

**WEST TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING**



**MASTER'S PROGRAM
STUDENT HANDBOOK**



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Dean, College of Nursing and Health Sciences

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Department Head, Nursing

This handbook belongs to: _____

My academic advisor is: _____

Advisor's Office: _____

Office Telephone: _____

WTAMU website: www.wtamu.edu

Department of Nursing Web site: www.wtamu.edu/nursing

Texas Board of Nursing: www.bon.texas.gov

West Texas A&M University Department of Nursing does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, handicap, or national origin. West Texas A&M University, according to Affirmative Action Goals, encourages qualified men, women, and minorities of all ages to apply.

Revision and review dates:

Revised: 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

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About Your MSN Handbook (MSNH)

The MSN Handbook (MSNH) has been designed to provide information about the intents, policies, and procedures for the MSN curriculum and program. The MSN program is an integral part of the university and the graduate school and the policies and procedures for the nursing graduate program are aligned with those entities. The handbook contains information about policies and procedures adapted to the nursing graduate program.

Members of Graduate Faculty:

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Department of Nursing

Mission, Vision, & Philosophy

MISSION

As an integral part of its parent institution, the Department of Nursing is committed to serving as the principal academic center for baccalaureate and graduate nursing education for a multi-state region. Our mission is to be a student-centered, learning community dedicated to developing professional and academic leaders in nursing and to serve our constituents through educational programs that engage students, provide high quality nursing services, demonstrate evidence-based nursing practice, and produce nursing scholarship.

VISION

The West Texas A&M University Department of Nursing envisions a health care system in which all persons receive quality care in an atmosphere of respect for human dignity. Scholarly nursing practice will be integral to such system. The undergraduate and graduate programs will promote the many ways of knowing that contribute to the Art of Nursing.

PHILOSOPHY

The faculty of the Department of Nursing believes **humans** are unique, holistic, and multidimensional beings who are valued in their uniqueness and are deserving of respect and dignity. Human beings have a right to self-determination and to make informed choices. They also have a right to competent advocacy when their abilities for self-determination and choice are impaired.

We believe that **health** is the dynamic state of interactions among mind, body, and spirit. Health is uniquely experienced by each person and exists in any of many conditions.

We believe that **nursing** is a practice discipline requiring the scholarly use of scientific, ethical, aesthetic, and personal ways of knowing (the Art of Nursing). Nurses use the many ways of knowing to enable persons to bring body, mind and spirit into harmonious relationship.

We believe that the **environment** is the biological, physiological, personal, spiritual, social, cultural, and political context in which persons experience health. The environment is not a separate entity, but an integral component of the human experience.

We believe caring, commitment, honesty, integrity, dependability, respect, responsibility, accountability and initiative are values, which are central to nursing scholarship. We believe that the **teaching and learning of nursing** is both an individual and community enterprise. Learners *and* teachers have role responsibilities, which foster informed participation, open communication, critical thinking, and community building.

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS OF AN MSN

You are embarking on a new and exciting learning experience in this Masters' program. Graduate level work may be a bit different from your experiences as an undergraduate, however.

Graduate education reflects mastery in an academic discipline which MAY result in an additional certification (e.g. FNP), but it is an academic discipline first. It is distinct from your undergraduate work in that, in addition to applying existing knowledge, you will be expected to generate new knowledge. You will be expected to employ, in all classes, a theoretical framework, a deep understanding of research methodology, and critical analysis. Learning, in the classroom, clinical setting and online is more self-directed. Graduate students are held to a higher standard than undergraduate students and are expected to demonstrate better research skills (e.g. conducting exhaustive reviews of current professional literature), and more in depth and applied knowledge.

Creativity and critical thinking are encouraged in all graduate level work. The graduate program recognizes that, upon graduation you will be considered an expert in nursing. The components of the graduate curriculum are carefully designed to insure the development of new knowledge, hone communication skills (oral and written), develop new ideas and encourage intellectual growth. One of the expectations of the American Academy of Colleges of Nursing (ACCN) is that graduate schools build on previous knowledge to include sciences and the humanities. A goal of the WTAMU graduate nursing program is to incorporate sciences and the humanities in each course. It is through the study of the humanities in particular that a broader understanding of the human condition is achieved, and through this broader understanding, more holistic care can be provided. In short, graduate nursing education is about more than just nursing, or perhaps more appropriately, through graduate education, nursing is understood more deeply for what it is, both the doing of nursing, and the being of a nurse.

It is also a goal of the WTAMU graduate nursing program to foster freedom of inquiry. Your experience as an undergraduate may have been prescriptive in specifics of course requirements, such as length of papers, how many references, and/or a specific topical outline for the paper. That is not necessarily true in graduate school. The faculty want you to explore deeper, to go “outside your comfort zone”, to be creative. Therefore, paper guidelines may seem vague. That is purposeful on the part of the faculty in order to foster in depth, critical, creative review. It also fosters close collaboration with the faculty regarding these learning opportunity. It is thru this relational experience that some of the richest learning takes place—which cannot be achieved if limited to specific objectives and expectations. Of course this requires flexibility on the part of both the learner and the faculty, but can be the most rewarding and exciting part of the learning process. Faculty are often asked how many references are required for a specific paper or project and the standard answer, without meaning to be flippant at all, is “as many as it takes”. It depends on the topic, the available literature, the depth and breadth of the literature accessed, how well it addresses the topic at hand, the age of the resource, and many more variables. The expectation is an exhaustive review so that you are confident in the depth and breadth of the resources to inform your paper or project.

MSN
Master of Science in Nursing

Department of Nursing Strategic Goals

1. Develop processes, programs and facilities necessary to provide the students of the Department of Nursing with a superior student-centered learning experience.
2. Foster a safe, dynamic, and respectful learning/living atmosphere in the campus classroom, lab, and clinical environment.
3. Recruit and retain increasing numbers of students in nursing who will graduate from our programs, assume leadership roles in society, and meet the nursing workforce needs of the region and state.
4. Recruit, develop, and support a faculty and staff that embody the core values of the Department of Nursing and the university and support their missions and goals.
5. Support individual scholarly and/or creative accomplishment in the Department of Nursing and develop into a “Center of Excellence” with increasing cross-departmental and college collaboration in these and other emerging areas.
6. Strengthen external relations and support of the Department of Nursing and the university with alumni, friends of the university, local and regional constituents, and legislative and governmental entities.
7. Baccalaureate and master’s nursing graduates will demonstrate achievement of the expected student learning outcomes and the expected aggregate outcomes.

Student Aggregate Outcomes:

1. FNP certification pass rate will be 80% or higher
2. Graduation rates for MSN will be 80% within 5 years of admission to Master’s program and enrollment in NURS 6318.
3. Graduation rates for post-MSN certification will be 80% within 3 years of admission to the FNP certification program and enrollment in the first FNP course.
4. Alumni satisfaction responses will meet or exceed Select 6 programs, Carnegie Class programs and all other institutions participating in the EBI survey.
5. Comprehensive exam pass rate of 80%.
6. Thesis pass rate of 90%.

Accreditation

The WTAMU master's degree program in nursing and the post-graduate APRN certificate program at WTAMU are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.ccnaccreditation.org>)

As such the graduate curriculum is designed using the AACN Essentials of Masters Education for Advanced Practice Nursing and is also congruent with the NTF criteria.

