Master of Science in Nursing
Student Handbook

Fall 2010
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Introduction

The Master of Science Degree in Nursing (MSN) Handbook is designed to supplement the Alvernia University Graduate Catalog. It has been prepared with policies specific to the Nursing Department. Copies of the Graduate Student Handbook and MSN Handbook are available on the Alvernia University website.

The policies contain essential requirements in the preparation of the advance practice nurse both academically and clinically in accord with the Mission of Alvernia University, the outcomes of the MSN Program, and the outcomes proposed by professional nursing standards.

The contents of this Handbook are provided for the information of the student. It is accurate at the time of printing, but is subject to change as deemed appropriate by the University in order to fulfill its role and mission or by a professional nursing organization specifically impacting the MSN Program. Changes may be implemented without prior notice and without obligation, and, unless specified otherwise, are effective when made.

Students are required to read this Handbook upon matriculation in the MSN Program. A signed statement by the student that he/she received a Handbook will be maintained in the student file.
I. Organization

Accreditations and Approvals

The MSN Program has initial approval from the Department of Education for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and is designed to meet all accreditation standards for the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). Application for CCNE accreditation will be made at the first possible opportunity as outlined by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

Nursing Department Mission Statement

The Nursing Programs are designed to function within the overall educational framework and in accord with the Mission Statement of Alvernia University. The Programs provide students with an education in the Catholic intellectual tradition, combining liberal arts, professional education, and ethical values. Learning takes place within a caring Franciscan environment, emphasizing respect for the dignity of all human beings and the call to serve others. Christian values are blended with the professional competence to provide the student with knowledge and skills to serve in health care settings with diverse populations. Faculty and students work together to increase understanding of each other and clients with different cultural backgrounds and perspectives. Graduates are prepared to be reflective practitioners with high moral integrity, engaged in lifelong learning.

Master of Science in Nursing Program Goals and Outcomes

The MSN graduate is prepared to practice as a nurse educator in a health-care facility or a pre-licensed educational program at baccalaureate, associate degree, and hospital diploma-based programs. In addition, the MSN graduate has the content knowledge and skills to successfully achieve Advanced-Practice Certification for Nurse Educator through the National League for Nursing’s Certified Nurse Educator™ Examination. The MSN program prepares students for entry into nursing doctoral education in either a practice or research focused program.

Specific knowledge, skills and attributes of the MSN program are organized into six outcome areas:

1. Nursing theory and practice
2. Educational theory and practice
3. Ethics
4. Research skills
5. Leadership / Collegiality
6. Communication skills

Upon graduation, the MSN student will be able to:
1. Apply evidenced-base knowledge of specialty practice area
2. Integrate nursing and education theory and scientific knowledge into the practice of nursing education
3. Demonstrate ethical standards across a wide range of nursing education and practice settings
4. Accurately synthesize research evidence on educational and clinical topics
5. Demonstrate characteristics of effective leadership in nursing education settings
6. Communicate clearly and effectively to a variety of audiences and settings

**Professional Standards and Guidelines**

The MSN Program is based on national standards as outlined in the following documents: *The Essentials of Masters Education for Professional Practice* (AACN, 1996); *The Scope of Practice for Academic Nurse Educator* (NLN, 2005); *Institutes of Medicine Health Professions Education: A Bridge to Quality* (IOM, 2003); and, *American Nurses Association Code of Ethics* (ANA, 2001).

A detailed matrix illustrating Alvernia University’s MSN Program Outcomes to National Standard outcomes is located in the Forms Section of this Handbook.

**Ethics**

**Statement of Mission and Values in Academic Life**

The Nursing Department supports the Alvernia University Statement of Mission and Values in Academic Life. This is in conjunction with the professional nursing standards of conduct.

- Franciscan higher education provides a value system seeking integration of all academic disciplines and a curriculum that acknowledges these values as a transforming force in the light of the Gospel.
- Those who acknowledge this value system also recognize that we are to be “in relationship” with all our brothers and sisters in respectful, loving and compassionate concern for each other.

Therefore, we

- Support peace and non-violence by respecting diversity and affirming the dignity of everyone in our University community.
- Practice civility and courtesy in our daily conversation and behaviors.

In light of the issues raised and understanding that the solution lies primarily in our living according to the Franciscan values we support, the Alvernia University faculty should continue to explore creative opportunities for integrating our core values and the mission statement into academic life thereby recognizing moral development across the curriculum as a priority at the University.

**Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct Standards**
The MSN Program adopts the American Nurses Association (ANA, 2001) code of Ethics and the Pennsylvania State Board of Professional Conduct Standards (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 2001) as a guide for professional nurse behavior. These standards are based on an understanding that to practice nursing as a RN student is an agreement to uphold the trust with which society has placed in us. The statements of the Code and Standards provide guidance for the RN student in the personal development of an ethical foundation. They are not limited strictly to the academic or clinical environment, but can assist in the holistic development of the person.

Sigma Theta Tau – International Nursing Honor Society

Graduate Membership Criteria for Sigma Theta Tau International, Upsilon Zeta Chapter

Membership in the Alvernia University Nursing Honor Society of Sigma Theta Tau, Upsilon Zeta Chapter is by invitation only. As a member of Sigma Theta Tau International, Upsilon Zeta follows the Membership Guidelines of the 2007-2009 International Bylaws, Article III, Section 2. Membership eligibility is determined by participation in an accredited program of graduate study in nursing including master, post-master, doctoral and post-doctoral studies. Students will be eligible for membership if they have achieved academic excellence and have completed at least one-quarter of the required graduate curriculum in nursing (9 credits). Academic excellence is defined as having a GPA of at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale. Students must demonstrate academic achievement, academic integrity and professional leadership potential.

