirements of the agency.

## **Appointments with Faculty**

Course faculty will post their office hours on course syllabi. It is up to course faculty to hold their office hours by phone or video conference. Appointments needed outside of the established office hours will be negotiated by the faculty and student based on individual availability.

## **Electronic Communication**

The faculty and staff at UMassD communicate with students regularly through the UMassD email. Personal email addresses will not be used. Please check your UMassD e-mail regularly. Important communication regarding class offerings, financial assistance, job opportunities, and other information will be posted on the MS program Community MyCourses site in Blackboard. It is the students' responsibility to review the contents.

## **Netiquette**

Both the student and the faculty will adhere to "Netiquette" at all times. Netiquette refers to the respectful use of language in the online environment. A module on Netiquette is posted in the MS Community on Blackboard. In general, if you are unwilling to say something to someone's face, do not put it in text.

## **Library**

Visit the Claire T. Carney Library website <http://www.lib.umassd.edu/index.html> to explore all of the services available to the students of UMassD. Contact the CNHS dedicated Library Liaison:

### **Library Liaison**

Kari Mofford 508-999-8865

## **Official Student Files**

Official student files are maintained in the Graduate Program Office of the CNHS. Students may review their files in the presence of the MS Program Director, who is present to answer questions about information contained in the file and to safeguard the contents.

Examples of items included in the file include:

- Application for admission with supporting materials (materials submitted during the application process are the property of UMassD. Materials will not be shared outside of the University).
- Change in enrollment status,
- Official correspondence between the student, the college, and the university,

- Transcripts
- Approved interactive program of study
- Advisement notes
- Requests and subsequent actions

Copies of immunization records and other “health” records are kept in a separate area of the student record folder, as are course related documents such as preceptor evaluations, contracts or letters of agreements with community agencies, and other evaluative data.

### **Sample Student Work**

The CNHS accrediting body requires us to collect samples of student work from each course. Faculty will select will an array of assignments (graded and ungraded) from the course and file them for the next accreditation visit. Students are made aware that the sample student work is only shared with the site-visit team.

### **Student Contact Information**

Students are requested to advise the University Office of Graduate Studies, University Admissions, and the college Graduate Program Administrative Assistant about address, telephone number or name changes. Failure to do so will interfere with timely receipt of financial reimbursements such as the Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP) or other equally important information.

Those students who have completed degree requirements are also requested to submit forwarding addresses and information regarding employment to the Graduate Program Office for certification and accreditation purposes, and mandated reporting following graduation for NFLP recipients.

## College of Nursing and Health Sciences – Nursing Policy on Complaint and Dispute Resolution Process

### Student complaints

During the academic year, a variety of issues may arise where a student believes that she or he has been treated poorly or unfairly or may have some other concern. The following list describes a number of different types of concerns and relevant resources. If a student has a concern and is uncertain how to proceed, an undergraduate student should contact the Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies and a graduate student should contact the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

#### **Student complaints implicating the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) Standards or Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing (BORN) Regulations**

Any student wishing to file a formal complaint that may violate CCNE Standards or MA BORN regulations should follow the following procedures.

**Submission of Complaint:** File a student petition in the Dean's Office where it will be assigned to the appropriate Associate/Assistant Dean. Identify the issue in sufficient detail to permit an investigation into the matter. All complaints must be written and signed and include the student's contact information. The appropriate Assistant or Associate Dean will acknowledge in writing receipt of the complaint within five business days.

**Initial Investigation:** The Assistant/Associate Dean will initially investigate and attempt to resolve the complaint. If resolution is not possible, the Assistant/Associate Dean will refer the matter to the appropriate administrator, administrative body, or an administrative official designated by the Dean (the "Referral Investigator"), within three weeks of receipt of the complaint. The Assistant/Associate Dean will communicate resolution of the complaint, or its referral, to the complainant upon such resolution or referral.

**Referral Investigation:** If referral of the complaint is made as referenced above, the Referral Investigator shall attempt to resolve the complaint as soon as possible, generally no later than three weeks after referral of the complaint. Upon completion of the referral investigation, the College will communicate its findings and, if appropriate, any intended actions to the complainant.

