Department of Nursing

Graduate Nursing Student Handbook

Master of Science in Nursing Program
Post Master’s Certificate Program
Family Nurse Practitioner
Nurse Educator

2019-2020
# Contents
Welcome ......................................................................................................................... 1  
Accreditation ..................................................................................................................... 2  
Disclaimer Statement ........................................................................................................ 3  
Mission, Vision, Philosophy ............................................................................................ 4  
  Angelo State University Mission Statement ................................................................ 4  
  Archer College of Health and Human Services Mission Statement ......................... 4  
  Department of Nursing ................................................................................................. 4  
    Mission ...................................................................................................................... 4  
    Vision ...................................................................................................................... 4  
    Philosophy ............................................................................................................... 4  
Nature and Purpose of Graduate Work ............................................................................ 5  
Graduate Programs .......................................................................................................... 5  
MSN Program Purpose and Outcomes ............................................................................ 6  
  Guiding Documents ..................................................................................................... 6  
  MSN Program Outcomes ............................................................................................ 6  
Graduate Program Degree Tracks and Certifications .................................................... 7  
Program Track Competencies ....................................................................................... 8  
  Master’s and Post Master’s Family Nurse Practitioner .............................................. 8  
  Master’s and Post Master’s Nurse Educator ............................................................... 8  
Program Admission Guidelines .................................................................................... 9  
  Master of Science in Nursing: MSN Admission Criteria ....................................... 9  
  Post Master’s Certificate Admission Criteria .......................................................... 9  
  Admissions Selection Process .................................................................................... 11  
  Application Deadlines ............................................................................................... 11  
  Provisional Admission ............................................................................................... 11  
Standards for Progression in the MSN Program ............................................................. 12  
  Program Dismissal .................................................................................................... 12  
  Program Readmission ............................................................................................... 12
Academic Guidelines ................................................................. 13
Orientation to MSN Program ....................................................... 13
Online Learning Requirements .................................................. 13
Academic Integrity and Angelo State University Honor Code ............. 14
Guidelines for Written Assignments ........................................... 16
Student Attendance .................................................................... 16
Course/Transfer Credit ................................................................ 16
Degree Plan ................................................................................. 16
Change of Major ......................................................................... 17
Grade of Incomplete ..................................................................... 17
Withdrawal Policy ........................................................................ 17
Relocation (Moving to a state other than the state of Texas) ............... 17
Current RN Licensure ................................................................. 18
Encumbered Registered Nurse (RN) Licensure ............................... 18
Online Testing .............................................................................. 18
Exam/Test/Quiz Re-sets .............................................................. 19
Comprehensive Examination Guidelines ...................................... 19
Physical/Mental Performance Policy and Professional Technical Standards for Nursing Practice ............. 20
Special Accommodations Request for Persons with Disabilities ........ 21
Title IX ....................................................................................... 21
Social Media Guidelines ............................................................. 23
Professional Standards ............................................................... 23
Patient/Client Confidentiality ...................................................... 24
Policies and Procedures Governing Student Complaints .................. 24
Evaluation of Faculty and Course ................................................. 25
Student Voice--Attendance of Faculty Meetings ............................ 25
Student Voice--View/Comment Faculty Meeting Minutes .................. 25
Student Resources and Facilities .................................................. 26
Departmental Website ................................................................. 26
Scholarships and Financial Aid .................................................... 26
ASU OneCard ............................................................................. 26
Email Accounts ........................................................................... 26
RamPort ....................................................................................... 27
Online Learning Orientation ......................................................... 27
Online Technical Requirements* .................................................. 27
Information Technology Services (IT) ............................................................... 28
Orientation to Blackboard Online Learning ..................................................... 28
Porter Henderson Library ............................................................................. 28
Nursing Learning Resource Center ............................................................... 28
Miscellaneous .............................................................................................. 29
Alumnae ........................................................................................................ 29
Texas Board of Nursing Recognition ............................................................ 29
Certification in Area of Specialization ........................................................... 29
Advanced Practice Nurse’s Organizations ..................................................... 29
Texas Nurse Practitioners ........................................................................... 29
San Angelo Coalition of Nurses in Advanced Practice (SACNAP) ................ 29
Emergency Messages .................................................................................. 30
Practicum Guidelines and Procedures .......................................................... 31
Precepted Clinical Experiences ..................................................................... 31
Preceptor Selection Criteria ......................................................................... 31
Record Keeping ............................................................................................ 32
Required Documentation for Clinical Courses ............................................. 32
CPR Certification ........................................................................................... 32
Health Insurance ........................................................................................ 32
Immunizations ............................................................................................. 32
Professional Attire ......................................................................................... 33
Student Occurrence ..................................................................................... 33
Guideline for Universal Precautions ............................................................ 33
Body Fluids to Which CDC Isolation Guidelines Apply ............................... 33
General Precautions ................................................................................... 34
Guideline for Standard Precautions ............................................................. 34
Statement of Understanding ......................................................................... 35
Welcome

Welcome to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Program. Your decision to enroll in one of the tracks within our MSN program will help open doors to advance your career and the professional nursing care you provide. Upon graduation from Angelo State University, you will have a strong foundation upon which to fulfill your lifelong commitment to the nursing profession and to the health care needs of the community. Your master's education will equip you with valuable knowledge and skills to lead change, promote health, and elevate care in various roles and settings. You will be a part of the future of nursing.

We welcome you to our nursing program and look forward to working with you during your educational experience. We are committed to providing you with an education that is both challenging and supportive, leading to intellectual discovery and success.

Wrennah L. Gabbert, PhD, APRN, CPNP, FNP-BC
Professor of Nursing/Department Chair and
Program Director of the Department of Nursing

Tammy K. Stafford, DNP, MSN, MBA, RN, NEA-BC
Assistant Clinical Professor
Graduate Program Coordinator

Welcome to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Program. It is our sincere pleasure to serve you as advisors and program track coordinators. Dr. Avis Johnson-Smith serves as the Family Nurse Practitioner Coordinator and Advisor. Dr. Robert K. Michael serves as the Nurse Educator Program Track Coordinator and Advisor. Please do not hesitate to contact us as we look forward to working with you to meet your career goals.

Avis Johnson-Smith, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, CPNP-PC, CNS, FAANP
Professor
Family Nurse Practitioner Track Coordinator

Assistant Professor
Nurse Educator Track Coordinator
Accreditation

The baccalaureate degree program in nursing/master's degree program in nursing and post-graduate APRN certificate program at Angelo State University is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
655 K. Street, NW Ste. 750
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: (202) 887-6791
Fax: (202) 887-8476

http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation

In addition, all nursing programs have full approval status by the Texas Board of Nursing.

Texas Board of Nursing
333 Guadalupe #3-460
Austin, TX 78701
Office: (512) 305-7400
Fax: (512) 305-7401
http://www.bon.texas.gov/index.asp
Disclaimer Statement

This handbook has been prepared to inform you of the selected guidelines, policies, procedures, and activities within the Graduate Nursing Program at Angelo State University. These policies and statements are subject to continuous review and evaluation. Students will be informed of any changes through email and announcements.

The purpose of this handbook is to supplement the Angelo State University Student Handbook. The rules and regulations of the Board of Regents, Texas Tech University System, and University policies described in the Angelo State University Student Handbook shall not be superseded by this document. As Registered Nurses, graduate students must adhere to all rules and regulations in the Texas Board of Nursing Practice Act. The sole purpose of this handbook is to further describe how said policies and guidelines specifically pertain to the Nursing Program. Graduate students should access the “real-time” version of this handbook on the ASU Department of Nursing website at Graduate Resources.

Archer College of Health and Human Services
Department of Nursing

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Mission, Vision, Philosophy

Angelo State University Mission Statement

Angelo State University, a member of the Texas Tech University System, delivers undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts, sciences, and professional disciplines. In a leaning-centered environment distinguished by its integration of teaching, research, creative endeavor, service, and co-curricular experiences, ASU prepares students to be responsible citizens and to have productive careers.

Archer College of Health and Human Services Mission Statement

The mission of the College is to educate a diverse student body from various backgrounds in the health and human service professions through rigorous curricular activities that prepare students to take leadership roles in a competitive, technological, culturally diverse and global environment, engage students and faculty in the discovery of knowledge through education, research, service, and co-curricular experiences, and extend the boundaries of Angelo State University to enrich the quality of lives, especially for individuals in underserved and vulnerable populations, through inter-professional and community collaborations.