Exceptions may be made to one of the following membership criteria at the discretion of the chapter’s governance committee when all other criteria have been met.

1. Academic Achievement – Students that have a cumulative grade point average slightly below 3.5 or the equivalent of this measure. OR
2. Curriculum – Students that lack a few credits of completing at least one-quarter of the required curriculum.

Students in the graduate program may be considered under the student criteria up to one year following graduation. In any one induction period, exceptions may not exceed ten (10) percent of the total number of inductees.
II. Curriculum

Program Structure

The 36-credit MSN Program is designed for professional nurses who seek a career in nursing education in the academic or practice settings. An in-depth study in the area of nursing education and a selected clinical practice focus are required. Application of theory and research principles are evidenced in a capstone project.

Interdisciplinary Courses (9 credits)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COR 510</td>
<td>Moral Leadership</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COR 600</td>
<td>Organizational and Professional Ethics</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(take in final 12 credits)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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</tbody>
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Nursing Education Courses (12 credits)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NUR 560</td>
<td>Policy and Curriculum</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUR 630</td>
<td>Measuring Educational Outcomes</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUR 640</td>
<td>Evidenced-Based Teaching Practice</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUR 642</td>
<td>Teaching Strategies in Nursing: Practicum</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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Nursing Practice Courses (9 credits)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NUR 530</td>
<td>Adv. Health Assessment</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUR 540</td>
<td>Adv. Pathophysiology/Pharmacology</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUR 632</td>
<td>Evidenced-Based Clinical Practice: focus</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(choice of clinical focus in adult health, maternal-child, community, or behavioral health)</td>
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Nursing Theory and Research Courses (6 credits)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NUR 550</td>
<td>Professional Nursing Theory and Research</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUR 650</td>
<td>Nurse Educator Role Synthesis: Capstone</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(take in final 12 credits)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Course Descriptions

Moral Leadership 3 credits
COR 510
Moral Leadership introduces students to a philosophy of education that will provide the skills necessary to assume a prominent place in shaping the vision, mission and activities of their employers and professions. This course also is designed to help students study the importance of
systematic reform of political, economic and social services, in remedying the problems that plague urban school systems, social services and society generally. It will also help the student understand the importance of openness to new analyses and strategies for change in addressing social problems.

**Organizational and Professional Ethics**

**COR 600**

This course explores specific questions relative to the behavior of systems, organizations and their members. The idea of a profession and its claim to special ethical expertise are examined. Methods to accomplish responsible social action, promote social justice and value the human dignity of each individual will be emphasized. Particular attention is paid to ethical issues surrounding the not-for-profit and educational sectors of American society.

**Advanced Health Assessment**

**NUR 530**

This course includes physical and psychological assessment of individuals across the lifespan, and strategies for health promotion. Comprehensive data collection includes history taking, assessment of signs and symptoms, and physical examination techniques. Critical thinking skills and transcultural nursing issues are integrated. Special attention is given to techniques used by nurse educators to teach assessment skill mastery to others.

Prerequisite: Basic health or physical assessment course or permission

Didactic: 40 hours

Laboratory: 3 hours

Clinical Hours: 6 hours in clinical practice setting assisting with physical assessment teaching and/or performance in various health care settings and/or undergraduate assessment teaching laboratory

**Advanced Pathophysiology and Pharmacology**

**NUR 540**

Expands upon basic knowledge of pathophysiology and pharmacology to provide a more in-depth understanding of human responses to interventions. Integrates best current evidence for effective health care management. Students will demonstrate assimilation of technology and information literacy to access ever-changing research integration of best practices and apply findings to case studies or simulations.

**Professional Nursing Theory and Research**

**NUR 550**

Builds upon knowledge of basic quantitative and qualitative research methods to develop a more sophisticated ability to analyze scholarly literature in nursing and health care. Theories, concepts and ethical considerations driving contemporary health research are examined. Students will demonstrate a high level of information literacy in a synthesis of literature and research proposal.

Prerequisite: Basic undergraduate research course and statistics course.
Policy and Curriculum  
NUR 560  
3 credits
Introduction to curriculum development and analysis based on health trends and standards of care. Explores organizational, community and government contexts in which nursing education takes place. Analyzes effect of government and institutional policies on health care and nursing education. Prioritize health needs of diverse populations in curriculum development. Change theory is applied to nursing education through an application project. 
Clinical: Approximately 6 hours in consultation with nurse leader/educator for application project

Measuring Educational Outcomes  
NUR 630  
3 credits
Evaluation strategies for clinical, laboratory and classroom nursing education are explored. Comparison of various methods of measuring student safety in skills and clinical performance. An in-depth review of objective test construction using sound measurement principles is performed. Correlation of national standards for nursing education with appropriate program evaluation measures is performed. Students practice reflective self and peer evaluations in relation to professional role development as a nurse educator.

