



**Saint Xavier**  
UNIVERSITY

**MASTER OF SCIENCE  
IN NURSING  
SUPPLEMENTAL HANDBOOK**

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2025-2026 EDITION

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\* This handbook is a supplement to, not a replacement for, the **Saint Xavier University (SXU) Catalog** and for the **Saint Xavier University Student Handbook**. Consequently, Saint Xavier University nursing students are subject to the academic student policies and procedures found in University catalogs and handbooks as well as the policies and procedures contained in this handbook. In instances where University-wide policies differ from those of the School of Nursing (SON), the policies of SON take precedence.

The master's degree program in nursing at Saint Xavier University is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) (<http://www.aacnnursing.org/CCNE/>).

**SAINT XAVIER UNIVERSITY**  
School of Nursing  
**Student Handbook Acknowledgement and Understanding Form**

All MSN students are expected to download and review the Graduate Student Handbook. You will be asked to acknowledge receipt, review and understanding of the handbook contents by completing the online handbook quiz upon admission to SXU's MSN program and thereafter review the revised handbook at the beginning of each academic year.

\* SON reserves the right to amend policies, procedures and other program information as necessary. All changes will be communicated promptly to students via SXU email. Students will be held responsible for these changes.

NOTE: Registration may be on hold until the required handbook acknowledgement quiz is submitted.

**ALL STUDENTS:**

1. Read the 2025-2026 Graduate Student Handbook.
2. Sign in to Canvas at <https://sxu.instructure.com/login/ldap>.
3. Open the Canvas course: (<https://sxu.instructure.com/courses/15729>) MSN Student Resource Center and read the welcome announcement.
4. Open the Modules tab to access the current handbook.
5. Open the Quizzes tab to access the handbook quiz.
6. Completion of the quiz at 100% will serve as your acknowledgement of receipt of the handbook.
7. Please check box to accept photo consent.
8. The handbook must be completed by the end of the fourth week of your first semester.

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**Saint Xavier**  
UNIVERSITY

School of Nursing and Health Sciences

Dear SXU Graduate Nursing Students:

Welcome to Saint Xavier University's (SXU) School of Nursing and Health Sciences! The School of Nursing (SON) is an integral part of the college. As the dean, I speak for the entire SON faculty and staff when I say that we are pleased you have chosen us for your advanced nursing education. The graduate nursing program has been ranked within the top 10 online MSN programs for 11 consecutive years by U.S. News & World Report and ranks No. 2 in the nation for 2025. U.S. News & World Report also names SXU as a "Best Value School" and a "Best Regional University" (2025). We are pleased that you are part of our learning community, and we look forward to helping you reach your goals.

This academic year brings opportunities to re-engage in our University community and reaffirm our commitment to the Mercy mission and core values. This handbook contains essential student information, so please read it carefully. In particular, you should note the academic and clinical policies that govern progression in the program. In addition, announcements of interest to MSN students will be posted in Canvas throughout the year.

The faculty will provide you with the resources needed to meet the outcomes of your courses. Syllabus, virtual classroom learning, and laboratory and clinical experiences are designed to ensure that you are successful. Faculty are available and eager to engage in dialogue with you.

You have identified a particular area of nursing that you are passionate about and are taking steps toward advancement within your career. No matter which MSN track you have chosen, faculty will provide you with the resources you need to meet course outcomes. Faculty are available to you and eager to get to know you and assist. Although our tracks are offered online, SXU professors strive to develop and maintain personal connections with students. Please feel free to contact your professors with questions or concerns or to share updates. As a student in an advanced degree program, you realize that the primary responsibility for your learning lies with you. Carefully read your course syllabus and the course schedule posted in Canvas to be sure you are clear about assignments, expectations regarding your participation in online discussions, and deadlines.

In closing, we are pleased that you are part of our learning community, and we are eager to help you reach your goals, whether as a family nurse practitioner or nurse educator.

Best wishes for a successful year ahead!

Charlene Bermele, DNP, RN, CNE  
Dean, School of Nursing and Health Sciences

## **School of Nursing Administration and Staff**

### Administration

Dean, School of Nursing and Health Sciences Charlene Bermele, DNP, RN, CNE	x3750	Room E-205
Director, Undergraduate Nursing Program Karen L. O'Brien, Ph.D., RN	x3721	Room E-206
Director, Graduate Nursing Program Colleen O'Hearn, DNP, APRN, CPNP-PC	x3727	Room E-208
Director, Simulation and Integrated Learning Center Jennifer Pietranczyk, MSN, RN	x3710	Room E-100A

### Staff

School of Nursing Clinical Placement and Recruitment Specialist Jill Marceille, B.A.	x3716	Room E-222
School of Nursing Clinical Process and Compliance Coordinator Rebecca Sotiros	x3756	Room E-224
Program Administrator Patricia Griffin	x3740	Room E-201
Assistant to the Dean Lisa Pruzewski	x3714	Room E-203

## HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING

The rich traditions of Saint Xavier University's School of Nursing evolved from the commitment of the Sisters of Mercy to serve the city of Chicago. The Sisters arrived in Chicago in 1846 and immediately opened a boarding school for girls, Saint Xavier Academy, the city's first parochial school, and began nursing the sick in their home. In 1852, the Sisters were issued a charter for what is now known as Mercy Hospital. As the hospital began to grow, the Sisters of Mercy recognized the need for trained women to care for the patients. To meet this need, the Mercy School of Nursing was opened in 1889 and received its charter in 1892 as the Mercy Hospital Training School.

In the 1930s, the Sisters of Mercy joined a new movement in nursing education, believing that collegiate preparation offered strong advantages to the profession of nursing. After graduating the class of 1935, the Mercy Hospital Training School merged its interests with those of Saint Xavier College. The first generic baccalaureate-nursing program in Illinois was begun. It was a four-year collegiate course, offering students a basic liberal arts education combined with professional nursing experience, culminating in a Bachelor of Science. In May 1940, the Mercy School of Nursing of Saint Xavier College became the only college of nursing in Illinois and the 27th member school to be recognized nationally by the Association of Collegiate Schools of Nursing, which was the first official accrediting body for nursing. In 1958, the school was accredited by the National League for Nursing and was fully accredited by this organization until 2002, when the school selected The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) as its new professional accrediting body. The school has been continuously fully accredited by an approved nursing organization since 1940.

Another significant change occurred during 1955 through 1956 under the leadership of Sister Mary Annette Walsh. In 1955, the school's name was officially changed from Mercy School of Nursing of Saint Xavier College to the Saint Xavier College School of Nursing. Over the next three years, Sister Annette managed the transfer of primary responsibility for the nursing program from the hospital to the college, a transfer symbolized by its move to the South Side campus in 1958. In 1966, the Alpha Omicron Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau, the international honor society for nursing, was established at Saint Xavier.

Innovation and service blend in with the traditions of the Saint Xavier University nursing program. The University Health Center was developed over a 30-year period, beginning in a small office in the nursing wing. Today, it is housed in the Driehaus Center and is managed and staffed by certified nurse practitioners who provide healthcare services to students, faculty, staff, and members of the surrounding community.

In 2018, the School expanded to the School of Nursing (SON) and was redesignated as an NLN Center of Excellence in Nursing Education for creating an environment that enhances student learning and professional development. Faculty provide an educational milieu that promotes intentional caring with students from diverse backgrounds. In September 2010, the school celebrated its 75th anniversary that brought together alumni, students, faculty, staff and administrators for a weekend of activities. During this time, funds were donated to establish an endowed scholarship, the "School of Nursing Alumni and Friends Endowed Scholarship." This scholarship is one of 11 endowed scholarships awarded to qualified nursing students. In September 2021, SXU hosted "85 + 1: A Celebration of Excellence in Nursing Education" to celebrate the transformative nursing education offered for more than 85 years.

During its history, the nursing program has responded to the changing needs of nursing students, the nursing profession and the health care system. The traditions established in the last 86 years are the foundation for future program development, characterized by innovations and responsiveness to educational and health care needs. Nursing alumni are practicing in nursing education, administration and service in a variety of health care settings throughout the United States and other countries. They

bring with them a strong commitment to quality nursing care and service based on Mercy values and traditions.

## **MISSION AND VISION**

This section contains the mission of the University and the mission and vision of the School of Nursing. Both the University and the School of Nursing remain dedicated to promoting the values of the Sisters of Mercy founded upon the ideals of education, service and compassion.

### **UNIVERSITY MISSION**

Saint Xavier University, a Catholic institution inspired by the heritage of the Sisters of Mercy, educates persons to search for truth, to think critically, to communicate effectively, and to serve wisely and compassionately in support of human dignity and the common good.

### **UNIVERSITY VISION**

Within the nursing program, we will create a learning community responsive to a changing and challenging 21st century health care environment. Building on faculty scholarship and clinical expertise and forming collegial relationships and strategic partnering, we will continue our tradition of preparing excellent nurses who will practice in a variety of professional roles.

### **SCHOOL OF NURSING MISSION**

Through excellence in education, scholarship and community engagement, the School of Nursing embodies the Mercy mission in preparing individuals to engage in high quality, compassionate and professional practice.

## PROGRAM PURPOSES, OUTCOMES AND MASTER'S ESSENTIALS

**The goals of the graduate program in nursing are to:**

1. Prepare registered professional nurses to meet current and future health care needs of populations through advanced nursing practice and transformative leadership, grounded in Mercy values.
2. Provide a foundation for research or practice-focused doctoral study in nursing.

AACN Master's Essentials 2021	MSN Program Outcomes*
<i>Essential I</i> Knowledge for Nursing Practice	<b>Synthesize and translate</b> established and evolving advanced specialty nursing knowledge and ways of knowing, including knowledge from other disciplines, to inform practice and clinical decision-making.
<i>Essential II</i> Person-Centered Care	<b>Demonstrate</b> leadership in designing, providing and coordinating comprehensive care that is holistic, inclusive, compassionate, evidence-based, and developmentally appropriate to protect, promote, and optimize health outcomes.
<i>Essential III</i> Population Health	<b>Implement</b> established and evolving methods to appraise and design population health strategies across the health care delivery continuum from prevention to disease management through collaborative activities with both traditional and non-traditional partnerships to address health policies and social determinants of health for the improvement of equitable population health outcomes.
<i>Essential IV</i> Scholarship for the Nursing Discipline	<b>Synthesize, translate, apply, and disseminate</b> research and evidence-based practice into advanced nursing practice specialties to improve health and transform health care.
<i>Essential V</i> Quality and Safety	<b>Develop and lead</b> initiatives utilizing established and emerging principles of safety and improvement science to enhance quality of care and to minimize risk of harm to patients and providers, through both system effectiveness and individual performance.
<i>Essential VI</i> Interprofessional Partnerships;	<b>Engage</b> in interprofessional relationships and intentional collaboration with care team members, patients, families, communities, and other support systems, to promote high quality, safe patient care, enhance the health care experience, and improve outcomes.
<i>Essential VII</i> Systems-Based Practice	<b>Analyze</b> health care systems to effectively and proactively coordinate resources to provide safe, quality, cost-effective, and equitable care to diverse populations.
<i>Essential VIII</i> Informatics and Health Care Technologies	<b>Apply</b> current and evolving technologies and informatics to interpret aggregated data, inform decision-making, and provide, document, and evaluate outcomes of care in the advanced management and improvement of the delivery of health care

	services, in accordance with best professional practice and regulatory standards.
<i>Essential IX</i> <b>Professionalism</b>	<b>Model</b> a professional identity that reflects advanced nursing practice specialty characteristics and values of ethical behavior, accountability, civility, respect, collaborative disposition, excellence, compassion, service, hospitality, and integrity.
<i>Essential X</i> <i>Personal, Professional, and Leadership Development</i>	<b>Demonstrate</b> evolving professional nursing leadership to foster and promote personal health, resilience, and well-being, contribute to lifelong learning, and support the acquisition of nursing expertise and leadership development in self and others across the profession.

\*Revised 10/2024

## OVERVIEW OF GRADUATE CURRICULA

Saint Xavier University's School of Nursing offers an accredited graduate nursing program leading to a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree. **Two specialty areas** are available:

1. **Family Nurse Practitioner**, an online master's program designed to prepare professional nurses as specialists in primary care services in a variety of settings and to sit for the FNP Certification Exam.
2. **Nurse Educator**, an online master's program designed to prepare nurses for the academic or clerical nurse educator role and to sit for the Certified Nurse Educator Exam.

**Two post-graduate certificate programs** are also available.

1. **Family Nurse Practitioner:** This certificate enables a nurse who already has earned a master's degree in nursing to specialize as a family nurse practitioner and sit for the FNP certification exam.
2. **Nurse Educator:** This certificate provides an opportunity for a nurse with a master's degree in nursing to specialize in nursing education and sit for the Certified Nurse Educator Exam.

### Requirements for the Master of Science in Nursing

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) requires completion of 35 to 47 semester hours of credit, based upon chosen specialty track and exclusive of pre-requisites. Required courses include core courses, courses which support the selected specialty, and specialty courses for the chosen MSN track. Course descriptions are located on the University website in the online graduate catalog at <https://www.sxu.edu/catalog/current/graduate/index.asp>.

1. Graduate students are expected to meet and complete all program and academic requirements within five (5) years of enrollment in the program.
2. To remain in good academic standing, graduate students are expected to maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better throughout their program. While enrolled in clinical/practicum courses, all students must carry professional liability insurance through Saint Xavier University and maintain active registered nurse (RN) licensure in a U.S. state or territory. Students must be licensed as an RN in any state where clinical experiences occur, maintain CPR certification and meet relevant health requirements. Additional requirements may be specified by clinical agencies in which the students practice. More details on these requirements are found in the Academic Policy and Practicum Policy sections of this handbook.



**Master of Science in Nursing  
Nurse Educator  
Program of Study**

**MSN Core Courses**

	<b><u>Course Title</u></b>	<b><u>Credits</u></b>
NURSG 517	Health Care Systems and Financing	3
NURSG 504	Philosophical and Theoretical Foundations of Advanced Nursing Practice	3
NURSG 509	Nursing Inquiry	3
NURSG 544	Epidemiology and Population-Based Health Care	3
NURSG 557	Information Technology and Health Care Outcomes Evaluation	3
NURSG 553	Culture, Communication and Conflict Resolution in Interprofessional Practice	3
<b><u>TOTAL CORE:</u></b>		<b><u>18</u></b>

**Courses Supportive of Specialty**

NURSG 503	Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NURSG 502	Advanced Health Assessment	3
NURSG 512	Advanced Pharmacology	3
<b><u>TOTAL SUPPORTIVE:</u></b>		<b><u>9</u></b>

**Specialty Courses**

NURSG 608	Nurse Educator Role (16 non-preceptored fieldwork hours)	2
NURSG 609	Clinical Practice Specialty 2	1
NURGP 609	Clinical Practice Specialty Practicum (75 practicum hours)	
NURSG 610	Learning Principles and Instructional Methods for the Adult Learner 2	1
NURGP 610	Learning Principles and Instructional Methods for the Adult Learner Practicum (75 practicum hours,)	
NURSG 611	Nurse Educator Capstone	2
NURSGP 611	Nurse Educator Capstone Practicum (75 practicum hours)	1
<b><u>TOTAL SPECIALTY:</u></b>		<b><u>11</u></b>

<b>Total Semester Hours</b>	<b>38</b>
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**Total Practicum Hours**

**225**

**Master of Science in Nursing  
Family Nurse Practitioner  
Program of Study**

<b><u>MSN Core Courses</u></b>	<b><u>Course Title</u></b>	<b><u>Credits</u></b>
NURSG 517	Health Care Systems and Financing	3
NURSG 504	Philosophical and Theoretical Foundations of Advanced Nursing	3
NURSG 509	Nursing Inquiry	3
NURSG 553	Culture, Communication and Conflict Resolution in Interprofessional Practice	3
NURSG 557	Information Technology and Health Care Outcomes Evaluation	3
NURSG 544	Epidemiology and Population-Based Health Care	3
<b><u>TOTAL CORE:</u></b>		<b><u>18</u></b>
<b>Courses Supportive of Specialty</b>		
NURSG 505	Advanced Health Assessment for FNP's	3
NURSG 503	Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NURSG 552	Advanced Pharmacology for FNP's	3
<b><u>TOTAL SUPPORTIVE:</u></b>		<b><u>9</u></b>
<b>Specialty Courses</b>		
NURSG 519	Primary Care of Women and Children	3
NURGP 519	Primary Care of Women and Children (150 practicum hours)	2
NURSG 525	Pharmacology for Advanced Nursing Practice	1
NURSG 535	Management of Common Health Problems in Primary Care	3
NURGP 535	Management of Common Health Problems in Primary Care (225 practicum hours)	3
NURSG 536	Management of Complex Health Problems in Primary Care	3
NURGP 536	Management of Complex Health Problems in Primary Care (225 practicum hours)	3
NURSG 537	FNP Role Synthesis	2
<b><u>TOTAL SPECIALTY:</u></b>		<b><u>20</u></b>
<b>Total Semester Hours</b>		<b>47</b>
<b>Total Practicum Hours</b>		<b>600</b>

## **Post-Graduate Certificate Plans of Study**

### **Certificates in Family Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Educator Studies:**

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) recognizes and endorses post-graduate certificate programs in nursing. Post-graduate students must successfully complete graduate didactic and clinical requirements of an academic graduate program through a formal graduate-level certificate or degree-granting graduate level program in the desired area of practice. Post-graduate students are expected to master the same outcome criteria as graduate degree granting program students.

A gap analysis will be conducted for all students admitted as post-graduate certificate students prior to enrollment to develop an individualized plan of study. The individualized plan of study will vary in total number of credits, depending on the student's previous graduate level course work in nursing and the time of completion.

The student's previous master's study will be evaluated for successful completion of core and specialty courses and/or content equivalent to the SXU MSN courses. If these courses and/or content were not included in the student's prior master's study, the student must take the course(s) as part of their post-MSN certificate.

Courses in advanced pathophysiology, advanced pharmacology and advanced health assessment must have been completed within five years of enrollment in the post-graduate certificate program or they must be retaken as part of the certificate.

If waived, post-master s FNP students who have taken a graduate-level advanced health assessment course within the past five years will be required to demonstrate proficiency in advanced health assessment by return demonstration of a full head-to-toe assessment prior to enrollment in the FNP specialty courses NURSG 519 and NURGP 519.

Note: Post-graduate certificate programs must be completed within three (3) years.

## **ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

The SXU Academic Calendar is posted on the University's website at

<https://www.sxu.edu/academics/guidance/records/academic-calendar.html>

Note: Summer graduate nursing courses do *not* follow the same schedule as other University summer sessions, so graduate students should check the mySXU portal for specific dates of their summer graduate courses.

## **REFUND AND WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION**

Refund and withdrawal information are posted on the University's website at:

<https://www.sxu.edu/academics/guidance/records/withdrawal.html>

For information on the start date of specific courses, access the "Search for Classes" feature on the mySXU portal and look at the section information, or contact Records and Registration at (773) 298-3501. Students who register for a class are responsible for tuition unless they officially withdraw either in Records and Registration or through the mySXU portal. Fees are not refundable. Notifying the instructor or ceasing to participate in the class does *not* constitute an authorized withdrawal.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES: ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, DISMISSAL AND GRADUATION**

The School of Nursing adheres to the policies established by Saint Xavier University and published in the current Saint Xavier University Graduate Academic Catalog. Additional policies and procedures established by the School of Nursing faculty are published below. Graduate nursing students, both degree-seeking and certificate, are held to policies and procedures published in both documents and are strongly urged to obtain copies of each and familiarize themselves with their contents.

### **Admission Process**

Refer to <https://www.sxu.edu/admission/graduate/requirements-process.aspx#msn> for current admission and transfer criteria.

### **Student Rights**

As noted in the SXU Student Handbook, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, establishes rights for eligible students and their parents with respect to records maintained by the University and additionally, the School of Nursing.

In addition to University requirements, the School of Nursing has adopted the following academic requirements, which must be achieved by the student.

## MANDATORY REPORTING:

Saint Xavier University is a community that respects the dignity and worth of each person and is committed to

fostering a diverse, civil and inclusive community in which its students can learn and grow. As a member of the SXU community, it is expected that students uphold the following values:

- Everyone deserves to feel respected.
- Everyone is responsible for treating members of the SXU community with dignity, civility and respect.
- Everyone is expected to be courteous, engaged, attentive and empathetic in order to help sustain a safe and inclusive environment for all.

Additionally, all members of the SXU community have a responsibility to help SXU be a respectful, inclusive community free from discrimination, bias, bullying and harassment by reporting instances that are not in line with our core values.

Mandatory Reporting on SXU Website:

- Bias Incident Report Form: Please use this form to report behavior that discriminates, stereotypes, excludes or harasses anyone in the community that is motivated by prejudice against an individual or group of people based on personal characteristics or identity, including but not limited to: age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or disability.
- Sexual Misconduct Report Form: Please use this form to report sexual harassment, stalking, relationship violence or sexual assault.

Incident Report Form: Please use this form to report behavior that violates the University Code of Conduct such as behavior involving alcohol, drugs, obscene language, threats, damage to property, vandalism, theft, etc.

In addition to these forms, you may contact the Office of the Dean of Students directly by visiting Room L-103 of the Warde Academic Center, emailing [deanofstudents@sxu.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@sxu.edu), or calling 773-298-3123. In line with our mission, core values and Catholic Mercy identity, we expect all members of the University community to act toward one another with sensitivity, consideration, understanding, appreciation, tolerance and active concern for the welfare of others. Please consider how you can positively contribute to our inclusive learning community.

### **MSN Program Statistics Requirement**

Meeting the MSN statistics requirement is a prerequisite to enrollment in NURSG 509 Nursing Inquiry and NURSG 544 Epidemiology and Population-Based Health Care. Two options are available for meeting the statistics requirement:

1. The first option is to pass a college-level statistics course with a grade of B or better within three years prior to enrolling in NURSG 509 Nursing Inquiry. The statistics course should include an introduction to descriptive and inferential statistics. For this option, the student must send the statistics course description and evidence of grade earned to the program director.

2. The second option is to successfully complete the activities described in the Statistics for Self-Study Module **one month** prior to enrollment in NURSG 509 Nursing Inquiry.
3. The Statistics for Self-Study Module is available in Canvas. A competency post-test is required to verify understanding of the statistical concepts covered in the Self-Study Module. Students take the competency post-test electronically in the Canvas learning management system (LMS). Successful completion of the graduate nursing statistics requirement via option two requires passing of the Mastery Exam at the 85% level. Students will have two opportunities to take a version of this exam before needing to fulfill the statistics requirement through formal coursework (option one).

## Grading

### Uniform Grading Scale – Nursing Program

93 – 100	= A
85 – 92	= B
77 – 84	= C
70 – 76	= D
69 and below	= F

1. Graduate nursing students must achieve a grade of B or better in all courses.
2. Any course in which a grade of C is achieved must be repeated with a grade of B or better in the next semester that the course is offered and before any other courses may be taken.
3. Only one course may be repeated during the program, including withdrawals from any course. A student who receives more than one C in the program will be dismissed from the nursing graduate program.
4. Any required nursing course in which the student receives a grade of D or F will result in dismissal from the School of Nursing.
5. Incomplete Grades: When acceptable circumstances prevent a student from completing course requirements prior to the end of a term, the **student** must initiate the process for requesting an Incomplete (I), as outlined in the Graduate Academic Catalog. Incomplete grades are assigned only for work in progress and at the discretion of the faculty member and approval of the program director. Students should have completed at least 75% of the course to be eligible for an Incomplete. Students who receive an Incomplete in a required nursing course will not be allowed to progress, unless the Incomplete has been replaced with a grade of B or better by the start of the sequential semester. The faculty member who serves as the instructor for the course determines the completion date for the I grade, and enters that date in CLAWS.
6. Please complete and submit the following Incomplete form -  
[https://my.sxu.edu/academics/Academic\\_Affairs/Documents/Incomplete%20Grade%20Request%20Form%20\(1\).pdf#search=Incomplete%20grades](https://my.sxu.edu/academics/Academic_Affairs/Documents/Incomplete%20Grade%20Request%20Form%20(1).pdf#search=Incomplete%20grades)

## Progression

Once admitted to the graduate nursing program, a student must meet the following criteria to remain in good academic standing.



1. Achieve and maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale in all graduate nursing courses.
2. Adhere to a planned program of study according to stated time frames and requirements. Students are expected to complete the program requirements within five years of enrollment.
3. Present evidence of compliance with CPR, health insurance, health and other requirements, criminal background check, and drug screens prior to enrollment in clinical/practicum courses and as required by clinical agencies.
4. Maintain registered nurse licensure in a U.S. state or territory where practicum hours will be completed. FNP students must be licensed as an RN in Illinois, Indiana, or Wisconsin.
5. Comply with all current practicum policies as outlined in this handbook and the Practicum Information Packet posted in Canvas.

### **Continuing Enrollment Policy**

1. Any admitted graduate student who will not enroll during a scheduled academic term must submit a completed Leave of Absence Form (Appendix E) to the graduate program director.
2. A leave of absence will require a revised program plan and may alter placement in clinical practicum courses. A leave of absence does not alter the five-year degree deadline established at the time of matriculation (note: this differs from the University Stop Out/Readmission Policy).
3. Students who stop out of the University and School of Nursing for two or more consecutive semesters must adhere to the program requirements in effect at the time of their readmission.
4. Admitted graduate students in good academic standing who stop out from Saint Xavier University for more than one year must follow the steps below to initiate readmission. Readmission into a program is subject to academic department approval.
  - Fill out a graduate application and include updated contact and employment information.
  - Provide official transcript(s) from all schools attended *after* leaving Saint Xavier University if applicable along with proof of a current RN license.
  - No application fee is required. Readmitted students are bound by the provisions of the University that this is current at the time of readmission.

In the rare instance where a student wishes to deviate from the plan of studies (i.e., accelerate or decelerate), the student must meet with their academic advisor, request the change in writing and submit it to the appropriate graduate program director. A change in the plan of studies may necessitate placing the student on a cumulative waiting list according to the date received in anticipation of possible program or course openings.

FNP students who take a leave of absence following completion of Advanced Health Assessment must successfully demonstrate competency in history-taking and physical assessment skills to a designated member of the FNP faculty prior to resuming study in any FNP specialty courses.

### **Withdrawal Process**

Students who withdraw from courses must initiate the process as outlined in the Graduate Academic Catalog Drop-Add/Withdrawal Policies: <https://www.sxu.edu/catalog/current/graduate/aca/withdrawl.asp>

Note that only one course may be repeated; withdrawal from two or more courses will result in dismissal from the School of Nursing.

### **Academic Probation and Dismissal**

Graduate students are required to maintain a grade point average of 3.0 (out of a possible 4.0). Any admitted student whose cumulative grade point average is below 3.0 or receives a grade of C in a required nursing course will be notified in writing of academic probation by the program director.

Probationary status will be removed when the student's cumulative grade point average reaches or exceeds 3.0 and the grade of C is replaced with a B or better. Students are allowed no more than one term of academic probation during their MSN program.

### **Dismissal Process**

Students will be dismissed from the School of Nursing if they:

1. Receive a grade of D or F in any nursing course.
2. Fail to raise GPA to 3.0 after one semester of academic probation.
3. Fail to receive a grade of B or better in a nursing course that is repeated because of an initial grade of C or W. Only one course may be repeated during the program, including withdrawals from any course. A student who receives more than one C in the program will be dismissed from the nursing graduate program.
4. Fail to meet and adhere to the policies outlined in the handbook.
5. Withdraw from two nursing courses. See University Academic Dismissal and Appeal Process <https://www.sxu.edu/catalog/current/graduate/aca/dismissal.asp> for more information.

### **Procedure for Readmission**

Students who leave the University and School of Nursing in good academic standing or dismissed from their program must submit a written request for readmission and advisement to the chairperson of the Graduate Student Management Committee.

Readmission of dismissed students into graduate nursing courses occurs only rarely and is considered on an individual basis. A student who is dismissed or leaves the nursing program who wants to seek readmission must submit a letter that includes the following information:

1. Original admission date to the School of Nursing.
2. Date of last semester enrolled in nursing, including last nursing course(s) completed, and grade(s) received in last course(s) completed.
3. Adequate evidence to support qualifications for readmission. This should include:
  - a. Statement of the initial reason for dismissal.
  - b. Documentation of how the reason for dismissal has been resolved.
  - c. Evidence of ongoing academic effort.
  - d. A description of strategies that will be taken to maintain the necessary academic standing in the nursing program.
4. Courses in advanced pathophysiology, advanced pharmacology, and advanced health assessment must have been completed within 5 years of initial enrollment in the MSN program or they must be retaken if a student is accepted for readmission.

### **Procedure for Students Who Stop-Out**

Admitted graduate students in good academic standing who stop out from Saint Xavier University for more than one year must follow the steps below to initiate readmission. Readmission into a program is subject to academic department approval.

- Complete a graduate application and include updated contact and employment information.

- Provide official transcript(s) from all schools attended after leaving Saint Xavier University if applicable along with proof of current licensure.
- No application fee is required. Readmitted students are bound by the provisions of the University catalog that is current at the time of readmission.

**Graduation Requirements** include the following:

1. Completion of the required program of studies within five years from the date of matriculation into the program.
2. Achievement of a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
3. Submission of the Petition for Graduation Form to Records and Registration via the mySXU portal during the semester prior to intended graduation and in compliance with the University's published deadline dates. Application for graduation must be made through the Office of Records and Registration during the student's final academic year. Deadlines for filing are published in the Academic Calendar. It is the responsibility of the student to note the deadline and to submit the completed form on time.
4. Students completing their graduate requirements in the summer are eligible to participate in the graduation ceremony in the month of May prior.

**Graduate Curriculum Student Management Committee (GCSMC) Decisions:**

1. The committee may recommend that the student be denied readmission to SON.
2. The committee may recommend that the student be readmitted to the nursing program. If the student is readmitted, the committee may require participation in specific academic support services/activities.
3. The committee may recommend that the student be denied transfer of program tracks.
4. The committee may recommend that the student be approved to change program tracks.

**Change of Program Track**

There is a formal process that students must follow in order to be approved to change program tracks. The student must be in good academic standing with a GPA of 3.0 or higher and no more than one course repeated. The student must submit a one- to two-page statement indicating the reason for the request to change tracks and address professional goals and any obstacles that may have prevented completion of the current track. These recommendations will be based on the quality and content of the personal statement, prior academic performance and likelihood of success in the chosen track.

The request is submitted to the chairperson of the Graduate Student Management Committee and reviewed by the committee, which recommends whether the transfer of program tracks will be approved. The final decision regarding transfer of program tracks will be made by the graduate program director, based on the recommendation of the committee. Students will receive a written notification of the decision and students will receive an admission date based on space availability. Students will be subject to the program plan in effect at the time of the program track change.

It is ***not*** acceptable to transfer programs when a student is in jeopardy of being dismissed from the program. All grades are considered in the student's progression process. Change of track forms are Appendix B and C.

**Readmission to the School of Nursing**

The decision regarding readmission to the School of Nursing will be made by the graduate program director, based on the recommendation of the committee. The student will submit a written letter to the chairperson of the committee. Upon review by the committee, the student will then receive a

written notification of the decision and students who are readmitted will receive a readmission date based on space availability. Students who were dismissed and then readmitted will be placed on a final semester of academic probation for one semester. Failure to meet criteria for good standing during the readmitted semester in nursing courses will result in dismissal from SON without possibility of readmission. Please note: A nursing GPA of 3.0 or greater must be achieved upon readmission to SON and be maintained through graduation from the program. Also, readmitted students are subject to the program plan in effect at the time of readmission.

A student not readmitted or accepted for transfer after completing the appeal process may further appeal the decision to the dean of SON. The student must submit this appeal in writing.

### **Grievance and Appeal Procedure**

A student who believes that an incorrect **final** grade has been received in a course or that a policy has been applied inappropriately has the right to grieve the final grade or the policy decision. Individual assignment grades cannot be appealed. See link for the grievance and appeal process followed by the School of Nursing.

## **GENERAL ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **Academic Advisement and Registration**

Upon admission to the graduate nursing program, all students are assigned a faculty academic advisor. MSN students receive a plan of study at the outset of their first semester of the MSN program. Modifications to that plan of study will be made by the graduate program coordinator in conjunction with the graduate program director.

Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) students are required to communicate with their assigned faculty advisor in the first semester of their program to review their program of study. To follow, FNP students are expected to contact their faculty advisor **at least** once per semester to review their academic plan and progress and to be cleared for registration for the upcoming term. Note that such advising may occur via phone contact, email or an in-person meeting. FNP students must be cleared in the mySXU portal for registration by their academic advisors. The student has the ultimate responsibility for making educational plans that are consistent with published requirements and deadlines. Any changes to the student's program plan must be approved by the FNP track coordinator.

Academic advising is a shared responsibility between student and advisor. Advisors, whether staff or faculty, work to inspire students by building relationships, empowering self-awareness, and reflection, connecting students with appropriate resources, fostering professional development, and supporting various college-to-career pathways. Although advisors provide guidance and recommendations, students are ultimately responsible for making academic decisions and satisfying degree requirements.

### **Students Admitted Under Probationary Terms**

*MSN students who were offered admission under probationary terms are required to earn a grade of B or better in NURSG 503 Advanced Pathophysiology. If a grade lower than a B is received, an additional opportunity to repeat the course will not be allowed and the student will be dismissed from the program.*

*In addition, probationary students are required to meet with their academic advisor on a monthly basis for the first two semesters of the MSN program. These meetings aim to help build a strong foundation for the student's studies by offering guidance, support, and resources to ensure success.*

*During these monthly meetings, the student and their advisor will discuss academic progress, address any challenges they may be facing, and strategize on how to achieve their goals. The meeting format will be determined by the advisor's discretion and the student's needs and may take place in person, over the phone, or via Zoom.*

*If the required monthly meetings are not attended on the first occasion, an unprofessional behavior form will be completed and added to the student's academic file. Additional missed meetings may result in dismissal from the program. Consistent communication between the student and their advisor is essential during this time, and we encourage students to be proactive in seeking support.*

### **Faculty-to-Student Communication**

Announcements from administration, faculty and staff in SON will be posted on SXU Canvas in the MSN Student Resource and Training site and within individual courses. It is highly recommended that students check Canvas announcements at least once daily or set notifications in Canvas to be automatically sent to email or text.

Email is considered the official means of communication in the SON. SXU provides central email services to support the educational activities of the University and to serve as a means of official University communication. SON expects that students actively maintain their SXU email accounts and check their email on a frequent and consistent basis. Students and faculty are required to use their SXU email for all SON and University-related communication. This ensures messages are not received as spam and aids in identification. Students who choose to forward their email to a private unofficial address outside their University address do so at their own risk. All communication is expected to take place in a timely and respectful manner with a 24-hour turnaround time suggested (48 hours on weekends).

### **Class Attendance**

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes (face-to-face or synchronous online), participate in all online class activities, and take exams and submit assignments on the dates scheduled. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor *in advance* if they will be unable to attend class, take an exam or submit an assignment when due. The student is expected to make arrangements to obtain information or materials that were missed due to absence from class. Policies related to class attendance and related matters are at the discretion of the course instructor. Students should refer to the course syllabus for these policies.

### **Veterans Statement**

Saint Xavier University is a proud participant of the Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program, a provision of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008.

Veterans and active duty military personnel with special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill requirements or disabilities) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these (in advance if possible) to the instructor.

### **Religious Holidays**

SON recognizes and respects that every individual has religious holidays and celebrations that they honor. The University embraces diversity as one of its core values and encouraging such celebrations is one way to honor this value. Nevertheless, regular attendance at class and practicum is a student obligation and a student is responsible for all coursework, including tests and written assignments.

Reasonable accommodations will be made by faculty for students requesting to miss class, practicum, exams or written assignments due to the observance of religious holidays. However, it is your obligation as a student to notify your course instructor *in writing* within the *first week* of the official start of classes of foreseen conflicts with class or practicum attendance, tests, or assignments caused by your religious observances.

At that time, you should review dates for exams, course and clinical assignments, and meet with the course coordinator to plan your absence and an alternate assignment.

If your request is denied, you may appeal in writing outlining the date, time and practices of the religious observance related to your request. Your appeal should also include the response from the course coordinator outlining the denial. The appeal should be filed ***no later than 2 weeks before the religious observance***. Your appeal should be addressed to the program director.

### **Examinations**

Students are required to be present for all scheduled examinations. Students must notify the course faculty prior to the scheduled exam time if they are ill or have appropriate extenuating circumstances preventing them from taking the exam. Course faculty have the following options regarding missed examinations:

1. Maintain the required exam date and assign a grade of zero for the missed examination.
2. Administer the examination at another time to be determined.
3. Administer an alternate form of the examination (e.g., an essay or case study).
4. Administer the same examination, but lower the grade received on the makeup exam.

It is the responsibility of the student to speak with the course faculty within 24 hours of the missed examination to discuss these options. Failure to do so may jeopardize satisfactory course completion.

### **Online Test Taking Policy**

Honesty and ethical behavior are inherent values of the nursing profession. Online testing occurs in a variety of graduate nursing courses, and exam security and integrity are high priorities. When applicable, students will be informed in advance about the requirements to maintain security and integrity of online testing. These requirements will be defined in the course syllabus and/or via announcements in Canvas. We wish to provide an atmosphere which encourages appropriate behavior. Students are expected to update their personal computer applications or software in order to meet requirements to maintain exam security.

The following rules apply during testing that occurs in online settings:

1. Phones or smartwatches are not allowed.
2. Students may be required to show photo identification prior to start of examination, and to adhere to specific exam guidelines.
3. Computer-based testing: Students are expected to do their own work and are not to refer to any other materials/sources unless indicated by faculty.
4. Exams administered via computer will require the use of lockdown procedures.

### **Assignments**

Unless the course syllabus provides alternative guidelines, all academic papers are to follow the American Psychological Association guidelines for formal papers. The "Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association," 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2020, is the manual of style for all nursing course written assignments. All papers are expected to be free of grammar, punctuation and spelling errors. Students who experience difficulty with written communication are encouraged to seek assistance from SXU's Writing Studio located in the Learning Center (WAC L-110).

### Learning Center/Writing Studio (WAC L-110)

The SXU Learning Center provides resources for undergraduate and graduate students. Subject tutors are available to help improve your studying skills, go over study guides, and practice exams. Subject tutoring is by appointment only and can be accessed via the portal under “Tutoring and Writing Sign-Up.” The Learning Center also provides writing consultants that excel at helping students think about the development of ideas, the arguments of an essay, grammar, punctuation, and documentation. Writing consultants are available by appointment or walk-in. If you would like an after-hours appointment or supplement to face-to-face service, you can access the Smarthinking Online Tutoring tool via Canvas.

For questions or to make an appointment, stop by L-110 or call (773) 298-5148. Appointments can also be made at <https://sxu.mywconline.com>. For more information, visit <https://www.sxu.edu/academics/guidance/learning-center/index.aspx>.

Assignments must be completed and submitted on the specified due date. Students should carefully follow the calendar printed in the course syllabus and schedule. Arrangements for an extension of time for completion of an assignment must be made before the due date of the assignment. Extensions will only be given at the discretion of the faculty member for serious reasons. If assignments are submitted after the specified due date, the course faculty has the option to:

1. Accept the late assignment with no penalty.
2. Maintain the required due date/time of the assignment and lower the grade.
3. Require an additional assignment.
4. Change the assignment.
5. Refuse to accept the assignment and assign a grade of zero.

### Academic Retention Alert

Retention Alert is an online program that can be found in the Self-Service menu of the mySXU portal by following the path: *Faculty > Faculty Information* or *Staff > Retention Alert*. A Retention Alert case should be submitted when any faculty or staff member believes that intervention by a member of the University is needed to assist the student. The student does not receive a notification that a Retention Alert case has been submitted. Examples of cases that need a Retention Alert case started include: the student has not responded to emails or phone calls, the student continues to perform poorly, or there are concerns regarding the student’s behavioral or personal issues. Senior staff members will develop an intervention strategy for the student and follow up with key personnel.

### Transfer Credit from Other Accredited Institutions

Graduate nursing students may request transfer of credit for graduate courses completed at other accredited institutions upon acceptance to Saint Xavier University. Subject to approval, a ***maximum of six*** semester hours (or equivalent) earned elsewhere may be accepted toward completion of graduate degree requirements in nursing.

Acceptance of transfer credit is contingent upon the following:

1. The student must be formally admitted to the graduate nursing program.
2. The hours were in graduate-level, non-clinical coursework at an accredited institution.
3. The credit was earned with a grade of A or B.
4. The course was taken within five (5) years prior to application for transfer.



Note: While hours may transfer and be counted as either elective or equivalent credit, cumulative grade-point averages **do not** transfer between schools.

To request transfer credit, the student should submit all of the following to the program director:

1. The Petition for Transfer of Graduate Credit Form found in Appendix A of this handbook.
2. An official transcript showing when the course was taken and the grade that was earned.
3. A copy of the course description from the school's catalog. A copy of the course syllabus may be necessary to fully evaluate transferability of the course.

### **Independent Study**

Independent study is the investigation or in-depth exploration of a topic so specialized or focused that it would not normally be addressed as part of the existing curriculum (as contrasted with a course by special arrangement, which is a course listed in the Saint Xavier University Graduate Academic Catalog, but not currently scheduled). A student wishing to engage in independent study is responsible for arranging the project with a professor who has expertise in the study subject and who agrees to supervise the project. The student and professor jointly develop an individualized study and evaluation plan. The student will complete the Arrangement for Independent Study Form available in the Office of Records and Registration, obtain the required signatures, and register for the course in the usual manner. The student is responsible for meeting with the professor on an agreed-upon schedule during the semester and for completing the terms of the contract as outlined on the above form. If the identified independent study activity includes a clinical component, it may be necessary to secure an agency contract and the student must then be covered under the University's malpractice insurance coverage.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic honesty and integrity are critical to any educational institution and are highly valued in the profession of nursing. Faculty expect students to do their own work. Students will not give or receive assistance during quizzes, examinations, or other class work unless directed otherwise.

One form of academic dishonesty is **plagiarism**. Plagiarism is intellectual theft. It is defined as including, without limitations, the act of representing the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism may consist of copying, paraphrasing, or otherwise using any work of another without proper acknowledgment of the source or presenting oral or written material prepared by another as one's own. It also includes using other people's work available on the internet. When in doubt about rules concerning plagiarism, students should consult the faculty for assistance.

Cheating, plagiarism and dishonesty of any kind are very serious matters and will incur serious consequences. Any student involved in dishonesty or academic misconduct may fail the course. As noted above, failure in a nursing course will result in dismissal from SON. The University policy on academic dishonesty will be followed. **Refer to the current Saint Xavier University Graduate Academic Catalog for academic policies and the statement on academic integrity:**

<http://catalog.sxu.edu>.

## POLICIES OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING

### Substance Use Policy

The School of Nursing requires all nursing students to be free from chemical impairment during participation in any aspect of the nursing program, including classroom, laboratory or clinical settings. The chemically impaired student is defined as one who tests positive for, has used or abused any drug that is not legally obtainable or any drug that is legally obtainable but is used by a person or in a manner not authorized by the terms of a legal prescription. This policy includes alcohol and marijuana which may be legally obtainable but not appropriately used. **Note that marijuana, which may be legally obtainable, is currently illegal under federal law. Therefore, SON maintains a zero-tolerance policy with regard to all use of cannabis and marijuana in all forms.**

Saint Xavier University recognizes that students may choose to use alcohol or other drugs. SXU takes seriously the issues of use of substances since these behaviors can affect the student's academic life, health status and future life goals. Substance use poses a significant risk to the individual student as well as the academic community, including the patients within our care. Substances cause significant alterations in behavior, physiologic homeostasis, and potential threats to the well-being of the SXU community as a whole.

SON demands that students respect and abide by the laws of the state of Illinois, the mandates of the Drug-Free School and Workplace Act of 1989, and the Alcohol, Drug and Other Policies of SXU.

The University and SON will provide information on support programs for treatment and recovery from substance abuse. This policy is in the best interest of the safety and health of all students, instructors, affiliating agencies and patients, and is consistent with the contractual arrangements with the affiliating agencies.

In accordance with University regulations regarding controlled substances as stated in the University Student Handbook, it is the responsibility of each student to refrain from the illegal manufacture, distribution/sale, purchase, possession or use of drugs on University premises or while on University business. Students must also be in compliance with the University policy regarding alcoholic beverages. Students are therefore prohibited from attending any class, laboratory or clinical experience while under the influence of alcohol or while the presence of illegally used drugs can be detected in the student's system. Any student found to have violated this policy will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from SON.

### Notes:

- 1) Although marijuana is legally available in some states, it is considered illegal from a federal standpoint and therefore, a student who tests positive for marijuana will be considered in violation of the SON Substance Abuse Policy. In addition, students should be aware that CBD products, although available over-the-counter, may still cause a positive drug screen if the product contains THC.
- 2) Students who have a legal prescription for a controlled substance or physician certification for medical marijuana must submit documentation in CastleBranch prior to testing.

## Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act Information

With the enactment of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), the idea that patients have the right to privacy and confidentiality became more than just an ethical obligation of health care providers, students and health care organizations. It became the law. The right to privacy is essential and it's important to patients and families Under no circumstances should you ever release or remove confidential patient information outside of the hospital/health care agency or discuss it with anyone unless it is needed for treatment of the patient. The student is responsible for the content found at: <http://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/index.html>.

## Social Media

Social networks and the internet provide unparalleled opportunities for rapid knowledge exchange and dissemination among many people according to the National Council for State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN, 2011), but this exchange presents special concerns for privacy and confidentiality. Social media are defined as “web sites and other online means of communication that are used by large groups of people to share information and to develop social and professional contacts” (dictionary.com, OED). The personal use of social media by nursing students must follow professional guidelines as outlined in the SON Handbook and published by the American Nurses Association (ANA, 2014). It is essential to keep in mind that information about students and patients is protected under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

## Social Networking Policy

First and foremost, consider the professional image a nurse/student would like to portray. If in doubt, ***do not post***. Students must present a professional and positive image of the profession of nursing, SON and themselves, while respecting the rights of patients, faculty members, clinical practice facilities and other students.

Appropriate use of social media includes protection of:

- Health information
- Educational record information
- Confidential personal information
- Confidential, private or trademarked information
- Copyrighted or intellectual property
- Clinical experiences that include identifiable information related to patients or SON-affiliated clinical facilities

Responsible use of social media must include:

- Refraining from the use of disparaging, bullying or intimidating information.
- Observing ethically prescribed professional nurse-patient boundaries.
- Maintaining privacy settings.
- Separating personal and professional information.
- Informing appropriate authorities of breaches.

## Consequences

- Violation of the SON social networking policy or the SXU Student Code of Conduct will result in immediate disciplinary action by SON and/or the University that may include dismissal from SON.
- Violation of the social networking policy may subject the student to legal proceedings and/or liability.

Please refer to the following sites for more information:

- American Nurses Association- Principles for Social Networking and the Nurse
- <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/official-position-statements/ana-principles/FERPA>  
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>
- HIPAA  
<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/index.html>
- NCSBN- Social Media Guidelines  
<http://www.ncsbn.org/347.htm>
- National Student Nurses' Association, Inc., Recommendations For: Social Media Usage and Maintaining Privacy, Confidentiality and Professionalism:  
  
● [https://www.ncsbn.org/public-files/NSNA\\_Social\\_Media\\_Recommendations.pdf](https://www.ncsbn.org/public-files/NSNA_Social_Media_Recommendations.pdf)

## Class Audits

Students are allowed to audit a course with permission from the instructor. The cost to audit a course is \$125 and free to SXU alumni. Access to exams or course quizzes are prohibited during the audit.

## Students-At-Large

SON will consider a limited number of interested applicants a graduate student-at-large option, in which the student's enrollment is not that of a fully, officially admitted, and/or degree-seeking student. Graduate students-at-large are not eligible for financial aid.

Graduate student-at-large applicants must have earned a BSN with a minimum GPA of 3.0, hold a current RN license and provide a personal statement detailing reasons for applying as a graduate student-at-large. The maximum hours allowed to be taken as a student-at-large is six semester hours.

Interested candidates must submit a completed application indicating desired courses, a personal statement describing the purpose for taking the course(s), a transcript indicating BSN degree with required 3.0 GPA, and current RN license. Application materials should be submitted to the graduate program coordinator. Applications will be reviewed by the SON Graduate Student Management Committee. If an application is submitted during the summer or over a University break, the graduate program director can review the application and grant a decision. An enrollment decision is then sent to the applicant.

Once accepted, a student-at-large must follow graduate admission policy for registration. The student must recognize that taking a course as a student-at-large does not guarantee admission to any graduate program. In addition, students should familiarize themselves with the requirements of the program and the maximum number of credits that may be accepted for transfer. If a student has been denied admission or dismissed from a graduate program at Saint Xavier University, registration for classes as a student-at-large is not permitted.

## CE Credits

According to IDFPR, academic credits can be used to fulfill continuing education (CE) requirements. One semester hour equals 15 contact hours of CE, and a three-hour scheduled course equals 45 contact hours. If CE credits were to be audited, the student would need to show proof of successful course completion via transcript.

## **PRACTICUM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Overview**

The following information describes the responsibilities of students, faculty members and preceptors for the practicum courses. Students must be in good academic standing (cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better) and complete all practicum requirements to be eligible to enroll in the practicum courses. A Practicum Placement Instruction Packet, including a practicum requirement checklist with due dates and necessary forms, is available in Canvas and Typhon. **Practicum requirements must be completed fully and on time or students cannot begin practicum as scheduled and graduation could be delayed.**

Saint Xavier University has been approved by the state of Illinois to participate in the National Council for State Authorization and Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). As a participating institution in NC-SARA, SXU can offer online programming to students in other SARA member states without seeking authorization from that state. The SARA-approved membership includes Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and all of the United States except California. For clinical practicums in California, Colorado, Florida, Kentucky, Utah and Washington, please verify clinical approval with the individual sites as special restrictions may apply. For out-of-state FNP students, please verify specific practicum requirements related to preceptors and clinical faculty with the local State Board of Nursing or other appropriate entity.

## Practicum Placement Process

MSN Track:	First Preceptor Practicum Course:	Practicum Placement Instruction Packet Posted In:	Submit Practicum Application and Preceptor CV/Resume:	Complete ALL Practicum Requirements:
FNP C.FNP	NURGP-519	CANVAS: MSN/Online Training and Resource Center	No later than start of the term prior to practicum	Four (4) weeks prior to enrollment in N519
NE NEC	NURSG-609	CANVAS: MSN/Online Training and Resource Center	No later than start of the term prior to practicum	Four (4) weeks prior to enrollment in N609

## Student Health Policies and Practicum Requirements

All students in the School of Nursing must undergo a criminal background check before enrollment in practicum courses. In addition, all students admitted to and currently enrolled in the nursing program will have an ongoing duty to report any arrest, criminal charges, pleas and/or convictions that may directly or substantially relate to one's work in the program and eligibility to be placed at a clinical site. The results of a student's background check may preclude a student's progress in the program, including practicum placement. **Graduate students must carry professional liability insurance** through Saint Xavier University while they are enrolled in practicum nursing courses, regardless of any additional personal malpractice insurance they may have. Fees for SXU liability insurance are added to the fees for any semester in which a graduate student is enrolled in a practicum course. To streamline the record retention process, the SON graduate program is using Typhon Group Student Tracking System and CastleBranch background screening and compliance tracking as the online platforms for maintaining practicum information.

## Practicum Placements

Students enrolled in the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP), Nurse Educator (NE) and certificate tracks are responsible for identifying and securing a preceptor and practicum placement.. A fully- executed affiliation agreement must be in place between Saint Xavier University and the practicum site *before* students enroll in practicum courses. On occasion, there may be provisions within the affiliation agreement to which SXU cannot agree. Or, practicum sites may not approve the request for placement. In these instances, the student will need to identify a potential alternate site. All practicum sites must provide a setting that enables the student to achieve the end-of-program competencies. These competencies are achieved through workplace assessment, completion of the project based upon the findings of that assessment and evaluation of the project. Some practicum sites require students to complete additional practicum placement and onboarding procedures. Note: Due to licensing regulations, be aware that practicum experiences might not be permissible in some states. If you move to another state during your practicum sequence, please contact your academic advisor, clinical compliance coordinator, and the appropriate organization or state board nursing to verify if your practicum placement will be affected.

Students enrolled in the FNP track will complete precepted practicum hours in a variety of primary care settings to obtain a broad experience in diverse clinical sites including community clinics, private practices, urgent care, convenience care sites and family practice sites. Practicum preceptors/sites are identified by the student with the assistance and approval of the FNP track coordinator and coordinator of graduate clinical placement and compliance. Once the FNP student secures a preceptor, they must provide the name and credentials of the preceptor, specialty practice area of the preceptor, and name and address of the practice or facility where the student will be completing the clinical practicum. A fully-executed affiliation agreement must be in place between Saint Xavier

University and the practicum site **before** students can begin the practicum course. If there is no current affiliation agreement in place with the clinical practicum site, the process of securing one must be initiated as soon as possible. It can take months to secure completed and signed practicum agreements with some institutions. A delay in the process can result in a delay in the student commencing the clinical experience. Practicum placements are to be finalized during the semester prior to enrollment in the practicum course. FNP preceptors/sites must be pursued well in advance of practicum and therefore, students should plan to initiate the process at least six months prior to the start of the semester. Students must also register for the practicum course during the previous semester. Failure to register in advance may result in non-placement and necessitate waiting for another semester to take the course. Students may not begin practicum hours before the course officially begins unless they have received written permission from the course faculty.

### **Practicum Requirements**

1. Attestation of having current comprehensive health insurance (for students needing health insurance refer to the SHIP program) <https://www.sxu.edu/student-life/health-wellness/health-center/student-resources/insurance/index.aspx>
2. Criminal background check
3. Drug screening with chain of custody
4. Immunization/immunity documentation for seasonal flu, measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, Hepatitis B, tuberculosis, and Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis (Tdap) and COVID-19 vaccine
5. Current CPR certification
6. Current RN licensure
7. Report of recent health and physical exam
8. Documentation of competency in both HIPAA protection and OSHA blood and body fluid precautions
9. Informed consent assumption of liability release form

Some practicum sites have their own placement and onboarding requirements. Students need to inquire about specific requirements for each practicum site and communicate this to the clinical coordinator in addition to stipulating this in the practicum application. Online students are required to obtain instructions for additional practicum site requirements and complete as needed. All students are required to complete SXUs requirements through CastleBranch regardless of individual site requirements.

### **CastleBranch: Background Screening and Compliance Tracking**

The School of Nursing partners with the University vendor CastleBranch in order to efficiently and accurately complete these practicum requirements. The specific instructions to complete the requirements through CastleBranch are included in the Practicum Placement Instruction Packet. Students create their own personal CastleBranch account. The cost of this background check, drug screen and health requirement tracking service (\$143.75) will be paid directly to CastleBranch by the student. Students will have **lifetime** access to their accounts at no additional charge. Students **must** meet all of the practicum requirements and submit documentation through CastleBranch. Students also have an ongoing duty to keep the requirements in their CastleBranch accounts current while enrolled in all practicum courses. Failure to update expired requirements may delay the completion of practicum and/or graduation.

### **Typhon Group Student Tracking System**

Students are required to create a student account in Typhon. Typhon login information will be sent to students via SXU email. The cost of the Typhon student account (FNP: \$100 and NE: \$70) will be paid directly to Typhon by the student.



## **Practicum Responsibilities of the Student**

The student will meet with the preceptor during the first week of the practicum to:

1. Discuss the expected focus of the practicum experiences.
2. Develop specific personal objectives to be achieved during the semester in addition to meeting expected course outcomes.
3. Identify learning activities to meet the outcomes and objectives.
4. Negotiate a practicum schedule and arrange regular meetings with the preceptor. Preceptor clinical experiences generally follow the guidelines of five hours of practicum per week for each semester hour of credit (i.e., a three-hour clinical course requires 15 hours per week of practicum). Note: Students should review any clinical hour requirements (e.g., 600 practicum hours for FNP and 225 practicum hours for NE) related to specialty certification and be sure that they will meet the minimum level.
5. Complete and timely communication with the coordinator of graduate clinical placement and compliance of information is necessary to establish practicum site arrangements and contracts. Failure to do so may result in a delay of a semester or more for the student to start practicum experiences.

In addition to meeting course and specific objectives, all students are expected to consistently meet the following minimum expectations in the practicum by:

1. Demonstrating accountability in meeting practicum expectations.
2. Assessing accurately their own strengths and weaknesses in a reflective manner.
3. Demonstrating initiative in identification of practicum learning experiences.
4. Maintaining a professional appearance and demeanor.

## **Practicum Responsibilities of the Clinical Faculty Member**

The course faculty member will confer with the preceptor and the student at the beginning of the practicum to:

1. Confirm the expected focus of the practicum experiences.
2. Review specific student objectives to be achieved during the semester in addition to reviewing course outcomes.
3. Identify learning activities to meet these outcomes and objectives.
4. Provide support as the student negotiates a mutually agreeable practicum schedule. Confirm a site visit for FNP students a minimum of once during a clinical rotation and regularly scheduled meetings to be held between the student and preceptor for the purposes of clinical supervision and case or project management for NE students.

The faculty member will facilitate the student's accomplishment of the practicum outcomes and objectives by:

1. Assisting the student and the preceptor as needed in planning and implementing practicum activities.
2. Acting as a resource person to both the student and the preceptor.
3. Providing feedback to the preceptor and student concerning the practicum experience when appropriate.
4. Meeting with the student and the preceptor at least once for each clinical rotation in the FNP track and as necessary in the NE track.
5. Arranging for methods of ongoing feedback on the student's developing competence

At the close of the semester, the clinical faculty member reviews the student clinical evaluation from the preceptor as well as the student's evaluation of the site and preceptor. The student and clinical faculty member review the student's performance in relation to criteria jointly agreed upon previously. The faculty member will determine the grade for the student's practicum experience

### **Practicum Responsibilities of the Preceptor**

The practicum preceptor has a vital role in the graduate nursing program at Saint Xavier University. The preceptor is a registered nurse who has expertise in the area in which the student wishes to focus and possesses at least a master's degree in nursing or higher. The practicum preceptor is oriented to the practicum outcomes and the specific requirements of the practicum by the faculty member.

The FNP preceptor must possess a master's degree in nursing at the minimum, be nationally board-certified as a nurse practitioner and hold an active, unencumbered advanced practice license which corresponds to their area of clinical practice in the state where you complete your practicum hours. The preceptor must also have at least one year of practice as a nurse practitioner. Other types of health professionals may also serve as a preceptor for FNP students (e.g., medical doctor [MD], doctor of osteopathy [DO], or physician assistant [PA]). All preceptors must have an active medical license.

All FNP preceptors must have applicable expertise and the ability to help the student achieve the learning outcomes of the program and your individualized practicum goals. Preceptors must be willing and available to work with you in a non-acute primary care setting where advanced practice nursing is allowed to contribute to the improvement of clinical care for multiple populations. The practicum preceptor has a vital role in the graduate nursing program at Saint Xavier University. Prior to the start of practicum, the preceptor will receive a preceptor packet which addresses the practicum outcomes and specific requirements of the course..

The preceptor will facilitate the student's progression in clinical practicum through the following actions:

1. Meet with the student the first week of the semester to jointly develop specific objectives, learning activities and evaluation criteria.
2. Assist with orientation to the agency.
3. Provide the student with ongoing and timely feedback regarding their progression.
4. Communicate with supervising clinical faculty to maintain open communication and transparency regarding the student's clinical experience
5. Participate in completing the Student Clinical Evaluations Tool.
6. Assisting the student in arranging contact with resources outside the agency when appropriate.

In addition to the above requirements, FNP preceptors will:

1. Facilitate the learning process in relation to effective communication with patients - obtaining histories, performing physical exams, succinctly recording and reporting findings, developing plans appropriate to the patient and course objectives
2. Supervise, demonstrate, teach and observe the student while delegating increasing levels of responsibility.
3. Allow site visits by clinical faculty at least once per practicum, allowing additional remediation site visits if necessary.

4. All students will have the opportunity to evaluate their practicum experience and clinical preceptor.

The preceptor will meet with the student on a regular basis to discuss practicum performance and progress toward the student meeting the objectives. At the end of the practicum, the preceptor will participate in the evaluation of the student by completing the appropriate Clinical Evaluation Form and conferring with course faculty.

NOTE: Certain expectations may be modified for students in unique practicum placements with prior consultation and approval of program faculty.

### **Health Problem/Illness Policy for Practicum**

At the beginning of each practicum semester, it is the responsibility of each student to inform their preceptor and clinical faculty of any health problems that could in any way impact safe clinical performance. In addition, the appropriate program director should be notified. The student might be asked to present a statement from their health care provider certifying that the student is physically able to participate in practicum experiences without restrictions.

Students with symptoms or signs of infectious and/or communicable disease must immediately inform their preceptor and clinical faculty for evaluation of possible limitation of practicum activities. The safety of the clients must be protected. Therefore, if a student has been ill, a written statement from a health care provider may be required before returning to clinical practicum.

***Clinical agencies may have policies that differ from the above and students must also abide by the policies of these agencies.***

### **Procedure for Student Adverse Event at a Clinical Site**

The procedure is designed to appropriately refer School of Nursing students who may need medical attention after an adverse event at a clinical site.

**Definition of Adverse Event:** An accident, occurrence or unexpected event that occurs while the student is engaged in clinical activities that may result in an injury requiring medical attention. The event may jeopardize the individual and may require medical/surgical intervention, prescription drug treatment or immunization therapy to prevent further degeneration of condition. Examples include, but are not limited to: student exposures (any diseases reportable to the Illinois Department of Public Health such as tuberculosis or measles; transferable insect exposure such as head lice, scabies or bed bugs; concerning injury that causes significant pain or bruising or that breaks the skin; and any bites, human or animal).

### **Procedure**

1. Students should report any adverse event (e.g., exposure or injury) to their clinical faculty instructor/supervisor as soon as possible after the occurrence and always the same day of the occurrence. See Appendix G for Occurrence Report.
2. Upon notification, the clinical faculty instructor/supervisor should notify their SON program director who is responsible for providing direction. If the director is unsure where to refer the student or believes the student could be treated at the Saint Xavier University Health Center, the director will contact the Health Center for assessment and advice. If it is after hours, Public Safety can page the on-call Health Center representative.
3. The Health Center director (either director of CNI or clinical director) will gather necessary detailed information about the incident to determine if the Health Center is the most

appropriate treatment center for the student to receive care or if the student needs to be referred to an urgent care facility, emergency room or their own primary care physician. The extent of injury and the individual's insurance coverage will be factors in determining where the student can receive the most cost effective and appropriate care.

4. The SON Occurrence Report should be completed by the clinical faculty instructor within one business day. All communication and referrals should be documented on the SON Occurrence Report.
5. Some insurance plans will cover the cost of testing and treatment. The injured student is responsible for all costs associated with testing and treatment from an adverse event at a clinical site.
6. The completed SON Occurrence Report is submitted to the appropriate program director for record-keeping.

This procedure was approved by the Leadership Team on June 10, 2019.

### **Procedure for Tuberculosis Exposure**

**Purpose:** To appropriately test and refer students and/or clinical faculty members after a confirmed exposure to active tuberculosis (TB).

### **Definitions**

Active Tuberculosis: Active TB disease occurs when a person's immune system can't stop the TB bacteria from growing and multiplying in the body. These people are usually symptomatic (cough, weight loss, night sweats, etc.) and can spread the bacteria to other people.

AFB: Acid Fast Bacilli

Exposed person: The student or faculty member who has been exposed or potentially exposed to an active case of TB.

IDPH: Illinois Department of Public Health

Latent Tuberculosis: Latent TB disease occurs when the body is able to fight off the TB bacteria enough that the person does not develop active disease. Someone with latent disease has no symptoms and is not contagious. The person will have a positive TB test (either a skin test or a QuantiFERON-TB Gold) and a normal chest X-ray.

Occurrence Report: A form from the School of Nursing that records adverse events at clinical sites.

Patient: The person who is being tested for tuberculosis.

### **Procedure:**

1. Notification
  - a. Students should report any possible TB exposure to their clinical faculty as soon as they are aware of any such exposure.
  - b. Faculty should report any possible TB exposure to their appropriate program director.
  - c. An Occurrence Report must be completed.
2. Verification of Tuberculosis Status
  - a. It is essential that the clinical faculty and/or clinical coordinator first verify that this is an active case of tuberculosis. If the patient is in an isolation room being tested for TB, it may take several days of specimen collection and testing before tuberculosis will be

able to be definitively ruled in or ruled out. A patient being tested for TB does **not** mean that they have an active case of TB.

- b. For inpatient exposures, the faculty need to contact the nurse manager, the infection control department for the hospital, and/or other hospital administration to verify the TB status of a patient.
- c. For outpatient exposures, the faculty may be able to confirm through the outpatient facility (e.g., if the patient is being treated outpatient by IDPH or if the patient's outpatient provider is able to access notes and lab results from an inpatient admission). Otherwise, the faculty may need to contact the hospital's infection control department or other such administration to get accurate information.
- d. If faculty can definitively determine that the patient does **not** have an active case of tuberculosis, the exposed person does not need any further testing. This should be documented in the Occurrence Report.
- e. If faculty can definitively determine that the patient has **tested positive** for active tuberculosis (generally through sputum AFB testing), then the exposed person must be tested.

### 3. Testing

- a. The exposed person must report to the Health Center or their own health care provider within 10 days of the exposure for testing. Students are responsible for all testing costs.
- b. Students who have previously had negative TB screenings (e.g., negative skin test or negative QuantiFERON-TB Gold) will need to have a QuantiFERON-TB Gold blood test drawn.
  - i. If at this time the QuantiFERON-TB Gold test is **negative**:
    - 1. The student should return for repeat testing at the SXU Health Center or at their own health care provider in 8-10 weeks.
    - 2. If the repeat QuantiFERON-TB Gold test is negative, the student does not need any further testing besides the normal yearly TB screening.
  - ii. If the initial or repeat QuantiFERON-TB Gold test is **positive**, the following steps should be taken:
    - 1. The exposed person should have a chest X-ray to rule out active tuberculosis. This will be ordered by the Health Center staff or their own health care provider.
      - a. A chest X-ray that shows any suspicion for tuberculosis should be immediately reported to IDPH (or other appropriate state/city public health department) to be referred for treatment for probable active tuberculosis infection. The exposed person will be restricted from any clinical setting until cleared by a public health or infectious disease specialist.
      - b. A negative chest X-ray after a positive QuantiFERON-TB Gold implies that the exposed person now has a latent TB infection. They will be referred to an infectious disease specialist that can discuss treatment for the latent infection. The exposed person does not need to be restricted from any clinical setting. In the future, the student/faculty member will have an annual TB symptom checklist instead of a TB skin test or QuantiFERON-TB Gold.

- c. An exposed person who previously had a positive TB test (prior to the exposure) will need to have a symptom checklist and a discussion about further action, including possible repeat chest X-ray(s).
  - d. Any testing or treatment should be documented on the Occurrence Report.
- 4. Reporting
  - a. All health care providers in attendance of a patient confirmed with active TB must be reported to the appropriate health department within seven days.
  - b. Any patient with suspected or confirmed TB must be reported to the appropriate health department within 24 hours.

This procedure was approved by the Leadership Team on June 10, 2019.

## GRADUATE NURSING ESSENTIAL ABILITIES AND BEHAVIORS

Within the tenets of professional nursing and highlighting the values expressed in the University and School of Nursing mission statement, students are expected to consistently demonstrate and abide by the following specifications of essential abilities and behaviors. Failure to continually strive to achieve these outcomes jeopardizes the student's academic and professional success and may result in discipline up to and including removal from the graduate nursing program.

**Communication:** Students must have the ability to demonstrate communication skills necessary for professional nursing including, but not limited to:

- Communicating in standard English effectively and sensitively, verbally, in writing, and electronically, with patients and their families as well as with other students, staff, faculty, professionals, agency personnel, community residents, and others relevant to their areas of study.
- Demonstrating clear, appropriate and respectful expression of ideas and feelings.
- Articulating information to patients in a manner that is understandable by patients, families, peers, faculty and other health care providers.
- Collaborating with health care team members across disciplines in order to provide optimal patient care.

**Cognitive:** Students must have the ability to demonstrate cognitive abilities necessary for professional nursing including, but not limited to:

- Engaging in critical thinking and professional reflection in face-to-face and online classroom and clinical situations.
- Solving problems involving measurement, calculations, reasoning, analysis and synthesis.
- Developing plans, considering alternative strategies, establishing priorities and making decisions in nursing care and leadership.

**Behavioral and Social:** Students must have the ability to demonstrate behavioral and social skills necessary for professional nursing including, but not limited to:

- Relating to patients, colleagues, faculty and other health care professionals with integrity, honesty and without discrimination, prejudice, intolerance or hostility.
- Exercising sound judgment, adaptability and the willingness to give and receive feedback in a professional manner.
- Completing the responsibilities in their program of study in a timely manner.
- Establishing and maintaining mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and their families, peers, faculty, staff, other professionals, and agency personnel under all circumstances, including highly stressful situations.
- Functioning effectively under stress and adapting to environments that may change rapidly without warning and/or in unpredictable ways.
- Demonstrating empathy for the situations and circumstances of others and appropriately communicating that empathy.
- Acknowledging that values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions and experiences affect their perceptions and relationships with others.
- Examining and changing behaviors when they interfere with productive relationships with patients, peers, faculty, staff, and other professionals in both individual and team situations.
- Demonstrating effective and respectful therapeutic relationships with the diverse academic, professional and community environments relevant to their program of study.

**Professional Conduct:** Students must possess the ability to reason morally and practice nursing in an ethical manner. They must be willing to abide by professional standards of practice as well as regulations for professional licensure. Students must demonstrate the attributes of compassion, integrity, honesty, responsibility, commitment to learning and respect for diversity.

**Motor and Sensory Skills:** Students need to have sufficient strength, motor function and sensory skills in order to be able to execute movements and make observations required in the domain of nursing care or nursing activity in their program of study.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF UNPROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR**

When problematic behaviors are identified, the involved faculty member will counsel the student on the unacceptable behavior and indicate what type of behavioral change is expected and the time frame for resolution. The student's unacceptable behavior and the specific counseling will be documented by the faculty with a copy placed in the student's file. In addition, the faculty member will notify the program director. The student will be given a copy of the documentation which was submitted to their file.

If the behavior violates the Saint Xavier University Student Code of Conduct, the process identified in the Student Handbook through the Division of Student Affairs will be followed.

The Code of Conduct can be found at the following web address:

<https://handbook.sxu.edu/Student/Code-Conduct/student-conduct.html>

If the behavior from the infraction does not change within the given time frame or there are multiple occurrences of unprofessional behavior during the duration of a course, then the faculty member has the right to fail the student.

Students who demonstrate repeated, consistent, unprofessional behavior in multiple courses may be subject to dismissal from the nursing program.

\*Adapted from policies developed by the University of Washington, School of Nursing, Seattle, Washington, and Queen's University of Charlotte, North Carolina.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **Nursing Committees: Student Participation**

As described by the bylaws of SON, student representatives serve for a one-year term on the following committees:

### **GRADUATE CURRICULUM STUDENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Participants: One graduate student

Committee Functions:

1. Review recommendations and requests on graduate curricular matters received from the dean, faculty and students.
2. Review the objectives and design of the graduate program for consistency with the School of Nursing philosophy and conceptual framework.
3. Review all new graduate courses and present recommendations to SON faculty for final approval.



4. Review and evaluate components of the graduate program for consistency with the curricular framework.
5. Recommend curriculum development and/or areas of study based on trends in nursing.
6. Collaborate with the undergraduate curriculum committee to enhance articulation with baccalaureate nursing programs.
7. Review completed applications to the nursing graduate program and make final decisions regarding admission.
8. Make final decisions regarding retention and progression of graduate nursing students.
9. Review exceptional requests and matters which affect graduate students' progression
10. Act upon graduate students' requests for readmission to the University or extension of time to complete the program.
11. Serve as a forum for graduate student appeal regarding admission, progression and graduation.
12. Review and recommend policies regarding full admission status, probationary admission status, readmission, progression, graduation extension of programs, and graduation of RN/MSN and master's students.
13. Make decisions regarding recognition of graduate nursing students.

#### **PROGRAM ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE**

Participants: One undergraduate and one graduate student.

Committee Functions:

- a. Ensure that the Nursing Evaluation Plan is reviewed regularly and is consistent with the strategic plans of the University and SON and with accreditation standards.
- b. Oversee implementation of the Nursing Evaluation Plan by designated groups.
- c. Collect data from appropriate individuals or groups and maintain evaluation reports.
- d. Disseminate the evaluation findings to the appropriate individuals or groups.
- e. Collaborate with individuals and groups to analyze, interpret and derive recommendations based on evaluation data.
- f. Collaborate with the University Institutional Review Board (IRB) regarding research activities that involve students, faculty and curriculum.
- g. Conduct evaluation research to support decision-making within SON.
- h. Collaborate with the administrators who oversee the organization of activities to promote the success of students on licensure and certification exams.

#### **SIGMA THETA TAU INTERNATIONAL - ALPHA OMICRON CHAPTER**

The Saint Xavier University School of Nursing was granted a charter for the Alpha Omicron Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau in 1968. We are one of the oldest chapters in the honor society.

The **purposes** of the international organization are to recognize superior achievement and leadership in professional nursing, foster high professional standards, encourage creative work, and strengthen commitment to the ideals and purposes of the profession.

**Membership** in the organization is an honor conferred on students in baccalaureate and graduate programs who have demonstrated excellence in their nursing programs. Graduate nurses with a baccalaureate or higher degree who have demonstrated marked achievement and leadership in the field of nursing are eligible for membership consideration.

**Qualifications for membership** are posted on the Sigma website. Graduate students must meet expectations of academic integrity, achieve a GPA of 3.5 or higher, and have completed one-quarter of the nursing curriculum.

**Invitations** to submit membership applications are emailed to eligible students approximately eight weeks prior to induction. Membership acceptance assumes acceptance of the purposes of the society and responsibility to participate in achieving the goals consistent with the professional and scholarly character of Sigma.

**Induction** of student and community members is held annually. Candidates will be notified by email at least one month before the induction date. Students may obtain additional information and assistance in the application process from the faculty counselors.

The chapter participates in sponsoring a variety of programs, some of which feature local and national nursing leaders, supporting research activities, and recognizing nurses for outstanding research, practice, leadership, mentorship and teaching. These programs are open to all nurses and nursing students, as well as the general public.

### **Short-Term Travel Study Opportunities**

Each year, Saint Xavier University and the Center for International Education (CIE) sponsor a variety of faculty-led travel study programs in which a short-term (one to two weeks) international study trip to one or more locations is an integral part of an SXU course. These programs are very affordable and less time-consuming for students with jobs or family responsibilities. Graduate and undergraduate students at SXU have studied and traveled to China, Croatia, Costa Rica, England, Ireland, Mexico and Poland. Current study abroad opportunities include travel to Italy and Ireland. Students must register for the associated credit-bearing course in order to participate in any travel study program.

### **Nursing Elective: Study Abroad**

Nursing electives are not required in the graduate program. They do, however, broaden the academic experience of students who participate in these one- or two-hour credit electives and help the student maintain full-time status. Programs have been approved to better understand the global differences in health care in Ireland and Italy. Students must be in good academic standing in SON and register for the course through CIE in order to participate in these electives. Study abroad electives are offered every semester. Check the mySXU portal for availability.

## **HONORS, AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS**

Refer to the MSN Student Training and Resource Course in Canvas (listed on the first page of this handbook) for a current description of available awards and scholarships.

**APPENDIX A  
SCHOOL OF NURSING  
PETITION FOR TRANSFER OF GRADUATE CREDIT**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (*street, city state, zip*): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

***Check One:***

Graduate Program

(specialty track)

Post-Master's Certificate

\_\_\_\_\_  
(certificate specialty)

I request review and evaluation of the following course(s):

\_\_\_\_\_ transfer credit

\_\_\_\_\_ equivalency only

**Title of Course(s):**

College/University: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Course : \_\_\_\_\_ Semester Hour Credit : \_\_\_\_\_ Grade : \_\_\_\_\_

***Please attach course syllabus and catalog description/documentation. An official transcript showing credit for the course must also be submitted, if not already on file.***

**Accepted For NURSG** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Approved

\_\_\_\_\_ Not Approved

\_\_\_\_\_  
Program Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

cc: Records and Registration  
Revised 08/2018

**APPENDIX B**  
**Petition to Change MSN Track**

On admission to the graduate nursing program, online students identify an MSN program track in Nurse Educator (NE) or Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP). A student who is in good academic standing (GPA 3.0 or greater) may petition to change tracks by submitting this form, with personal statement, to the appropriate program director.

In approximately one to two double-spaced pages, explain your reasons for pursuing the selected track. In your statement, please include 1) how your previous education, experience and professional interests have prepared you to be successful in the selected track; 2) your professional goals and how completion of the said track will help you to reach them; and 3) your understanding of the FNP/NE role and your intentions regarding service, especially with underserved populations. **Attach your statement with this form.**

Petitions will be reviewed by the Graduate Admission, Recognition and Progression Committee. Decisions may be delayed pending completion of the student's current coursework. The student will be notified of the committee's decision in writing. If approved, a new program plan will be generated for the student and a new advisor may be assigned.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Track** (please check):

Nurse Educator \_\_\_\_\_ Family Nurse Practitioner \_\_\_\_\_

**New Track Requested** (please check):

Nurse Educator \_\_\_\_\_ Family Nurse Practitioner \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature

Date

**Approvals:**

GCSMC Committee Chair

Date

Program Director

Date

New faculty advisor will be: \_\_\_\_\_

cc: Records and Registration, Advisors

Below this line for committee use only

Catalog Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Revised Anticipated Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

New Academic Advisor Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

Revised Program Plan sent to student (date): \_\_\_\_\_

Registrar Notified (initials/date): \_\_\_\_\_

Program Advisor Notified (initials/date): \_\_\_\_\_

Revised 07.2022

## Appendix C



**Saint Xavier University**  
**School of Nursing and Health**  
**Sciences**

**Leave of Absence Form**

*Please complete the yellow boxes, save to your computer, and email to the Graduate Nursing Program Coordinator.*

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Student ID #:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>		<b>Cell #:</b>	
<b>City, State and Zip:</b>		<b>Home #:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>		<b>Program Start:</b>	

*NOTE: It is the student's responsibility to monitor SXU email while on LOA for important program information and updates.*

Current Semester	Course(s) Taken This Semester	Credits	Class Start Date

Anticipated Returning Semester	Anticipated Course(s) to Take in Return Semester	Credits	Class Start Date

Updated Semesters for Practicum Courses	Practicum Course(s) program plan revision due to LOA	Credits	Class Start Date

*NOTE: Student Program Plans are subject to revision and may be adjusted to reflect new program requirements or course availability. LOA may extend program completion time and placement in practicum. Students are expected to complete their program within 5 years.*

Program Track (Check One)		Semester(s) on Leave
<input type="checkbox"/>		
Nurse Educator <input type="checkbox"/>		Semester of Anticipated Return
Family Nurse Practitioner <input type="checkbox"/>		

Reason for LOA			

<b>Student Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Academic Advisor</b>	
Approvals (Office Use Only)	
<b>Graduate Nursing Coordinator Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Director of Online Programs</b>	<b>Date</b>

**Appendix D**  
**SAINT XAVIER UNIVERSITY**

**School of Nursing**

**Essential Behaviors Remediation Plan**

**Student's Name:**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Identification of issue:**

**Steps to be taken (if required):**

**Time frame for re-evaluation:**

Student Signature

Date

Faculty Signature

Date

Program Director

Date

**Resolution:**

*I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that the aforementioned Remediation Plan to address unprofessional behavior and/or unsafe practices has been reviewed with me. I further acknowledge and understand that my refusal or failure to comply with every requirement in the Remediation Plan shall result in additional University action up to and including removal from the nursing program.*

Student Signature

Date

Faculty Signature

Date



**SAINT XAVIER UNIVERSITY**  
**School of Nursing**  
**OCCURRENCE REPORT**  
**Appendix E**

This form is used to report an occurrence involving a SON student who is engaged in a scheduled clinical or course-related activity. The purpose of the form is to assist with the identification and management of clinical practice occurrences, adverse events, errors and near misses. The entire form must be completed and signed by both the student and the clinical/course faculty.

Date of Report: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Occurrence: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Occurrence: \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm

Agency/Location of Occurrence: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Program of Study:    SON            CSD    Exercise Science            Gerontology Studies            Sports and Fitness Admin            Physical Education

Course Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor/Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

**CATEGORY OF OCCURRENCE:**

Error [Defined as: Incident or occurrence that had the potential to place a client at risk or harm or resulted in actual harm]

Near Miss [Defined as: An event or situation that could have resulted in accident, injury, or illness, but did not, whether by chance or through timely intervention (Ebright et al., 2004)]

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**TYPE of OCCURRENCE**

Medication error

Needle stick

Unprepared for providing client care

Blood/body secretion exposure

Fall event

Outside of scope of practice

Injury to body

Change in client condition

Inappropriate/inadequate communication by: faculty, preceptor, student, client, health care team or visitor

Violation of HIPAA

Environmental safety for self, client or others

Equipment or medical device malfunction

Not following agency/program policy

TB exposure

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**WHO RECEIVED INJURY:** ☐ Client ☐ Student ☐ Faculty ☐ Staff ☐ Visitor ☐ Other

**GENDER:** ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Unknown

**ENGLISH is predominant language:** ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

## STATUS OF CLIENT/STUDENT/INDIVIDUAL

**Harm**

**No Harm**

**Death**

**Other**

**AGE:** ☐ 0-5    ☐ 6-12    ☐ 12-15    ☐ 15-20    ☐ 21-25    ☐ 26-30    ☐ 31-35    ☐ 36-40  
☐ 41-45    ☐ 46-50    ☐ 51-55    ☐ 56+    ☐ Unknown

### I. STUDENT INVOLVED IN OCCURRENCE

Name:

(Last)

(First)

(Middle)

Address:

(Street)

(City, State, Zip)

Phone:

(Residence)

(Work)

(Cell)

SXU ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

II.

b. CLIENT/VISITOR/OTHER INVOLVED IN

OCCURENCE

(circle one if applicable)

Name:

(Last)

(First)

(Middle)

Address:

(Street)

(City, State, Zip)

Phone:

(Residence)

(Work)

(Cell)

**II. FACTS OF OCCURRENCE** (Describe fully the events that resulted in the incident. Explain what happened, how it happened, whether an injury occurred as a result, and name any equipment, personnel or other factors involved in the incident. Attach additional pages to this form if necessary.):

**III. If an injury resulted, explain who was injured and the nature and location of the injury.**  
(Describe fully, including parts of the body affected.)

**IV. Was medical attention received? (Describe by whom, where and when.)**

*Signature is required in the appropriate space below only if student sustained an injury.*

Treatment received (student's signature)

Treatment refused (student's signature)

**V. ACTION(S) TAKEN**

Agency occurrence report completed: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown ☐ Not Applicable

SXU Public Safety Occurrence Report filed: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown ☐ Not Applicable

Describe action taken following the incident:

Faculty

School of Nursing Administration

Other

**VI. EXPECTED FOLLOW-THROUGH (Include dates for completion)**

Who was informed?

Course Faculty

SON Administration

Client/Family

Clinical Agency

Clinical Unit Manager

Clinic Director

Other:

**VII. CHANGES OCCURRING POST-OCCURRENCE**

(Provide a plan to keep other such incidents from occurring in the future).

Student Instruction

System Change

Policy Change

Practice Change

Course/Curriculum Change

No Change

**VIII. OTHER PARTY INVOLVED** (if applicable)

Name:

(Last)

(First)

(Middle)

Address:

(Street Address)

(City, State, Zip)

Home:

(Residence)

(Work)

(Cell)

**IX. PERSONS OBSERVING OCCURRENCE** (if applicable)

Name:

(Last)

(First)

(Middle)

Address:

(Street Address)

(City, State, Zip)

Phone:

(Residence)

(Work)

(Cell)

Name:

(Last)

(First)

(Middle)

Address:

(Street Address)

(City, State, Zip)

Phone:

(Residence)

(Work)

(Cell)

**X. CLINICAL SUPERVISOR** (if applicable)

Name:

(Last)

(First)

(Middle)

Address:

(Street Address)

(City, State, Zip)

Phone:

(Residence)

(Work)

(Cell)

## **XI. PARTIES INFORMED OF OCCURRENCE**

Name:

Position:

Date:

Agency/Title:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Agency/Title:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Agency/Title:

### Complete For Occurrences at SXU Clinic (if applicable):

Name:

Relationship to Client: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Name:

Relationship to Client: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Name:

Relationship to Client: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Report Prepared by:

Student Signature:

Instructor Signature:

Other Signature:

Date:

Date:

Date:

Date:

**ORIGINAL REPORT TO BE FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN, SCHOOL OF NURSING. ONE COPY TO BE RETAINED BY PROGRAM IN A SECURE FILE.**

**APPENDIX F**  
**Assumption of Risk,**  
**Liability Release and Waiver**  
**Agreement**

I am a student at Saint Xavier University (the “University”). I have voluntarily chosen to enroll in the University’s **School of Nursing (SON) program**, which includes and requires certain clinical and patient care educational experiences at third-party facilities (the “Program”). My participation in the Program is wholly and completely voluntary. As a condition of my participation in the Program and in consideration of the University allowing my participation in the Program, I hereby agree as follows:

1. I understand and acknowledge that a portion of my clinical and patient care experiences may be at third-party health care facilities whereby I will be in proximity to, or interacting with, individuals who are known to, or suspected to be, infected with the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2 also known as COVID-19). I understand and acknowledge that COVID-19 is a highly infectious, life-threatening disease declared by the World Health Organization to be a global pandemic and that there is no cure for COVID-19. I understand that the facility will have certain safety rules. I agree to comply with such safety rules while acknowledging that those rules may or may not be effective in mitigating exposure, infection or illness from COVID-19. I understand and acknowledge that notwithstanding my adherence to the facility’s safety rules, I have more than a minimal risk of being exposed to, infected with, or becoming ill from COVID-19. I understand and acknowledge that given the unknown nature of COVID-19, it is not possible to fully list each and every individual risk of contracting COVID-19. I understand that the risk of becoming exposed to or infected by COVID-19 during my participation in the Program may result from the actions, omissions or negligence of myself and others. I represent and warrant that no person, including any University trustee, officer, employee, agent, volunteer or student, has made any representations to me regarding my safety while I participate in the Program. Instead, I have relied on my own judgment as to whether to undertake the risks of participating in the Program. I, individually, and on behalf of my heirs, successors, assigns and personal representatives, hereby knowingly and voluntarily assume all risks, known and unknown, that I may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19 through my participation in the Program and that such exposure or infection may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, and/or even death.
2. I, individually, and on behalf of my heirs, successors, assigns and personal representatives, hereby release, acquit and forever absolve and discharge the University and its employees, agents, officers, trustees and representatives (in their official and individual capacities) from any and all liability whatsoever for any and all damages, losses or injuries (including, but not limited to, exposure, infection, illness, disability or death) I sustain to my person or property, or both, including but not limited to any claims, demands, actions, causes of action, judgments, damages, expenses and costs, including attorneys’ fees, which arise out of, result from, or occur during, or are connected in any manner whatsoever from my participation in the Program and/or any travel incidental thereto, wherever, whenever or however the same may occur. I further agree, on behalf of myself, my heirs, successors, assigns and personal representatives, not to make any type of legal or equitable claim against the University and its employees, agents, officers, trustees and representatives (in their official and individual capacities), with respect to any exposure (including infection) I may have to COVID-19 through my participation in the Program, whether or not it arises through the negligence, omission, default or other action of any other third party.
3. I, individually, and on behalf of my heirs, successors, assigns and personal representatives, hereby agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the University and its employees, agents, officers, trustees and representatives (in their official and individual capacities) from any and all liability, losses, damages, judgments or expenses, including attorneys’ fees, that they or any of them incur or sustain as a result of any claims, demands, actions or causes of action that arise out of, result from or occur during, or are connected in any manner whatsoever from my exposure to COVID-19, through my participation in the Program, whether or not it arises through the negligence, omission, default or other action of any other third party.
4. I understand that this agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the laws of the State of Illinois and I agree that if any portion is held invalid, the remainder of this agreement will continue in full legal force and effect. I further agree that the sole venue for any legal proceedings arising out of this agreement shall be in Cook County, Illinois.
5. I understand and acknowledge that the University is only allowing my participation in the Program because of my agreement to each and every term and provision of this agreement, and that if I had not agreed to each and

every term and provision of this agreement, the University would not have allowed me to participate in the Program.

6. I affirm that I am of legal age, or if not, that I have secured below the signature of my parent or guardian as well as my own, and I am freely signing this agreement. I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND THAT BY SIGNING THIS AGREEMENT, I AM KNOWINGLY AND VOLUNTARILY GIVING UP SUBSTANTIAL LEGAL RIGHTS AND REMEDIES WHICH MAY BE AVAILABLE TO ME AS AGAINST THE UNIVERSITY, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO SUE THE UNIVERSITY. I FURTHER UNDERSTAND AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT PRIOR TO SIGNING THIS AGREEMENT, I HAVE THE RIGHT TO CONSULT WITH THE ATTORNEY OF MY CHOICE. I UNDERSTAND AND AGREE THAT THIS AGREEMENT IS A BINDING LEGAL DOCUMENT.

**CAUTION: READ THIS AGREEMENT CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING:**

_____ (Signature of Student)	_____ Name (Printed)	_____ Date
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_____ (Signature of Parent/Guardian if student is under the age of 18)	_____ Name (Printed)	_____ Date
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**E-SIGNATURE OPTION:**

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have reviewed and understand the Assumption of Risk Waiver. By checking this box, I acknowledge that typing my name below will serve as my electronic signature. ☐

Student Signature:      Click or tap here to enter text.

Date:      Click or tap to enter a date.