Department of Nursing

Mission
The Department of Nursing supports the overall Mission of Angelo State University by offering graduate and undergraduate nursing programs that produce professionals committed to improving the health of individuals, groups and communities both locally and globally. As practitioners and educators, our graduates effectively lead and advocate for safe, high-quality healthcare that respects diversity and is responsive to a dynamic and technologically complex society.

Vision
We will be recognized as visionary leaders committed to delivering innovative nursing education that promotes optimal patient outcomes.

Philosophy
We believe nursing is a unique, caring, scientific practice discipline built upon a solid foundation of knowledge in the liberal arts and sciences. Each level of nursing education expands upon prior knowledge and competency through the integration of research-based evidence. Our programs produce compassionate and skilled nurses prepared to meet the healthcare needs of a global society.

We believe the nurse delivers person-centered care as a member of the inter-professional team utilizing therapeutic partnerships and patient advocacy that emphasizes health promotion, health restoration and disease prevention.

We believe in student-centered, adult learning principles and provide a supportive, engaging educational environment facilitating personal and professional growth for leadership and lifelong learning.

We believe lifelong learning is nurtured in an environment of mutual respect and shared responsibility for the development of clinical reasoning, ethical conduct and personal accountability.
Nature and Purpose of Graduate Work

The purpose of graduate education is to provide advanced and specialized training beyond the baccalaureate program. Graduate study is intended to strengthen the academic and professional competence of the student, to develop the student’s capacity for independent study, to familiarize the student with past and current research, to train the student in the techniques of research, and to enable the student to relate his or her research to the investigations of other scholars and derive significant implications from the relationships. Graduate study presupposes a broad background of knowledge, an adequate preparation in appropriate fields of study at the baccalaureate level, and a command of skills required to carry on intensive research and investigation with a high degree of resourcefulness and self-direction. Generally speaking, only students with superior undergraduate academic records are qualified to pursue study at the graduate level. It should be noted that graduate studies differ from undergraduate studies in the following respects:

1. The graduate student is expected to assume greater responsibility and to exercise more individual initiative.
2. More extensive and intensive reading is required.
3. Greater emphasis is placed on productive research, with particular emphasis on the use of primary materials.
4. Seminar methods are employed with greater frequency, as greater class participation by the student is required.
5. Less instruction is provided in content, survey-type lecture courses Graduate study thus involves far more than the passing of a given number of courses and the fulfillment of certain minimum requirements.

The student cannot be content solely with earning acceptable grades. The student must continually satisfy the Graduate Faculty in the major field by displaying superior intellectual powers and scholarly commitment in order to maintain graduate status and good standing in the school. *(Retrieved from the Angelo State University Graduate Catalog, 2019-2020 p.5)*  

Graduate Programs

Pathways to the MSN include traditional post baccalaureate (BSN) and are designed for qualified nurses holding a baccalaureate degree in nursing from an accredited nursing program. Additionally, the nursing program offers post-master’s certificate tracks designed for nurses who hold a MSN degree from an accredited nursing program.
MSN Program Purpose and Outcomes

Guiding Documents

The primary document guiding the MSN Program is The American Association of Colleges of Nursing Master's Essentials\(^1\). Additional professional nursing standards utilized by graduate faculty in the development and revision of curriculum include the American Nurses Association's Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice\(^2\), National Task Force on Quality Nurse Practitioner Education\(^3\), The NP Core Competencies of The National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties, and the National League of Nursing, NLN Core Competencies for Nurse Educators: A Decade of Influence\(^4\).

MSN Program Outcomes

The purpose of the Master of Science in Nursing Program at Angelo State University is to prepare graduates to practice nursing within an expanded role. Master’s education prepares nurses with essential knowledge in professional leadership; patient centered care, and advanced nursing practice. These outcomes are met by a combination of online course delivery, on-campus orientation, skills lab and assessment and precepted practicum experiences.

Upon program completion, the graduate will be prepared to:

1. Integrate nursing and related sciences into the delivery of advanced nursing care to diverse populations.
2. Apply organizational and systems leadership skills.
3. Design and implement quality improvement initiatives.
4. Integrate best research evidence to improve health outcomes.
5. Utilize informatics, healthcare technology and information systems.
6. Advocate through system level policy development.
7. Employ effective communication in inter-professional teams.
8. Synthesize the impact of health determinants for provision of culturally relevant health promotion/disease prevention strategies.
9. Practice at the level of a Master's prepared nurse.

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Graduate Program Degree Tracks and Certifications

Angelo State University Department of Nursing offers two pathways to the MSN degree and post master's certificate options. The MSN options include the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) and Nurse Educator (NE) tracks. Graduates of the FNP track apply to the Texas State Board of Nursing for advanced practice status after the successful completion of a national certification exam. It is the responsibility of the individual student to apply for the certification exam and advanced practice status. Graduates of the Nurse Educator track are eligible to take the National League for Nursing (NLN) nurse educator certification exam.

**MSN - Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)** - An online program for baccalaureate nurses designed to develop expertise in the advanced practice role. Graduates are prepared as primary care providers to families and individuals across the lifespan.

**MSN – Nurse Educator (NE)** - An online program for baccalaureate nurses designed to develop expertise as an advanced level nurse in the teaching role. Graduates are prepared to teach healthcare providers enrolled in a variety of educational programs, including those at the vocational, associate and baccalaureate levels as well as in healthcare environments.

**Post-Master’s Family Nurse Practitioner Certificate** - An eight course (25 course hours) certificate program designed to develop primary care expertise as a nurse practitioner treating populations across the lifespan. The program will benefit master’s prepared nurses seeking to expand employment opportunities in a variety of health care settings. All courses are offered in a convenient online format. The post-master’s program is available to nurses holding a master’s degree with a major in nursing. Prerequisites: Nursing 6318 Pharmacotherapeutics, 6324 Advanced Pathophysiology, 6331 Advanced Health Assessment (to include a minimum of 50 precepted direct hands-on patient care clinical hours), and 6338 Leadership and Roles in Advanced Nursing or equivalent course work.

**Post Master’s Nurse Educator Certificate** - A four-course (12 course hours) certificate program designed to develop expertise in teaching a variety of educational programs, including vocational, associates and baccalaureate levels as well as in healthcare environments. All courses are offered in a convenient online format. The program will benefit masters prepared nurses wanting to develop expertise in curriculum development, and teaching strategies including online strategies and evaluation. Prerequisites: Nursing 6318 Pharmacotherapeutics, 6324 Advanced Pathophysiology, 6331 Advanced Health Assessment (to include a minimum of 50 precepted direct hands-on patient care clinical hours), and 6338 Leadership and Roles in Advanced Nursing or equivalent course work.
Program Track Competencies

Master’s and Post Master’s Family Nurse Practitioner

Students completing the Master’s Family Nurse Practitioner track / Post Master’s Certificate will possess the nine (9) nurse practitioner core competencies identified by the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF) amended in 2017. These competencies include:

1. Scientific Foundation Competencies
2. Leadership Competencies
3. Quality Competencies
4. Practice Inquiry Competencies
5. Technology and Information Literacy Competencies
6. Policy Competency
7. Health Delivery System Competencies
8. Ethics Competencies
9. Independent Practice Competencies

Students completing the Master’s Family Nurse Practitioner track/Post Master’s Certificate will also possess the Family/Across the Lifespan Nurse Practitioner Competencies identified by the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF) amended in 2017.

