



DEWITT SCHOOL OF NURSING

Student Handbook

MSN Program

STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM ★ NACOGDOCHES, TEXAS

MISSION STATEMENTS AND NURSING GOALS

University Mission

Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA), a member of the University of Texas System, is a comprehensive institution dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, creative work, and service. Through the personal attention of our faculty and staff, we engage our students in a learner-centered environment and offer opportunities to prepare for the challenges of living in the global community.

College of Health Professions Mission

The College of Health Professions prepares students to improve the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities through excellence in education, scholarship, service, and clinical practice. Bringing together the disciplines of allied health studies, family sciences, nursing, psychological sciences, social work and pre-health professions, the college provides an interdisciplinary educational environment that prepares students for meaningful careers in the health professions. Students benefit from innovative teaching, experiential learning, research opportunities, and clinical and community-based experiences that strengthen their ability to apply evidence-based practice and demonstrate professional competence. Through partnerships with healthcare providers, schools, community organizations, and regional stakeholders, graduates are prepared to meet the evolving health and behavioral needs of those they serve with compassion, integrity, and professionalism.

DeWitt School of Nursing (SON) Mission

The DeWitt School of Nursing provides excellence in undergraduate and graduate programs by valuing scholarship and service, developing a deep commitment to integrity and ethical behaviors, and caring for diverse populations in an ever-changing society.

SCHOOL OF NURSING CORE VALUES

Excellence

The SON ensures a culture of educational and professional excellence committed to continuous quality improvement by providing transformative learning experiences. It is a culture where exceptional performance is the expectation.

Caring

The SON ensures a culture of caring where compassion and civility facilitate trust within the programs and extends into the community. It is a culture where diversity is valued, respected, and pursued.

Integrity

The SON ensures a culture of academic and professional integrity by upholding standards while encouraging humility, equity, ethical-decision making, and accountability.

Scholarship

The SON ensures a culture of scholarship that fosters a spirit of inquiry steeped in evidence-based practice. The programs are rooted in evidence-based teaching practices facilitating experiential learning which equip students to deliver high-quality, safe, patient-centered care.

MSN PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

End of Program Student Learning Outcomes

The student will:

1. Synthesize nursing science with knowledge from other disciplines as the basis for the advanced level of nursing practice.

2. Evaluate effective strategies for managing the ethical and legal dilemmas inherent in patient care, the health care organization, and research.
3. Employ effective communication and collaborative skills in interdisciplinary teams for creating change in health care.
4. Analyze concepts of health promotion and culturally competent care across the lifespan.
5. Assume responsibility for the use of health care information systems and patient care technology to improve patient outcomes.
6. Demonstrate leadership and accountability in the development and implementation of health care policy.
7. Critically appraise existing literature from nursing and other disciplines to determine and implement the best evidence for practice.
8. Advocate for the advanced practice role within the policy related to access and health care communities.
9. Value continuing competence, growth, and development in the profession.

COMPETENCIES

The Richard and Lucille DeWitt School of Nursing prepares MSN graduates to demonstrate either the *National League for Nursing Competencies* for nurse educator students or the *National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Core Competencies* for family nurse practitioner students. All graduates are also expected to meet the competencies outlined in the *Essentials of Nursing Education* by AACN. The competencies serve as a guideline and tool for curriculum development and revision, a tool for benchmarking and evaluation of the program, and national standard to ensure graduates will enter practice as safe and competent nurse educators, or advanced practice registered nurses, family nurse practitioners.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The DeWitt School of Nursing offers curricula leading to a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) with a choice of two focus areas, Nurse Educator (NE) or Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP). The curriculum plan builds on the courses and experiences that graduates of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing obtain. The coursework prepares graduates with the knowledge and skills to lead change, promote health, and elevate care in various roles and settings.

The MSN program is offered primarily online with the exception of no more than two on-campus seminars throughout the program. The online format is designed to meet the needs of the working RN. Clinical experiences may be conducted in the geographical area in which the student resides.

The program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). The FNP focus area has a total of 47 semester credit hours which includes 840 (760 minimum face-to-face with patients) clinical hours, and the NE program is 36 semester hours including 180 clinical hours.

An MSN/MBA dual enrollment opportunity is available. Students can pursue both options concurrently online. The MBA option is a 36-credit hour program that requires 12 hours of electives. MSN program coursework can substitute for the 12 hours of electives. Students must apply separately to the MBA program and can get more information by emailing mba@sfasu.edu.

CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE

Upon completion of the program, the NE graduates are eligible to take the certification exam offered by the National League for Nursing (NLN). This exam measures competence in the full scope of the nurse educator's practice role.