**Appeals:** If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome or resolution of a complaint, the complainant may appeal the decision in writing to the Dean of the College. Such appeal must be filed within two weeks of communication to the complainant of the resolution of the complaint. The Dean's decision will be communicated in writing to the complainant within three weeks of the time the appeal was filed and shall be final.

### **Maintenance of Records**

The College shall maintain a written record of each complaint filed and its resolution in the Office of the Assistant/Associate Dean for a period of ten years from the date of the final resolution of the complaint.

Complaints not concerning CCNE or BORN regulations (examples below) should be submitted according to guidelines outlined on the UMassD website or in the University Handbook and/or College of Nursing and Health Sciences Nursing Handbooks.

### **Grade appeals**

Students who have questions about their grades should seek to discuss the matter first with the relevant faculty member. In certain limited circumstances, students may pursue a formal grade appeal. The process for pursuing a grade appeal is described at <https://www.umassd.edu/acadvising/grades/>.

UMassD Nursing Grade Appeal Officer is located at <https://www.umassd.edu/acadvising/grades/>.

### **Student Conduct & Dispute Resolution**

The [Office of Student Conduct and Dispute Resolution](#) handles complaints for violations of the [Student Code of Conduct](#) or other laws and regulations.

### **Office of Equal Opportunity, Diversity & Outreach**

The [Office of Equal Opportunity, Diversity & Outreach](#) deals with equal opportunity and [sexual assault/harassment](#) complaints.

### **UMass Student Rights & Responsibilities**

The rights and responsibilities of UMass students, including students' rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), are found in the [statement of student rights and responsibilities](#).

### **Other complaints**

Students with concerns that do not fall within any of the previously described categories should contact the Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies or Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research for assistance.

Approved: 10/25/19

Reviewed 12/2024

# College of Nursing and Health Sciences – MS Program Academic Policies

## Course Grade Equivalents

A letter grade of C is the passing grade in all graduate courses, including the elective. Grades of C- and below are failing and will result in dismissal from the program. Students may not repeat a course that they have failed.

The grading system used in the CNHS includes the following:

A+ (97-100)	4.000
A (93-96)	4.000
A- (90-92)	3.700
B+ (87-89)	3.300
B (83-86)	* 3.000
B- (80-82)	2.700
C+ (77-79)	2.300
C (73-76)	2.000

\*B (83) is the lowest grade acceptable for graduate credit

**C-, D, F** Unsatisfactory/Failure (grade < 73)

## Progression in the MS Program

To progress in the MS program in the CNHS students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 and may not fail (less than a grade of C) any course in the program of study. A cumulative GPA below 3.0 is subject to action outlined under Academic Sanction.

## Academic Sanction

Students are expected to make appropriate progress toward completion of their degrees or certificates, and those who do not are subject to review for warning, probation or possible dismissal.

**Academic Warning**- A student will be placed on Warning if his/her cumulative GPA is less than 3.00 (B) after having attempted six (6) or more credits in courses that are eligible to count toward the degree.

**Academic Probation**- A student will be placed on Probation if his/her cumulative GPA is less than 2.7 (B-) after having attempted six (6) or more credits in courses that are eligible to count toward the degree.

**Academic Dismissal**- A student will be subject to Academic Dismissal if his/her cumulative GPA is less than 2.00 after having attempted six (6) or more credits in courses that are eligible to count toward the degree or certificate.; OR if his/her GPA is less than 3.00 after completion of one-half (20

or more) of the required number of credits in courses that are eligible to count toward the degree.

## **Appeal**

A student may appeal, in writing, any action concerning academic probation or dismissal by petitioning the MS Program Committee within the CNHS. The student should work with the academic adviser during this process.

### **Grade Appeal**

Grade appeals are pursued through a formal process, which is conveyed in the university's Grade Appeal Policy. The following paragraphs summarize the grade appeal process. Students and faculty should make every effort to resolve questions about grades without seeking a formal grade appeal. Grade Appeal is a last resort. A grade appeal will be pursued only if there is a valid basis and evidence.