Master’s and Post Master’s Nurse Educator

Students completing the Master’s Nurse Educator track / Post Master’s Certificate will possess the eight (8) core competencies identified in the National League of Nursing’s NLN core competencies for nurse educators: A decade of influence. These competencies include:

1. Facilitate Learning
2. Facilitate Learner Development and Socialization
3. Use Assessment and Evaluation Strategies
4. Participate in Curriculum Design and Evaluation of Program Outcomes
5. Function as a Change Agent and Leader
6. Pursue Continuous Quality Improvement in the Nurse Educator Role
7. Engage in Scholarship
8. Function within the Educational Environment
Program Admission Guidelines

Master of Science in Nursing: MSN Admission Criteria

In addition to the general requirements for admission to the College of Graduate Studies & Research, applicants for regular admission to the MSN program must meet the following criteria:

- Acceptance into the College of Graduate Studies & Research
- Be a U.S. Citizen or hold permanent residency in the U.S.
- Reside in the state of Texas
- Baccalaureate degree in nursing from a program accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) or the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)
- Overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale
- Undergraduate statistics course (3 course hours) completed with a grade of “C” or higher (Junior or senior level statistics within 5 years is recommended but not required).
- Applicant must have one (1) year of recent clinical experience as a Registered Nurse if applying for the Family Nurse Practitioner program.
- Current, unencumbered license to practice as a Registered Nurse in Texas required.
- Three references (academic, professional, or clinical) addressing your ability to succeed in graduate school.
- Complete a Personal Statement describing (a) why you are choosing to become a Family Nurse Practitioner or Nurse Educator, (b) your plans upon completing the graduate program, (c) how your current work experience will enhance your graduate school experience, and (d) how you plan to manage your time due to the demands of the program, work, and/or family life. (Less than 800 words)
- Curriculum Vitae (CV)/resume

* In accordance with College of Graduate Studies & Research admission requirements, applicants from a foreign country whom English is not their first language, must also include official scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) taken within the last two years.

** MSN Curriculum requiring practicums are required to be completed in Texas.

*** When an applicant’s GPA is below 3.0, but between 2.75 and 2.99, and the applicant has achieved a 3.0 GPA in the last 60 hours of undergraduate work, the applicant may be granted provisional admission.

Post Master’s Certificate Admission Criteria

Certificate Program Admission and Progression Requirements

- Acceptance into the College of Graduate Studies & Research
- Be a U.S. Citizen or hold permanent residency status in the U.S.
- Reside in the state of Texas
- Have a Master’s degree in nursing from an accredited nursing program
- Applicant must have one (1) year of recent clinical experience as a Registered Nurse if applying for the Family Nurse Practitioner post master’s certificate program.
- Overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale
- Meet academic prerequisites***/****
  - Advanced Pathophysiology
  - Advanced Pharmacology
  - Advanced Health Assessment (AHA). The AHA course must include a minimum of 50 precepted clinical hours of direct patient care. The clinical hours must be “hands on” and be completed in a patient-care setting (i.e. family practice). Clinical hours may not include
standardized patients, on campus workshops/educational offerings, or simulation lab scenarios.

- Leadership and Roles and may be taken with the Post Master’s FNP curriculum.
- Acceptance of prerequisites will be subject to faculty approval. Potential students may be required to provide course descriptions and syllabi prior to approval.

- Current, unencumbered license to practice as a Registered Nurse in Texas.
- Three references (academic, professional, or clinical) addressing your ability to succeed in graduate school.
- Complete a Personal Statement describing (a) why you are choosing to become a Family Nurse Practitioner or Nurse Educator, (b) your plans upon completing the graduate program, (c) how your current work experience will enhance your graduate school experience, and (d) how you plan to manage your time due to the demands of the program, work, and/or family life. (Less than 800 words)

- Curriculum Vitae (CV)/resume

*In accordance with College of Graduate Studies and Research admission requirements, applicants from a foreign country whom English is not their first language, must also include official scores from the Test of English as Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) within the last two years.

**MSN Curriculum requiring practicums are required to be completed in Texas.

***GAP Analysis for Post Graduate Certificate NP Students
A student who is a nationally certified NP seeking partial credit or waiver of course work towards completion of a post master’s certificate in another NP practice area must have a thorough analysis completed of previous coursework (NONPF, 2016). The Family Nurse Practitioner Track Coordinator will conduct the analysis and report to the Graduate Program Coordinator. Recommendations to accept course work will be made to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies & Research for final approval after the student has successfully completed one semester at ASU. Reference: NONPF, 2016. *Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs (5th ed.)*.

****GAP Analysis for Post Graduate Certificate NP Students who are not nationally certified NPs
The Family Nurse Practitioner Track Coordinator will conduct the analysis and report to the Graduate Program Coordinator. Recommendations to accept course work will be made to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies & Research for final approval after the student has successfully completed one semester at ASU.
Admissions Selection Process

- A student planning to earn the MSN degree at Angelo State University must be accepted into the MSN program before enrolling in required nursing coursework. A number of factors, including regulatory agencies’ requirements and university resources, may dictate the number of candidates who can be accepted into the MSN program. As a result, meeting pre-admission requirements does not guarantee admission to the MSN program. In the event that applications for admission for a specific semester outnumber available openings, the most-qualified candidates, based on an evaluation of factors including, but not limited to, overall grade point average (GPA), and last 60 hours (GPA), will be admitted.

- Application information and links to application sites for the MSN program are available on the departmental website, Master of Science in Nursing Programs.

- Applications are not considered complete until all admission requirements have been met. Only completed applications will be evaluated for admission to the program.

- There will be an initial review of all complete applications for admission to a specific semester. Depending on the number of available seats and number of complete applications, a candidate could be admitted, or their application could be deferred to the final evaluation round for a particular semester. Application Deadlines for final review of completed applications are as follows:

**Application Deadlines**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Fall Deadline February 15th</th>
<th>Fall Deadline June 1</th>
<th>Spring Deadline October 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSN Family Nurse Practitioner</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSN Nurse Educator*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Master's Certificate - FNP</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Master's Certificate – NE*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Deadline may be extended per seat availability

**Provisional Admission**

Applicants who are given provisional admission will be on academic probation, with the requirement that they maintain at least a 3.00 cumulative grade point average in all graduate-level work until they have completed at least nine semester hours of graduate level work in a degree program at Angelo State University. Failure to maintain the requisite 3.00 may result in dismissal from the graduate program in which the student has been studying.
Standards for Progression in the MSN Program

The following standards must be maintained by each student in order to progress in the MSN program to graduation:

- Compliance with all rules and regulations outlined in the Graduate Nursing Student Handbook and the current ASU Graduate Catalog 2019-2020.
- A minimum 3.00 overall grade point average (GPA) at the completion of each semester in order to register for the next graduate nursing course. Students with a cumulative GPA below 3.00 will be placed on academic probation.
- Each student must have a minimum 3.00 overall grade point average at the completion of each semester in order to re-register for the next graduate nursing course. Students with a cumulative GPA below 3.00 will be placed on academic probation.
- Successful completion of each nursing course with a grade of “C” or above.
- Any student earning an “F” in a graduate nursing course may re-take the failed course one time pursuant to faculty approval. Students must petition MSN faculty for this recommendation. (Contact graduate program coordinator for instructions).
- Demonstration of safe performance in the clinical laboratory/practicum at all times.
- Adherence to the rules and regulations as defined in the current Nurse Practice Act for the State of Texas, and the Code of Ethics of the American Nurses Association while in the performance of duties in the MSN program.
- Proof of current health insurance.
- Current CPR certification
- Maintain current, unencumbered Texas nursing license
- Validation of University immunization requirements
- Compliance with all requirements of the clinical facility while engaged in student clinical experiences. These include, but are not limited to, criminal background checks and drug screenings. The student is responsible for all costs associated with these requirements.
- Compliance with the Angelo State University Honor Code.

Program Dismissal

- Dismissal from the MSN Program will result from the following circumstances:
- Students earning an “F” in two or more graduate courses.
- Students earning an “F” in the same nursing course twice.
- Unsuccessful second attempt of either portion of the comprehensive exam.
- Failing to meet expected standards in any nursing program track may result in dismissal at any time. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - professional standards
  - physical/mental requirements;
  - practice safety
  - academic dishonesty
  - poor performance in coursework
  - poor and/or unsafe performance in the clinical setting

Program Readmission

Graduate Students who do not attend class for one year must re-apply for admission through the College of Graduate Studies & Research ASU Graduate Application and Nursing Centralized Application Service NursingCAS. Under the MSN program competitive admission criteria, consideration for re-admission will be on a “space available” basis.
Academic Guidelines

Orientation to MSN Program

Once accepted into the MSN programs, new students are required to attend a mandatory, on-campus orientation. Family Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Educator students will attend the fall orientation session.

Online Learning Requirements

Online Learning is an educational process that takes place when the student and instructor are not physically in the same place. Using a computer and an Internet Service Provider (ISP), a student can work on course work where it is most convenient. Even though the online class may be more accommodating to a student’s schedule, the content and workload are equivalent.

In an online class, the instructor provides instruction and facilitates the learning environment. Students can review course materials online, interact with other students and the instructor via email, chat rooms, and threaded discussion, and virtual classroom meetings. In the online classroom students are active participants in their own learning. An online course may be more demanding than a face-to-face course and require students to have a high degree of self-discipline and motivation to be successful.

Online courses are similar in structure to classroom courses. The courses have a syllabus, weekly assignments, projects, papers, and/or tests. Students will do exercises and solve problems either alone or in small groups. Students will interact with classmates and instructors through online communication tools instead of face-to-face interaction.

For online course work, students should possess basic computer skills. Students should be able to:

- send and receive email
- attach, send, and open documents from email or internet sites
- participate in online chat
- research topics using the web resources and use internet library databases
- Find and access professional internet sources
- Use MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint programs

The Learning Management System (LMS) used by Angelo State University is Blackboard. A LMS is a web-based platform through which instructors can communicate with students, distribute information and facilitate the exchange of ideas, information and resources. A LMS offers students easy and immediate access to discussion forums and chats, course materials, assignments and resources, announcements and course calendars.

Most online courses are asynchronous or designed so students can conveniently complete assigned work via internet access. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure the browser used to access course material is compatible with ASU’s Blackboard Learning System. Faculty reserve the right to deny additional access to course assignments lost due to compatibility issues. Students are responsible for reviewing the guidelines posted in the course regarding accessing Blackboard assignments. Problems encountered should be discussed with faculty at the time of occurrence, either via a phone call (preferred) during

Revised 8/2019
posted acceptable hours for calling, or via email notification during times outside those posted for calls.

Students should perform a browser test. Select the “Technology Support” tab from the Blackboard homepage (Blackboard) Select “Test your Browser” option.

Please see technical requirements for MSN classes at this link: Computer Requirements

**Academic Integrity and Angelo State University Honor Code**

The Academic Integrity statement from the ASU Student Handbook is as follows: “Academic integrity is taking responsibility for one's own class and/or course work, being individually accountable, and demonstrating intellectual honesty and ethical behavior. Academic integrity is a personal choice to abide by the standards of intellectual honesty and responsibility. Because education is a shared effort to achieve learning through the exchange of ideas, students, faculty, and staff have the collective responsibility to build mutual trust and respect. Ethical behavior and independent thought are essential for the highest level of academic achievement, which then must be measured. Academic achievement includes scholarship, teaching, and learning, all of which are shared endeavors. Grades are a device used to quantify the successful accumulation of knowledge through learning. Adhering to the standards of academic integrity ensures grades are earned honestly. Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build their educational and professional careers.” Any student not adhering to the academic integrity statement in any phase of academic work is subject to disciplinary action. See the Angelo State University Student Handbook at: Angelo State University Academic Integrity

In addition to the ASU Academic Integrity Statement, the Department of Nursing recognizes the strong link between honesty in academic work and professional integrity. Any act of academic dishonesty, including cheating in the classroom or fabrication of reports or records of interactions with clients, is considered incompatible with ethical standards or nursing practice. Students must be able "to promptly inform and fully self-disclose facts, circumstances, events, errors, and omissions when such disclosure could enhance the health status of patients/clients or the public or could protect patients/clients or the public from unnecessary risk of harm" (Texas Board of Nursing). See the Texas Board of Nursing Rule 213.27 Good Professional Character.

“Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, violations of published professional ethics/standards, and any act or attempted act designed to give unfair academic advantage to oneself or another student.” See ASU Student Handbook for additional information: Academic Misconduct

All assignments submitted by students are subject to review by anti-plagiarism software. Students found guilty of scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the ASU Academic Integrity policies.

In a case of suspected academic dishonesty, the faculty member may take any or all of the following actions in the order as indicated below:

- F on the assignment or
- F in the course
- Refer the case to the Student Affairs Committee
- Report the student to the department head as is outlined for the student filing a grade grievance.
Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

Cheating:
- Copying from another student’s exam or other assignment.
- Using or possessing unauthorized materials during a test
- Using, having, or acquiring test answers, test drafts, test copies, etc.
- Discussing or sharing test content with students who have not taken the test

Plagiarism:
- Using someone’s work in your academic assignments without appropriate acknowledgement
- Copying another student’s paper or any portion of it
- Using ideas from or copying a portion of published material (e.g. books or journals) without adequately documenting the source
- If five or more words in sequence are taken from a source, those words must be placed in quotes and the source referenced with author's name, date of publication, and page number of publication.
- If the author’s ideas are rephrased, by transposing words or expressing the same idea using different words, the idea must be attributed to the author by proper referencing, giving the author's name and date of publication.
- If a single author's ideas are discussed in more than one paragraph, the author must be referenced at the end of the paragraph.
- Authors whose words or ideas have been used in the preparation of a paper must be listed in the references cited at the end of the paper.

Students are encouraged to review the plagiarism module from the ASU Writing Center at: ASU Academic Honesty Resources

Nursing students are expected to maintain an environment of academic integrity. Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build education and professional careers (Texas Tech University Quality Enhancement Plan, Academic Integrity Task Force, 2010). Actions involving academic dishonesty violate the professional code of ethics, are completely unacceptable, and will not be tolerated in any form. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work will be disciplined in accordance with ASU regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University.

The University may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, misrepresentation, conspiracy, misuse of library material, misuse of technology, and any act designed to give an unfair advantage to the student such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor(s) or the attempt to commit such an act.

Online education requires a high level of personal integrity. Any indication that submitted work is not original or that students are collaborating without express written given permission will be considered academic dishonesty.

*Incidents reported to the University Office of Student Affairs will be reported to the Texas Board of Nursing.*
Guidelines for Written Assignments

Writing is an essential component of the communication skills that help define professional nursing practice. Clear, precise, logical, appropriate expression of ideas, opinions, and values in nursing is required to provide quality care to clients, families, and communities. High standards for communication lie at the heart of professional nursing practice and should be reflected in all curricular activities.

The discipline of nursing uses formatting standards established by the American Psychological Association (APA) to guide clear and precise professional communication. APA format refers to the APA editorial style (grammar, quotations, etc.) and standards for content, organization of a paper, and ways to express ideas clearly while reducing bias in language. Knowledge and use of APA recommendations enhance professional communication.

The official source book for formatting of written assignments will be the most current edition of:


Students are required to purchase and use the most current version of the American Psychological Association (APA) manual. Students are expected to follow the guidelines in this manual. While there are online APA websites with abbreviated guidelines, there is no substitute for the detailed information in the book. Papers with an abundance of noticeable errors, including spelling and grammar, will receive a low grade or an Unsatisfactory for the assignment.

Student Attendance

Like face-to-face classes, online classes require weekly attendance. Timely participation in discussion forums or other assigned activities is online classroom attendance. Equivalent weekly attendance is expected and is critical to the successful completion of the course. See individual course syllabi for specific requirements.

Course/Transfer Credit

As stated in the current Angelo State University Graduate Catalog: A maximum of 9 semester credit hours of graduate-level work taken prior to admission to the degree program may be used in the student’s degree program but only with the written approval of the graduate program advisor.

Degree Plan

Graduate students are expected to maintain a degree plan for the purpose of tracking their progress through the program and must have an approved degree plan on file prior to the second registration cycle. It is the student’s responsibility to maintain this plan through scheduled appointments with assigned faculty advisors. Official degree plans follow track curriculum and are filed in the student file in the College of Graduate Studies & Research and Research office.
Change of Major

Students accepted into the graduate degree program will be required to meet the criteria for specific program tracks per degree plan (i.e. FNP and NE). Because each track has and specific criteria students will not be able to change program tracks at will. Changing from one program track to another requires a submission of change of major and approval of the track coordinator and program coordinator. Change to the FNP track is dependent upon competitive admissions process and space availability. This process requires application to the actual program track through Nursing Centralized Application Service NursingCAS. Contact the graduate secretary for instructions about the process. Transfer to the Nurse Educator track requires approval by the NE Track Coordinator and Program Coordinator. Such approval must be obtained before the student enrolls in any course for which a modification is being sought. A letter of intent to change from one-degree plan to another should be submitted to the track coordinator prior to each semester’s academic advising date. The student is responsible for making arrangements to discuss their desire to change from one program track to another with the track coordinator. An approved modification is contingent upon space availability and the student’s ability to meet all criteria for the preferred program track.