Upon completion of the program, the FNP graduates are eligible to take a national certification exam offered by either the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board (NPCB) or the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). Upon successfully passing the exam, the graduate is eligible to apply to the Texas Board of Nursing for licensure as an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, Family Nurse Practitioner.

A Post Master's Certificate is offered for both the FNP and NE option. This is for students that already have an MSN degree. Course work is based upon previous MSN transcript analysis.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

In compliance with the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) the University designates that staff may not release certain information (grades) without prior written consent.

You may disclose directory information without written prior consent, unless the student notifies the Registrar's Office in writing to the contrary. Directory information includes the following items: name, address including e-mail, telephone numbers, major field of study, academic classification, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight & height of athletic team members, dates of attendance, degree and awards received, and photograph.

Written consent is required to release all other information.

FERPA provides students:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education record that the student believes is inaccurate or misleading.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests.

The following items are considered DIRECTORY INFORMATION by the University, and the University may disclose any of these items without prior written consent, unless the student notifies the Registrar in writing to the contrary by September 1 of each fiscal year.

1. Name
2. All addresses, including University issued e-mail address
3. All telephone numbers
4. Major field of study
5. Academic classification
6. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
7. Height and weight of members of athletic teams
8. Dates of attendance and enrollment status
9. Degrees and awards received

10. Previous schools attended
11. Photograph
12. Class roster (not the student's class schedule)

Academic Permission

As a student at SFA, permissions are given through the Registrar's Office to allow the SON faculty to discuss grades with anyone other than the student. If a form is not on file in the Registrar's Office and anyone other than the student wishes to meet with the Director and/or faculty, the student must authorize the release of information using the following procedure:

Students may choose to grant access to their educational records to other individuals by completing the FERPA Authorization form in mySFA.

1. Log in to mySFA.
2. Select the "Academics" tab.
3. Locate the "Academic Records" block.
4. Select the "FERPA Authorization form" link.

Follow the instructions to complete and submit the required documentation. Once submitted, students can follow these steps again to view the details of their information. Authorizations are usually effective 15 minutes after the form is successfully submitted. Current students or alumni unable to access their mySFA account must contact the registrar's office by emailing registrar@sfasu.edu for assistance.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

All students are required to have access to a laptop or desktop computer for academic and testing purposes. The complete list of [technology requirements](#) can be found on the SON website. For questions regarding laptop hardware or software, please contact the [SFA Help Desk](#) at 936-468-HELP.

NETIQUETTE

The principles of online communication relate to honoring others and their opinions: respecting differences; responding honestly using thoughtful and respectful dialogue; respecting privacy; giving constructive, professional responses to faculty and peers; and avoiding slang, jargon and emoticons. Academic writing style using the APA format is required for all online communication.

SON STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

All students are responsible for the Standard Operating Procedures of the School of Nursing. Please review the School of Nursing Procedures located on the SFASU Nursing website (www.sfasu.edu/nursing). You are required to consent to, and abide by, the procedures of SFASU and of the DeWitt School of Nursing while a student in this nursing program. Procedures are subject to change and, if changes occur, the updated SOP will be posted on the SON website, and students will be notified when changes occur.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this procedure.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one's self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one's own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one's own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

VIDEO/AUDIO/PHOTOGRAPHY RECORDING CONSENT

The School of Nursing may record participation and appearance in clinical simulations and/or classroom activities. These are used only for educational, instructional, and/or advertising purposes by the SON. Any simulation video/audio recordings are destroyed within one year of the filming or recording unless otherwise noted on a separate consent.

HIPAA COMPLIANCE

Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU) has cooperative agreements with agencies in the area for clinical training of its students enrolled in all health-care fields and programs. In exchange for educational opportunities provided by clinical rotations, students agree to comply with all state, local, and federal requirements governing the privacy of medical information. Students must agree to uphold all HIPAA and other privacy requirements during clinical rotations and educational experiences.

TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING (BON)

Nurse Practice Act: For detailed information regarding the Nursing Practice Act, see the Texas BON website at https://www.bon.texas.gov/laws_and_rules_nursing_practice_act.asp.

TEXAS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

Section 231.27 Good Professional Character

(a) Every individual who seeks to practice nursing in Texas must have good professional character related to the practice of nursing. This requirement includes all individuals seeking to obtain or retain a license or privilege to practice nursing in Texas.

(b) The Board defines good professional character as the integrated pattern of personal, academic, and occupational behaviors that indicate an individual is able to consistently conform his/her conduct to the requirements of the Nursing Practice Act, the Board's rules, and generally accepted standards of nursing practice. An individual who provides satisfactory evidence that he/she has not committed a violation of the Nursing Practice Act or a rule adopted by the Board is considered to have good professional character related to the practice of nursing.

(c) A determination that an individual does not have good professional character related to the practice of nursing must be based on a showing by the Board of a clear and rational connection between a violation of the Nursing Practice Act or a rule adopted by the Board and the individual's ability to effectively practice nursing. See Section 231.27 for the remainder of the provision. The provisions of this §213.27 adopted to be effective October 29, 2015, 40 TexReg 7403; amended to be effective February 25, 2018, 43 TexReg 863.

Section 217.11 Standards of Nursing Practice

The Texas BON is responsible for regulating the practice of nursing within the State of Texas. The standards of nursing practice are defined in detail congruent with the Texas Nursing Practice Act. See the Texas Administrative Code for details.

ANA CODE OF ETHICS PROVISION STATEMENTS

Provision 1: The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.

Provision 2: The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.

Provision 3: The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.

Provision 4: The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.

Provision 5: The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.

Provision 6: The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.

Provision 7: The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.

Provision 8: The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.

Provision 9: The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.

American Nurses Association. (2018). *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statement*. Retrieved from <https://www.nursingworld.org/nurses-books/code-of-ethics-for-nurses/>

GENERAL STUDENT INFORMATION

All email communication with clinical faculty must occur within D2L; although a copy can also be sent to the university email address when communication is urgent. The name the student uses must match what is on record in the University and on their nursing license for clinical courses. If there is a name change on their license, they must make the name change with the University Registrar, obtain a new nametag reflecting name change, and notify their faculty.

CLINICAL INFORMATION

The primary consideration should be securing a high-quality clinical experience that meets the course objectives. Under no circumstances will students complete the clinical portion of any course under the guidance of their work supervisors or family members. Students may complete clinical experiences in the institution where they are employed when they have obtained approval from the program coordinator. Quality clinical experiences usually require some travel, especially in highly competitive areas. Students will not begin clinical until all clinical requirements are current and verified.

FNP Students

It is the student's responsibility to find his/her own clinical site and preceptor. Clinical sites that have been used in the past will be maintained in Typhon (Preceptor Directory or Clinic Directory), and students may use this as a resource for selecting clinical sites and preceptors. FNP students can also access www.texasnp.org (the site for the Texas Nurse Practitioners organization) to locate their local NP representative and make connections with NPs in their specific geographical area.

Students are required to spend at least half of the total clinical hours during the program with an advanced practice NP. Physician Assistants and physicians may be used for up to half of the program clinical hours. Students may use preceptors in clinical sites in outpatient family practice or primary care, pediatrics, or women's health. Only during the Diagnostics and Procedures course may the student do clinical hours in an urgent care clinic or in the "fast track" side of an emergency room. Specialty practice clinics (i.e., cardiology, dermatology, etc.) may be approved by the program coordinator for the last 50 hours of the Capstone course once the student has completed all other clinical requirements. There are 840 clinical hours required during the clinical portion of the FNP program. Students are expected to complete a minimum of 100 hours seeing patients in pediatrics and women's health and 150 hours seeing patients in mental health and gerontology.

Students should schedule clinical throughout the semester. "Front-loading" of clinical hours is not advised. Example: if there are 120 clinical hours over a semester, students should do approximately 40 hours per month.

FNP Preceptor Qualifications

- Nursing/medical expertise in clinical practice derived from practical and theoretical

preparation

- Authorized to practice as advanced practice nurse in the state, or currently licensed as a health care professional who can provide supervision and teaching in clinical settings appropriate for advanced practice nursing.
- Appropriate current license **with no current disciplinary actions**, state approval, and/or recognition to practice in a specialty area
- Appropriate national certification
- Preferably an earned Master's degree or its equivalent in a specialty area of practice
- Nurse Practitioner or Physician Assistant preceptors should have a minimum of 2000 hours or one year of full-time clinical experience in the role prior to working with FNP students.

Nurse Educator Students

It is the Nurse Educator student's responsibility to find their own clinical site and preceptor. Clinical sites that have been used in the past will be maintained in Typhon (Preceptor Directory or Clinic Directory), and students may use this as a resource for selecting clinical sites and preceptors. Nurse Educator practicums must be completed in an undergraduate nursing program. Some of the clinical hours require supervision of nursing students in an inpatient non-precepted clinical setting. Students are allowed to have multiple preceptors to meet the learning objectives of the course.

NE Preceptor Qualifications

- Must have at least three years of experience as a nurse educator
- Authorized to practice as a nurse educator in Texas or the approved state
- Current unencumbered nursing license in the approved state