Evidence Based Clinical Practice: focus  
NUR 632  
3 credits
Students select a clinical-practice area (adult health, maternal-child, behavioral health, etc.) as a focus for in depth exploration of best health care practices. Priority health outcomes in the specialty are identified and applied to the specialty practice education of nurses at pre and post licensure. National health goals and professional standards are evaluated. Strategies to maintain clinical competency as a nurse educator are explored. 
Didactic: 30
Clinical: 15 hours in consultation with practice expert and specialty meetings/conferences

Evidence Based Teaching Practice  
NUR 640  
3 credits
Introduces theoretical and evidence based approaches in nursing education. Pedagogical methods are explored to develop student thinking, clinical competence and professional behavior. Teaching strategies geared toward culturally and demographically diverse learner populations are integrated. Explores the role of nursing faculty in a variety of settings and prepares educators for integration of technology in teaching across the curriculum. 
Didactic: 30 hours
Simulation Laboratory: 8 hours
Expert Teaching Observation: 12 hours
Teaching Strategies in Nursing: Practicum  3 credits  
NUR 642
Includes practicum experience in the classroom, simulation skills laboratory, clinical, and academic settings. Students will demonstrate skill in working with technology enriched pedagogical methods and apply current evidenced-based literature in nursing education to teaching practice. The student will recognize the influence of teaching styles, interpersonal interactions and cultural contexts on learner outcomes. Co or Pre-requisition: NUR 640
Seminar: 10 hours (4 group meetings throughout semester)
Clinical: 100-hour practicum experience with current nurse educator(s)

Nurse Educator Role Synthesis: Capstone  3 credits  
NUR 650
A guided, multi-disciplinary, scholarly project beginning with a theoretical framework and comprehensive literature review, proceeding through an implementation phase, and concluding with an analytical outcome measurement. The paper/project is supported by the integration of principles from the disciplines of education and nursing. The final paper will be presented in a professional conference setting. The student works with a capstone facilitator and a seminar component is included.
Course is taken in the final 12 credits of the MSN Program.
Seminar: Varies to meet group/individual needs (minimum of 3 sessions)
Faculty Advisement: Varies to meet individual needs (minimum of 2 sessions per month)
Project Implementation: Approximately 100 hours

POSSIBLE ELECTIVES (non-inclusive)

NUR 610  Coordinated School Health Design
NUR 620  At Risk School Environments: Emergency Planning and Response
M.Ed. 501  Foundations of Teaching in Cross-Cultural Settings
M.Ed. 610  School Law and Social Advocacy
M.Ed. 510  Assessment and Evaluation
M.Ed. 515  Strategies for the Inclusive Classroom
MBA 500  Strategic Management
MBA 535  Crisis Management
MBA 540  Employment Law
MBA 635  Public Relations
LAS 500  The Evolution of Scientific Thought and Perceptions
LAS 510  The Biology of Behavior
LAS 520  Major Artists and Writers in their Milieus
LAS 600  Topics in Christian Ethics
Curriculum Outcome Evaluation

The MSN Program evaluation is folded into current University-wide and Nursing Department evaluation practices. The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) Accreditation Standards ensures comprehensive, ongoing evaluation from every level of the curriculum and internal/external consumer. Several methods are utilized to obtain on-going systematic program evaluation. Formal and informal processes are in place to stay abreast of internal and external variables and will expand to meet the needs of the MSN Program:

- Systematic Program Evaluation Plan
- Alumni Surveys
- Employer Satisfaction Survey
- Curriculum/Program Evaluation Survey
- Course Evaluations
- Clinical Practice Site and Preceptor Evaluation
- Capstone Project Quality
- NLN Nurse Educator Certification Exam™ Outcome Data

Data from the above evaluation methods are summarized annually during a nursing faculty meeting using the Systematic Evaluation Plan as a guide. The plan is comprehensive and designed to evaluate all aspects of the program based on CCNE Standards; starting with the mission and philosophy and continuing through with goals and program learning objectives. The MSN Program Director will be responsible for gathering, interpreting and presenting the data to the Nursing Faculty and the Graduate Academic Council. Through these mechanisms, the faculty will evaluate the overall curriculum and make appropriate changes.

Students and faculty will be engaged in the on-going process of reflection and self-evaluation to assess their personal and professional development as they develop competencies and apply knowledge. These opportunities for self-evaluation will foster professional independence and critical thinking. Student success will be judged by each student’s mastery of the knowledge and competencies, combined with their understanding of the attitudes and values that link their master’s education to responsible professional practice as they continue to develop their professional expertise in an increasingly complex health care environment.
III. Guidelines and Policies

Admission

Candidates must show evidence of the following:

• Bachelor’s degree in nursing from NLNAC or CCNE accredited program
• Minimum of 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale in BSN Program
• Satisfactory scores on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) or Miller Analogies Test (MAT) within the past five (5) years. GRE or MAT may be waived if GPA is 3.0 or better on a 4.0 scale and all other admission criteria are satisfactory.
• Completion of an undergraduate statistics and research course with a grade of “C” or better
• Minimum of one (1) year recent relevant practice in nursing

Application Packet to include (forms and essay criteria included in packet):

• Complete application form and the $50 nonrefundable application fee to the Graduate and Continuing Studies Office
• Three (3) recommendations (preferably from professional nurses with graduate degrees) regarding applicant’s practice and potential for graduate work in nursing. In lieu of letters, MSN candidates must obtain references using specific form supplied with admission packet. (*)
• Photocopy of valid Pennsylvania license as a Registered Nurse
• Satisfactory scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for all applicants from non-English speaking countries
• Current resume
• Essay (*)
• Official transcripts from all previously attended institutions of higher education
• When the application packet is complete with the above materials, the MSN Program Director/Faculty will contact the student to set up an interview. (*) Waived for BSN graduates of Alvernia University

Complete applications must arrive at the Graduate and Continuing Studies Office before:

• July 15 for matriculation in the fall semester
• October 15 for matriculation in the spring semester
• March 15 for matriculation in summer sessions

Final approval for admission is determined by the MSN Admissions Committee made up of:

• MSN Program Director
• Nursing Faculty #1
• Nursing Faculty #2
Matriculation

A matriculated MSN student is one who has been accepted officially into the MSN Program. Students with full graduate status may opt for full-time or part-time enrollment.