Only final course grades may be appealed.

Grades may be appealed that are alleged to be caused by:

- Unfair and unequal application of grading standards.
- Unfair or unannounced alteration of assignments, grading criteria or computational processes.
- Computation dispute about calculation of a final grade or its transmission to the Registrar.
- Failure to document a finding of plagiarism that results in a punitive final grade. Definitions of appropriate kinds of documentation are provided by the Academic Ethics Committee in its Plagiarism Policy report approved in April 2004.

### **Grade Appeal Officer**

A faculty member is identified as the Grade Appeal Officer, who serves students and faculty as an ombudsperson for grading issues. S/he provides students and faculty with someone to approach with questions relating to grading fairness and process; provides the first level of adjudication when issues related to grading arise between students and faculty by conducting an informal investigation of the issue and suggesting a non-binding solution where possible; and serves as facilitator for a formal grade appeal process when one is to occur. Contact the Graduate Program Administrative Assistant to identify the CNHS grade appeal officer.

## **Incomplete Grades**

*Refer to Graduate Catalog*

Incomplete (I) may be given only in exceptional circumstances at the instructor's discretion and at the student's request made no more than 48 hours after the final examination or last class. The student must be passing at the time of the request or must be sufficiently close to passing for the instructor to believe that upon completion of the work the student will pass the course. If the work is not completed within a year of

recording of the "I," the grade will become an F (I). "I" grades cannot be changed to W. The exact time frame and conditions for completion of the incomplete work is negotiated between student and faculty and must be documented in a memo with copies for the instructor, the student, and the MS Program Director. The incomplete work must be completed with the same instructor. Students who receive a grade of "I" have one calendar year to complete the course work for a grade. At the end of one year, University policy converts the "I" to an "F."

## **Transfer Credit**

Transfer of credit is the acceptance of credit from another institution for inclusion in a program of study leading to a degree awarded by UMassD. The number of credits transferred from other institutions may not exceed 6 [six]. Transfer credit applied to the program of study must be approved by the MS Program Director and the Dean. A maximum of six (6) credits of graduate courses taken before matriculation in a Master of Science program may be applied to the student's program of study if the courses are relevant to the program of study and the student achieved a B or better. However, the grades will not be calculated in the cumulative GPA. Once matriculated in the program, students may take graduate courses at other universities with the advance approval of their academic advisors and the MS program director. Credit for grades of B or better will be accepted in transfer however, the grades will not be calculated in the cumulative GPA.

## **Graduation**

Students must complete all specified course work within 5 years of matriculation and have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 to graduate from the program.

Students must:

- Declare their "intention to graduate" in the Office of Enrollment Services on July 1 for September 1 graduation, on November 1 for January 31 graduation: or on March 15 for May commencement.
- Submit an update resume to the Graduate Program Office at least 2 weeks before the end of classes.  
See Appendix B
- Complete the Program Exit Survey

## **CNHS Professional Competencies – MS Program**

### **Professional Student Conduct**

The CNHS abides by and adheres to the Code for Nursing, and the ANA Professional Standards, which is set forth by the American Nurses' Association as it relates to the professional conduct of nurses. It is an expectation of the College of Nursing that ALL students enrolled in graduate level courses act and present themselves professionally and respectfully when interacting with faculty, staff, colleagues, in the classroom whether in-person or online, and, when a student is representing the College of Nursing in a practicum setting. Should an instance occur when a student is not acting in a professional manner, the instructor of the course, the students' academic advisor, and/or the Program Director will be consulted.

The faculty of the CNHS has an academic, legal, and ethical responsibility to prepare graduates who are competent in safe nursing practice to protect the health of individuals and communities. It is within this context that graduate students are disciplined or dismissed from the CNHS for unsafe practice or unsafe behavior that threatens or has the potential to threaten the safety of a client, a family member or substitute familial person, another student, a faculty member, or other health care provider. Unsafe nursing practice is also defined as any behavior determined to be actually or potentially detrimental to the faculty, client and/or to the health care agency. The process of dismissal will be guided by the University Office of Student Conduct and Dispute Resolution. Please refer to this website.