Program Outcomes

	Nursing Coursework	Examples of methods
Learning Outcome 1 Background for practice incorporates sciences and humanities	NURS 6303 NURS 6322 NURS 6306 synthesis/thesis	Theoretically based written papers using latest evidence
Learning Outcome 2 Demonstrate organization and systems leadership	NURS6321 NURS6314 NURS 6306 and synthesis/thesis	Practicum logs which include reflective journaling addressing outcomes specific to the course and role specialization
Learning Outcome 3 Incorporates quality improvement and safety	All nursing courses and synthesis/thesis	On-line and hybrid course discussions current evidence based practice
Learning Outcome 4 Translates and integrates scholarship into practice	All practica and synthesis/thesis	Objective examinations
Learning Outcome 5 Incorporates informatics and healthcare technologies	All practica and synthesis/thesis	Recorded or In-class presentations Community based presentations
Learning Outcome 6 Shapes healthcare policy and advocacy	All practica and synthesis/thesis	Dissemination of current research in a variety of modes to include writing scholarly articles, policy change recommendations to area institutions, presenting workshops, and in-services in practica courses.
Learning Outcome 7 Interprofessional collaboration	NURS 6318, all practica and synthesis/thesis	
Learning Outcome 8 Implement clinical prevention and population health	All coursework and synthesis/thesis	
Learning Outcome 9 Develop master's-level nursing practice	All coursework, practica and synthesis/thesis	

MSN CURRICULUM

2018-2019 Catalog

Comprehensive MSN (Online)		
<i>Course #</i>	<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Cr. Hr.</i>
NURS 6303(O)	¹ Theories for Nursing	3-3-0
NURS 6317(O)	Nursing Research	3-3-0
NURS 6318(O)	Nursing Populations and Settings	3-3-0
NURS 6320(O)	Pathophysiology	3-3-0
NURS 6315(O)	Advanced Health Assessment	3-3-0
NURS 6384(O)	Pharmacotherapeutics	3-3-0
NURS 6314(O)	Advanced Nursing Education and Leadership	3-3-0
NURS 6322(O)	Bioethics and Advocacy	3-3-0
NURS 6324(P)	Scholarly Clinical Praxis (Incl. informatics)	3-3-0
NURS 6323 (P)	Role Practicum in Area of Concentration	3-1-6
ELECTIVE	ELECTIVE Supporting Role Specialization	3-3-0
NURS 6301 <i>or Elective</i>	Thesis I <i>or</i> 6000-level course supporting role specialization	3-0-9
NURS 6302 <i>or Elective</i>	Thesis II <i>or</i> 6000-level course supporting role specialization	3-0-9
NURS 6120(O)	Research Synthesis (required for non-thesis students only)	1-0-0
TOTAL(MINIMUM) CREDIT HOURS = 39-40		

FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER (Hybrid)		
<i>Course #</i>	<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Cr. Hr.</i>
NURS 6303(O)	¹ Theories for Nursing	3-3-0
NURS 6317(O)	Nursing Research	3-3-0
NURS 6318(O)	Nursing Populations and Settings	3-3-0
NURS 6320(O)	Pathophysiology	3-3-0
NURS 6315(O)	Advanced Health Assessment	3-3-0
NURS 6384(O)	Pharmacotherapeutics	3-3-0
NURS 6611(H)	Family Nurse Practitioner Primary Healthcare I (135 cl hrs.)	6-3-9
NURS 6712(H)	Family Nurse Practitioner Primary Healthcare II (180 cl hrs.)	7-3-12
NURS 6713(H)	Family Nurse Practitioner Primary Healthcare III (180 cl hrs.)	7-3-12
NURS 6316(H)	Issues: Nurse Practitioner Role Development	3-3-0
NURS 6120(O)	Research Utilization Project (required for non-thesis students only)	1-0-0
NURS 6490(P)	Capstone Clinical Practicum (180 cl hrs.)	4-0-0
TOTAL(MINIMUM) CREDIT HOURS = 46		

- (O) Online
- (H) Hybrid (meets 2-3 times on campus during semester)
- (P) Practica (requires clinical/field experiences)

SCHEDULE OF WHEN COURSES ARE OFFERED			
FULL COURSE LISTING	FA	SP	SU
Nurs 6120 Research Utilization Project (non-thesis only) (O)	X	X	
Nurs 6301 Thesis	X	X	
Nurs 6302 Thesis	X	X	
Nurs 6303 Theories of Nursing (O)	X	X	
Nurs 6317 Nursing Research (O)	X		X
Nurs 6318 Nursing Populations & Settings (O)		X	X
Nurs 6320 Pathophysiology (O)	X	X	
Nurs 6384 Pharmacotherapeutics (O)		X	X
Nurs 6315 Advanced Assessment	X		X
Nurs 6314 Advanced Nursing Education and Leadership (O)	X		
Nurs 6322 Bioethics and Advocacy (O)		X	
Nurs 6323 Role Practicum in Area of Concentration (O)	X		
Nurs 6324 Scholarly Clinical Praxis (O)		X	
Nurs 6321 Student Engagement in Nursing Education (O)	X		
Nurs 6326 Nursing Informatics (O)	X		
Nurs 6392 Special Topics in Nursing (O) (Rotating Topics)	X	X	X
Nurs 6316 Advanced Anal. Issues in Nsg. (O)	X	X	
Nurs 6490 Capstone (FNP)	X	X	
Nurs 6611 FNP I			X
Nurs 6712 FNP II	X		
Nurs 6713 FNP III		X	

WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

Course Requirements for PostMaster’s FNP Role and Semesters Offered

Course	Fall	Spring	Summer I
<i>NURS 6320 Pathophysiology*</i>	X	X	
<i>NURS 6384 Pharmacotherapeutics*</i>		X	X
<i>NURS 6315 Advanced Assessment</i>	X		X
NURS 6316 Issues: Nurse Practitioner Role Development	X	X	
NURS 6611 Family Nurse Practitioner I			X
NURS 6712 Family Nurse Practitioner II Pediatric and Adolescent	X		
NURS 6713 Nurse Practitioner III		X	
NURS6490 Nurse Practitioner Capstone Practicum	X	X	

Total of 27-36 credit hours including transfer credits (Includes 675 clock hours of clinical practica)

Courses in *italics* are prerequisites to Family Nurse Practitioner I, II, and III. NURS 6316 may be taken concurrently with Capstone.

*A student who has one or more of the requisite courses on his/her MSN transcript(s) may receive credit toward the FNP requirements if those courses have been taken within **five years** of enrollment in the post Master’s course of study and if they correspond to the WTAMU course descriptions. In some instances, challenge exams may be allowed for students who have previously completed the 3P’s.

Overview MSN Program

Degree Options

MSN Students may select a comprehensive MSN or Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) MSN.

Comprehensive MSN —with this degree, students are prepared to function at an advanced nursing practice level in complex environments to include: educational roles, leadership roles, and administrative roles. Students will take the clinical nursing courses of Pathophysiology, Pharmacotherapeutics, and Advanced Assessment to enhance clinical practice at an advanced level. Additional degree requirements prepare graduates to fill roles in administration and/or education. Praxis will be personalized to address each student's specific learning objectives. Students in this degree option are encouraged to do a thesis rather than the electives if they plan to continue toward a doctorate. The thesis helps prepare for dissertation writing. However, a thesis is not required for the comprehensive MSN. (39-40 credit hours)

Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)—with this specialization, students are prepared for advanced practice nursing providing primary healthcare in diverse areas. (i.e. underserved areas, clinics, and independent practice areas.) This results in improved access to primary healthcare for all. Students in this specialty take nursing core as well as role specialization courses. Electives are not required because of the expanded credit hours necessitated by the 675- clock hour practicum (46 credit hours). All FNP clinical hours are completed in Texas.

Post Master's FNP is designed as a certificate course of study that enables practicing nurses with an MSN to prepare for credentialing as an FNP. Upon completion of the prescribed course of study, the student's transcript indicates that he/she has completed the educational preparation as regulated by the Texas Board of Nurse Examiners. Students are then eligible to prepare to take a national FNP certification exam. All post-master's FNP clinical hours are completed in Texas.

The WT master's program intends to encourage the development of collegial nursing scholarship. Instructional design for the MSN degree emphasizes seminar style, discussions, and group process. Collegial critique is encouraged. You are encouraged to discuss ideas for papers and projects in class and with peers in order to clarify and focus your ideas. It is expected that your final plans for assignments will be discussed with course faculty prior to completion.