A non-matriculated student is one who is taking a course for credit, but has not yet been officially accepted into the MSN Program. A non-matriculated student may take up to six (6) credits in the MSN Program prior to matriculation.

Maintenance of Matriculation

A matriculated MSN student is required to enroll at least two (2) semesters (fall, spring, or summer) per calendar year. Student who do not apply for a leave of absence and have not completed at least one (1) course in two (2) semesters during a calendar year will be dropped from the program. Students may petition for readmission by submitting a new application and letter of intent.

Leave of Absence

Matriculated MSN students meeting the Maintenance of Matriculation policy must submit a written request for a leave of absence, with rationale to the MSN Program Director. The student and Program Director will document the leave, revised plan of study and intent to complete the MSN Program.

Time Limit

The maximum time-frame for MSN Program completion is six (6) years.

Transfer of Graduate Credit

Students who are matriculated in another nursing graduate program and wish to transfer will be considered on an individual basis. A maximum of two (2) approved courses (6 credits) or the equivalent will be accepted. Transfer courses must be from an accredited college and the student must have earned a minimum grade of “B” to receive transfer credit. Transfer credits do not count towards the cumulative GPA at Alvernia University.

After matriculation, students requesting to take a course off campus for transfer credit must receive written approval from the MSN Program Director.

Academic Advisement

All students are assigned a faculty advisor upon formal acceptance to the MSN Program. Mutually agreed upon goals and a program of study plan will be developed within the first month after formal acceptance into the MSN Program.

The faculty advisor will serve the student throughout the course of the program and clarify concerns or questions as they arise.
Clinical and Practicum Experiences

**Required Clinical Practice Clearances**

For compliance with healthcare regulations and facility contracts, prior to entering the clinical practice component of NUR 640 Evidenced-Based Teaching Practice and NUR 642 Teaching Strategies in Nursing Practicum, **students must provide evidence of the following**:

- Healthcare provider CPR Certification
- Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance
  - Act 151
- Pennsylvania Criminal Record Check
  - Act 34
- FBI Check if not a Pennsylvania resident for two (2) years
  - Older Adult Protective Services Act (Acts 169 and 13)
- FBI Check in accordance to DPW Laws in Pennsylvania
  - Acts 73, 34, 114
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Act Educational Program
  - Copy of certificate from employer, or
  - Certification of completion of online educational program (see HIPAA Policy)
- Documentation of receiving all required immunizations (self report)
- Documented TB test within one (1) year
- Photocopy of current malpractice insurance policy
- Required OSHA and The Joint Commission educational programs for nurses
  - Electrical and fire safety
  - Blood Borne Pathogens
- To comply with selected clinical facility contracts, the MSN student may be required to obtain a urine drug screen.

All evidences must be submitted to the Nursing Department Secretary **prior** to the first clinical observation/experience.

**Clinical Observation and Practicum**

There are two courses in the MSN Program requiring students to observe, participate, and/or evaluate undergraduate student education and/or clinical education in a health care facility. The following guidelines will be followed related to NUR 640 and 642.

**NUR 640 Evidenced-Based Teaching Practice**

1. All observations in the classroom, laboratory and clinical settings will be performed in Alvernia University’s BSN Program(s).
2. After student input, the NUR 640 course faculty will collaborate with the BSN Program faculty to facilitate experiences within their classrooms, laboratory and clinical areas.
3. Times may vary and MSN students need to remain flexible to the BSN Program’s schedule.
4. MSN students **MUST** complete all clinical clearances **prior** to attending clinical practice at any health care facility.
5. MSN students **MUST** wear an Alvernia University student ID card in plain sight at all times during clinical observations and practicum.

**NUR 642 Teaching Strategies in Nursing Practicum**

1. All practicum experience must be performed outside of Alvernia University.
2. The student is responsible for arranging a practicum preceptor and accompanying paperwork.
3. MSN students **MUST** complete all clinical clearances prior to the beginning of NUR 642.

**Procedure for Obtaining Practicum Preceptors**

1. The student is responsible for finding a practicum site and preceptor(s) that allow for 100% of NUR 642 Practicum’s outcomes to be met.
   a. The preceptor(s) must have a MSN and at least two years experience in nursing education; the experiences must include, but are not limited to, pre-licensed nursing programs. A pre-licensed clinical experience is expected.
      i. A copy of the preceptor’s Curriculum Vitae (CV) must be submitted to the course faculty
      ii. The agency/school’s Nursing Department Head approves the preceptor and signs the Agreement
   b. The preceptor arrangements must be completed prior to the course start-date; including all contractual paperwork
2. An introductory visit is made by the student for the purpose of operationalizing the course content and expectations.
   a. A course syllabus must be shared with the potential preceptor with a framework of expectations, dates and outcome measures.
3. Two (2) copies of “The Letter of Agreement” are signed by the student, preceptor, course faculty, and MSN Program Director. One (1) copy is maintained in the Alvernia University Nursing Department student file and the second copy is held by the preceptor.
   a. The preceptor’s CV will be filed with the Letter of Agreement.
4. All required clinical practice clearances are maintained in the student’s file (NRC). If a facility and/or preceptor requests copies, it is the student’s responsibility to pick up copies from the Nursing Department Secretary and take them to the preceptor. The Nursing Department will not distribute copies to give to other parties.
   a. A signed request is required from the student giving the Nursing Department permission to copy clearance items in the student’s file. The signed request will remain in the student’s file.

