

**PHD Program
Nurse Scientist Educator**

Handbook

**College of Nursing and Health Sciences
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth**

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides important information about the PhD in Nursing Program. It includes policies and procedures established by and specific to the PhD in Nursing Program. Students are responsible for adhering to the contents of this handbook.

This handbook is designed to supplement the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth *Graduate Catalog* that contains material related to student rights, academic policies, registration, tuition, fees, financial aid, campus facilities, and course offerings. A full listing of University of Massachusetts Dartmouth graduate requirements can be found in the *Graduate Catalog*. Students are responsible for being familiar with these requirements. Rules and procedures pertaining to the code of student conduct, confidentiality of academic records, resolution of problems, human subject's protection, faculty conduct, and student governance are not reproduced in this handbook.

The handbook is not a contract. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this handbook, the program reserves the right to make changes.

The PhD program builds on the mission, vision and core values of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES MISSION

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 care environment through transformative nursing education, leadership, and scholarship.

Core Values

- Excellence in Teaching/Scholarship
- Integrity
- Professionalism
- Respect
- Innovation
- Collaboration
- Community
- Diversity in People/Ideas

PHD PROGRAM MISSION

To prepare nurse scientists to advance nursing knowledge, transform nursing education and to contribute to optimal health in the regional, national and global community.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY, OUTCOMES AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The PhD in Nursing program is designed around selected foundational concepts and values. First, the model of scholarship presented by Ernest Boyer (1990) and updated by AACN (2018) with its four domains of scholarship – Discovery, Integration, Application, & Teaching – was adopted. Second, a belief in respect for the human experience of chronic illness and the need for more and better nursing care for people with chronic illnesses led to a commitment to research on the prevention of chronic illness and the care of people with chronic illness. Next, the growing need for qualified nurse faculty led to a commitment to prepare Nurse Scientist Educators (NSE) who contribute to the growth of the discipline through leadership in transforming nursing education. Finally, the belief that students require supportive structures to advance their knowledge and develop research and teaching competencies led to the development of a comprehensive curriculum that promotes scholarly thinking, and mentorship. Examples to promote learning include a cohort model of education, assigned mentors, and structured activities that lead to publication and funding.

This innovative PhD Program in Nursing addresses the critical nursing shortage by preparing NSE. Outcomes of the program are:

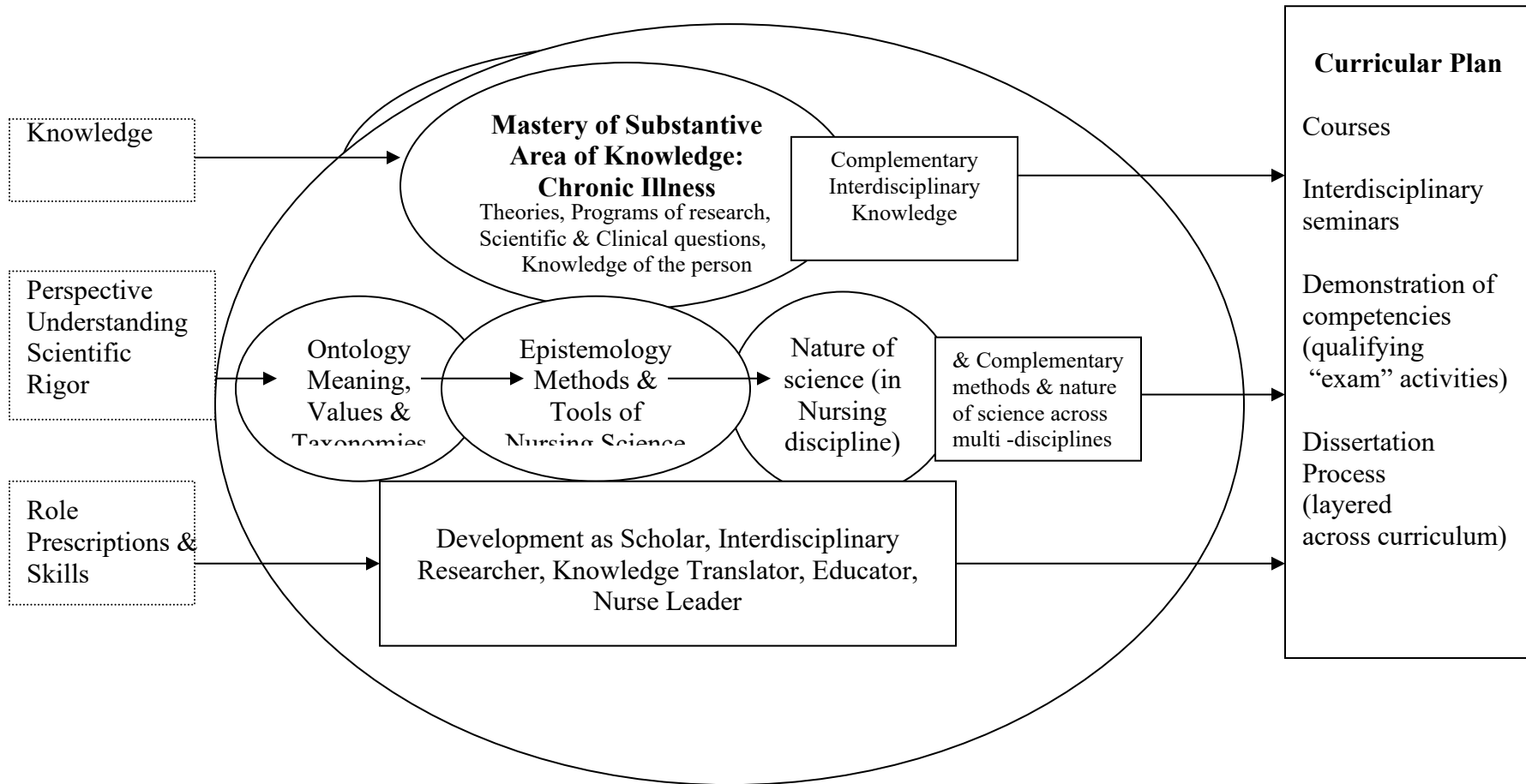
1. Develop the science of nursing by conducting and disseminating theory-guided research in the chronic illness experience and nursing education.
2. Integrate research, teaching, mentoring and service to the organization and/or profession.
3. Contribute to the development of future nurses through discovery, application and integration.

The NSE who completes this program acquires substantive, meaningful knowledge in a range of areas:

- qualitative and quantitative research methods;
- the nature of, and criteria for, scientific inquiry;
- building, synthesizing and applying nursing knowledge;
- theoretical perspectives in chronic illness;
- interdisciplinary approaches to the issues of chronic illness;
- strategies for developing a program of research; and
- skills that include publication, grant development, curriculum design and evaluation.

Figure 1.

Nurse Scientist Educator



Dluhy, 2006

PROGRAM OF STUDY

The program, based on the *AACN Guidelines for the Research-Focused Doctoral Program in Nursing (2010)* document, is designed to assist the student to develop the knowledge, skills, and habits of NSE through mentorship, didactic teaching and research experience. The program requires 52 credits and is designed to be completed in 48 months of full-time study that includes work in the summer months. BS-PhD students will complete 73 credits in 60 months of full-time study that includes work in the summer months. There is a one-year residency requirement.

The structured mentorship experience begins upon admission, when students are assigned to work with a specific faculty advisor to guide the student in academic writing, writing for publication, grant writing, and completing qualifying examination requirements. A doctoral seminar is held three times a semester on scholarly topics based on student needs and interests. Seminar presentations include educational, chronic illness and research methods topics. Additionally, lunch and learn sessions provide extra needs-based topical discussions. Once a student has submitted the first paper for publication, the student selects a dissertation committee chair who further mentors the student in their research. In addition, students are educated didactically, through course work, seminars, tutorials, and on-line learning.