Grade of Incomplete

Under some circumstances (i.e., reasons other than lack of adequate effort), if all assignments in a course are not completed before its conclusion, the student may request the instructor assign an incomplete for the course. If the instructor agrees, a symbol of incomplete (I) is recorded on the student's transcript. The student is urged to complete the course work as quickly as possible. An incomplete (I) in a prerequisite course will prohibit enrollment in courses requiring the prerequisite course. Work must be completed within one calendar year to be converted to a letter grade by the instructor. If work is not completed within one year, the incomplete (I) automatically converts to a failing grade (F). For more information refer to ASU Operating Policy 10.11 Grading Procedures for more information.

Withdrawal Policy

The University’s policy regarding dropping courses and/or withdrawal from the university can be found in the current ASU Catalog. Deadlines for dropping classes with a W can be found in the University Calendar in the Course Schedule. Please visit Withdrawals and Refunds for more information.

ASU Registration and Scheduling

Students should use the Online Course Drop to withdraw from online courses.

Students can access the Registrar’s Office webpage and click on forms to access the drop slip.

Relocation (Moving to a state other than the state of Texas)

It is mandatory all MSN online students, regardless of track, provide notification prior to relocating to another state. Students are required to contact their respective MSN track coordinator with this notification a minimum of 60 days prior to the proposed move. Upon receipt of notification the student will be contacted, either by phone or email, to discuss possible options for completing the program. All clinical rotations must be completed with a licensed Practitioner in the state of Texas.
Current RN Licensure

A copy of the student’s current Texas RN license number must be on file in the Nursing Department Graduate Office by the beginning of the student’s first semester of study. Each student is responsible for maintaining current records of licensure in the Department of Nursing. Students will not be permitted to register for classes unless they have filed evidence of a current registered nursing license with the department. A valid Texas RN license must be verified before any clinical courses are taken.

Encumbered Registered Nurse (RN) Licensure

- To obtain regular admission to the graduate nursing programs students must have an unencumbered Texas RN license.
- If a student experiences an encumbered license (such as an RN license with stipulations or restrictions) during his/her graduate studies, he/she must notify the track coordinators immediately upon receipt of the encumbrance. The student will provide the track coordinators with a copy of the Agreed Order.
- Students may be allowed to take non-clinical courses with an encumbered license.
- Students will not be allowed to take clinical courses with an encumbered license.
- The student will notify the track coordinator when the student's license becomes unencumbered and provide a copy of the BON's notification letter. The student may then participate in clinical courses.
- Failure to notify the track coordinator of an encumbered RN license will be considered academic misconduct and be treated as such.

Online Testing

- **Professionalism:** Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate moral and ethical behavior. Unless specified, students will work alone and without notes or textbooks while taking online quizzes or tests. Faculty reserve the right to monitor any student evaluation for test security and integrity using methods that include, but are not limited to, proctored, audio and video surveillance.

- **Test Security:** Students are expected to maintain test security by NOT discussing test questions with peers or attempting to copy questions and/or answers. Discussing test questions or test content with students who have not taken the test is a violation of test security, and will result in being reported for academic dishonesty.

- **Violations:** The ASU graduate nursing faculty takes test security very seriously. Violations in test security are considered academic violations and ethical violations, which is unacceptable behavior for nursing professionals. If a student is found to be in violation of test security or has been found to have cheated or colluded with other students on an online test, the student will be immediately reported to the Office of Student Life for disciplinary action. **Faculty reserve the right to require proctored exams.** The Texas Board of Nursing may also be notified of breaches in academic integrity and professional behavior.
Exam/Test/Quiz Re-sets

Students are responsible for having a reliable Internet connection for quizzes, exams and tests. Typically, the most common problem during online exams is internet server issues with the student’s computer, causing the student to lose access to the exam. For students with unreliable internet service, there are many options for using a reliable computer with a reliable internet connection, including public libraries and ASU computer labs.

Verifiable ASU Issues: On rare occasions, there may be brief problems with the ASU server or Blackboard. While these issues are rare, they are easy to verify and document. If a verifiable ASU problem occurs during testing, students will not be penalized. In the event of a testing issue, the student must contact Information Technology (IT) for assistance at that time (325-942-2911)

Non-verifiable Issues: For non-verifiable, non-ASU internet problems, test reset requests are subject to administrative evaluation. In the event of a testing issue, the student must contact Information Technology (IT) first for assistance. If allowed, resets will be limited to one per semester. In general, for non-ASU internet or connectivity issues occurring during testing, the following options may occur:

- Students may receive a zero.
- For exams partially completed, faculty may allow students the option of accepting the grade for only the items answered.
- Students may be offered an alternative test form; such as essay or short answer.

Exam/Test/Quiz Rules

Students should be aware of the following rules and procedures:

- All online exams are administered through Respondus Lockdown Browser, available for download through all Blackboard courses and from the IT Help Desk.
- During an exam, students will be unable to save or print the questions; this is for test security purposes. Attempting to screen capture is a violation of student conduct and attempts will be reported.
- Students are strongly encouraged to use an Ethernet connection for all online exams.
- Students are encouraged to plan ahead and not wait until the last minute to take exams. Students have a window of time when exams are open. Please take exams as soon as possible to avoid last minute glitches and ensure IT help is available.
- Major online tests (mid-term, final exam, etc.) will be open for a limited time frame, not more than 16 hours. Online final exams are scheduled in accordance with university rules for specific dates and times and these will be adhered to.

Comprehensive Examination Guidelines

MSN students must successfully complete a two-part comprehensive examination as part of the eligibility requirements for graduation. The written comprehensive examination is to be taken at the Archer College of Health and Human Services Building Testing Center, San Angelo, Texas. The purpose of the comprehensive examination is twofold:
1. Determine **MSN core curriculum competency** in areas of leadership, theory, ethics, advocacy, and research for advanced nursing.
2. Determine competency in the area of specialization (Nurse Educator, or Family Nurse Practitioner).

Students typically complete all core curriculum courses prior to taking the on-campus written comprehensive exam. Students are eligible to sit for on-campus written comprehensive examination during the semester of final core course work as identified by the graduate degree plan. The **track** specific comprehensive exam is typically taken during the last semester of enrollment. Students will be notified of eligibility to take the exam during the semester in which they qualify. Application to take the comprehensive exam is made once student receives notification.

MSN graduate faculty determines exam results on a pass/fail basis. Students receive notification of exam results from the MSN track coordinators as soon as all grading of exam is complete. Exam results are also forwarded to the College of Graduate Studies & Research.

Students who do not successfully pass the on campus written competency exam will be given the opportunity to have a second exam administered in oral format.

“A graduate student whose performance is unsatisfactory on the first and second administration of the comprehensive examination may be dismissed from that graduate program if recommended by the appropriate department committee.” *Angelo State University Graduate Catalog, 2019-2020*, p.26. [ASU 2019-2020 Graduate Catalog](#)

**Graduation Application**

“In the term in which the student expects to complete all degree requirements, the student should apply for graduation during the registration process for that term. If the student is not enrolling for course work during the term he or she expects to graduate, the graduation application form can be obtained on-line. Students anticipating graduation in a given term should apply for graduation prior to a published date which is early in that semester. If the student is not able to complete degree requirements at the end of that period, the application form must be resubmitted in the term in which graduation is again anticipated. No degree will be conferred until the Application for Graduation has been filed.” *Angelo State University Graduate Catalog, 2019-2020*, p. 26 [ASU 2019-2020 Graduate Catalog](#)

**Physical/Mental Performance Policy and Professional Technical Standards for Nursing Practice**

In order to accomplish the objectives of the program, students must be able to meet the following performance requirements:

- Visual acuity with corrective lenses to identify physical findings such as cyanosis, edema, erythema, etc., observe patients, read diagnostic test results, and legibly document and interpret.
- Hearing ability with auditory aids to understand the normal speaking voice without viewing the speaker’s face, interpret spoken communications received from patients, families, and health care professionals, and auscultate or percuss various body systems such as the cardiac, respiratory, gastrointestinal, etc...
- Physical capacity to stand for prolonged periods of time, perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation, patient assessments, evaluation and treatment activities, and diagnostic maneuvers.
- Communicate effectively to accurately relay verbal and written information, clearly and succinctly explain treatment procedures, describe patient conditions, and implement patient teachings.
- Technology capability to utilize computers and electronic devices at a reasonable level of...
proficiency for safe patient care.