**Roles and Responsibilities of the Preceptor:**

A preceptor is an experienced MSN clinician or educator with current expert knowledge of practice/education. The role of the preceptor is to assist the MSN student to synthesize previously obtained knowledge and skills, while examining and applying set practicum objectives in the current setting. The preceptor must provide a copy of current Curriculum Vitae to Alvernia University Department of Nursing. Specific activities may include:

- Orient the student to the agency/school
- Assist the student to meet practicum and personal objectives
• Assist the student in scheduling activities or assignments
• Supervise the student directly or indirectly
• Assume a liaison role in clarifying the expectations of students as learner rather than expectations of employees
• Consult with faculty as necessary
• Evaluate the learning process collaboratively with the student
  • Complete a systematic evaluation for the purpose of 40% course grade

Roles and Responsibilities of Alvernia University:
• Give final approval of clinical site and preceptor
• Meet with the preceptor and student as necessary to provide support and clarification
  • A minimum of three (3) visits during semester
  • An orientation or final evaluation visit may be performed via tele or video conferencing
• Provide the preceptor with the course syllabus and evaluative measures
• Assist the student in identifying specific learning needs
• Maintains record of student’s immunizations, clearances, malpractice insurance, and completion of HIPAA, CPR, Blood Borne Pathogen, and Fire/Electrical Safety programs

Roles and Responsibilities of the MSN Student:
Follow all health and safety regulations, dress code, and professional and legal regulations.
  • See MSN Student Handbook, p. 5
• Wear an Alvernia University student ID card in plain sight at all times
• Complete personal learning objectives and outcome measures
• Notify the preceptor/agency to report unavoidable absence as soon as possible.
• Promptly report an error of omission or commission to agency and faculty member. Follow agency guidelines for incident reporting.
• Promptly report any illness or accident incurred during practicum experience to the agency and preceptor. The student is financially responsible for emergency treatment rendered.
• Assume all responsibility for any personal items taken to the clinical setting.
• Meet regularly with preceptor to discuss practicum progress.

Ethical Confidentiality:
All FERPA and HIPAA regulations must be followed at all times.
MSN Students will have access to student, client and facility records. This is confidential information and may not be used for anything except to enhance the student learning experience. Information used for journaling or case studies shall carry only the initials of the student/client and physician. This information is to be shared only with the preceptor, course faculty and in the classroom setting.

Harassment Policy
All parties affirm their complete agreement with the Harassment Policy showing no tolerance for any form of harassment.

Academic Field Experiences:
A. Background
It is the responsibility of each person on campus to respect the personal dignity of others. Alvernia has always encouraged its students, faculty and staff to celebrate in the diversity of the University and to immediately confront any expressions of harassment within the community based on differences in sex, race, religion, disability or ethnic background.
Your Academic Field Experience will be taking you outside of the Alvernia Campus Community. The Agency in which you will serve has been carefully screened by the University, and the Sponsoring Agency has affirmed its complete agreement with the policy of showing no tolerance for any form of harassment. The Sponsoring Agency has agreed to hold all members of its institutional community to the same high standards of respect and dignity essential to the mission of Alvernia.

B. DEFINITIONS
Sexual Harassment is one example of forbidden harassment and has been defined by the University as unwanted sexual attention, intimidation or advances that are made:

1. Either explicitly as a term or condition of academic or employment status or advancement;
2. As a basis for academic or employment decisions;
3. Which unreasonably interfere with an individual’s work or academic performance; and/or
4. Which create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or academic environment.

C. RESOURCES
Alvernia does wish to make known to all of the participants in Academic Field Experiences that there are available resources and procedures for resolving any instances of harassment, including sexual harassment, which might be confronted by program participants within the Alvernia Community, or while in the institutional community of the Sponsoring Agency.

1. Information, Counseling and Support
   If you, as a participant in an Academic Field Experience, believe that you may have been the victim of harassing conduct, and you wish to seek information and/or counseling about the incident or incidences giving rise to this concern, you should immediately contact either:
   a. The Faculty Supervisor of the Program;
   b. The Department Chair; or
   c. The College Dean, and request a confidential counseling session. In order that any incident may be immediately addressed, you should make this contact within ten (10) days of the occurrence.

2. Formal Complaint Procedure
   Any participant in an Academic Field Experience who feels that he or she has been the subject of harassment of any kind may, after participating in the initial counseling session, file a Complaint in writing setting forth the material facts of
the incident. To facilitate the contemporaneous investigation of the incident, the written Complaint should be filed within ten (10) days of the informal counseling session. The written Complaint should be directed to and addressed by the Provost.

Upon receipt of the written Complaint, the Provost will initiate an investigation concerning the Complaint. The investigation will include the contacting of the Sponsoring Agency, as well as others identified as being witness or having first-hand knowledge of the alleged behavior or incident.

Following an investigation and a completion of appropriate corrective measures, if warranted, the University will so advise the person filling the form Complaint.