<http://www.umassd.edu/studentaffairs/departments/studentconductanddisputeresolution/>

### **Definition Professional Nursing Competency**

Part of professional competence is having a knowledge base that allows practitioners to make sound clinical decisions. Professional competence is the habitual and judicious use of effective communication, knowledge, technical skill, reasoning, emotions, values and reflection in daily practice for the benefit of the individual and community being served (Epstein & Hundert, 2002).

The UMass Dartmouth CNHS has determined that the standards below are essential to the nursing profession. Therefore, students entering the nursing program at the UMass Dartmouth CNHS are expected to meet these standards for progression in the program to graduation<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>The list of competency standards has been reprinted for use by UMassD CNHS with permission from Dr. Barbara G. Miller, New York University College of Nursing Technical Standards for Core Nursing Competency Performance.

## **1. Communication and Observation Skills**

Students are expected to sufficiently demonstrate verbal, non-verbal, written, computer assisted entry, and observational skills. Communication includes not only speech, but also seeing, reading, writing, and computer literacy abilities in the classroom and clinical on and off-campus settings; the ability to communicate with a wide variety of people, and the ability to be easily understood. The following are examples of communication and observation skills.

- Speak clearly and effectively in English
- Hear and observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and to perceive nonverbal communications
- Communicate in writing or computer entry, as well as orally using standard, professional nursing and medical terminology
- Communicate effectively and sensitively with patients' family members and other members of the healthcare team, as well as faculty and peers in a 1-1 or group situation.
- Elicit, convey or exchange information at a level that allows for the implementation and evaluation of the nursing process
- Communicate in ways that are safe and not unduly alarming to patients, family members, and other members of the healthcare team
- Relay appropriate information to patients: teach, explain, direct and counsel a wide variety of individuals, as well as provide clear, direct communication in English during highly stressful, crisis situations

## **2. Cognitive Abilities**

Nursing students on admission and throughout the program are expected to sufficiently demonstrate cognitive abilities which include intellectual, conceptual, integrative, quantitative, critical thinking and comprehension skills. The following examples include, but are not limited to nursing students demonstrating these related cognitive skills:

- Sufficient skills to read and understand written documents in English
- Sufficient skills in problem solving including measurements, calculations, reasoning, memory, analysis, and synthesis of subjective and objective data as well as critically appraise the best available research evidence
- Sufficient skills to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures
- Critical thinking ability sufficient for academic and clinical judgments demanded of nurses which require the intellectual abilities to critically appraise, to synthesize knowledge, integrate and prioritize all aspects of patient care in a prompt, timely fashion; synthesis of

objective and subjective findings and diagnostic studies in order to formulate nursing diagnoses and initiate a plan of care integrating patient preferences

- Incorporate data from multiple patient sources (e.g. physical assessment, vital signs, lab values, interdisciplinary documentation) in a prompt manner in order to provide appropriate, safe patient care
- Recognize, make decisions quickly, and respond rapidly and safely to changes in a patient's status based on a variety of sources, such as physical assessment and pertinent laboratory findings, and ability to revise care to promote appropriate patient outcomes

### **3. Gross Motor Skills, Strength, Mobility, and Physical Endurance**

The student is expected to be able to perform gross and fine motor movements required to provide comprehensive nursing care. Examples of care that the student must be able to perform safely include, but are not limited to:

- Lifting as described below:
- Turning and positioning patients as needed to prevent complications due to bed rest or minimal movement
- Transferring patients in and out of bed
- Transporting and exercising patients
- Pulling and pushing patients and/or equipment
- Administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation(CPR)

The student is expected to have the psychomotor skills necessary to perform or assist with procedures, treatments, administration of medications, and emergency interventions. Examples include but are not limited to, the ability to:

Stand and/or sit for long periods of time (e.g., minimum of 3-4 hours)

Stand and maintain balance while transferring patients, reach below the waist and overhead while providing patient care procedures.