- Manual dexterity to perform accurate movements, to execute diagnostic procedures or routine laboratory tests, and operate medical equipment.
- Physical and emotional stability to function safely under stressful conditions, and adapt to ever-changing clinical situations involving patient care.

In accordance with University policy, students with a disability who may require a reasonable accommodation to meet these technical standards should contact Student Disability Services.

Special Accommodations Request for Persons with Disabilities

ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from the participation in or be denied the benefits of services, programs, or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA) and subsequent legislation.

Student Disability Services is located in the Office of Student Affairs, and is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting an employee of the Office of Student Affairs, in the Houston Harte University Center, Room 112, or contacting the department via email at ADA@angelo.edu. For more information about the application process and requirements, visit the Student Disability Services Website.

Title IX

Angelo State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. In accordance with Title VII, Title IX, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE), and other federal and state laws, the University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination and unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature. The terms includes sexual harassment, nonconsensual sexual contact, nonconsensual sexual intercourse, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence or dating violence), sexual violence, and any other misconduct based on sex.

You are encouraged to report any incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator, Michelle Boone, J.D. You may submit reports in the following manner:

- Online Incident Reporting Form
- Face to Face: Mayer Administration Building Room 210
- Phone: 325-942-2022
- Email: michelle.boone@angelo.edu

Note, as a faculty member at Angelo State, we are mandatory reporters and must report incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator. Should you wish to speak with someone in confidence about an issue, you may contact the University Counseling Center (325-942-2371), the 24-
Hour Crisis Helpline (325-486-6345), or the University Health Clinic (325-942-2171).

For more information about resources related to sexual misconduct, Title IX, or Angelo State’s policy visit ASU Title IX.
Social Media Guidelines

The Angelo State University Nursing Program supports the use of social media in personal/non-academic or non-professional contexts. Students may encounter confidential information within the academic or patient-care environment during clinical practicum and must demonstrate professional behaviors and communication. Consistent with Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements [ANA, 2015], Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice [ANA, 2015] and Nursing’s Social Policy Statement [ANA, 2011]. It is the student’s responsibility to refrain from the following:

- Uploading images/videos of yourself in a clinical environment or uniform
- Discussing patients, visitors, vendors, or organizational partners
- Talking about physicians, hospital/facility/clinical staff
- Discussing clinical events or news stories involving clinical partners
- Giving medical advice online
- ‘Friending’ or requesting to friend patients (even when they are no longer patients), Department/College faculty, or staff

* The only exceptions are individual or group photos of the clinical group and faculty. ASU nursing faculty reserves the right to order the immediate removal of inappropriate items (HIPAA violations, etc.) that are posted on a student’s social media site.

Registered Nurses have a professional obligation to understand the nature and consequences of participating in social networking of all types [blogs, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, etc.]. Patient privacy is a fundamental ethical and legal obligation of nurses. Although social networking venues offer opportunities for mentoring and sharing needed health related education and information among colleagues and the lay public it also presents risk. The use of privacy settings and the separation of personal from professional information are not guaranteed from being shared or made public in less protected forums. Online content and behavior has the potential to enhance or undermine the individual student’s career and/or the academic institution they attend. Students should consider the ‘unintended consequences’ of any information they share outside the context in which it was learned. (Adapted from Principles for Social Networking and the Nurse [2011], American Nurses Association).

Professional Standards

§217.11-12. Standards of Professional Nursing Practice. The responsibility of the Texas Board of Nurse Examiners is to regulate the practice of professional nursing within the State of Texas. The purpose of defining standards of practice is to identify roles and responsibilities of the registered professional nurse (RN) in any health care setting. The standards for professional nursing practice shall establish a minimum acceptable level of professional nursing practice.

(See Rule 217.11-12 Texas Administrative Code. Texas Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations Relating to Nurse Education, Licensure, and Practice)
Patient/Client Confidentiality

In accordance with the current Texas Nurse Practice Act Rules and Regulations regarding Unprofessional Conduct [disclosing confidential information or knowledge concerning the client except where required or allowed by law] and the HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) guidelines, the faculty of the Department of Nursing have adopted the following policy:

- Except within the structured, teaching-learning situation, all aspects of the patient/client’s medically related information, and/or data shall not be discussed with any other person or persons under any circumstances.
- Proper identification as stated in ASU Dress Code is required before reading charts/records.
- Under no circumstances is the student to photocopy and/or tape record any part of the patient’s chart/records.
- Students may become privileged to clinical agency or organization information, which is considered private. Students who divulge agency or patient information acquired during courses may be immediately dismissed from the nursing program.

Failure to honor this basic ethical right of the patient/client may result in the immediate dismissal of the student from the Nursing Program.

HIPAA (1996): Annual education materials are available through the Blackboard course delivery system at ASU. Each year, every nursing student must review the HIPAA instructional materials. Each year, faculty will require each student to submit proof of completion of these materials.

Policies and Procedures Governing Student Complaints

In accordance with the Grievance and Appeal Procedures for Students at Angelo State University, it is the policy of the Department of Nursing to receive, process, and resolve student grievances in a fair and prompt manner. The Angelo State University Student Handbook distinguishes between grievances related to discrimination, or an infraction, breach, or misinterpretation of University policies, rules, regulations, AND a grade grievance. Therefore, the student handbook outlines two distinct procedures for each of these grievances. Any student with a concern or grievance should follow the Complaint Processes located in the Angelo State Student Handbook.

Every effort should be made to resolve complaints/grievances informally between the student and the faculty member most directly involved; or, such efforts failing, by the specific track coordinator. If unable to resolve the complaint/grievances through these steps, the student may seek resolution through the Department Chair. A written record of all complaints/grievances, with resolution, will be maintained in the departmental office.
Evaluation of Faculty and Course

Students in all programs are given the opportunity to evaluate their courses and the faculty who teach the courses. Evaluations are most helpful when they are honest, fair, constructive, and pertinent to the class, clinical experience, and course. Faculty value student evaluations and use student suggestions in making modifications in courses, and clinical experiences. Evaluations of class, laboratory, and clinical teaching effectiveness are used by individual faculty members in identifying areas of strength and areas of needed improvement. Course evaluations are also used in faculty tenure and promotion decisions. The faculty values student evaluation of teaching effectiveness as a means of improving teaching skills.

Angelo State University uses the IDEA (Individual Development and Educational Assessment) system administered through Kansas State University for all lecture course evaluations. Clinical courses may use IDEA or Qualtrics for gathering clinical instructor and clinical site evaluation feedback. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment administers IDEA for the entire University and has established a policy whereby students can complete course evaluations free from coercion. The faculty may provide instructions and reminders about the evaluation process. The online survey is sent to the students’ angelo.edu email address and once completed is returned directly to the tabulation center. Please do not miss this opportunity to provide us valuable input into how this course can better serve future students. Students are encouraged to evaluate classroom and clinical instruction using forms and methods provided. In addition, narrative input is welcome.

Student Voice--Attendance of Faculty Meetings

Students are invited to participate in regularly scheduled graduate faculty standing committee meetings (Curriculum or Student Affairs) or serve as student representatives in person or by video conference. Interested students should contact the graduate secretary for meeting dates and times. All general session meetings are open to students. Executive sessions are closed sessions.

Student Voice--View/Comment Faculty Meeting Minutes

Faculty meeting minutes are available for viewing within Blackboard via the Graduate Nursing Tab. Students are encouraged to review and comment regarding the Faculty Meeting Minutes.
Student Resources and Facilities

Departmental Website

Students should access the departmental website for updates, information on courses, books, course schedules, clinical facilities, degree plan applications, and other important items. ASU Department of Nursing Website

Scholarships and Financial Aid

All students are encouraged to review financial aid and scholarship information on the Department of Nursing website (see link below). Students needing financial assistance are also encouraged to contact the University Financial Aid Office (see link below).

Financial Assistance for Graduate Nursing Students

ASU Financial Aid

Scholarship Programs

ASU OneCard

All students (including online students) MUST have an ASU OneCard. This student ID serves as your library card, so students cannot use interlibrary loan or check out books without the card. The ASU OneCard is the method through which students who receive a refund from ASU will choose their disbursement option.

For those who are not local, an ASU OneCard can be obtained without coming to campus. The OneCard office needs the following from you:

- An enlarged copy of your drivers’ license that can be easily read (not too dark)
- A photo of yourself that shows your face
- A valid mailing address

Students can mail a photo via regular mail or email a digital photo. The ASU OneCard staff can crop and enlarge images so only your face is showing. Students who have access to a scanner can scan their drivers’ license and email as an attachment. Students can also mail a photo and a copy of their drivers’ license. Students should ensure their mailing address is correct because the ASU OneCard cannot be forwarded. For more information, go to the ASU OneCard office website.

Email Accounts

The University provides an email account to all current students. Students are required to use their ASU email address for the purpose of communicating with the Nursing office, faculty, and Blackboard assignments. The Department of Nursing will use ASU email addresses exclusively in communicating to students. This is particularly important for students enrolled in online courses.

Students must have an ASU email username and password to access online library databases from off campus. Students must also have an email username and password to activate their ASU OneCard which is the official student identification card for ASU students.

If a distance student needs assistance obtaining a University email username and password, the Technology Access Account Agreement form must be completed and faxed to the IT Help Desk at (325) 942-2508. After
receiving a username and password, students should immediately change their password.

To access email when away from the University students can login to the RamMail service using a web browser such as Internet Explorer or Netscape.

**RamPort**

RamPort is a personalized communication system providing access to University services, news, and outside web media. This innovative online environment for Angelo State University students, faculty, and staff allows access to the ASU Email System, Library, Blackboard, Virtual Calendar, Course information, and Departmental information.

The Department of Nursing at Angelo State University uses a Nursing tab in Blackboard to communicate important announcements, upcoming events, and program information. It is the student’s responsibility to sign up for the nursing channel and check it frequently for current news and information.

**Online Learning Orientation**

**Online Technical Requirements**

Current recommendations for technical support and computer requirements in online education can be found at [Online Learning](#).

Individual courses may have additional requirements for special equipment including, but not limited to:

- Webcam
- Headset
- Specific software
- Ethernet Cable

*Faculty assumes that students enrolling in online education have basic computer literacy skills. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure competency in the various activities related to online educational requirements.*
Information Technology Services (IT)
Assistance with problems associated with Blackboard course management system may be obtained by calling the ASU IT Help Desk at (325) 942-2911 or itsupport@angelo.edu.

Orientation to Blackboard Online Learning
It is highly recommended that MSN students review the training videos available within Blackboard. Additional support is available through eLearning at 325-486-6263.

Porter Henderson Library
The Porter Henderson Library provides a variety of resources essential for nursing student projects and formal papers, including and extensive nursing collection of monographs, professional journals, online databases, Tex Share Loan Program, and an interlibrary loan program. In order to check out materials from the library, you must have an ASU OneCard.

It is important students become familiar with resources available through the University library at the beginning of the semester by completing the Nursing Library Tutorial. Nursing Library Tutorials

Distance students (not on-campus) wanting to know more about how to access library databases from off campus, click here

If you are a distance student, the TexShare Loan Program will assist you in the use of public libraries in your home community. Students may obtain a TexShare card at the Library’s Circulation Desk, provided the student’s library account is in good standing (e.g. no library fines). Students will then need to obtain a borrower’s card from the library they visit. Participating library policies vary. Participating libraries and lending policies can be accessed from the aforementioned URL. Distance nursing students taking online classes needing a TexShare card should contact the Circulation Department at (325) 486-6524 for assistance.

Interlibrary Loan
This is a library-to-library loan service offered by the Porter Henderson Library to ASU students, faculty, and staff. The primary purpose of the ILL is to assist scholarly research by obtaining materials not available locally. For more information on how to submit a request for library materials through this program please contact the Library's Interlibrary Loan unit.

Nursing Learning Resource Center
The Nursing Learning Resource Center (LRC) or "skills lab" is located on the third floor of the ACHHS building. It has two nursing skills labs and a virtual IV therapy lab. The purpose of the LRC is to assist a nursing student at any level to prepare for class, clinical assignments, and/or nursing skills. A student lounge room is located on the second floor of the ACHHS building.

All of the LRC equipment and resources are available for independent study or classroom use. Many items are available for checkout upon request. LRC hours will be posted at the beginning of each semester and may vary from week to week. Please contact LRC/Skills Lab staff for more information regarding hours and equipment.
Miscellaneous

Alumnae

Students are expected to notify the Graduate Nursing Office secretary of Certification status within 1 year (12 months) of graduation through email, phone, or LinkedIn. Within 12 months of graduation, ASU MSN Program alumnae will receive a survey/questionnaire requesting information concerning initial employment after graduation and certification status. This provides essential information regarding program outcomes for evaluation of the ASU MSN Program and for the purposes of responding to accreditation requirements, national surveys and seeking federal or state funding for program development. It is crucial that each alumnus complete the survey/questionnaire ensuring the alumnae database is complete.

Texas Board of Nursing Recognition

Angelo State University prepares advanced practice registered nurses (APRN) through an MSN degree program. All individuals completing preparation as an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse must be recognized by the Texas Board of Nursing, or their current state of residence, as an Advanced Practice Nurse prior to practicing. Graduates in the state of Texas must access the Texas BON website and complete the application to be recognized as an Advanced Practice Nurse. This cannot be done until the graduate has proof of successful completion of the required national certification exam.

Certification in Area of Specialization

All individuals prepared as APRN's must be certified in their area of specialization. The Texas BON designates that the graduate has two years from completion of a program to pass the certification exam and become certified in their specialty area. The graduate level program director will facilitate the completion of paper work to submit for the certification exam. The graduate will be responsible for completing and submitting all application materials to the certification organizations that are currently available for graduates ANCC-American Nurses Credentialing Center or AANPCB-American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board

Nurse Educator graduates meet the requirements for national Nurse Educator Certification through NLN.

Advanced Practice Nurse’s Organizations

Graduate students are encouraged to participate in nursing organizations such as Texas Nurses Association, American Association of Nurse Practitioners, Texas Nurse Practitioners, and local/regional Nurse Practitioner organizations in the community they reside. Participation in these organizations allows the student to build professional networks and learn the advanced practice role in the context of their community.

Texas Nurse Practitioners

The TNP organization encourages student participation. Membership in TNP is free to students in the first year of the program. Students also have discounted fees to the state TNP conference. Many local chapters of the TNP offer educational and leadership opportunities for students.

San Angelo Coalition of Nurses in Advanced Practice (SACNAP)

The San Angelo Coalition of Advanced Practice Nurses is an organization established to encourage networking and professional development and collaboration among advanced practice nurses in the San Angelo area. All nurses recognized as advanced practice in the state of Texas (i.e., nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, nurse midwives, and nurse anesthetists) and graduate students preparing for the advanced practice role are encouraged to join and participate. SACNAP meets approximately 10 times a year.
and meetings typically include an educational program. Past meetings have included information on newly approved drugs or equipment or dialogue with local politicians and policy makers. Legislative issues and rules and regulations affecting advanced practice are also discussed.

**Emergency Messages**

If the Department of Nursing receives a call for a student that is of an emergency nature, the Department will locate the student to relay the message. This procedure will be used only for emergencies. It is the student’s responsibility to maintain accurate phone numbers with the department office and their practicum instructor.
Practicum Guidelines and Procedures

Precepted Clinical Experiences

A number of MSN courses include a clinical practicum in traditional and community-based settings. These clinical experiences can usually be completed in the student's city of residence, under the supervision of a qualified and approved preceptor (See Preceptor-Student Orientation Handbook). The student, with faculty guidance, will identify a qualified preceptor, provide the preceptor with the departmental Preceptor-Student Orientation Handbook, and return the signed Preceptor Agreement Form, Preceptor Profile and Preceptor CV to the Department secretary before beginning clinical experiences. In addition, the student is responsible for determining if a clinical contract with the preceptor's clinical facility is on file in the department office. Please contact the Graduate Secretary to inquire about the status of a clinical contract with a facility.