Non-Fraternization Policy

It is the policy of the Alvernia University Academic Programs that students should NOT fraternize on a personal level with staff, patients, or clients during assigned academic field placements on or off campus. Selected examples of fraternization are:

- After hours personal contact with staff, client, patients or students
- Inappropriate touching or gestures
- Inappropriate communication (implied or direct)
- Flirting

Upon receipt of a written complaint, the Dean will initiate an investigation. Following the completion of an investigation, appropriate corrective measures, if warranted, will be taken. Corrective measures may include:

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Dismissal from course
- Dismissal from academic program
ALVERNIA UNIVERSITY MSN PROGRAM
SELF REPORT HEALTH and AGENCY REQUIREMENTS

1. Tuberculosis testing
   Date Tested ______. Results ______ (may be recorded in mm)
   If positive, attach a copy of chest x-ray report and/or follow-up explanation.

2. DT (Diphtheria-tetanus) booster (Required within 10 years):
   Booster date ______.

3. MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) (Two doses required after the age of 15 months or documentation of immunity by serology):
   Initial immunization date ______. Booster date ______.

4. Hepatitis B Three (3) doses: Date of Series Completion: ______

5. Varicella: Yes ___ No ___
   (If no, a Varicella Zoster Vaccine or Varicell Zoster Antibody Test is recommended)

6. OSHA Blood-born Pathogen Training: Date: ______

7. Fire and Electrical Safety: Date: ______

8. CPR Certification (attach copy of certificate/card): Date: ______

9. Malpractice Liability Insurance (attach copy of policy) Date: ______

10. HIPAA Educational Program (attach copy of certificate) Date: ______

7. Clearances (all require copies of official reports):
   PA Criminal Record Check Date: ______
   PA Child Abuse History Check Date: ______
   FBI Check (Depart of Aging) if not PA resident for 2 years Date: ______
   FBI Check through Cogent Date: ______

____________________________
Signed _________________________ _______

____________________________
Print Name _________________________ Date
ALVERNIA UNIVERSITY
Program in Nursing Education Leading to a MSN

Preceptor Agreement

This agreement is for the purpose of providing classroom, clinical skills laboratory, and/or clinical teaching opportunities for the graduate student enrolled in the NUR 642 Teaching Strategies in Nursing Practicum course at Alvernia University.

Roles and Responsibilities of the preceptor:
A preceptor is an experienced MSN clinician or educator with current expert knowledge of practice/education. The role of the preceptor is to assist the MSN student to synthesize previously obtained knowledge and skills, while examining and applying set practicum objectives in the current setting. The preceptor must provide a copy of a current Curriculum Vita to Alvernia University Department of Nursing. Specific activities may include:
- Orient the student to the agency/school
- Assist the student to meet practicum and personal objectives
- Assist the student in scheduling activities or assignments
- Supervise the student directly or indirectly
- Assume a liaison role in clarifying the expectations of students as learner rather than expectations of employees
- Consult with faculty as necessary
- Evaluate the learning process collaboratively with the student
  - Complete a systematic evaluation for the purpose of 40% course grade

Roles and Responsibilities of Alvernia University:
- Give final approval of clinical site and preceptor
- Meet with the preceptor and student as necessary to provide support and clarification
  - A minimum of three (3) visits during semester
  - An orientation or final evaluation visit may be performed via tele or video conferencing
- Provide the preceptor with the course syllabus and evaluative measures
- Assist the student in identifying specific learning needs
- Maintains record of student’s immunizations, clearances, malpractice insurance, and completion of HIPAA, CPR, Blood Borne Pathogen, and Fire/Electrical Safety programs.

Roles and Responsibilities of the MSN Student:
Follow all health and safety regulations, dress code, and professional and legal regulations
- See MSN Student Handbook, p. 5
- Wear an Alvernia University student ID card in plain sight at all times
- Completes personal learning objectives and outcome measures
- Notify the preceptor/agency to report unavoidable absence as soon as possible.
- Promptly report an error of omission or commission to agency and faculty member. Follow agency guidelines for incident reporting.
- Promptly report any illness or accident incurred during practicum experience to the agency and preceptor. The student is financially responsible for emergency treatment rendered.
• Assume all responsibility for any personal items taken to the clinical setting.
• Meet regularly with preceptor to discuss practicum progress.

The preceptor and/or agency may request Alvernia University to withdrawal the student for any reason that may have a detrimental effect on the service to students/clients. In addition, Alvernia University may withdrawal any student from a preceptor experience should the preceptor/agency prove incompatible with the educational objectives developed for student learning.

The student, preceptor and agency/school agrees to indemnify from all actions, suits, claims, damages and costs for damage to persons or property resulting from neglect or intentional acts or omissions of the student/preceptor resulting while participating in the practicum experience.

Student Name: __________________________________________________________

Email: _____________________________  Preferred Phone: _____________________________

Preceptor Name/Signature: _______________________________________________________

Agency/School Name: __________________________________________________________

Email: _____________________________  Preferred Phone: _____________________________

Approved for the Agency/School _______________________________________________

Name: _____________________________  Date: _____________________________

Title: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________

Approved for Alvernia University:

Signature: _____________________________  Date: _____________________________

MSN Program Director
Alvernia University
MSN Program Student Portfolio Assessment

Purpose
The purpose of the MSN Program Portfolio Assessment is to present an individual student’s collection of materials that communicates professional and scholarly development; while at the same time, demonstrates that the program goals and outcomes have been met. The Portfolio Assessment serves as a form of summative evaluation for the MSN student. The MSN Student Portfolio Assessment is just one component of the MSN Systematic Program Assessment.