The students' experiential learning includes writing for publication, grant writing, opportunities for research and teaching assistantships, the qualifying examination, dissertation proposal hearing, and defense of the completed dissertation.

The curriculum addresses four core areas of study: knowledge development for nursing science; nursing education; research methods; and the theory and research in promoting health, guiding people through health/illness experiences and shaping the health care system in the nursing care of people with chronic illness (substantive knowledge). The curriculum includes courses in philosophy of science, strategies for developing nursing knowledge and substantive content in chronic illness. Research expertise is developed through courses in qualitative and quantitative research methods, statistics, clinical research topics, a series of research practica, and dissertation advisement. An elective course is planned with the advisor and mentor for the chosen area of research concentration.

In addition to the content above, the BS-PhD curriculum is designed to foster the student's scholarship, critical thinking, and creativity and prepare nurses to advance the clinical practice of nursing by assuming a role in nursing education. The master's level course work offers theory and experiential content in the clinical practice and lays the foundation in the functional role of the nurse educator. Students can elect to apply for a master's degree after completing 39 credits and the capstone course.

Table 1. Curriculum Overview: PhD in Nursing

Content Area	Courses	Credits
Nurse Scientist	NUR 700 Philosophy of Nursing Science	3
	NUR 705 Theory Construction, Synthesis and Application to Practice	3
	NUR 710 Multivariate Analysis in Health Care Research	3
	NUR 712 Qualitative Methods in Nursing Research	3
	NUR 714 Quantitative Methods in Nursing Research	3
Subtotal		15
Substantive Knowledge	NUR 720 Human Responses to Health & Illness: Research, Theory & Practice	3
	NUR 730 Nursing Interventions in the Care of Chronically Ill Persons: Research, Theory & Practice	3
	NUR 740 Promoting Health & Shaping the Healthcare System: Research, Theory, & Practice	3
Subtotal		9
Nurse Educator	NUR 642 Curriculum Development in Nursing Education	3
	NUR 644 Teaching and Learning Theory, Research and Strategies	3
	NUR 750 Leadership and Scholarly Development in Nursing Education	3
Subtotal		9
Elective		
Select one of the three	Elective in Research/Theory, Methods, Education, and/or Issue pertinent to Health/Illness	3
Subtotal		3
Comprehensive Examination	1 manuscript submitted for publication and successful completion of qualifying examination in year 1	0
Dissertation credits		
	NUR 780 Doctoral Seminar	6
	NUR 786 Dissertation Development	2
	NUR 787 Dissertation Development	2
	NUR 788 Dissertation Proposal	3
	NUR 789 Dissertation Defense	3
Subtotal		16
Program Total		52 credits

Three of the PhD courses (NUR 705, 712, 714) require evidence of a graduate level prerequisite (Theory, Research) or the student may opt to take NUR 500 or NUR 511. NUR 710 requires a prerequisite of a graduate level statistics course.

Table 2 Curriculum Overview: BS-PhD in Nursing

Content Area	Courses	Credits
Master's core	NUR 500 Theoretical Foundations for Advancing Nursing Practice	3
	NUR 511 Translating Research Evidence for Advancing Nursing Practice	3
	NUR 512 Integrated Physiological Knowledge	3
	NUR 520 Healthcare Systems	3
	NUR 605 Statistical Analysis	3
		15
Education core	NUR 642 Curriculum Development in Nursing	3
	NUR 644 Teaching and Learning Theory, Research and Strategies	3
	NUR 645 Teaching in the Clinical and Technology-Enhanced Environments	3
	NUR 750 Leadership and Scholarly Development in Nursing Education	3
Capstone course	NUR 646 Practicum in Nursing and Healthcare Education	3
Subtotal		15
Nurse Scientist	NUR 700 Philosophy of Nursing Science	3
	NUR 705 Theory Construction, Synthesis and Application to Practice	3
	NUR 710 Multivariate Analysis in Health Care Research	3
	NUR 712 Qualitative Methods in Nursing Research	3
	NUR 714 Quantitative Methods in Nursing Research	3
Subtotal		15
Substantive Knowledge	NUR 720 Human Responses to Health & Illness: Research, Theory & Practice	3
	NUR 730 Nursing Interventions in the Care of Chronically Ill Persons: Research, Theory & Practice	3
	NUR 740 Promoting Health & Shaping the Healthcare System: Research, Theory, & Practice	3
Subtotal		9
	Elective	3
Subtotal		12
Comprehensive Examination	1 manuscript submitted for publication and qualifying examination	0
Dissertation credits	NUR 780 Doctoral Seminar	6
	NUR 786 Dissertation Development	2
	NUR 787 Dissertation Development	2
	NUR 788 Dissertation Proposal	3
	NUR 789 Dissertation Defense	3
Subtotal		16
Program total		73

Table 3. PhD Program of Study

NUR 780 Doctoral Seminar begins with a day of orientation for first year students in early September preceding the academic year

Fall Year 1	Spring Year 1	Summer Year 1
NUR 700: Philosophy of Nursing Science (3crs)	NUR 705: Theory Construction, Synthesis and Application to Practice (3crs)	NUR 712: Qualitative Methods in Nursing Research (3crs)
NUR 720: Human Response to Health and Illness: Research, Theory, and Practice (3crs)	NUR 710: Multivariate Analysis in Health Care Research (3 crs)	
NUR 780: Doctoral Seminar (1cr)	NUR 780: Doctoral Seminar (1cr)	
	NUR 786: Dissertation Development I (2 crs) qualifying exam	

19 credits

Fall Year 2	Spring Year 2	Summer Year 2
NUR 714: Quantitative Methods in Nursing (3crs)	NUR 730: Nursing Interventions in the Care of the Chronically Ill Persons: Research, Theory, and Practice (3crs)	Elective (3 crs)
NUR 644: Teaching and Learning Theory, Research and Strategies (3 crs) online course	NUR 642: Curriculum Development in Nursing Education (3 crs.) online course	
	NUR 787 Dissertation Development II (2 crs)	
NUR 780: Doctoral Seminar (1cr)	NUR 780: Doctoral Seminar (1cr)	

19 credits

Fall Year 3	Spring Year 3	Summer Year 3
NUR 750 Leadership & Scholarly Development in Nursing Education (3crs)	NUR 740: Promoting Health and Shaping the Healthcare System: Research, Theory and Practice (3crs)	
NUR 780 Doctoral Seminar (1crs)	NUR 780 Doctoral Seminar (1cr)	
<i>Select Dissertation Committee Chair in September</i>	<i>Form Dissertation Committee by May</i>	<i>Apply for PhD candidacy</i>

8 credits

Fall Year 4	Spring Year 4	Summer Year 4
NUR 788: Dissertation Proposal (3crs)	NUR 789: Dissertation Defense (3crs)	