Walk without a cane, walker, casts, walking boots, or crutches, as well as, arms free of casts or other assistive/restrictive devices in order to ambulate patient and provide bedside or general nursing care Have two hands, real or prosthetic

### **4. Behavioral and Social Attributes/Abilities**

Nursing students must exhibit the professional behavioral and social attributes embedded in the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's (AACN) (2008) Essentials of Master's Education for Professional Nursing Practice. They must possess the emotional and mental health required for full use of their intellectual, communication/observational, motor and sensory abilities in order to exercise appropriate judgment and

promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients in a variety of settings and from different cultures. The following are examples, which are not limited to, the behavioral and social attributes and abilities that nursing students need to demonstrate:

- Ability to relate to patients, family members, as well as work cooperatively with other members of the healthcare team and colleagues with honesty and integrity, and with non-discrimination in relation to the patient's race, ethnic group, age, religion or political preference, ability to pay, gender or sexual orientation
- Ability for the development of a mature, sensitive and effective therapeutic relationship with clients
- Ability to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients
- Ethical behavior reflecting adherence to the professional nursing code of ethics, student nurses' code of ethics and student academic integrity policy
- Sufficient emotional and mental stability to:
- Tolerate physically taxing workloads
- Handle emotions that might affect practice performance
- Function effectively when stressed
- A level of consciousness and attentiveness that guarantees patient safety
- Ability to care for patients with communicable diseases using appropriate standard precautions and/or guidelines
- Ability to accept and integrate constructive criticism given in the classroom and clinical settings
- Ability to examine and change his/her behavior when it interferes with productive individual or team relationships and/or the care of patients
- Ability to work in close quarters with patients, healthcare team members and nursing faculty

## **5. Sensory Skills**

Nursing students must have hearing, visual and tactile skills sufficient to monitor, access, and respond to patient health needs. Nursing students must possess these skills in connection with the other identified technical skills in order to observe and learn from demonstrations in the on-campus clinical simulation laboratory and in the off- campus clinical patient care areas, and to make observations accurately at a distance and close at hand of the patient and the patient's environment. Observation necessitates the functional use of the senses of vision and other sensory modalities; it is enhanced by the functional use of the specimens; and obtains information from digital, analog, and wave form representations of treatment/therapy.

Examples of the necessary sensory skills include, but are not limited to:

- Normal tactile feeling and use of touch to feel sensitivity to heat, cold, pain, pressure, etc.
- Use of auditory sense to detect sounds related to bodily functions using a stethoscope; to hear and interpret many people and correctly interpret what is heard, i.e., physician' or nurse practitioner orders whether verbal or over telephone, patient complaints, physical assessment (especially heart and other body sounds), fire and equipment alarms, etc.
- Auditory sense to communicate clearly in telephone conversations and respond effectively with patients and with other members of the healthcare team
- Acute visual skills necessary to detect signs and symptoms, body language of patients, color of wounds and drainage, and possible infections anywhere; interpret written words accurately, read characters and identify colors on the computer screen
- Observation skills to observe lectures, demonstrations, research and patient situations in the practice of healthcare professions; observation is necessary to perform competent health assessments and interventions and necessitates functional use of vision, hearing, tactile and somatic senses
- Capacity to make accurate visual observations and interpret them in the context of laboratory studies, medication administration, and patient care activities

## **6. Normative Difficulties**

This policy is not intended to address the common and expected difficulties experienced by a majority of students particularly as they start a new course. These normative difficulties might include, but are not limited to, mild emotional reaction and adjustment difficulties, mild or transient difficulty keeping up with academic work and normative conflict with professors, fellow students, supervisors and administrators in clinical placements.

## **Violation of Professional Nursing Competencies**

### **Reporting a matter of concern**

Students, faculty or staff who become aware that a student is showing characteristics that may suggest noncompliance with nursing competencies are urged to report this to the Master's Program Director. The Program Director will consult with the Dean or designee of the College of Nursing and a meeting with the student will be scheduled within seven (7) school days and may recommend informal or formal proceedings. The Dean or designee, after meeting with the student and any other individuals, may recommend informal or formal proceedings. Such proceedings may be extended if they occur during semester breaks. All members of the

CNHS community are responsible for complying with the Policy on Professional Nursing Competence including reporting of any potential infringement of this policy. No lawyer or legal representative is allowed to participate in the informal or formal proceedings. No recording devices will be permitted in the informal or formal proceedings. The CNHS will inform the Student Affairs Office of any conduct that is also a violation under the Student Code of Conduct. In such a case, conduct that is noncompliant under this policy and the Student Code of Conduct will be addressed in both the CNHS and Student Affairs.

### **Informal Proceedings**

Informal proceedings, after discussions with the student, will include non-binding suggestions to the student for the purpose of improving a nursing competency(ies) or the remediation of a nursing competency(ies).

During the Informal Proceeding, the Dean or designee will direct the faculty member or member of the CNHS community to provide specific information about the complaint and specific recommendations. This information will be documented in the reporting form for this Policy on Student Professional Nursing Competence. This form will include a list of competencies not met; circumstances surrounding the unmet expectations, and recommendations. This form will be forwarded to the Dean or designee. The report will not become part of the student's record but will be given to the Dean or designee. The report will be kept in a separate confidential file by the Dean or designee for a period of 3 years after the student leaves the program. The student also will receive a copy of the reporting form. Recommended remediation from Informal Proceedings may include but will not be limited to the following: additional academic work, meetings with faculty or clinical mentors, periodic review of progress, periodic feedback on progress, and recommendation for counseling or medical intervention.

### **Formal Proceedings**

The Dean of Nursing or designee will begin Formal Proceedings if

- a second complaint is filed; or
- if no change in the competency (ies) and/or GMC behavior occurs as a result of the Informal Proceeding; or
- if failure in the course or dismissal from the UMass Dartmouth CNHS is a possible consequence of the complaint.

The Dean or designee will inform the student that a Formal Proceeding will be scheduled with a minimum of five (5) school days' notice. Such proceedings may be extended if they occur during semester breaks.

The Dean or designee will invite the following panel members and they will have voting rights: the supervising clinical or classroom faculty, a CNHS SSPC faculty member, and a Department Chair or representative. The student may invite a faculty member who will have voting rights and an additional non-voting panel member, which may be a faculty member.

No lawyer or legal representative is allowed to participate in the formal proceedings. No recording devices will be permitted.

Forty-eight hours prior to the proceeding, the student must provide the Dean or designee with the names of those individuals that he/she has invited to be physically present at the Formal Proceedings. The Dean or designee will chair the panel and state the nature of the violation related either to competence or good moral behavior. The Dean will offer panel members an opportunity to discuss the issue and the remediation. The student will have an opportunity to explain his/her actions. Formal Proceedings recommendation(s) will be made after a majority vote of the voting members. In the event of a tie vote, the Dean or designee will vote. The range of remediation recommendations may include but will not be limited to all of the remediation listed under Informal Proceedings and will also include: a recommendation of failure in the clinical or classroom course; a recommendation of dismissal, suspension or probation. The recommendation(s) will be forwarded to the Dean or designee who may adopt, deny or modify the recommendation(s) and make a decision. All appropriate UMass Dartmouth administrators will be notified. The proceedings, recommendation(s) and decision of the Dean or designee will be maintained as confidential to the extent allowed. The student and appropriate UMass Dartmouth administrative officials will be notified in writing of the decision.

### **Probation**

If the decision of the Dean or designee, is to place the student on probation, the student will be given a written list of impaired nursing competencies, and behaviors and a written list of recommended remediation(s). The Dean of Nursing and Health Sciences, or designee, will diligently review the student in subsequent clinical and/or classroom courses at least once each semester. The probation may continue until the inappropriate behaviors(s) are resolved and the Competencies have been met. When the behaviors and competencies are met, the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences or designee will recommend ending the probation. If probation continues for more than one full semester,

the student will be recommended for suspension and failure in the current classroom or clinical course.