Organization
The Portfolio process and collection are based on the specific knowledge, skills and attributes of the MSN program. The Portfolio Assessment mirrors the MSN Program learning outcomes and is organized into the following six areas:

- Nursing theory and practice
  - Apply evidenced-based knowledge of specialty practice area
- Educational theory and practice
  - Integrate nursing and educational theory and scientific knowledge into the practice of nursing education
- Ethics
  - Demonstrate ethical standards across a wide range of nursing education and practice settings
- Research skills
  - Accurately synthesize research evidence on educational and clinical topics
- Leadership / Collegiality
  - Demonstrate characteristics of effective leadership in nursing education settings
- Communication Skills
  - Communicate clearly and effectively to a variety of audiences and settings

Portfolio Content
Students are to include course materials in the Portfolio Binder as they are returned from faculty in each course. The Portfolio Binder is to be organized with the following items:

1. Cover Sheet
   a. Information and Signature Page
2. Table of Contents
3. Curriculum Vitae
4. Professional Development Plan and Teaching Philosophy
5. Tab 1: Nursing theory and practice
6. Tab 2: Educational theory and practice
7. Tab 3: Ethics
8. Tab 4: Research skills
9. Tab 5: Leadership/Collegiality
10. Tab 6: Communication Skills
11. Tab 7: Capstone scholarly project and paper

All papers, clinical evaluations, and projects are to include the completed grading rubric and faculty comments. Group projects are acceptable. Additional options are provided to allow for flexibility and a broader perspective of program outcomes. The student is required to submit at least one of the options, if provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Outcome</th>
<th>Option 1</th>
<th>Option 2</th>
<th>Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Theory and Practice</td>
<td>NUR 540 Case scenario project</td>
<td>NUR 530 Scenario project</td>
<td>NUR 650 Capstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Theory and Practice</td>
<td>NUR 560 Curriculum Project</td>
<td>NUR 640 Teaching Strategy</td>
<td>NUR 642 Preceptor Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NUR 630 Professional Development Plan and Teaching Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NUR 650 Capstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>COR 510 Moral Leadership Paper</td>
<td>COR 600 Ethical Case Study Presentation</td>
<td>NUR 650 Capstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Skills</td>
<td>NUR 550 Mock Research Proposal</td>
<td>NUR 632 Synthesis paper</td>
<td>NUR 650 Capstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership / Collegiality</td>
<td>NUR 640 Reflection Essay</td>
<td></td>
<td>NUR 650 Capstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NUR 642 Preceptor Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NUR 650 Capstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Brief narrative (2-3 pages) reflecting on professional growth in the area of communication skills (written and verbal)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Portfolio Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Responsible Person(s)</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Getting Started</strong></td>
<td>1. Faculty Advisor or 2. MSN Program Director</td>
<td>1. Program Planning Advisement or 2. During student’s first MSN course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio Binder provided; policy and procedure reviewed with student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Submission</strong></td>
<td>1. MSN Student 2. Faculty Advisor</td>
<td>1. First week of class following completion of five (5) MSN/COR courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After first five (5) MSN/COR courses are completed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final Submission</strong></td>
<td>1. MSN Student 2. NUR 650 Faculty</td>
<td>1. Final week of NUR 650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After completion of NUR 650 Capstone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>1. Faculty Advisor 2. MSN Program Director</td>
<td>1. Prior to student’s completion of MSN program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attached:**
- Cover Sheet and Signature Page
- Portfolio Outcomes Assessment Checklist
MSN Program Portfolio Assessment Cover and Signature Page

Student Name:

Student Contact Information:

Home Address:

Home Phone:          Cell Phone:

Email:               Work Contact (include Employer name):

Advisement of Portfolio Process (Getting Started):

Date: ___________  Faculty Signature: __________________________

Student Signature: __________________________

First Submission:

Date: ___________  Faculty Signature: __________________________

Student Signature: __________________________

Final Submission

Date: ___________  Faculty Signature: __________________________

Student Signature: __________________________
**MSN Program Portfolio Outcomes Assessment Checklist**

Student Name: __________________________________________________

First Submission  ____  Date: ____________________________

Final Submission  ____  Date: ____________________________

**Directions:** Each item is to be checked as met or Portfolio will be returned to student as incomplete. Comments on the back of this tool are required if Portfolio is returned.

**Rating Scale:**  
0=Absent;  M= Met;  U=Unmet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENT</th>
<th>First Submission</th>
<th>Final Submission</th>
<th>Evaluator Initial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organized materials are in binder with cover sheet and table of contents page</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dividers labeled with clear identification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper/projects submitted have completed grading rubric and evaluative comments are included</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Vitae</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional and required materials are matched to policy/procedure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching philosophy and professional development plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Educator Role Capstone Requirement**

**Purpose and Description**
The purpose of the MSN Program Capstone Project is to facilitate students during a major synthesis project that applies theory and skills acquired during coursework. This guided, multi-disciplinary, scholarly project begins with a theoretical framework and comprehensive literature review, proceeds through an implementation phase, and concludes with an analytical outcome measurement. The project is supported by the integration of principles from the disciplines of education and nursing and reflects the MSN Program Outcomes.

The project is completed in NUR 650 Nurse Educator Role Synthesis: Capstone and taken during the last 12 credit hours of MSN Program coursework.