6 credits

Grand Total = 52 credits
Dissertation = 16 credit

Table 4. BS-PhD Program of Study

Fall Year 1	Spring Year 1	Summer Year 1
Nur 500: Theoretical Foundations in Advancing Nursing Practice (3 crs)	Nur 511: Translating Research Evidence for Advancing Nursing Practice (3 crs)	Nur 605: Statistical Analysis (3 crs)
Nur 520: Healthcare Systems (3 crs)	Nur 512: Integrated Physiological Knowledge (3 crs) online course	
15 credits		
	Spring Year 2	Summer Year 2
NUR 644: Curriculum Development in Nursing Education (3crs.) online course	NUR 642: Teaching and Learning Theory, Research and Strategies (3crs) Online course	
NUR 645: Teaching in the Clinical and Technology-Enhanced Environments (3 crs) online course	NUR 646 Practicum in Nursing and Healthcare Education (3 crs) Online course clinical practicum	
12 credits		
Fall Year 3	Spring year 3	Summer Year 3
NUR 700: Philosophy of Nursing Science (3crs)	NUR 705: Theory Construction, Synthesis and Application to Practice (3crs)	NUR 712: Qualitative Methods in Nursing Research (3crs)
NUR 720: Human Response to Health and Illness: Research, Theory, and Practice (3crs)	NUR 710: Multivariate Analysis in Health Care Research (3 crs)	
	NUR 786: Dissertation Development I (2 crs) qualifying examination	
NUR 780: Doctoral Seminar (1cr)	NUR 780: Doctoral Seminar (1cr)	
Apply for MS degree		
19 credits		
Fall Year 4	Spring Year 4	Summer Year 4
NUR 714: Quantitative Methods in Nursing (3crs)	NUR 730: Nursing Interventions in the Care of the Chronically Ill Persons: Research, Theory, and Practice (3crs)	Elective (3 crs)
NUR 750 Leadership & Scholarly Development in Nursing Education (3crs)	NUR 740: Promoting Health and Shaping the Healthcare System: Research, Theory and Practice (3crs)	
	NUR 787 Dissertation Development II (2 crs)	
NUR 780: Doctoral Seminar (1cr)	NUR 780: Doctoral Seminar (1cr)	
	<i>Select Dissertation Committee Chair in May</i>	<i>Apply for PhD candidacy</i>
19 credits		
Fall Year 5	Spring Year 5	
NUR 788: Dissertation Proposal (3crs)	NUR 789: Dissertation Defense (3crs)	
NUR 780 Doctoral Seminar (1crs)	NUR 780 Doctoral Seminar (1cr)	
<i>Form dissertation committee</i>		
8 credits		
Total: 73 credits		

FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND RESEARCH ASSISTANSHIPS

Students should consult with the Financial Aid Office regarding their eligibility for need-based assistance. Effort is made to secure financial support for students enrolled in the program. Funding of dissertation projects through grants is attempted.

Research and Teaching Assistantships. There are graduate assistantships available. See *Graduate Catalog* or the Office of Graduate Studies student support website at: <https://www.umassd.edu/graduate/student-resources/> for more information. To qualify for any University assistantships, students must be in good academic standing, with GPA of at least 3.0. In addition, students may not have any Incomplete grades on their transcripts.

Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP) UMass Dartmouth College of Nursing 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 CON NFLP coordinator, Dr. Monika Schuler (mschuler@umassd.edu).

The CON also offers scholarships to qualified students. For more information on scholarships available to graduate students see the CON website: <http://www.umassd.edu/nursing/scholarshipopportunities/>

TRAVEL SUPPORT

Doctoral students who are representing UMass Dartmouth College of Nursing and Health Sciences by presenting scholarly work completed as part of degree requirements are eligible to receive travel assistance from the University. The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth is committed to assisting graduate students in their endeavors to share their research results with the broader academic community. It is important for the students to present their scholarship at regional, national, and international professional meetings. Attendance for the purposes of presenting a paper will be funded and only one person will be supported for presentation of a paper with multiple authors.

In order to enable as many graduate students as possible to present their work at professional meetings, the maximum grant amount is \$500 per fiscal year (July 1–June 30). There will be no limitation for the number of meetings a student attends or if the meeting is international or domestic so long as the total amount awarded during the fiscal year does not exceed \$500. The application should be submitted first to the Graduate Program Director for her/his review, verification and signature. Then the application must be forwarded to the Department Chair and the Dean for his/her endorsement before it is sent the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies for final review and approval. To provide adequate time for proper review and processing, complete applications (this form as well as all required supporting documentation with all necessary approvals) must be received in the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies at least 21 days prior to the beginning of travel. The applicants will be notified in a timely manner of the decision of funding. Applications that are incomplete and/or are received fewer than 21 days prior to the beginning of travel will not be considered. In order to

process reimbursement, original travel receipts must be submitted to the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies for travel expense report creation. Applications are available online at: <https://www.umassd.edu/graduate/student-resources/>

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Prospective graduate students in nursing will meet these specific criteria for admission to the PhD Program in Nursing:

- Bachelor's degree minimum GPA of 3.0 and Master's degree minimum GPA of 3.3.
- One of these two degrees is from an accredited nursing program.
- Master's level courses that include exposure to theory and research, and a course in multivariate statistics. For BS-PhD applicants, these will be completed in the program.
- For BS-PhD applicants, BS minimum GPA of 3.5.

Prospective BS-PhD students in nursing will meet these specific criteria for admission to the BS-PhD program:

- Bachelor's degree in nursing from an accredited program with minimum GPA of 3.5

Application to the PhD program includes:

- Two letters of recommendation from people who have supervised the applicant in the academic, professional, or community service setting. If possible, at least one recommendation should be from a doctorally-prepared faculty member who is familiar with the applicant's academic work and capacity. The recommendations should address the applicant's ability to do graduate work, and potential to advance the discipline of nursing through scholarship.
- Personal statement of research interest and intent. Please submit, with your application, a typed two-part essay. In the first part (up to 250 words), give your reasons for wishing to pursue graduate study. In the second part (up to 1,000 words), indicate your research interests and goals for doctoral study.
- All applicants are encouraged to submit supporting credentials (curriculum vitae or resume) with their applications.
- An example of scholarly writing (for example, a peer reviewed publication or a paper from school).
- Applicants must be registered nurses.

Application Review and Offer of Admission:

- Students are admitted to the program in the fall only for full time admission.
- The Admissions Committee of the PhD in Nursing Program reviews all applications in the spring semester beginning in March. Applicants who meet admission criteria may be invited for an admission interview with the committee. Final selection of students for the Fall class are made on a rolling basis until the fall courses are filled.
- A letter offering admission to selected applicants will be sent by March 15 for those who complete their applications by February 15.
- Applicants must accept or reject the offer of admission no later than April 15.

POLICY FOR PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

The faculty and student body of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth College of Nursing and Health Sciences regard the following as guidelines for professional behavior. All members of the UMD CNHS are expected to act professionally in the school and community with or in front of patients, families and other staff.

Displaying honesty and integrity

- Consistently displays ethical behaviors that conform to the CONHS standards of conduct.
- Does not engage in:
 - Cheating**
Copying from another, submitting work as your own, resubmitting papers or assignments previously submitted by others.
Submitting work that was not independently created.
 - Fabrication**
Falsification of any citation or information including resubmission of previously completed works that is not one's own.
 - Facilitating dishonesty**
Knowingly helping another student to commit dishonesty includes allowing another to copy your assignments or examinations.
 - Plagiarism**
Representing another's work as your own.
Failing to properly identify works or partial works with appropriate citations.
Incorporating another person's work into assignments as your own.

Maintaining a professional demeanor

- Treats peers, faculty, staff and patients with respect in:
 - Individual settings - not arrogant or insolent
 - Lectures and conference settings- turns off cell phones/pagers, refrain from disturbing others with texting, talking or activities not related to class. Uses laptops/computers in class with faculty permission.
 - Online communication
- Conforms to policies governing behavior:
 - Confidentiality, sexual harassment, use of alcohol and other existing policies of UMass Dartmouth.
- Follows generally accepted professional norms for professional behavior, dress and appearance.
- All students must read and be accountable for behaviors as described in the *Policy on Student Professional Nursing Competence and Good Moral Character (GMC)*. This policy is provided in the Appendix of this Handbook.

Accurate self-reflection

- Correctly recognizes own limits in abilities or knowledge and seeks help from faculty or tutors as needed.

Responding to supervision

- Accepts responsibility for own errors
- Incorporates feedback in a non-resistive and non-defensive manner

Violations of the policy on professional behavior will result in actions as outlined in the University Graduate Student Handbook.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Academic Advising. A research oriented, doctorally-prepared nursing faculty member serves as academic advisor to each student from time of admission to graduation from the program. The PhD Graduate Program Director will serve as the academic advisor to all PhD students. Students should meet with the academic advisor each semester for academic advising and in situations where difficulty in a course is encountered. The role of the academic advisor includes developing and monitoring the course of study for the entire program and assisting the student:

- To progress through the program in a timely manner
- Choose an appropriate elective to meet the student's learning needs in consultation with the mentor/dissertation chairperson
- Design an individualized program of study to meet the student's learning needs
- Monitor program progression
- Develop a course of action for students with progression difficulties
- Consult with the mentor about academic issues as needed

Mentoring. A research-oriented, doctorally prepared nursing faculty member serves as a mentor to an assigned PhD student from admission to the program until the completion of NUR 787. Each student will be assigned a mentor on admission to the program based on areas of mutual research interest. The mentor assignment is determined based on the admission essay and is assigned during the admission process. Students are expected to meet with assigned mentors a minimum of once a month. The purpose of the mentoring relationship is to assist the student to develop as a scholar, refine areas of research interest and meet the outcomes of Nur 780. Students are expected to come to mentor meetings with completed assignments and/or questions based on scholarly work. Mentors may assign readings and or/writing assignments based on the learning needs of the mentee. Students are graded by the mentor for work completed during the mentoring relationship. Once a dissertation chair is chosen, the student will continue the mentoring relationship but the dissertation chair will assume mentoring responsibilities. Students may select their assigned mentor as a dissertation chair or may choose another faculty member. The grade for the mentoring experience is assigned in NUR780.

The role of the mentor is to assist the student to:

- identify and develop research questions and review relevant literature;
- engage in scholarly as opposed to clinical dialogue;
- evolve into an academic nurse educator;
- select a dissertation chair
- develop writing competency; and
- most importantly, to complete a manuscript for publication to satisfy the qualifying criteria for candidacy in the program.

Students and their mentors will meet a minimum of once a month to advance the student's scholarship and academic progress. Students may meet with the mentor more often than once a month and that will be determined by the mentor and mentee as needed.

Academic Review. At the end of each semester, the PhD Graduate Program Director will review each student's transcript and assess the adequacy of each student's progress in achieving program

outcomes. For students with incomplete grades or progression issues, the issue will be presented to the PhD Program Committee for resolution.

If a student is not performing to the program standards or failing to make satisfactory progress towards completing the degree, the student will be placed on academic probation and the Committee will prescribe a course of action to be completed in order for the student to return to good standing in the program. The student is required to meet with the mentor/dissertation advisor and academic advisor and/or Associate Dean to review the plan. The academic advisor will inform the student in writing that s/he is not meeting program standards and what the committee prescribes as corrective action. A copy of this correspondence will be placed in the student's file in the College of Nursing Graduate Program Office. The student may appeal the corrective action to the PhD Program Committee. If satisfactory corrective action is not taken by the student, dismissal from the PhD program may result.

Electives. Electives should enhance the student's competency to complete the dissertation and may have either a content or a methods focus. Electives should be selected after consultation with the academic advisor and mentor/dissertation chairperson.

Courses offered by the College of Nursing or other colleges on campus, at the 500-level or above, can be taken as electives with approval of the PhD Graduate Program Director.

Also, students may take graduate level courses, at the 500 level or higher, at other universities with the approval of the PhD Graduate Program Director. The student must make the request in writing and submit a copy of the course syllabus. Only 6 credits from other universities may be applied to this program.

Students may register for face to face courses on other University of Massachusetts' campuses using the intercampus registration form. A copy of this form is available from the Graduate Administrative Assistant and must be signed by the PhD Graduate Program Director and the PhD Program Director at the other University of Massachusetts campus. Students who register using this option will not have these courses count against the 6 credit transfer rule.

Full-time Status. PhD Students are expected to take nineteen (19) credit hours in year 1 and sixteen (16) credit hours in year 2. Full-time continuous PhD students should complete all their course work in three years of study. BS-PhD students should complete coursework in five years of study.

A student may take up to 12 credits during the fall and spring semesters and up to 9 credits in the summer. Any student who wishes to register for more than the maximum credit load must secure written permission from the PhD Program Director

The University requires that each matriculated graduate student must maintain continuous registration until the degree has been formally awarded. If the student does not register for courses or dissertation credits during any semester, the student must pay a fee per semester to maintain continuous registration. In the dissertation phase, the student will register for doctoral continuation Nur 789 of 0 credits and pay a fee.

Attendance. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes as well as seminars, conferences and research socialization activities recommended by the faculty. Students should refrain from scheduling vacations and work-related meetings on scheduled class days. The attendance policy for each class is established by course faculty.

Grades. The College of Nursing and Health Sciences requires that all PhD students receive a grade of B or better in all courses or pass in the case of a pass/fail course, to remain in the program. (Note: this is more stringent than University policy) A student who fails to earn a grade of B or better in any course is subject to dismissal from the program.

Grades for dissertation courses. Dissertation level courses (Nur 786, Nur 787, Nur 788 and Nur 789) will receive a pass/fail grade rather than a letter grade.

Grade appeal. Students may appeal a grade in writing to the Grade Appeal Facilitator in the College. Students are advised to read and follow the grade appeal policy: <http://www.umassd.edu/acadvising/grades/>. All appeals should be submitted by the Monday of the second week of January for fall semester grade appeals, and no later than Monday of the last full week of May for spring semester grade appeals. Please read the complete grade appeal policy to determine if you can submit an appeal.

Incomplete. A grade of “Incomplete” is not given automatically. A student must request a grade of “Incomplete” and receive approval from the instructor. The PhD Program requires that the student and faculty member complete a written contract that specifies the incomplete work and an agreed upon time frame for completion. This contract will be presented to the PhD Program Committee for review. Both the student and the faculty member must sign the form and retain a copy. A third copy is filed with the PhD Graduate Program Director. The student must be passing at the time of the request or be sufficiently close to passing. If the work is not completed within one year of the recording of the incomplete grade, the grade will become an FI. In most cases, the incomplete work from the fall semester should be finished before the start of the spring semester. Incomplete work from the spring semester should be completed prior to the start of the summer semester. Incomplete work from the summer should be completed prior to the start of the fall semester. Students with incomplete work in more than one course will not be allowed to enroll courses until all incomplete work has been made up.

Independent Study. Students may complete an independent study to fulfill required or elective credits. Independent study credits vary from 1 to 3 depending on the scope of the project. The independent study should consist of study and work at the graduate level with a specified written product. The faculty member who agrees to work with the student in independent study must be a recognized expert in the content area. The student and faculty member must agree to the number of credits, scope of the work and the amount of supervision required (for example, weekly or biweekly meetings). Paperwork for the independent study can be obtained from the Registrar’s office. A written agreement, signed by the student and the faculty member, must be approved by the PhD Graduate Program Director with copies retained by each and submitted to the Registrar’s office.

Directed Study. Students may complete a directed study to fulfill required or elective credits when a required course is not available in a certain semester. Directed study credits vary from 1 to 3 depending on the scope of the project. The directed study should consist of study and work at the graduate level with a specified written product. The faculty member who agrees to work with the student in directed study must be a recognized expert in the content area. The student and faculty member must agree to the number of credits, scope of the work and the amount of supervision required (for example, weekly or biweekly meetings). Paperwork for the directed study can be obtained from the Registrar’s Office. A written agreement, signed by the student and

the faculty member, must be approved by the PhD Graduate Program Director with copies retained by each and submitted to the Registrar's office.

Leave of Absence. A student seeking a leave of absence (LOA) for medical or personal reasons must petition the PhD Graduate Program Director. Please see the *Graduate Catalogue* for University policies on LOA. An approved LOA extends the statute of limitations for degree completion by the length of the leave. A LOA can be granted for up to one year. If a student fails to return from the LOA after the specified time, the student will be administratively withdrawn from the program.

Statute of Limitations. The College of Nursing and Health Sciences specifies that a student must make satisfactory progress toward completion of a degree within the Statute of Limitations for the degree. Each PhD in Nursing student must complete all degree requirements including the dissertation within seven (7) calendar years of entering the program. Students must defend their dissertation proposal by the completion of year 6 in the program in order to successfully complete all degree requirements in 7 years. Note that this is more stringent than the University requirements.

If a student is failing to make satisfactory progress towards completing the degree within the time frame noted above, the student will be placed on academic probation and the Committee will prescribe a course of action to be completed in order for the student to return to good standing in the program. The student is required to meet with the mentor/dissertation advisor and academic advisor and/or Associate Dean to review the plan. The academic advisor will inform the student in writing that s/he is not meeting program standards and what the committee prescribes as corrective action. A copy of this correspondence will be in the student's file in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences Graduate Program Office. The student may appeal the corrective action to the PhD Program Committee. If satisfactory corrective action is not taken by the student, dismissal from the PhD program may result.

Transfer Credit Policy. Applicants/students who have completed graduate course work at other accredited institutions may transfer those credits towards the completion of a graduate degree up to the equivalent of six (6) credits from courses that meet the following requirements: 1) the student received a grade of B or higher; 2) the course has not been used to fulfill requirements for another degree; and 3) the course credit must have been earned no more than six (6) years prior to the student's matriculation at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

The PhD Program Director determines what credits are eligible for transfer based on a review of the official transcript at the time of admission to the program. The University policy is that courses must have been taken within 6 years of applying to the program to be considered for transfer credit.

Prior to taking a course at another university, currently matriculated students must complete a prior approval form. The Graduate Administrative Assistant has access to these forms. Students must complete this form and also submit a copy of the course description to the PhD Graduate Program Director. The form is then signed by the PhD Graduate Program Director and the Dean prior to taking the course. Once enrolled in the PhD Program, students also can request transfer credit. Requests should be made to the PhD Graduate Program Director by submitting a copy of the student's transcript and a copy of the course syllabus. A copy of the transcript should also be submitted to the Registrar's office when the course is completed. Transfer credit decisions for either core or elective courses are made on a course-by-course basis.

Waiver Policy. A student may seek a waiver from a prescribed course in the PhD in Nursing Program if s/he has completed a course with substantially equivalent content at another institution. If a course waiver is granted, the student will receive 0 credits towards degree requirements and must take additional courses to complete the credits required for the PhD degree. A maximum of 3 courses may be waived.

Course waivers will be decided on a case-by-case basis, through negotiation between the student seeking the waiver and the faculty member who teaches the course. All waived courses require consultation with the faculty member and written approval of the PhD Graduate Program Director and Department Chair. A copy of the waiver will be placed in the student's file.

Policy on Complaint and Dispute Resolution Process. 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.

1. **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.
2. **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.
3. **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.
4. **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.
5. **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.

COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS

Program information will be communicated to students by UMass Dartmouth email and on-site mail boxes. Student mail boxes are located in Textiles 012. Students will receive a UMassD e-mail account upon matriculation. This is the e-mail address that will be used to contact students with important information. Students can have their University e-mail forwarded to another account but must check this e-mail address for correspondence related to the PhD program. Students are responsible for checking their e-mail regularly (at least once a week) and notifying (even during summer months) the Registrar and graduate administrative assistant of any change in mailing address or contact information during the course of the program. Personal or work e-mail addresses will not be used for school-related matters. Students keep their University e-mail account for life.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODALITIES

The PhD in nursing program is a hybrid program that is distance accessible. A schedule of online class dates is determined each spring for the following academic year. Generally, classes are offered online three times per semester. All students are notified in the spring by email of the academic calendar for the next academic year. Courses are synchronously available via distance technology. Students requiring use of this technology to participate in a live classroom experience should communicate with course faculty about the need to participate in a given class using this technology. Students are responsible for having adequate technology and internet access to remotely participate in the class. Students are expected to fully participate in the live classroom using distance technology at the time that the class is offered.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN WORK

Unless otherwise specified, all written work will conform to APA guidelines. These guidelines can be found in the American Psychological Association (2020). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.)*. Washington DC. In the event that a new edition of the manual is released during the student's time in the program, the latest guidelines will be required.

GUIDELINES FOR INTERNAL REVIEW OF SCHOLARLY WORK

Guideline

Students seeking to submit their work for any type of external review must seek an internal review from their mentor and/or dissertation chair at least three weeks prior to the planned submission date, unless another timeframe has been negotiated. Any work which identifies the student as a UMass Dartmouth PhD student must undergo an internal review. The purpose of this review process is to strengthen the quality of the work and assist the student to develop in this scholarly capacity. Work that should be reviewed includes: abstracts for conferences, oral or poster presentations, articles for submission or grant proposals of any kind.

Rationale

Any work which has the UMass Dartmouth affiliation is a matter of professional integrity. Public presentation of ideas generated while a student at UMass Dartmouth has the potential to influence others in a public forum. The reputation of the program can be helped or hindered by the quality of the work presented in public forums and therefore is subject to faculty review.

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORSHIP AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Guidelines for authorship

As a matter of professional integrity, scholars list each major contributor to a work as a coauthor. Contributions by authors may include conception of the work, writing, data analysis and revision of the work.

Students who are developing a paper or other work including abstracts or poster presentations for external review should confer with their mentor and/or dissertation advisor before the work begins.

Student groups working on a paper or other project for external review should confer with each other about authorship prior to beginning the work. These guidelines apply for ideas and papers submitted as part of course work and considered potentially publishable.

- Students own their work and should determine authors and the order of authorship prior to beginning the work.
- Groups should consult with course faculty to make decisions about publication.
- In no case should a member of a group submit a piece of work for external review prior to review and approval by all authors.

Rationale

Policies and conventional practices governing authorship and acknowledgement may vary among institutions. Publishers may also specify guidelines for authorship and acknowledgement. Students may seek advice from course faculty and the PhD Graduate Program Director related to authorship of work developed as a PhD student.

- Authorship may be a complex issue depending on whether the work was the idea of one person or multiple people and the type of contributions of each person.
- For student work developed with the support of a faculty member, the student will be first author and the faculty will be listed as second author.
- Students performing secondary analysis of data collected by a faculty member should include the faculty as an author on the publication.
- The order of coauthor's names is important and varies depending on the journal and field of study. In nursing, the order of author typically signifies the contributions of each author. The order of authors should be agreed upon before the publication is developed.

- Some journals require authors to formally list the role of each author in the publication and provide guidelines about who should be included as an author based on their role in the publication.
- Most publications require authors to sign certain assurances about the originality and contributions of authors to the work presented, and certain laws protecting intellectual property apply.
- If a student chooses to publish in an open access journal, both student and faculty member must agree to this publishing route. Students, as first author of the publication, assume full responsibility for any costs or payments related to open access publishing.
- If a student submits an abstract for presentation at conference that includes a faculty member as second author, both student and faculty member must agree to the contents of the abstract. Students, as first author of the publication, assume full responsibility for any costs or payments related to submission of the abstract.

Guidelines for acknowledgement

Authors publicly thank those people and organizations that supported the work submitted for public presentation.

- Prior to acknowledging an organization or person, confer in advance with the person or organization whose name you intend to publicly recognize.
- Some organizations that provide grant funding will require acknowledgement and may have a preferred statement about how they wish to be acknowledged.
- Students publishing or presenting their dissertation work as sole authors typically acknowledge the dissertation committee and any funding sources.
- Students may also acknowledge other persons who assisted with making the work possible but did not qualify as authors.

Examples of acknowledgements:

In a journal article, the author may gratefully acknowledge the support of someone who read and commented on earlier versions of an article or patients who participated in a study.

In an oral presentation, the author typically acknowledges contributors in a slide near the beginning of the presentation.

QUALIFYING EXAMINATION AND PHD CANDIDACY

The Qualifying Examination process demonstrates the student's mastery of nursing philosophy and theory. A unique characteristic of the qualifying examination in the PhD program is that it prepares the student for the role of the academic nurse educator by promoting the publication of scholarship. Students will complete a written qualifying examination in the spring of year 1. All students will register for Nur 786. Students are required to pass the written qualifying examination with a grade of 5 or higher. Students receiving a 2 or higher in each area and a 3

in critical thinking and synthesis section for a total score ≥ 12 on the qualifying examination will receive a grade of pass with distinction. The content of the examination will include a written paper of the student's philosophical and theoretical ideas. In the spring of year 2 of the program, students will produce one manuscript for publication in Nur 787. This time frame may change in the cases of students who transfer 6 credits into the program.

Students are eligible for the candidacy review upon completion of 30 credits of required course work with no incomplete grades and status as a student in good standing. To fulfill candidacy criteria, the student presents evidence to the PhD committee that a manuscript is under review for publication in a peer-reviewed journal and has successfully passed the first year qualifying examination. Students should complete the request for candidacy form found on the Nur 780 website and submit that with a copy of a current CV and the article submitted for publication. While the PhD committee meets monthly and can review materials for the Qualifying Examination materials at any time, the target date for review for each cohort of students is of the fall of the third year of study. Upon approval of the PhD Committee, the PhD Graduate Program Director places documents in the student's file that the student has met candidacy requirements. Successful completion of candidacy requirements for the PhD degree enables the student to begin formal work on the dissertation.

DISSERTATION

The PhD dissertation is an original body of work in which the candidate demonstrates an in-depth understanding of a substantive area in promoting health, guiding the illness experience or shaping the health care system for people living with chronic illness or in nursing pedagogy. The dissertation demonstrates a candidate's ability to effectively incorporate theoretical, conceptual, and methodological tools in an original piece of research.

While dissertation planning begins early in the PhD Program, substantive work on the dissertation begins after the student has met the candidacy requirements

Dissertation Committee. The committee must have a minimum of three (3) and no more than five (5) members. At least two (2) members should be full time faculty in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. The PhD student must submit the name of the dissertation committee chair to PhD Graduate Program Director and the PhD Committee for review and approval in Fall of Year 3 or after the first article has been submitted for publication. The student should complete the request for dissertation chair form located on the Nur 780 website and submit it to the PhD Graduate Program Director. The candidate in consultation with the dissertation committee chair selects the committee members, elicits their willingness to serve and submits their names to the PhD Program Graduate Director in the Spring of Year 3 by May 1. The student should complete the request for dissertation committee member form located on the Nur 780 website and submit it to the PhD Graduate Program Director. A CV of the external committee member should be submitted with the request for committee member form. The PhD committee will review and approve all requests.

The dissertation committee chair is a University of Massachusetts Dartmouth doctorally prepared nurse faculty researcher who serves as the research mentor of the candidate and guides the candidate in research and funding processes and University protocols for research and scholarship. The dissertation committee chair has expertise in the content or methods of the candidate's research. The other members of the dissertation committee function as content or

methods experts and assist the candidate in producing substantive research that makes a contribution to the field.

Dissertation Proposal. The dissertation research proposal is submitted in Fall of Year 4 by December 1. All dissertation work follows the format of the *American Psychological Association Manual for Publication, 7th Ed.* and the relevant University guidelines in *Requirements for Theses and Dissertations* available at <http://www.umassd.edu/graduate/administration.cfm> . Faculty committee members have 3 weeks to provide feedback to the student on the proposal unless other arrangements have been made in advance. Specific guidelines for completing a dissertation are located in the Nur 780/789 folder. Although the length of the proposal will vary with the candidate and the topic, the proposal must include the following elements:

- cover page
- table of contents
- 300-400 word abstract
- introduction that clearly states the problem, establishes its significance, states the research questions to be examined or the hypotheses to be tested;
- clear statement of the conceptual-theoretical-empirical structure that will guide the research;
- critical review of the literature that synthesizes the current research on the problem, explores related bodies of knowledge that contribute to the understanding of the problem, and explores the theoretical framework of the study.
- thorough description of the methodology including research design, a description of the study population and sample, a plan to access the study population, human subjects' considerations, data collection methods, and the plan for data analysis;
- references;
- appendices with informed consent letters and instruments.

The candidate works closely with the chair of the dissertation committee. Together they decide when to forward the draft proposal to the entire committee for review. After review, the candidate and the chair review the committee members' recommendations and make necessary adjustments to the proposal.

Proposal defense hearing. The chair schedules a proposal hearing that is open only to the dissertation committee members. Three weeks prior to the scheduled hearing the final draft of the proposal must be received by all committee members. All members of the committee are expected to read the proposal, bring questions to the defense and attend the proposal hearing. For external committee members, either a video or audio conference call can be arranged. The dissertation chairperson will book a room for the proposal defense that includes equipment for a presentation. Students are responsible for providing his/her own laptop for the defense. Students are expected to develop a 30 minute presentation of the dissertation proposal. After the presentation, committee members will ask questions until all questions have been answered.

Dissertation proposal and final dissertation defenses are to be scheduled between September 1 and May 31st of a given academic year. Dissertation proposal and final dissertation defenses will not be scheduled during the summer months.

Following the hearing, the committee meets in executive session and makes one of four determinations regarding the proposal: 1) approve; 2) approve subject to minor changes; 3) action deferred pending major revisions; and 4) disapprove. In the case of approval, the candidate may proceed with the dissertation. Students will complete the dissertation proposal defense form

found on the Nur 780/789 website and bring it to the defense for signatures. The completed form is submitted to the PhD Graduate Program Director.

In the case of approval with minor revisions, the candidate need only resubmit the revised proposal to the chair and any other specified committee members. Once approved, the chair forwards one copy of the proposal to the Graduate Administrative Assistant with a letter stating that all minor revisions have been satisfactorily completed and that the proposal should be included in the student's academic record.

In the case of major revisions, the candidate must resubmit the proposal to all committee members. The candidate must complete both minor and major revisions within three months. In the rare case of a rejection, the committee will meet with the candidate and decide how to proceed.

Human Subjects. All research and research-related activity proposed by any member of the UMD community that involves human subjects in any way must be reviewed by the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). If students are obtaining research subjects at another site, it may be necessary to complete IRB approval at that site as well. Check with your dissertation chair to verify whether IRB approval at another site is necessary. This requirement is based upon the University's assurance given to the federal Department of Health and Human Services that UMD researchers—faculty, students, administrators, staff—are aware of and follow all federal rules and regulations concerning the protection of human subjects in research as contained in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Part 46 (45 CFR 46). In addition, the Federal code requires that all researchers be trained and certified in the assessment of risk, informed consent, and research involving special populations such as children or prisoners. Human subjects' training at UMD is done and certified through the CITI program at the following link: <https://www.umassd.edu/research/institutional-compliance/institutional-review-board/training/>

Only after the dissertation proposal has been accepted by the committee may the student submit the required documents to the IRB. Data collection cannot start until appropriate Human Subjects approvals have been obtained. Forms and information about Human Subjects review can be obtained from the Office of Research at the following link: <http://www.umassd.edu/research/grants/compliance/humansubjects/forms/>.

The Dissertation. The candidate works closely with the chair and other appropriate committee members throughout the data collection, data analysis and final writing phases of the dissertation. The candidate should expect repeated iterations of the dissertation to accommodate the committee chair's and members' input and guidance. Students can expect feedback within 3 weeks of submitting a draft unless individual arrangements have been made with faculty.

The final dissertation contains all of the elements listed under Dissertation Proposal above and will include a findings paper submitted for publication. Students should work with the dissertation chair and committee to determine an appropriate journal to submit study findings. Once the dissertation chair and committee members approve the final manuscript for publication, the dissertation defense can be scheduled.

Dissertation defense. A dissertation defense is scheduled by the committee chair after the committee members agree that the dissertation is sufficiently complete to undergo defense. Three weeks prior to the scheduled defense the final draft of the dissertation and findings paper is delivered to all committee members. All members of the committee are expected to read the dissertation, forward any clarification questions to the candidate and the committee at least 72

hours in advance of the scheduled dissertation defense and to attend the dissertation defense hearing.

Timelines for completing the dissertation. Degree conferral occurs in May, August, and January. A formal commencement ceremony is held each May. Only those students who have completed all requirements may participate in the May ceremony. Students must adhere to the following timelines in order to graduate in a timely manner. For students anticipating a May graduation, all dissertation sections and final manuscript must be given to all committee members by March 10th. The defense date must be set and publicly announced by April 1st. The final public defense must occur by April 15th. For students anticipating a January graduation, all dissertation sections and final manuscript must be given to all committee members by October 10th. The defense date must be set and publicly announced by November 1st. The final public defense must occur by November 15th. For students anticipating an August graduation, all dissertation sections and final manuscript must be given to all committee members by April 25th. The defense date must be set and publicly announced by May 17th. The final public defense must occur by May 31st. In the event these timelines are not met, the student will graduate at the next scheduled graduation date. Students should also complete an *Intention to Graduate Form* located on the Registrar's website in the semester in which they plan to graduate.

Defense hearing. The dissertation defense hearing is open to the public. The dissertation chairperson will book a room for the defense that includes equipment for a presentation. Students are responsible for providing his/her own laptop for the defense. The dissertation chair will introduce the student and explain the processes and purposes of the defense hearing. Students are expected to develop a 30 minute presentation of the dissertation. After the presentation, committee members will ask questions for up to 30 minutes or until all questions have been answered. Then, the audience is able to ask questions for up to 30 minutes. Two weeks prior to the defense, a public announcement must be made to the academic community at the university on the UMD announce website.

Following the dissertation defense, the dissertation committee meets in executive session in another room, and makes one of two determinations: 1) approve; or 2) approve subject to minor changes. In the case of approval, the chair forwards 2 copies of the dissertation cover sheet to the PhD Graduate Program Director and the candidate can prepare the dissertation for binding. The Nur 780/789 website includes a list of binding companies. A final bound copy of the dissertation should be given to the Graduate Administrative Assistant.

In the case of approval with minor revisions, the candidate need only submit the revised dissertation to the chair and any other specified committee members. Once approved, the chair forwards two (2) copies of the dissertation cover sheet to the PhD Graduate Program Director and the candidate can prepare the dissertation for binding as noted above.

The dissertation manuscript must conform to *Requirements for Theses & Dissertations* at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth: <https://www.umassd.edu/graduate/student-resources/>. The College of Nursing and Health Sciences has designated the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Ed.* as the format for organization, tables, illustrations and references. In the case where there are discrepancies between APA recommendations and the UMD requirements for thesis and dissertations, the student will defer to the UMD guidelines.

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APPENDIX

**University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
College of Nursing
Policy on Student Professional Nursing Competence and Good
Moral Character GMC
Applicable for all Undergraduate and Graduate Clinical
Nursing Courses**

Section I – Purpose

The purpose of this document is to explain the College of Nursing’s position regarding Professional Nursing Competency and Good Moral Character (GMC) standards for all clinical nursing courses. All students, faculty and staff are expected to

read, understand, and comply with this policy described herein. Students will sign an acknowledgement of receipt of this policy at the beginning of the first nursing course and all students will review and sign this policy each September. The policy and executed acknowledgement will be placed in the individual student file located in the Dean's office. The Associate Dean or designee will periodically disseminate this policy so that all students, staff and faculty understand its importance and implications.

Section II - Preamble

The following policy has been adopted by the Faculty Organization of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth (UMD) College of Nursing (CON). The policy is based on the assumption that nursing students of the UMD CON will be eligible for licensure as registered nurses, as well as practicing as nurses at the basic professional RN or advanced practice levels. The professional nature of these experiences, and the professional licensure and certification associated with nursing education brings an ethical responsibility to our faculty to attend to the competency and GMC of its students.

Students admitted to the UMD CON are expected to complete the curriculum requirements related to Professional Nursing Competency and GMC. It is the policy of the UMD CON to adhere to all policies at UMD including the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended. Students are not required to disclose their disability to the UMD CON. Qualified Students with disabilities who believe they need an accommodation to meet the Professional Nursing Competency and/or GMC must register with the UMD Center for Access and Success.

The following standards have been deemed by the UMD CON to be essential to all clinical nursing courses. All nursing students must meet the Professional Nursing Competency and GMC

Policy Effective September, 2012

Standards set forth in this policy with or without a reasonable accommodation(s). Additionally, all UMD CON students must also adhere to the UMD Student Code of Conduct. Violations of student conduct that pertain to Professional Nursing Competency and/or GMC standards may be processed both through the UMD Office of Student Affairs, consistent with the Student Code of Conduct and CON, consistent with this policy. Please review the UMD handbook on student conduct for clarification. Additionally, the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics should guide any consideration of appropriate behaviors in the profession.

Section III – Professional Nursing Competence and Good Moral Character (GMC)

Definitions

A. Professional Nursing Competency

The UMD CON faculty have a professional obligation to UMD and the public to ensure that nurses graduating from its programs are competent to practice within the nursing profession. 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 UMD CON has determined that the standards below are essential to the nursing profession. Therefore, students entering the nursing program at the UMD CON are expected to meet these standards for progression in the program to graduation¹.

1. Communication and Observation Skills

Students are expected to sufficiently demonstrate the following verbal, non-verbal, written, computer assisted entry, and observational skills during professional interactions with others during their professional nursing practice. 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. The nursing student needs to be able to:

- 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 that allow her/him to carry out the nursing process in the care of patients. 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

¹ The list of competency standards has been reprinted for use by UMD CON with permission from Dr. Barbara G. Miller, New York University College of Nursing Technical Standards for Core Nursing Competency Performance.

- 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 procedure treatments, administration of medications, and emergency interventions. On a regular day whether in the classroom or clinical (on-campus simulation or off campus clinical), the student may be expected to sit, walk and stand. 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 AACN's (2008) *Essentials of Baccalaureate 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, gender, 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, students nurse' 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 participate in the professional care of a patient, before and after procedures that he/she may be in disagreement with
 - 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 waveform 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., physicians' 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.

Normative difficulties. The policy is not intended to address the common and expected difficulties experienced by a majority of nursing students particularly as they start a new clinical 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.

B. Good Moral Character

Another part of competence is what has been called Good Moral Character (GMC) to practice nursing. GMC is defined for practical purposes as the ability to practice nursing in a safe and competent manner and with minimal risk to the public health, safety or welfare. The Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing assesses Good Moral Character in order to be eligible for licensure. The term “GMC” generally includes character and health as well as functional abilities that may impact a professional’s ability to practice in a competent manner.

GMC as defined by the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing is demonstrated through reliable evidence of good conduct. Additionally, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education who certify that the UMD CON curriculum meets standards of excellence in nursing education requires that the UMD CON program defines policies and procedures that govern competence and GMC to practice consistent with established guidelines (CCNE, 2009). The policy described herein is based on these ethical standards and requirements.

1. Examples of such good conduct are as follows:

- a. honesty;
- b. trustworthiness;
- c. integrity;
- d. accountability;
- e. reliability;
- f. distinguishing between right and wrong;
- g. avoidance of aggression to self and others;
- h. taking responsibility for one’s own actions and other similar attributes found relevant by the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing.

2. Examples of absence of such good conduct are as follows:

- a. hostile or destructive conduct to another or to self;
- b. conduct that demonstrates disregard for the welfare, safety or rights of another;
- c. conduct that demonstrates disregard for honesty, integrity or trustworthiness

- d. inability and/or unwillingness to acquire and integrate professional standards into professional behavior
- e. inability to control personal stress, interpersonal difficulties, significant psychological dysfunction, and/or excessive emotional reactions that interfere with professional function.
- f. inability or unwillingness to acknowledge, understand or address the impairment when it is identified
- g. failure to report absence of GMC evidenced by another student to a UMD CON faculty member.

3. Violations of laws in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Clinical Substance Abuse

Students, while enrolled in the nursing program, who are arrested or charged with a misdemeanor or other crime including the use, possession, manufacture, sale or distribution of alcohol or any other drug, are required to report this within two University/business days to the Dean of Nursing. Students who receive a positive drug screen during any of their clinical rotations will be required to meet with the Dean of the CON or designee within five University/business days of the positive drug screen. Additionally, students may not return to classes, on-campus clinicals or off campus clinicals until meeting with the Dean or designee.

Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing standards underlie this policy. See the web address located in the references. These standards from the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing include:

- The use of psychoactive substances while performing or learning to perform nursing care is not acceptable.
- When a student's performance is impaired, safe, effective care is at risk whether it occurs in the classroom, skills laboratory or in a clinical setting.
- Alcohol and drug abuse and addiction are primary illnesses and can be successfully treated.
- Legal transgressions such as theft, falsification of records, diversion of drugs for sales or to supply another, or the substitution, alteration or denial of prescribed medications to patients are unacceptable at UMD CON.

Section IV - Assessment and Remediation Steps

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, and/or GMC are urged to report this to the Dean's office. The Associate Dean of the College of Nursing will schedule a meeting with the student within seven (7) school days and may recommend informal or formal proceedings. The Associate Dean, 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 CON community are responsible for complying with the Policy on Professional Nursing Competence and GMC 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.

CON 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 CON 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 competence (ies) and/or GMC or the remediation of a nursing competency (ies) and/or GMC noncompliance.

During the Informal Proceeding, the Associate Dean of the UMD CON or designee will direct the faculty member or member of the CON 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 and Good Moral Character GMC. This form will include a list of competencies and/or GMC not met; instances or circumstances surrounding the non-achieved competency (ies) and/or GMC surrounding the lack of competencies and/or GMC and information necessary for remediation; findings of fact based upon the preponderance of the evidence, and recommendation(s). This form will be forwarded to the Associate Dean or designee. The report will not become part of the student's record but will be given to the Associate Dean. The report will be kept in a separate confidential file by the Associate Dean of Nursing 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, recommendation for counseling or medical intervention, and referral to the Ombudsperson's Office.

Formal Proceedings

The Associate Dean of Nursing or designee will begin Formal Proceedings if

1. a second complaint is filed; or
2. if no change in the competency(ies) and/or GMC behavior occurs as a result of the Informal Proceeding; or
3. if failure in the course or dismissal from the UMD CON is a possible consequence of the complaint.

The Associate Dean of Nursing 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.

Voting members of the formal proceeding will include the following members. Two faculty members will be invited to attend by the Associate Dean of Nursing. This will include the supervising clinical faculty member as well as a faculty member from the Enrollment Progression and Advisement Committee (EPAC) within the UMD CON. Additionally, the Department Chair or representative will be invited to attend. A faculty member of the UMD CON will be invited as a voting member by the student.

The student may invite an additional non-voting panel individual including a faculty member representative. **No lawyer or legal representative is allowed to**

participate in the formal proceedings. No recording devices will be permitted. The student must notify the Associate Dean regarding those individuals that he or she has invited to be physically present, forty-eight hours prior to the time of the Formal Proceeding. The Associate Dean or designee will chair the panel and state the nature of the violation related either to competence or good moral behavior. The Associate Dean will offer panel members an opportunity to discuss the issue and the remediation. The student will have an opportunity to explain their actions. Formal Proceedings recommendation(s) will be made after a majority vote of the voting members. In the event of a tie vote, the Associate Dean or designee of the College of Nursing 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 course; a recommendation of dismissal, suspension or probation. The recommendation(s) will be forwarded to the Dean or designee of the College of Nursing who may adopt, deny or modify the recommendation(s) and make a decision. All appropriate UMD 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 decision by the Dean or designee will be provided to the involved student and appropriate UMD administrative officials.

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 GMC impaired nursing competencies, GMC demonstrated behaviors and a written list of recommended remediation(s). The student will be diligently reviewed in subsequent clinical courses at least once each semester by the Associate Dean of Nursing. The probation may continue until the inappropriate GMC behaviors(s) are resolved and the Competencies have been met. When GMC Competencies have been met, the Associate Dean of the College of Nursing will recommend ending the probation to the Dean. If probation continues for more than one full semester, the student will be recommended for suspension and failure in the current academic 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 clinical course from which he or she has failed. In repeating a course, the competencies not met, and/or inappropriate GMC behaviors identified in the failed clinical 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 or she will meet with the clinical faculty member and the Associate Dean at mid-semester regarding an appraisal of the remediation and or the effectiveness of the remediation.

Dismissal from the Nursing Program

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

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

Confidentiality

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. During and after these procedures, the UMD CON 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. When the Dean of the UMD CON 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 UMD administrative officials.

Section V - Appeal

The determination by the Dean of the CON in the formal proceedings can be appealed to the UMD 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 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 UMD Provost is final and cannot be appealed.

Policy on Professional Nursing Competence and Good Moral Character

Student Notification, Acknowledgement and Release

I, _____, have read and understand the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth's College of Nursing's policy on Student Professional Nursing Competence and Good Moral Character GMC, (the "Policy") which is attached hereto and made a part of this Notification and Acknowledgement.

I understand that if I violate the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth's Student Code of Conduct and that this violation is also a violation under the Policy, I may be processed both through the UMD Office of Student Affairs, consistent with the Student Code of Conduct, and the CON.

By signing this form, I give the Office of Student Affairs permission to inform the College of Nursing of any resolved complaint made against me that violates the principles of the policy on Professional Nursing Competency and Good Moral Character.

Print Student Name _____

Student Signature _____

Date _____

University of Massachusetts College of Nursing Reporting Form

Policy on Professional Nursing Competence and Good Moral Character

The purpose of this form is to record information required to initiate either an Informal or Formal Proceeding.

Student Name

Name of individual making complaint

Date: _____ List _____ Members of Informal or Formal Proceeding (check one)

Describe specific behavior related to: Professional nursing competence; and/or good moral character. Include name(s) of individuals reporting this behavior or involved; include date(s) when this occurred:

(Attach written description of the alleged infraction)

Describe student's perception related to these behaviors:

(Attach written description of student's perception)

Recommendations from the Informal or Formal Proceeding:

Associate Dean or Designee: Date: _____

References and Bibliography

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- Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing: Available at: <http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=eohhs2subtopic&L=6&L0=Home&L1=Provider&L2=Certification%2c+Licensure%2c+and+Registration&L3=Occupational+and+Professional&L4=Nursing&L5=About+the+Board+of+Registration+in+Nursing&sid=Eeohhs2>
- New York University College of Nursing Technical Standards for Core Nursing Competency Performance:
<http://www.nyu.edu/nursing/academicprograms/bachelors/NYUCNTechStandards.pdf>
- Quality and Safety Education for Nurses. Retrieved from <http://qsen.org/>
- Standard for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Degree Nursing Programs April 2009 <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Education/pdf/BaccEssentials08.pdf>