Courses are offered in both online and hybrid formats. All WT online courses are indicated by Section 70. Be sure to contact your faculty for class meeting days of hybrid courses. You are encouraged to communicate with your faculty in class and via e-mail or phone. E-mail addresses are shared at your discretion to dialogue with peers. WTAMU utilizes Blackboard as its learning management system for all courses and practica.

Most of your syllabi are available prior to the first day of class via WT BuffAdvisor.

NOTE: Graduate faculty require all written work to be completed using Microsoft Word. Other word processing packages will not be acceptable.

Academic Advising and Plan of Study

Each student consults with the academic advisor to design a **Plan of Study** (Degree Plan) that supports their role specialization upon approval by the Associate Dept. Head for Graduate Nursing Studies, College Dean, and Graduate Dean. The Plan of Study is filed at the Graduate School and becomes the basis for the graduation check by the Graduate School. Changes in courses may be made after filing, as long as they are approved by the student's advisor and the Associate Dept. Head for Graduate Nursing Studies. It is the student's responsibility to obtain a copy of the approved plan from the academic advisor.

In addition, each graduate student will complete, with their advisor, a Department of Nursing Plan of Study for their role specialization. This plan of study will help the student and their advisor track course progression and plan for effective sequencing of coursework to maximize the learning experience. The student's Plan of Study, Timeline, and program progress are available online through Buff Advisor.

Changes in Courses Required for Plan of Study (obtained from advisor)

If it becomes necessary for the student to make changes in the plan of study, a Degree Plan Change form must be completed and approved by the adviser, college Dean, and Dean of the graduate school. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the filing of this form with the academic advisor.

Students with a Disability

An alternate form of administration of any examination will be available to students who have appropriately followed the procedure for disabled students (See WTAMU Student Handbook).

Filing for Graduation

It is the student's responsibility to be informed of the filing dates, graduation application dates, and fees required for graduation. This information is available from the Graduate School Office in the Kilgore Research Center, and is printed in the class schedule bulletins. Students are responsible for meeting all deadlines associated with graduation and the completion of the degree. All students who wish to receive a diploma must file for graduation even if they do not intend to attend the graduation ceremony. A graduation checklist is available at Appendix A.

University Financial Aid

The U.S. Public Health Department has money available for students who agree to pay back in working in health shortage areas. Information is shared on the Graduate Bulletin Board and is available through the Internet. It is possible new funding will appear as the nation addresses the nursing shortage.

Student Information

Students must keep the Graduate School and the Nursing Department informed of changes in address and telephone numbers, and the status of nursing licensure. Notification of changes should be in writing to the Registrar, Dean of the Graduate School and the Assoc. Dept. Head of the Nursing Graduate Program respectively. Name and address information may also be updated by completing the Update Student Information form and submitting it by mail or fax. If you do not have access to a fax machine or are unable to mail the request, you may send a request via your Buff's student email account containing the following information:

- Full Name
- Student ID number
- Information to be changed

If changing legal name or social security number, documentation must be provided. The Update Student Information form lists the documentation required for a name change. The Update Student Information form is available at <https://www.wtamu.edu/administration/registrar-update-information.aspx>

Communicating with Faculty Communication with faculty can be accomplished several ways:

- Electronic messages are the most efficient.
 - First initial, lastname@wtamu.edu
 - Example: jdoe@wtamu.edu
- Phone: may leave a voice mail message speaking clearly with a call back number.
- Questions regarding a specific course may be sent through course messaging

ACADEMIC ADVISING AND THE STUDENT'S FILE

Each student is responsible for completing requirements of their plan of study; meeting all deadlines required by the department of nursing, the graduate school, and the university, and for initiating contact with the academic advisor should any problem arise associated with progression or completion of the master's degree.

Each student is assigned an academic advisor from the graduate nursing faculty. The advisor will assist in the preparation of your Plan of Study and is available to advise you prior to each registration period. Students may meet with advisors by phone, e-mail, or office visit to discuss their plans for the following semester. Graduate students are "greenlighted" at the beginning of their course work and remain greenlighted as long as they are progressing satisfactorily

in their program. Greenlighting allows you to register online from home or the computers in the JBK or other spots on campus. Students should meet with their advisor if they wish to amend their Degree Plan.

Each student has an academic file in the Department of Nursing and one in the university Graduate School Office. Students are responsible for seeing that the appropriate information has been submitted to both.

Academic Advisement and Student Record

It is the student's responsibility to provide the documentation and information required in the student folder and to keep this information up to date. Following is a checklist of information that must be filed in each student folder.

- _____ Application to the Department of Nursing
- _____ Plan of Study
- _____ Transcript of Statistics Grade
- _____ State Nursing License Number
- _____ Evidence of current immunizations/titers
- _____ Evidence of current CPR certification
- _____ Undergraduate Degree Transcripts (Not required for Graduates of WTAMU BSN Program)

Some file items (Td, TB, Influenza, CPR, and unencumbered RN licensure) will require periodic updating. It is the student's responsibility to insure that the academic file is current. There will be a restriction on course registration for students with files that are not current.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE NURSING STUDENTS

The Department of Nursing MUST have a photocopy of completed immunizations and screening prior to the FIRST DAY OF CLASSES.	Schedule for Vaccinations
Required Vaccinations include:	
Tetanus-diphtheria toxoid (Td/Tdap)*	One (1) dose of Tdap is required within the last ten (10) years.
Measles*	Students who were born on or after January 1, 1957, must show, prior to patient contact, acceptable evidence of vaccination of two (2) doses of measles-containing vaccine administered since January 1, 1968
Rubella*	Students must show, prior to patient contact, acceptable evidence of vaccination of one (1) dose of rubella vaccine.
Mumps*	Students who were born on or after January 1, 1957, must show, prior to patient contact, acceptable evidence of vaccination of one (1) dose of mumps vaccine.
Hepatitis B*	Students shall receive a complete series of hepatitis B vaccine prior to the start of direct patient care or show serologic confirmation of immunity to hepatitis B virus.
Varicella (chickenpox)*	Students shall receive two (2) doses of varicella vaccine unless the first dose was received prior to thirteen years of age or a serological test that is positive for varicella antibody.
TB Test - Mantoux	On admission to the Department of Nursing and annually during clinical courses.
Annual Influenza Vaccine	Students are required to have an annual flu vaccine.
Meningitis	http://www.wtamu.edu/student-support/bacterial-meningitis.aspx

For more information, see the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention dated December 26, 1997, Vol. 46, and the *Supplement to Hospital Infection Control*, January, 1998; or call the Texas Department of Health Immunization Division, 1-800-252-9152. *See Texas Administrative Code, Title 25, Health Services, Part 1 Texas Department of Health, Chapter 97 Communicable Diseases, Subchapter B Immunization Requirements in Texas Elementary and Secondary Schools and Institutions of Higher Education, **Rule §97.64 Required Vaccinations for Students Enrolled in Health-Related and Veterinary Courses in Institutions of Higher Education**, effective July 28, 2016.

WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY - DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

Admission Requirements: including recent changes from legislature & graduate school. (See university catalog for detailed requirements)

Application Procedure—obtain forms online or by e-mail from us.

Submit appropriate forms (including transcripts if not WTAMU graduate) to:

University	Very early response
Graduate School	
Department of Nursing	Nursing "Secondary Admission" is included in the graduate school application Approved Statistics Course (leveling course) must be taken prior to admission

International applicants must go through the international student office prior to admission.
Transfer applicants must meet residency requirements.

Removal of Conditional Admission Status

If admitted **conditionally**, the student must supply all of the required information listed on the letter of admission from the nursing department on or before the day of registration for the first semester of enrollment.

Students who were admitted conditionally by either the graduate school or the department of nursing must complete 12 hours of graduate courses with a minimum of a grade of B in each course taken. Failure to do so after completing 12 hours will result in suspension from further graduate study. Conditional nursing admission may have leveling course work assigned before progression in graduate course work is permitted.

Registered Nurse Licensure:

Graduate students are responsible for possessing a verifiable unencumbered Texas Registered Nurse License and/or be registered in the state in which they practice. Students are responsible for notifying the department of any change in their licensure status throughout their enrollment. Failure to do so is grounds for immediate dismissal from the graduate program.

Admissions/progression policy:

Students in the graduate program of the Department of Nursing at WTAMU must earn a grade of B or higher in graduate nursing courses. A grade of "C" or lower is considered a failing grade and necessitates repeating that course prior to progressing in the program. This course must be retaken at WTAMU and will not be considered transferable from any other institution of higher education. Two grades of "C" or lower in any graduate courses will result in the student's dismissal from the program.

Students who drop a graduate level course for any reason after the 12th class day (or after the 4th class day during summer sessions) must submit a letter requesting reinstatement to the graduate nursing program. Reinstatement is not guaranteed and requests for reinstatement are considered on a case by case basis.

Progression in the nursing graduate program:

If a nursing course is listed as a co-requisite for any other nursing course, withdrawal from one of the co-requisite course requires an immediate withdrawal from the associated co-requisite course.

Grounds for Dismissal

1. Failure to meet academic requirements.
2. Clinical/practicum performance that does not uphold professional and state board nursing standards.
3. Failure to report change in status of registered nurse license. A change in status, even if reported, might result in dismissal.
4. Earning a grade less than B in two nursing graduate courses.

All graduate students are reminded that as Registered Nurses they are expected to practice within the scope of their state Nursing Practice Act. Any deviation from this Act may result in disciplinary actions, including the possibility of suspension, probation or dismissal from the graduate nursing program or university. Students are further reminded that unprofessional conduct and violations of the Texas Nursing Practice Act may be reportable to the Texas Board of Nurse Examiners.

Transfer Credit

It is possible for a student to transfer up to 12 semester credit hours of the required credit hours (exclusive of thesis and independent study) toward the master's degree. Only courses in which the student earned an A or B may be transferred and all transfer courses must be approved by the assoc. dept. head for graduate nursing, college Dean, and graduate school Dean. Credit hours obtained more than 6 years prior to enrollment cannot apply toward a master's degree. Eighteen hours of course work at the 6000 level must be taken at WTAMU. Previous coursework in pathophysiology, advanced physical assessment, and/or pharmacotherapeutics, whether done at WTAMU or another university, **cannot** be applied to the FNP role specialization unless the program of study can be completed within a six year time frame from when the first of these courses was begun. In some instances, challenge exams may be allowed for students who have previously completed the 3P's.

Time Limitation for Course Credits

Master's degree requirements must be completed within a period of **six years** beginning with the date the first degree credit course is taken. If courses taken prior to enrollment are transferred for credit, the time limit is calculated from the date of the first transferred course.

Nametags and Photo IDs

Graduate students doing their clinical or practica must wear a WTAMU Department of Nursing nametag. These can be ordered through the Bivins Nursing Learning Center at a cost of \$20.00 each.

Students need to allow at least three weeks for delivery. All nametags have the WTAMU emblem, the student's name, WTAMU Department of Nursing, RN, BSN credentials if desired. An order form for nametags is provided in this handbook.

Independent Studies

Independent study courses may not be taken as a substitute for course work designated on the plan of study. Independent studies will be approved only for experiences that enhance research skills, role specialization or otherwise meet a student's unique learning needs. The student desiring the independent study must first seek academic advising. Upon approval of the academic adviser, the student should then identify an appropriate graduate faculty member to guide and evaluate the independent study. The student is required to meet with the faculty member throughout the semester at times mutually agreed on. The student must show evidence of working on the independent study throughout the semester and must complete the study within one semester.

Incomplete Grades

In general, incomplete grades are intended for use only in the event of serious illness or extreme personal crisis of the student or household member. In precepted clinical and practica, an incomplete may be necessary due to time constraints of the preceptor. The student must sign a request for the incomplete and establish, with the course instructor, the time requirements for completion of the course. WTAMU allows one year for the completion of the course before the incomplete becomes an F, however, it is strongly recommended that the date for completion be established as the minimum time required to complete course requirements. It is the student's responsibility to maintain contact with the faculty member regarding progression on the incomplete and to notify faculty of any circumstances hindering progression.

Standardized Examinations:

Standardized HESI specialty examinations will be required at the end of the 3P's core courses (NURS 6384 Pharmacotherapeutics, NURS 6315 Advanced Health Assessment, and NURS 6320 Pathophysiology) and in selected other advanced courses. The cost of the examinations (approximately \$60) is the student's responsibility.

Proctoring of Major Exams:

All major exams will be proctored. An online test proctoring service will be utilized for most major course exams. Students also have an option of testing on campus in most courses. Students are responsible for setting up an account with the online proctoring service, scheduling their exams, and paying associated costs. Instructions for setting up the account and scheduling exams will be provided within each course. The cost of online proctoring will be up to \$90 depending on course and student options. Students electing to test on campus will pay no proctoring fees. A web conferencing camera and microphone are required for online proctoring sessions.

West Texas A & M University
MSN Nametag Order Form

Name: _____

Credentials: _____

(e.g. RN, BSN RN, CEN RN, CCRN etc.)

Print your name carefully!

Make your check out to WTAMU

Send this form along with the check for \$20 to:

Lisa Robinson RN, MSN

WT BOX 60969

Canyon, TX 79016

Mailing address for nametag delivery:

For faster processing - put your Buff Id number on your check.

It may take up to 4 weeks to receive your nametag - please order early!

Academic Grievance Procedure (University Student Grievance Procedure)

West Texas A&M University has procedures for addressing written student complaints. These procedures are intended to provide a process for resolving student grievances in a prompt and equitable manner without prejudice, discrimination, or malice toward the person or persons initiating the complaint. The procedure for filing such a complaint is outlined in the West Texas A&M University Code of Student Life, p. 34. The Code of Student Life document is found electronically at <http://www.wtamu.edu/webres/File/Student%20Life/Codeof-Student-Life.pdf>

Reminder: Any grievance or grade appeal rests on the principle that all parties have made a good-faith effort to resolve the dispute prior to initiating either system. Grade appeals only occur if the student alleges that an arbitrary, capricious, or prejudicial grade assignment has occurred. Students are expected to follow the chain of 23 command in resolving any grievances. The chain of command is as follows: course instructor, associate department head for undergraduate studies or clinical coordination (whichever is appropriate), department head, dean, provost, president.

Comprehensive Examination--All graduate students at WTAMU are required to pass a comprehensive examination in the department of their major. Graduate faculty in the department of nursing have made the decision that Comprehensive Examinations will be comprised of a written comprehensive examination.

Comprehensive Examinations are administered at the end of the fall and spring semesters and taken the semester the student plans to graduate. Local students will sit for comprehensive examination on a scheduled day in the computer lab of the Bivins Nursing Learning Center (BNLC). An online test proctoring service will be utilized for distance students. If the student plans to graduate in a summer term, the student will complete the comprehensive examination during the preceding spring semester. The comprehensive examination allow students to demonstrate meeting the program learning outcomes of using nursing's unique body of knowledge to improve patient care. It consists of three questions which address the learning outcomes listed on page 8 of this handbook.

In addition to comprehensive examination/thesis, all students will have a capstone practicum experience. Scoring rubrics for these experiences are provided for the Comprehensive MSN (major code 5703/5713) and the Family Nurse Practitioner (major code 5807/5817) on the following pages.

Additional information regarding the written comprehensive exam including a study guide is located in Appendix B.

**Department of Nursing
Graduate Nursing Program
End of Program Practicum Evaluation (5703/5713)**

Student: _____

Faculty Member: _____ Date: _____

Required Score: 40 (80%)

Earned Score Faculty Member: _____

Outcome Criteria	0=no behaviors evident	2=20% behaviors evident	4=40% behaviors evident	6=60% behaviors evident	8=80% behaviors evident	10=100% behaviors evident
Learning Outcome 3 Ethical Decision-Making Practice ethical decision making by <i>identifying and analyzing</i> ethical dilemmas and <i>assuming</i> responsibility for one's own practice.						
Learning Outcome 4 Operationalize professional role development by <i>implementing</i> advanced nursing practice in role specialization. This can include but not be limited to fiscal and human resource development, quality improvement, staff development, instructional design, informatics, clinical proficiency, evidence-based practice, and acting as advocate, consultant, and collaborator.						
Learning Outcome 6 Cultural Competence Appreciate human diversity in health and illness by <i>assuring</i> that systems meet the needs of populations in a culturally relevant manner.						
Learning Outcome 7 Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes Recognizes and acts as a part of an interprofessional team.						
Learning Outcome 8 Integrate Clinical Prevention and Population Health Integrating health promotion and disease prevention by <i>utilizing</i> epidemiological data in <i>developing and evaluating</i> culturally competent nursing care.						

Faculty Member Signature: _____

Elaboration (please continue on separate page):

**Department of Nursing
Graduate Nursing Program
Practicum Evaluation – Family Nurse Practitioner (5708/5718)**

Student: _____

Faculty Member: _____ Date: _____

Required Score: 32 (80%)

Earned Score Faculty Member: _____

Outcome Criteria	0=no behaviors evident	2=20% behaviors evident	4=40% behaviors evident	6=60% behaviors evident	8=80% behaviors evident	10=100% behaviors evident
Learning Outcome 3 Ethical Decision-Making Practice ethical decision making by <i>identifying and analyzing</i> ethical dilemmas and <i>assuming</i> responsibility for one’s own practice.						
Learning Outcome 4,9 Operationalize profession role development of Family Nurse Practitioner by <i>implementing</i> advanced practice as clinician, teacher, researcher, advocate, consultant, collaborator, and manager of systems.						
Learning Outcome 6 Cultural Competence Appreciate human diversity in health and illness by <i>assuring</i> that systems meet the needs of populations in a culturally relevant manner.						
Learning Outcome 7 Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes Recognizes and acts as a part of an interprofessional team.						
Learning Outcome 8 Integrate Clinical Prevention and Population Health Integrating health promotion and disease prevention by <i>utilizing</i> epidemiological data in <i>developing and evaluating</i> culturally competent nursing care						

Faculty Member Signature: _____

Comments:

Thesis Committee Guidelines – WTAMU Department of Nursing

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines for the functioning of thesis committees in the Department of Nursing, WTAMU. These guidelines augment the guidelines provided by the Graduate School, WTAMU. Development of a thesis committee, the function of the thesis committee, and thesis defense expectations are included. Thesis is accomplished during the final two semesters of study and consists of conducting original research.

Thesis Committee

Appointment of the Committee

A student who expresses interest in completing a thesis will be directed to the Associate Department Head for Graduate Studies, Research, and Grants. The student will complete the application for thesis prior to meeting with the Associate Department Head (Appendix A). The Associate Department Head will guide the student in selecting a thesis chair and thesis committee based on faculty expertise in either subject matter or methodology. The student will then get approval from the members of the thesis committee (Appendix B).

The two thesis courses (NURS 6301 and NURS 6302) should coincide with the students projected last two semesters of coursework in the nursing graduate program.

Number of Members

Each master's thesis committee shall be composed of a minimum of three members. A fourth and/or fifth member may be added to the committee when deemed appropriate/necessary to provide required expertise.

Committee Membership

Committee membership can include faculty from outside the nursing department, but the thesis chair must be a graduate faculty of the Department of Nursing. In order for a member to chair a thesis, he/she must have previously served as a second or third member of a thesis committee.

Thesis Committee Responsibilities

The initial responsibility of the committee is to meet and determine the feasibility of the topic and the thesis plan or proposal, and to permit the student to proceed only after such determination has been made. The committee shall sign off on the student's plan or proposal and a copy should be kept in the student's file in the department. The signing of this document signifies that the student has permission to proceed with the study as outlined in the plan.

The committee shall determine whether the student's research is subject to the university policy on research on human or animal subjects and advise the student accordingly.

The committee shall determine the adequacy of the bibliography.

The committee shall review and approve the methodology and any instrument or questionnaire used in data collection.

Committee members are responsible for reviewing thesis drafts, and providing feedback in a timely manner. Depending on circumstances, there should be no more than a two-week turnaround review time for each of the committee members to review the manuscript for a thesis. In addition, committee members should meet periodically, as determined by the thesis chair, to discuss progress of the student. The student need not be present at such meetings, but may upon request.

The responsibility of the committee as a whole is to examine the student's work and to meet and make a final determination of the acceptability of the thesis, and to arrange for any oral defense of the thesis in accordance with Graduate School policies.

It should be communicated to the student that it is their responsibility to observe graduate deadlines for the submission of draft and final copies of the thesis. A reasonable amount of time (not more than two weeks) should be allowed for each of the committee members to review the manuscript.

The Chair

The committee chair should inform the student regarding proprietary interests and ownership of data or research product as appropriate, and reach agreement about potential publication of this material. Formal written memoranda of understanding are desirable. This needs to be done as early in the process as possible, preferably at the time the proposal is accepted.

The student and the committee chair, insofar as it is possible, should arrive at an agreement on an approximate time schedule, including meetings of the committee, for the accomplishment of thesis/dissertation-related work for each semester or term that the student is engaged in such work. The committee should meet throughout the thesis process. The chair shall have primary responsibility for the supervision of the student's work, setting deadlines, and guiding the student's progress.

The chair shall assume the role of "principal investigator" when the student's research involves human subjects and shall insure the student has completed CITI/ethics training as part of the completion of the Institutional Review Board application process. The chair shall ensure that Graduate School policies in this area are carefully observed.

The chair shall inform the student of university regulations regarding the need to maintain continuous enrollment while working on the thesis.

The chair shall inform the student of the Graduate School process for completion of thesis.

In consultation with the other members of the committee, the chair shall determine the final grade on the thesis and see that it is properly reported to the Associate Department Head. The Associate Department Head will provide appropriate notification to the Graduate School.

The chair is responsible for evaluating the student's progress before assigning an "IP" and final grade for thesis. All "IP" grades will be changed, by the Chair, once the student has successfully defended their thesis.

The chair shall inform the student of the APA style manual along with any deviations for the style manual required by the department for formatting the thesis.

Disputes

In the event that a dispute or disagreement arises between a student and a member of the committee or between members of the committee, the committee chair shall call a meeting of the committee and the student for the purpose of resolving the problem.

If the dispute cannot be resolved through this process, or if the proposed solution is unacceptable to the student or one of the committee members, the committee should consult the Associate Department Head. If the dispute remains unresolved, the Department Head and Dean, Graduate School may be consulted.

Termination of the Committee

The committee has completed its obligations when the final manuscript has been approved by the Graduate Dean, each member has signed the approval page for the publication copy of the thesis/dissertation, and the thesis/dissertation grade is recorded. If the student fails to progress, the thesis chair may terminate the committee.

Application for Thesis
WTAMU Department of Nursing

Student: _____

Date: _____

Student ID#: _____

Proposed Research Project (*Include topic, research question/hypothesis and methodology*):

TOPIC:

RESEARCH QUESTION/HYPOTHESIS:

METHODOLOGY:

Signature

**Thesis Committee Assignment
WTAMU Department of Nursing**

Candidate: _____ Date: _____

ID# _____ Estimated Date of Graduation: _____

The above student is advanced to candidacy, is in good standing at WTAMU, Graduate School, and Department of Nursing, and is recommended for thesis NURS 6301 assignment.

The student and committee members have read the thesis guidelines of the Graduate School and approve the following proposed topic:

Human subjects training has been completed: Yes/No/NA (circle one) Date: _____
IRB approval has been obtained: Yes/ No/ NA (circle one) Date: _____

**Committee
Chair**

Print Name

Signature

Members

Print Name

Signature

Print Name

Signature

Print Name

Signature

Approved:

*Associate Department Head, Graduate Studies,
Research and Grants*

WTAMU Graduate Nursing Program Thesis Guidelines

Purpose of the Thesis

The Thesis is the alternative to the Research Paper in the Graduate Nursing Program. It offers the opportunity to (1) access and critically review current and relevant literature regarding a specific research question through the lens of a theoretical framework, (2) design and complete a research project at the master's level, and (3) determine how the findings from the study will improve nursing practice. The master's thesis does not have to be independent or original research, but should be the new application of ideas. The Thesis and the related oral comprehensive examination (Oral Comprehensive Examination) offer the opportunity to demonstrate the ability to write, and communicate orally (AACN Essentials for Master's Education). The thesis must be written using the guidelines of the WTAMU Graduate School. Following are the nursing requirements:

Developing the Research Idea

1. The student is encouraged to initiate a meeting with the Assoc. Dept. Head for Graduate Nursing early in the semester **prior to enrolling in thesis**. Once the topic and methodology are approved, the student may be referred to graduate faculty with expertise in the content area or the methodology for course enrollment. Meetings with the graduate coordinator or other graduate faculty are encouraged to facilitate this process. Should human subjects review be necessary, the student will assure that the IRB forms are completed and approved by the IRB Committee before collection of any data.
2. Once the thesis has been completed and the thesis chair and the graduate student are satisfied that it is ready, paper copies of the final draft will be forwarded to other graduate faculty at least 10 working days prior to thesis defense.
3. The Oral Comprehensive Examination (defense), will be scheduled within the last two weeks of the semester. At the Oral Comprehensive Examination:
 - a. The student will make a formal presentation of the thesis (approximately 20 - 25 minutes)
 - b. If the oral comprehensive exam is opened to those outside the committee, questions will be entertained by the graduate student (10 minutes), after which the guests will leave the room.
 - c. The graduate faculty members will engage in scholarly discussion with the graduate student until their questions about the study have been satisfactorily addressed.
 - d. The graduate faculty members will confer in private, and students will be informed by letter of their performance on comprehensive examination. The student's score will be determined by averaging the scores from the graduate faculty.
 - e. The outcomes of the oral comprehensive examination are: approval with editorial changes, conditional approval with substantive changes, and approval denied. Note: a thesis may only be defended two times.

4. Upon approval, all graduate faculty members will sign the “Thesis Title Page” and the “Report of Comprehensive Examination” (forms found in the appendices of the Graduate Handbook for the Nursing Programs). It is the responsibility of the student to bring a copy of the forms, printed on final draft paper (at least ¼% bond) to the oral comprehensive exam ready for signature.

QUALITATIVE THESIS GUIDELINES

Utilize thesis guidelines for the Graduate
School Thesis Approval Form with Signatures
Dedication (if any)
Thesis Title Page
Acknowledgements (if any)
Abstract
Table of Contents (including appendices)
List of Tables
List of Figures

Chapter I: Introduction

The introduction to the thesis provides the reader with an understanding of the phenomena being studied, its significance to the nursing profession, and the research question. The thesis should address the following areas fully:

1. Identification of the phenomena of interest
2. Description of the author's interest in the phenomena
3. Identification of the purpose of the study
4. Identification of the research question
5. Sensitizing definitions of the concepts surrounding the phenomena
6. Description of the significance of the study to the nursing profession
7. Proposed theoretical framework that will guide the study
8. Identify assumptions and limitations (please note that the design or paradigm cannot be a limitation, so do not identify small sample size associated with qualitative research as a limitation)

Chapter II: Integrative Review of the Literature

For the thesis, write an introductory paragraph that identifies the areas that will be addressed. These areas should contain at a minimum the research literature regarding the theoretical framework and the concepts inherent in the research question(s). Each of these areas should be addressed under its own subheading. The following areas of the research literature are to be discussed under each subheading:

- 1. Comparison of the Quantitative Research Literature:** Compare the research articles to one another, looking for points of agreement and disagreement – paying attention to author/purpose of the study and its significance to nursing, major findings, populations, independent and dependent variables, measurement tools, data analysis, rigor of the study, significance, and effect size)
- 2. Comparison of the Qualitative Research Literature:** Compare the research articles to one another, looking for points of agreement and disagreement – paying attention to author, purpose of the study and its significance to nursing, research questions, qualitative paradigm used, aspects of rigor, and themes that emerge.

3. Synthesis of the Relevant Literature: Integrated discussion of the major findings and their application to an issue of significance to nursing. Consolidate major areas of agreement and disagreement from both the quantitative and qualitative literature relevant to the student's project. Discuss ways in which the qualitative and quantitative research confirms or contradicts each other.

4. Summary: Discuss the existing state of literature, identify gaps in the knowledge base, and make a link to your study.

Note: In qualitative studies it is expected that the review of literature will be expanded upon conclusion of the study to explore concepts that have emerged through the study.

Chapter III: Methods

This chapter provides the reader with an understanding of how the study was conducted including:

1. Introductory paragraph outlining the material that will be included in the chapter
2. Overview of the qualitative paradigm through which the phenomena has been studied, including the philosophical background of the paradigm
3. Description of the setting
4. Description of the researcher's process for gaining access to the population
5. Criteria for inclusion in the study
6. Plan for data collection and analysis
7. Presentation of ethical considerations
 - a. Describe the review process that was used
 - b. Discuss the risks and benefits, and identify steps taken to minimize any risks
 - c. Place examples of cover letter(s) and /or consent forms in Appendices

Chapter IV: Results

The results chapter is written upon completion of the study, and provides the reader with a full description of the findings of the study. This chapter will include:

1. An introductory paragraph to overview areas discussed in the chapter
2. Description of the sample characteristics
3. Description of data analysis procedures Results for each research question(s), reported according to the paradigm used: themes that emerged, propositions or theories that emerged, etc. The author should write this section using thick, rich description including quotations that explicated the themes or categories
4. Additional findings that are not related to the research question(s).
5. Discuss the methodological rigor of this study.

Chapter V: Discussion

This chapter provides the reader with an understanding of how the researcher interprets the findings, implications for further study, additional review of the literature that was done upon completion of the study to address emerging concepts, and relevance to the profession of nursing. It should address these areas:

1. Introductory paragraph
2. Interpretation of findings
3. Literature review for concepts emerging during the study that were not addressed in the original review of literature
4. Relevance of findings to the nursing profession
5. Identification of specific recommendations for additional research

References

Appendices

QUANTITATIVE THESIS GUIDELINES

Utilize thesis guidelines for the Graduate School

Thesis Approval Form with Signatures

Dedication (if any)

Thesis Title Page

Acknowledgements (if any)

Table of Contents (including appendices)

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter I: Introduction

The introduction to the thesis provides the reader with an understanding of the problem being studied, its significance to the nursing profession, and the research question(s) and hypotheses.

The thesis should address the following areas fully:

1. Background and significance of the problem
2. Statement of the purpose of the study
3. Clear delineation of the research question(s) and / or hypothesis(es)
4. Proposed theoretical framework that will guide the study
5. Definitions of major variables or concepts, both theoretical and operational
6. State major assumptions, limitations, and delimitations

Chapter II: Integrative Review of the Literature

For the thesis, write an introductory paragraph that identifies the areas that will be addressed. These areas should contain at a minimum the research literature regarding the theoretical framework and the variables being studied. Each of these areas should be addressed under its own subheading. The following areas of the research literature are to be discussed under each subheading:

1. **Comparison of the Quantitative Research Literature:** Compare the research articles to one another, looking for points of agreement and disagreement – paying attention to author/purpose of the study and its significance to nursing, major findings, populations, independent and dependent variables, measurement tools, data analysis, rigor of the study, significance, and effect size)
2. **Comparison of the Qualitative Research Literature:** Compare the research articles to one another, looking for points of agreement and disagreement – paying attention to author, purpose of the study and its significance to nursing, research questions, qualitative paradigm used, aspects of rigor, and themes that emerge.
3. **Synthesis of the Relevant Literature:** Integrated discussion of the major findings and their application to an issue of significance to nursing. Consolidate major areas of agreement and disagreement from both the quantitative and qualitative literature relevant to the student's project. Discuss ways in which the qualitative and quantitative research confirms or contradicts each other.

Summary: Discuss the existing state of the literature, identify gaps in the knowledge base, and make a link to your study.

Chapter III: Methods and Procedures

This chapter provides the reader with an understanding of how the study was conducted, including:

1. Introductory paragraph outlining the material that will be included in the chapter.
2. Description of the research design
3. Description of the setting
4. Discussion of the measurement methods
5. Describe each measurement tool, its scoring, and level of data provided
 - a. Attach copies of all measurement instruments in Appendices
 - b. Attach letters of permission to use measurement instruments in Appendices
 - c. Discuss evaluation of validity and reliability of each measurement tool
6. Discussion of procedures
 - a. Explain in detail treatments used
 - b. Provide step-by-step description of procedures
 - c. Place samples of data collection forms in the Appendices
7. Discussion of the proposed methods of data analysis
 - a. Statistical testing proposed for each question and/or hypothesis
 - b. Plans for data management (use of computerized statistical program?)
8. Presentation of ethical considerations
 - a. Describe the review process that was use.
 - b. Discuss the risks and benefits, and identify steps taken to minimize any risks
 - c. Place examples of cover letter(s) and /or consent forms in Appendices
9. Discussion of limitations

Chapter IV: Results

The results chapter is written upon completion of the study, and provides the reader with a full description of the findings of the study. This chapter will include:

1. Introductory paragraph outlining the material that will be included in the chapter
2. Description of the sample characteristics reflected in the data
3. Description of the results of statistical analysis for each research question or hypothesis
4. Address issues of reliability and validity of your instruments as they performed with your sample in this study (this is a significant piece of this chapter).

Chapter V: Discussion

This chapter provides the reader with an understanding of how the researcher interprets the findings, implications for further study, and relevance to the nursing profession. It should address these areas:

1. Introductory paragraph

2. Interpretations of major findings
3. Discuss conclusions
4. Relevance of findings to the nursing profession
5. Identification of specific recommendations for additional research
- 6 Conclusion

References

Appendices

Appendices

Appendix A

Graduation Checklist

- ✓ Have met Requirements for the Master of Science in Nursing Degree (MSN):
 - ❑ 39-40 credit hours for Administration & Education Role Specializations, 46 hours for the Family Nurse Practitioner Role
 - ❑ 18 hours at the 6300 level taken at WTAMU (these 18 hours do NOT include transfer in credits)
 - ❑ Minimum grade of B in all graduate courses
 - ❑ Degree completed within 6 years from date of first course listed on plan of study for MSN degree. This includes any courses transferred in.
 - ❑ Thesis or non-thesis option
 - ❑ Pass Comprehensive Examination (research utilization project or thesis, oral presentation)
 - ❑ In good standing with State Board of Nursing
- ✓ Current Degree Plan, forms have been processed for any changes from original degree plan.
- ✓ Course work including practicum completed.
- ✓ Comprehensive Examination- Synthesis:
 - ❑ Intent to enroll in thesis or research utilization project; thesis will be enrolled in for a minimum of 2 consecutive semesters prior to graduation; research utilization project must be enrolled in fall or spring semester of projected graduation semester; if planning to graduate in August, synthesis must be completed spring semesterGraduations are held May, August and December
- ✓ Comprehensive oral exams are scheduled April and November. Discuss Synthesis/Thesis paper plans prior to due date with advisor
 - ❑ Oral presentation of synthesis/thesis
- ✓ Thesis filed in Graduate Office by due date (for those who selected thesis option)
- ✓ Apply for graduation—must do in order to have a diploma made even if you do not plan to participate in the ceremony. Apply at least by semester plan to graduate: Oct. 1, March 1, July 1.
- ✓ Order cap, gown, hood for graduation ceremony (last 2 items or ordered at bookstore)
- ✓ Order WTAMU pin (order in October or February)

Appendix B

MSN Comprehensive Exam Study Guide

Purpose

The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to ensure that the student is able to demonstrate mastery of the following **MSN Graduate Program Student Learning Outcomes**.

MSN Graduate Program Student Learning Outcomes

Upon program completion, the graduate will be prepared to:

- 1. Incorporate the sciences and humanities into an MSN practice.*
- 2. Demonstrate organization and systems leadership.*
- 3. Incorporate quality improvement and safety into practice.*
- 4. Translate and integrate scholarship into practice.*
- 5. Utilize informatics and healthcare technology into practice.*
- 6. Shape healthcare policy and advocacy.*
- 7. Engage in interprofessional collaboration.*
- 8. Synthesize disease prevention strategies and population health promotion.*
- 9. Practice at the level of a Master's prepared nurse.*

Planning for Success

Successful completion of the graduate nursing program is based upon synthesis and application of master's level advanced nursing knowledge taught throughout the program. The comprehensive exam validates that the MSN Graduate Program Student Learning Outcomes have been met and knowledge synthesis has occurred.

To study for comprehensive exams, a **thorough review** of all major core courses is required. Additionally, students are reminded that the best source of review material comes from the list of recommended study textbooks. Students are cautioned not to limit their study resources to summaries of the concepts listed in the study guides below. It is recommended that you utilize your course notes and textbooks from your previous courses.

Testing Procedure

The MSN Comprehensives exams are offered fall and spring. Dates for testing are posted in at the beginning of each semester in the NURS 6120 course. MSN Comprehensive exams are written at the BNLC and are limited to four hours. Students are required to have a Buff Gold Card to sign into the testing room and access the computer. Each exam is blindly graded by at least two faculty members. Students who are unsuccessful will be required to register for NURS 6120 in the next semester that it is available. The exam will be made up of three (3) essay questions. Each question will be answerable in about two double spaced pages.

Research Component Study Guide

Students completing the Master of Science in Nursing degree at WTAMU should be able to:

1. Identify a researchable problem and explain the process and purpose of a review of literature.
2. Generate research questions from theory and practice.
3. Develop a researchable problem statement (PICO/PICOT) or research question and justify that problem selection.
4. Relate research design (experimental, quasi-experimental, correlational, descriptive, etc.) to the project objectives, research question(s) and hypotheses.
5. Discuss the validity and reliability of data collection measurements/instruments.
6. Identify and define sampling techniques and strategies as these apply to the research process.
7. Compare and contrast qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and be able to provide a rationale for their use in a research project.
8. Identify and differentiate independent and dependent variables in a variety of research problem statements.
9. Interpret statistical methods employed in research studies. Be able to derive meaning and interpret statistical findings. Examples include p value, confidence interval, effect size, and power.
10. Differentiate between statistical and clinical significance.
11. Describe an approach (systematic plan) for applying research findings in practice setting, including evaluation of outcomes.
12. Describe the purpose and objectives for evidence-based practice as contributing to the development of nursing science.
13. Appraise research studies for **quality and level of evidence**. Be able to discuss the following:
 - a) type of research, b) need for the study, c) theoretical framework, d) sampling technique, e) study design, f) strengths and limitations of the findings, g) interpretation of outcomes, and h) recommendations for practice or future research.
14. Discuss considerations for inclusion of articles in the review of literature section.

You should expect to be asked to discuss any of the above concepts in detail as well as provide substantive examples and/or analysis of research studies and findings for application in practice.

List of Recommended Research/Statistics Textbooks - Only one textbook is needed.

Any general research and statistics textbook written for the graduate level nurse will suffice for

comprehensive exam preparation. In addition to reviewing a recommended textbook, we suggest students evaluate published research articles located in the Cornette Library database for concepts from the above list.

*Grove, S. K., Burns, N., & Gray, J. R. (2013). *The practice of nursing research: Appraisal, synthesis, and generation of evidence* (7th ed.) St. Louis, MO: Elsevier.

Kim, M., & Mallory, C. (2014). *Statistics for evidence-based practice in nursing*. Burlington MA: Jones and Bartlett.

*Melynk, B., & Fineout-Overholt, E. (2011). *Evidence-based practice in nursing and healthcare* (2nd ed). Philadelphia: Lippincott.

Pyrzczak, F. (2013). *Evaluating research in academic journals: A practical guide to realistic evaluation* (5th ed.). Glendale CA: Pyrczak Publishing.

Samuels, M.L. Witmer, F. L., & Schaffner, A. (Author) (2012). *Statistics for Life Sciences* (4th ed.). Pearson.

Tappen, R. M. (2016). *Advanced nursing research: From theory to practice* (2nd ed.). Sudbury, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Theory Component Study Guide

The purpose of theory is to guide nursing research and practice, so the theory should reflect a reality that is substantial and significant. In other words, it should possess clinical or practical importance. Students must understand the underlying premise of a theory in order to appropriately apply that theory to the research process. Select two or more (nursing or borrowed) theories that you feel will guide you professionally and review the following information about each so you can discuss how best to incorporate use of theory into a practice or research problem. Consider the following list of theories/theorists:

Nursing:

Jean Watson' Caring Theory

Rosemary Rizzo Parse Human Becoming Theory

Margaret Newman – Theory of Health as Expanding Consciousness

Betty Neuman Systems Model

Nola Pender – Health promotion Model

Martha Rogers's Science of Unitary Human Beings

Swanson – Theory of Caring

Boykin and Schoenhoffer – Nursing as Caring

Patterson and Zderad – Humanistic Nursing

Vulnerability Model

Borrowed:

Transtheoretical Model

Health Belief Model

Travis Wellness Model

Systems Theory

Application of Theory in Professional Practice

1. Is the theory clear and consistent? Explain.
2. What are the major concepts of the theory and how are they defined?
3. Are relationships described for these concepts?
4. What assumptions, values, and/or beliefs underlie the development of the theory?
5. Does the theory address a problem that is essential to nursing practice?
6. How might the selected theory serve as a framework for a research question?
7. How does the theory help identify meaningful and relevant areas for study?
8. Does the theory provide a plausible approach to management of health problems and/or health promotion?
9. Does the theory help to generate a nursing diagnosis and how would it be usable in a plan of care?
10. Compare and contrast two nursing theories.
11. Appropriately apply a health promotion theory to a given situation (for example, an individual, family, or community healthcare issue or problem).

You should expect to be asked to discuss any of the above concepts in detail as well as provide substantive examples of application of theory in practice. Additionally, you should be able to compare the selection and application of diverse theories under similar circumstances i.e. discuss how a project will change based on theory selection.

List of Recommended Theory Textbooks – Only one of the following theory textbooks is necessary.

Any general nursing theories textbook written for the graduate level nurse will suffice for comprehensive exam preparation. In addition to reviewing a recommended textbook, we

suggest students evaluate published research articles located in the Cornette Library database for application of selected theory.

Cody, W. (Ed.). (2013). *Philosophical and theoretical perspectives for advanced nursing practice* (5th ed.). Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett.

Butts, J. B. & Rich, K. L. (2015). *Philosophies and theories for advanced nursing practice* (2nd ed). Burlington, MA: Jones and Bartlett.

George, J.B. (2011). *Nursing theories: The base for professional nursing practice* (6th edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall

Population Health Study Guide

1. Know basic epidemiological data such as IMR, longevity rate, top 3 causes of death for state of residence and US. Know top 3 cause of death of third world countries (in general).
2. Know and discuss meaning of IMR, Causes of death at local, national and global level.
3. Differentiate between incidences, prevalence, Case fatality Rate (CFR), and index case. Endemic, epidemic, pandemic, epidemiological designs, epidemiological triangle, chain of infection and web of causation. Be able to discuss, apply, and utilize these concepts in a case scenario.
4. Apply a community needs assessment to a case study.
5. Discuss issues related to health literacy and vulnerable populations from a local, national, and global perspective.
6. Discuss health care policy from the global perspective.
7. Be able to identify multiple elements that affect healthcare policy decisions.

You should expect to be asked to discuss any of the above concepts in detail. Additionally, be able to discuss planning necessary for conducting a community needs assessment as well as for utilizing any of the above. or for any of application of the information above.

Recommended Textbook

Any general nursing public health or population's textbook written for the graduate level nurse will suffice for comprehensive exam preparation. In addition to a textbook, it is considered very helpful for students to review NURS 6318 course notes and websites referenced within the course.

DiClemente, R., Salazar, L. & Crosby, R. (2013). *Health behavior theory for public health: Principles, foundations, and applications*. Burlington, MA: Jones and Bartlett

Any general nursing public health or population's textbook written for the graduate level nurse will suffice for comprehensive exam preparation. In addition to a textbook, it is considered very helpful for students to review NURS 6318 course notes and websites referenced within the course.

Praxis and Practicum Requirements for Comprehensive Students

Praxis and Practicum are clinically based experiences. In praxis, you explore a clinically focused issue in which you are interested or which is occurring in your place of employment. In Practicum, you explore an issue based on your role specialization (Nursing Education, Leadership, Management, etc.) Praxis is taken when you have completed the 6 core course (Theory, Research, Populations, Pharmacotherapeutics, Pathophysiology and Advanced Assessment) or concurrently with the last of these courses. A caveat to this, Pharmacotherapeutics, Pathophysiology and Advanced assessment must be completed BEFORE you enroll in Praxis. Practicum is taken during your last semester and serves as your graduate capstone course.

You are required to find a mentor to help guide you through the projects. Additionally, the instructor in the course will aid you. Your praxis may be completed in your place of employment and may be completed within the scope of your job description. Neither require travel to WTAMU. If you are not currently employed as a nurse, you will need to find resources for this course. This may mean collaborating with a clinic to explore issues related to, for example, childhood asthma. Your instructor will guide you through this when you enroll in the course. The syllabi reflect in detail the specific requirements for these courses, but here is a brief overview of what to expect:

Praxis. Praxis is clinically focused regardless of your role specialization. Additionally, you will focus on a particular clinical issue/intervention and identify a population of focus - something that piques your interest. For example, you might be the Director of an ICU unit and notice an increase in incidence ventilator acquired pneumonia, or read about a new management protocol which would require a change in practice on your unit. Perhaps you have new hires who need more instruction in care of the patient with ventilator acquired pneumonia. Perhaps you believe you want to reduce the incidence to a level below national norms. You would explore this. That could include staff meetings for input, research of practices in other hospitals, walking rounds specific to this issue, etc. etc. - with some end product in mind, such as a new protocol, developing and presenting refresher courses, recommending equipment changes, etc., etc. Your interventions are designed to influence health care outcomes for your specified population. You will be required to keep a log and participate in short activities online as well. You will develop three personal course objectives related to the clinical issue and how you intend to address it.

Practicum. Practicum is similar but is your capstone experience for the program. In it, your question and objectives will specifically address your role specialization (leadership/management, education, holistic nursing, etc.). In education, an objective could be to negotiate with a local nursing school to present a guest lecture on some area of expertise, or lead seminars, or develop an online teaching module. In holistic nursing, you might focus on a need for self-care to address the issue of nursing burnout or “compassion fatigue”. In both courses you are required to log at least 90 clock hours. This includes time spent researching the issue, planning and conducting staff meetings, developing a protocol or in-

service, presenting it—basically all the time needed to see the project to its fruition. You will find that it is very easy to accumulated 90 hours as you well know in your current role when trying to effect change or address population health as a whole. This can easily be accomplished on your own time, or actually in conjunction with your work duties if working on a work related issue. Again, specifics about the course requirements will be in the course syllabus, but this should provide guidance in course sequencing and semester planning.