Preceptor Selection Criteria

A qualified and approved preceptor must supervise the clinical experience. Angelo State University follows the Advanced Practitioner Regulation Chapter 219.10 of the Texas Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations relating to Nurse Education, Licensure, and Practice requiring the following qualifications:

1. Nurses:
   a. Master's Degree in Nursing from an accredited university.
   b. Current unencumbered RN license in the state of Texas
   c. Authorized to practice as an advanced practice nurse in their area of specialization and with specified patient population APRN focus in Texas
   d. Must have prescriptive authority
   e. Currently licensed health care professionals who provide supervision and teaching in clinical settings appropriate for advanced practice nurses.
   f. Have a minimum of one year (1) full-time experience in the role in which the student is being precepted.
2. Physicians and Physician Assistants*
   a. Doctor of Medicine or Osteopathy from an accredited university
   b. Certification as a Physician Assistant* and must have prescriptive authority.
   c. Currently licensed and practicing
   d. Have at least one year (1) full-time experience in the role in which the student is being precepted.
3. Area of practice must be relevant to the educational clinical practice component.
4. Able to provide adequate supervision, teaching, and evaluation of students for the achievement of clinical course objectives and learning needs.
5. Able to facilitate active participation of students in the delivery of health care.
6. Commitment to the concept of advanced practice nursing.
7. Familiar with written clinical objectives specific to preceptor experience.

*Physician Assistants are utilized on a case-by-case basis and must be discussed with your clinical instructor before obtaining a signed preceptor agreement

NOTE: Pending disciplinary actions or an encumbered Texas license will disqualify preceptors.
Record Keeping

All ASU graduate nursing student records must be up to date and on file in the Graduate Nursing Office PRIOR to the first day of class. Failure to have current records on file will be considered out of compliance and the student may be dropped from courses and barred from practicum. Current records include Texas RN nursing license, CPR Certification, required immunizations, health insurance, student data sheet at Graduate Nursing Student Data Sheet and reading of the Graduate Student Handbook confirmation form Graduate Statement of Understanding. Students are responsible for maintaining their compliance throughout the semester in which they are enrolled.

Required Documentation for Clinical Courses

Prior to the first clinical course, graduate students must have the following on file in the nursing office:

- Current CPR (professional level) certification showing completion of the cognitive and skills evaluations in accordance with the curriculum of the American Heart Association Basic Life Support Program.
- Evidence of meeting University Immunization Requirements
- Proof of current health insurance

Clinical sites may require background checks, drug screens, completion of online learning modules, or face-to-face orientation before allowing students to participate in clinical experiences. Fees associated with any of the clinical site requirements are the responsibility of the student.

CPR Certification

Students are required to have a current CPR (Basic Life Support) certification showing completion of the cognitive and skills evaluations in accordance with the curriculum of the American Heart Association Basic Life Support Program prior to beginning clinical course work. Active status must be maintained throughout the program. At the beginning of subsequent semesters, certification status will be reviewed. Only students with an active status will be permitted to progress.

Certification courses are offered by the Continuing Education Department of Angelo State University and by various community agencies. Students will need to make arrangements for enrollment and payment for required certification courses.

Health Insurance

All nursing students are required to have health insurance coverage during their entire tenure as a graduate student. Evidence of health insurance coverage must be submitted to the Department of Nursing prior to the beginning of the first clinical course. Students who do not provide proof of alternate coverage will be required to obtain health insurance coverage.

Immunizations

Since students may be exposed to infectious disease, the immunizations listed below are required for all nursing students and a complete immunization history is kept for each nursing student. Current evidence of compliance with immunization requirement is necessary.

- Hepatitis B (3 immunizations)
- Measles (immunization or titer)
- Mumps (immunization or titer)
rubella (immunization or titer)
- Tdap (must be current within 10 years)
- TB Test (Mantoux, Quantiferon, Chest X-Ray) Chickenpox (immunization or titer)
- Annual flu

Hepatitis B vaccine is required to be initiated prior to the student’s first clinical practicum. The three-part series must be completed according to an established immunization schedule which extends over a six-month period. Health facilities require students to have other immunizations or testing prior to their clinical experience (Texas Administrative Code Title 25, Part 1, Chapter 97, and Subchapter B Rule 97.64 Required Vaccinations for Student Enrolled in Health-related and Veterinary courses in Institutions of Higher Education).

Students may receive the required immunizations and/or titers from their local Health Department or from their own private physician. Students are responsible for any fee charged. Current evidence of meeting these requirements is necessary throughout enrollment in the Department of Nursing, and should be reported to the Graduate Nursing Office.

Professional Attire

Projecting a professional image is a responsibility of all students and faculty. Appearance reflects not only upon the individual, but also upon the Angelo State University Department of Nursing and the nursing profession. Individual agencies may determine further dress code requirements at their discretion. If a student appears at a clinical agency inappropriately attired, it will be the agency representative’s prerogative to ask the student to correct the situation. Prior to the student’s first clinical course, they will be provided an ID Badge to be worn during all clinical rotations throughout their graduate nursing program. The ID Badge should NOT be worn at the place of the student’s employment.

Student Occurrence

Any student involved in a clinical occurrence (e.g., accidental needle stick patient or student fall/injury, medication error, preceptor/staff/patient altercation, etc.) must notify the clinical faculty member immediately. The faculty member will provide information about appropriate action to be taken. Reporting of any incident must be done immediately for the safety of all persons involved.

Guideline for Universal Precautions

The Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta has developed CDC Isolation Guidelines as recommendations to all health care workers for preventing transmission of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and other blood borne diseases in the health care setting. Blood and certain body fluids of ALL patients are considered potentially infectious for HIV, Hepatitis B virus (HB.) and other blood borne pathogens. The guidelines are intended to prevent parenteral, mucous membrane, and non-intact skin exposure. The implementation of these control measure does not obviate the need for continued adherence to general infection-control principles and general hygiene measures.

Body Fluids to Which CDC Isolation Guidelines Apply

Universal precautions apply to blood and other body fluids containing visible blood. **Blood is the single most important source of HIV, HB, and other blood borne pathogens in the health care facility.** Universal precautions also apply to semen and vaginal secretions, tissues, and the following fluids: cerebrospinal, synovial, pleural, peritoneal, pericardial, and amniotic. Although universal precautions do not apply to saliva, feces, nasal secretions, sputum, sweat, tears, urine, or vomitus, the use of the gloves and/or
eye shield is recommended during any contact with these secretions and/or excretions. Using gloves and washing your hands after handling any of the above should minimize any risk.

**General Precautions**

1. Use universal precautions for all patients.
2. Use appropriate barrier precautions routinely when in contact with any blood or other body fluids of any patient.
3. Change gloves after each contact with patients, followed by hand washing after gloves are removed.
4. Wear mask and protective eyewear during any procedure that is likely to generate drops or sprays to prevent exposure of mucous membranes of mouth, nose, and eyes.
5. Wash hands and other skin surfaces immediately and thoroughly if contaminated with blood or other body fluids.
6. Refrain from all direct patient care if you have exudative lesions or weeping dermatitis until the condition resolves.
7. Use mouthpieces, resuscitator bags or other ventilation devices to reduce the need for mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
8. Always use gloves when changing wound dressings, starting IV’s or heparin locks or in any situation in which you may come in contact with blood or body fluids.
9. Take care to prevent injuries when using needles, scalpels or other sharp instruments.
10. Do not recap needles. Discard needle unit uncapped and unbroken into sharps containers after use.
11. Notify your instructor immediately if you receive an injury from a contaminated needle or other sharp instruments.
12. Fill out an incident report immediately following any accident or incident involving contamination from body fluids, needle stick injuries, or any potentially harmful occurrence to either you or your patient(s). It is your responsibility to adhere to the guidelines and procedures of the agency regarding completion of incident reports.

**Guideline for Standard Precautions**

Standard precautions must be observed by all health care workers in all health care settings. This includes nursing students.

As you care for patients and clients, you will be expected to comply with the precautions set forth by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the centers for disease control and prevention (CDC), and the health care agency where you are participating in clinical experiences.
Statement of Understanding

By signing and submitting the Student Handbook Graduate Statement of Understanding students agree to comply with all handbook guidelines, including patient confidentiality rules.