#### **Suspension and Failure in Course**

If suspended, the student will not continue in the course from the date of suspension and will receive a failing grade in the course. The student may not progress in the curriculum but must first repeat the course from which he or she has failed. In repeating a course, the competencies not met, and/or inappropriate behaviors identified in the failed course will be documented. Recommended remediation will be specified and may include but will not be limited to the following: additional academic work, meetings with faculty or clinical mentors, periodic review of progress, periodic feedback on progress, recommendation for counseling or medical intervention. When the student repeats this course, he/she will meet with the faculty member and the Dean or designee at mid-semester regarding an appraisal of the remediation or the effectiveness of the remediation.

### **Dismissal from the Nursing Program**

If dismissed by the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, the student will not continue in the CNHS from the date of dismissal and will not be permitted to enroll in the CNHS at a later date. Students may apply for transfer to another UMass Dartmouth college or department.

In all of the decisions above, the student will receive a copy of the actions taken and will include: finding of the facts, conclusions and recommendations. A copy will also be placed in the student's confidential file in the Dean's office.

### **Confidentiality**

During and after these procedures the UMass Dartmouth CNHS will use reasonable efforts to maintain the confidentiality of all in the process. All individuals participating in the procedures will be informed of this expectation. Information provided by a faculty member, student, staff member or witness involved in the Informal or Formal Procedure will be maintained as confidential to the extent possible. When the Dean or designee has completed the procedures, he/she will, to the extent appropriate, inform all involved of the determination of results including the identified student and appropriate UMass Dartmouth administrative officials.

### **Appeal**

The Dean's determination of the formal proceeding may be appealed to the UMass Dartmouth Provost or his/her designee within 10 days of the date of the decision of the Dean. This appeal may be made on the grounds that: (1) the sanction administered as a result of the original student behavior is unjustified in its severity; (2) the weight of the evidence did not justify a finding from the Formal Proceedings; (3) CON failed to comply in material respect to its Formal proceeding procedures; or (4) new evidence exists that is relevant and that was unobtainable at the time of the original Formal Proceeding. The decision of the UMass Dartmouth Provost is final and cannot be appealed.

### **Academic Ethical Standards**

All UMassD students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity and scholarly practice. The University does not tolerate academic dishonesty of any variety, whether as a result of a failure to understand proper academic and scholarly procedure or as an act of intentional dishonesty.

A student found guilty of academic dishonesty is subject to severe disciplinary action which may include expulsion from the University. Refer to the Student Handbook and Student Judicial Code for due process. A high standard of academic integrity promotes the pursuit of truth and learning and respect for the intellectual UMassD CNHS MS Program Student Handbook, approved 5/1/17; updated 10/16/19

accomplishments of others. These are values that are fundamental to the mission of this University. Such values are undermined by academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty is defined as attempting to obtain academic credit for work that is not one's own. Examples include: (1) copying another student's answers on an examination; (2) obtaining, or attempting to obtain, the answers to an examination in advance; (3) submitting a paper that was written by someone else; (4) submitting a paper that includes phrases, sentences and paragraphs that were copied verbatim, or almost verbatim, from a work written by someone else, without making this clear without indicating that these words were someone else, through the use of quotation marks or other appropriate citation conventions; (5) collaborating on a homework assignment when this has been expressly forbidden by the professor; (6) using unauthorized materials in completing assignments or examinations; (7) submitting the same paper for more than one class without the express permission of the instructors involved. This list of examples should not be considered exhaustive.

This definition of academic dishonesty applies to information submitted in other forms besides paper. Submitting a project of a musical or artistic nature where all or part of the project is someone else's work, without acknowledging this fact, constitutes academic dishonesty. Submitting computer files that do not represent one's own work is also considered to be academic dishonesty; examples of computer-based academic dishonesty would include submitting a computer program or text file created by someone else as one's own, or submitting the output of a computer program written by someone else, and claiming to have written the program that generated the output.

For all forms of academic dishonesty, students who knowingly allow other students to use their work are themselves considered to be academically dishonest. Examples would include students who knowingly allow other students to copy their exam answers, and students who give papers that they have written to other students so that the other students can submit them for credit.

A faculty member is appointed by the Faculty Senate to act as an Academic Ethical Matters Facilitator. This individual will offer advice to both students and faculty about the issues involved in penalizing academic dishonesty, and the process of appealing such penalties.

Penalties assessed by faculty members for academic dishonesty generally consist of a reprimand, a requirement to resubmit the work in a more acceptable form, a lowering of a grade, failure in the course in which the alleged infraction took place, or a combination of these. Instead of (or in addition to) assessing such penalties, a faculty member may refer the matter to the UMassD Student Judiciary. Decisions made by the Student Judiciary may be appealed to the University Appellate Board.

## Financing your MS Degree

### Financial Assistance

Financial assistance for Master of Science study is available in the form of scholarships, traineeships, assistantships, and loans. Scholarships, traineeships, and assistantships are awarded to students with regular admission status and satisfactory academic standing. In addition to information on financial assistance presented in this section, students are advised to consult the Graduate Studies Catalog.

#### *Nursing Scholarships*

Several scholarships are awarded during the academic year. To be considered for an award, students must complete a generic scholarship application, available from the Dean's secretary. Students will receive information about scholarship deadlines from the Graduate Program Administrative Assistant.

#### *Teaching Assistants/Research Assistants (TA/RA)*

Graduate teaching/research assistants are graduate students employed on a part-time basis by University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. The award of teaching/research assistantship carries with it a compensatory stipend for services rendered. A graduate teaching/research assistantship is a form of apprenticeship and contributes to professional development. Its primary purpose is to assist students in strengthening and successfully completing their academic program. It should include activities that are relevant to each student's program of study and contribute to the University's teaching or research/creative activity. Applications for Teaching Assistantships are available from the CNHS Graduate Program Administrative Assistant. Please note that the Department Chairs hire Teaching Assistants on an as needed basis. These positions are not usually filled until late July (fall semester) and early January (spring semester).

#### *Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP)*

UMassD CNHS has received funding through a federal grant, which aims to increase the number of qualified nursing faculty. Participating schools of nursing make loan funds available to assist students in completing their graduate master's and doctoral education to become qualified nursing faculty. The program offers up to 85% loan forgiveness for borrowers who graduate and serve as faculty for four years in accredited schools of nursing. For more information, contact the CNHS NFLP coordinator.

# University, College, & Professional Governance and Organizations

## Student Representation on CNHS Committees

The student voice is an integral part of delivering a quality program. The CNHS solicits involvement of students on several of the standing committees, this includes but is not limited to the Master's program Committee.

Students who participate in CNHS committees represent their peers in respectful dialogue and constructive critique. Many revisions and improvements made in the CNHS are a result of student feedback and governance participation. The student does not need to be present for these committee meetings – the student may attend via zoom if their schedule permits, or they may submit a written report to the committee chair. The Graduate Program Administrative Assistant will email students when positions on committees are open.

## Graduate Student Senate

Working collaboratively with the Office of Graduate Studies and the Division of Student Affairs and more broadly with the administration and faculty, the Graduate Student Senate (GSS) is intended to be a vibrant organization representing the goals, interests, concerns, and professional development of graduate students at UMassD. In order to be eligible to serve on the GSS, candidates must be graduate students enrolled in the college in which they are seeking to represent, and must be in good academic standing, as defined by their specific college or school program guidelines.

### ***GSS Voting***

Any graduate student who is currently registered for at least one graduate level course bearing a minimum of three (3) academic credits shall be eligible to vote in graduate student senate elections.

## Sigma Theta Tau International

The UMassD CNHS received a charter for the Theta Kappa Chapter in April 1986 and inducted 229 charter members. Sigma Theta Tau is the International Honor Society of Nursing. Constituent chapters are established in accredited collegiate schools of Nursing. The organization recognizes superior achievement, and the development of leadership qualities, fosters high professional standards, encourages creative work, and strengthens commitment to ideals of the profession. Membership is by invitation only based on eligibility criteria.

Master of Science students who are currently members of Sigma Theta Tau through other chapters are invited to transfer membership to the Theta Kappa Chapter and to participate in meetings with the CNHS