**Types of Projects**

1. Educational program outcome assessment using existing data from Alvernia University or current workplace (with permission)
   a. Examples include
      i. Longitudinal demographic trends and student success
      ii. Longitudinal curriculum content area performance using ATI, National Benchmarks, etc.
2. Fully developed grant proposal with nursing education focus
3. Development and testing of an innovative teaching strategy or methodology (i.e.: technology)
   a. Student volunteer subjects
   b. IRB approval
   c. Evaluation of data
4. Development of an innovative continuing education or college course
   a. Syllabus, examples of two fully developed presentations, content rubrics, and faculty evaluation measures
   b. External validation from an expert with written documentation
5. Create, implement and evaluate a high fidelity clinical simulation scenario
   a. Student volunteer subjects
   b. IRB approval
   c. Evaluation of data
6. Evidence based project and development of a protocol/policy with an education focus.
   Collaborate with agency to meet mutual goals
7. Other: with approval of MSN Program Director

**NOTE:** It is strongly recommended that only existing research/measurement instruments with published validity and reliability are accepted for outcome assessment; self-created surveys instruments are not allowed.
Capstone Timeline
During the pre-registration period in the semester prior to NUR 650, the student chooses and meets with his/her intended Capstone Facilitator. A mutually agreed upon topic and project timeline are developed and documented on the MSN Capstone Project form. The MSN Program Facilitator reviews and gives final approval.

If the project requires IRB approval, the application should be submitted to the IRB three months prior to the beginning of the semester in which NUR 650 is scheduled.

Roles and Responsibilities of Student
1. Meet with self-selected faculty Capstone Facilitator during pre-registration period for guidance in selecting topic and creating implementation timeline
2. Register for NUR 650
3. Complete approval form and obtain required signatures by the end of the semester prior to NUR 650
4. Acquire appropriate approvals such as IRB and facility permissions by the 2nd week of the semester in which NUR 650 is scheduled
5. Maintain self-direction to meet timeline and quality expectations
6. Accept ongoing constructive feedback and work in collaboration with Capstone Facilitator
7. Adhere to Alvernia University’s academic honesty and ethical standards

Roles and Responsibilities of Capstone Facilitator
1. Approve topic and project timeline
2. Provide ongoing guidance and feedback related to all aspects of the project, including IRB
3. Meet a minimum of two times per month with student for the purpose of student facilitation
4. Support the student in maintaining timeline for implementation
5. Give student advice and support related to logistics of implementation
6. Preview and approve presentation
7. Approve presentation venue and attend presentation
8. Allow student to provide a process evaluation of capstone experience
9. Assign course grade based on MSN Capstone Program Assignment Rubric
MSN Program Capstone Project Approval

Student Name:

Student Contact Information:
Address: ______________________________________________________________
Work Phone #: _________________________________
Home Phone #: _________________________________
Cell Phone #: _________________________________

Advisement and Capstone Process (Getting Started):

Topic/Title: ________________________________________________________________

Timeline:
1. ________________________________________________________________
2. ________________________________________________________________
3. ________________________________________________________________
4. ________________________________________________________________
5. ________________________________________________________________

Expected Approvals/Permissions to be obtained:
1. ________________________________________________________________
2. ________________________________________________________________

Faculty Signature and Date: _________________________________
Student Signature and Date: _________________________________

Approval Granted:

MSN Director Signature and Date: _________________________________
**MSN Capstone Project Assessment Rubric**

**Expectation:** The student will demonstrate a systematic process of exploring a question, implementing a process of evaluation, collection and analysis of data that results in informed conclusions or judgments. The conclusion/judgments may be applied in different ways according to the project purpose and design. The student will demonstrate competence in written and oral communication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Competent (80 – 89 points)</th>
<th>Expert (90 – 100 points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic Selection congruent with Nursing and Educational Theory &amp; Practice</td>
<td>Identifies a focused and manageable topic that addresses relevant aspects of nursing education</td>
<td>Identifies a creative, focused and manageable topic that addresses potentially significant yet previously less-explored aspects of the topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Process congruent with topic, Nursing and Educational Theory &amp; Practice</td>
<td>Appropriately developed critical elements of the methodology or theoretical framework; however, more subtle elements are ignored or unaccounted for</td>
<td>Skillfully developed all elements of the methodology and theoretical framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrates a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential and/or proprietary information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conducts all educational, research and clinical activities with honesty and integrity; reflects behavior that is congruent with the value and dignity of every human being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Independently applies ethical perspectives/concepts to an ethical question; accurately, and is able to consider full implication of the application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Skills</td>
<td>Presents in-depth information from relevant sources representing various points of view/approaches</td>
<td>Synthesizes in-depth information for relevant sources representing various points of view/approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership &amp; Collegiality</td>
<td>Works somewhat effectively in among leadership structures in</td>
<td>Works Highly effectively among leadership structures in academic and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication Skills: Written</th>
<th>Correctly uses 80-90% of the following using guidelines established by APA: use of citations and references, choice of paraphrasing, summary or quoting, using information in ways that are true to original context</th>
<th>Correctly uses all of the following using guidelines established by APA: use of citations and references, choice of paraphrasing, summary or quoting, using information in ways that are true to original context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communicates and organizes information from sources. The information is somewhat synthesized. Intended purpose is achieved</td>
<td>Communicates, organizes and synthesizes information from sources to fully achieve the project purpose, with clarity and depth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills: Oral</td>
<td>Demonstrates an organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body and transitions) that is clearly and mostly observable within the presentation</td>
<td>Demonstrates an organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body and transitions) that is clearly and consistently observable and is skillful making the content of the presentation cohesive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exhibits deliver techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressions) that make the presentation understandable, and speaker appears comfortable</td>
<td>Exhibits delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressions) that make the presentation compelling; speaker appears polished and confident</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Initial Approval: 5/10

Reference: