WVU Board of Governors

PROGRAM OF EXCELLENCE

PhD in Nursing
Program Handbook
2021-2022

West Virginia University
School of Nursing
Robert C. Byrd Health Sciences center
64 Medical Center Drive
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The West Virginia University Graduate Catalog is the official reference for all program information

Revised April 2021

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Welcome from the Program Director

Welcome to the 2021-2022 academic year. On behalf of all faculty and staff at the West Virginia University School of Nursing, I welcome you to the PhD Program. The PhD in Nursing Program was designated in 2020 to be a program of excellence by the West Virginia University Board of Governors. As PhD Program Director, my job is to ensure that your educational experience at WVU provides you with the skills and tools necessary to earn a top spot in the career of your choice.

The Doctor of Philosophy Degree is the highest academic degree and it is awarded by the University. The Mission of West Virginia University states that as land-grant institution, the faculty, staff, and students at West Virginia University commit to creating a diverse and inclusive culture that advances education, healthcare, and prosperity for all by providing access and opportunity; by advancing high impact research; and by leading transformation in West Virginia and the world through local, state, and global engagement.

West Virginia University has been awarded the significant R1 ranking as a Research University which indicates Highest Research Activity by the 2018 Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Faculty from the School of Nursing are excited to be involved in collaborations with colleagues from the Health Sciences Center, other West Virginia University Campuses, and other universities as they work to discover new nursing knowledge for the 21st Century. These faculty will be your teachers and mentors as you embark on your new adventure to become a nurse scientist and scholar

Your success is our top priority. This is an exciting time in your life as you embark on a research career. The School of Nursing administrators, faculty, and staff are excited to facilitate your achievements and will work to support you in every aspect of the program. We look forward to sharing a stimulating and productive experience with you.

It is important to read this handbook carefully. For your reference, it is electronically available at PhD in Nursing Student Handbook 2021-2022. All underlined phrases in the electronic document are clickable links that will take you to websites containing the corresponding resources and forms. Please contact me or Ms. Toothman with any questions.

Sincerely,

Laurie Theeke

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Overview of WVU School of Nursing

The [West Virginia University School of Nursing](#) offers innovative baccalaureate through doctoral educational programs. Students are prepared at the WVU School of Nursing for the roles of skilled practitioner, educator, and researcher in a rich scholarly environment. These roles are aimed at facilitating learning, providing health services, and generating new knowledge to directly benefit the residents of West Virginia and advance the discipline of nursing.

[WVU School of Nursing Research](#) focuses on improving health and reducing disparities among rural populations, in order to reach the overarching goal of improving the lives of West Virginians. It is consistent with the WVU Health Sciences Center strategic plan and the West Virginia Clinical and Translational Science Institute. The Office of Nursing Research at the WVU School of Nursing provides resources and support for the conduct and dissemination of research, including scholarly activities conducted by PhD students.

Vision, Mission, and Values of the School of Nursing

It is expected that the research conducted at the School of Nursing will be congruent with the [vision, mission, and values](#) of the WVU School of Nursing.

Vision
The West Virginia University School of Nursing envisions optimal health, enhanced quality of life, and excellent health care for the people of West Virginia and the global community.

Mission
The mission of the WVU School of Nursing is to lead in improving health in West Virginia and the broader society through excellence in student-centered educational programs, research and scholarship, the compassionate practice of nursing, and service to the public and the profession.

Values
At the West Virginia University School of Nursing, we are committed to the values of **integrity, excellence**, and **inclusiveness**. We want to create and foster a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect and inclusion. By embracing new ideas and broadening our perspectives, we will enhance our ability to address the diverse needs of the patients we serve. These values, together with vision, transparency and strategic leadership, enable us to create an organization in which teaching, learning, scholarship, service, and practice can flourish.

PhD Program Overview, Description, and Goals

The [PhD in Nursing Program](#) at WVU offers both part-time and full-time progression plans. The program is a hybrid program. Currently, Fall and Spring coursework is delivered online and the first two summers of courses are offered in a seminar style face to face format that requires a maximum of 6 days on campus for each course. Course times and days do vary throughout the program. After completing required coursework, students must complete a qualifying examination prior to advancing to dissertation phase. Once students defend a dissertation proposal, they advance to become doctoral candidates. Students then complete the research and dissertation phase, which culminates in a written and oral dissertation defense.

Program Description

The purpose of the PhD program is to educate nurse scholar-scientists for roles in research, teaching, and service. The program prepares graduates who will contribute to the body of nursing knowledge; educate the next generation; and assume collaborative leadership roles in shaping health policy, improving health, and reducing disparity.

Program Learning Outcomes

The expected learning outcomes of the program are that each graduate will be able to

1. Rigorously test, generate, and extend knowledge to inform nursing science, practice, and policy.
2. Contribute to the development of knowledge and interventions to address health disparity and promote or improve health.
3. Assume collaborative leadership roles in academia, healthcare organizations, research teams, and scholarly networks.
4. Demonstrate expertise within an area of study that incorporates nursing and transdisciplinary perspectives.

PhD Degree Requirements

The PhD program requires students to take **at a minimum**: 18 credits of core nursing core, 31 credits of research methods and mentorship courses, and a minimum of 6 credits of cognate courses, comprising a total of **55 credits** of post-master's coursework. The PhD coursework provides content in scholarly processes, nursing science, and an area of concentration that supports the student's chosen area of research. Students work with faculty advisors to determine any additional coursework and experiences that may be needed to support dissertation research.

Admissions Policies for the PhD in Nursing

The PhD Program takes applications on a rolling basis and processes them accordingly. The regular admission cycle begins in the fall semester. Class size and progression plans may be limited based on available faculty resources and space. Applicants should plan to submit an application and all official documents that accompany the application by June 30th of the year of the desired admission cohort.

Qualifications for admission to the PhD in Nursing Program

1. Submission of formal transcript of a nursing degree at the baccalaureate level or higher from a nationally accredited nursing program or equivalent.
2. Provide evidence of current license to practice nursing.
3. Official transcripts confirm an earned Master's degree in nursing from a regionally accredited college or university. A Master's degree in a health-related discipline will be considered.
4. Official transcripts reflects a grade of "B" or higher in graduate statistics and research methods courses.
5. Official transcripts indicate a cumulative GPA of 3.25 in Master's degree work.

Note: Any student who has been dismissed from the West Virginia University School of Nursing or any other nursing program will not be readmitted or considered for admission to the PhD program.

To be considered, applicants will be required to meet all WVU admission requirements in addition to program-specific admission criteria.

Application Process for the PhD Program

1. Application for Admission to Graduate Studies (available at: https://westvirginia.force.com/wvugrad/TX_SiteLogin?startURL=%2Fwvugrad%2FTargetX_Portal__PB)
2. Request an official transcript of records from each college or university attended.
   a. It is preferred that official transcripts be sent via an online, secure service such as eScrip-Safe, National Student Clearinghouse, or Parchment to graduateadmissions@mail.wvu.edu.
   b. Alternatively, sealed, untampered, physical official transcripts can be sent directly to WVU Graduate Admissions, P.O. Box 6510, Morgantown, WV 26506-6510.
   c. Applicants who completed prior education outside of the U.S. must have their transcripts evaluated by World Education Services (WES). Please request a "course-by-course" International Credential Advantage Package (ICAP).
3. Submit a current curriculum vitae or resume.

4. Provide an example of graduate work (if available).
5. Essay: Read about the [research](#) focus of our faculty. Select one or two faculty with whom you are interested in working based on their research focus and explain how your interest aligns with the faculty members' area of research, referring to their relevant publications. Essay should be submitted in APA format and cover the following areas: preparation for doctoral work (background), why do you want a PhD (how does a PhD fit in your career plan), personal/academic strengths and weaknesses, research area of interest, and current/long term goals.
6. Interview to determine congruence between the applicant's career goals and program objectives and between the applicants research interests and those of the faculty.
7. Applicants must also provide three letters of reference addressing the applicant's likelihood for success in graduate work.

Once you complete the application, you will receive an email confirmation. It is essential that you return to the site to track your documents and ensure that all documents have been submitted. Qualified applicants will be invited for an interview. An invitation for an interview does not guarantee admission. Once the WVU application has been completed, you must complete and submit the [Application Checklist](#), a tool designed to ensure you have submitted all required information for your application to be considered complete. In addition, you must complete all supplemental application materials as instructed and request official transcripts from all Colleges and Universities ever attended. Questions about admission to WVU graduate programs can be addressed to either of the following addresses:

WVU Office of Graduate Admissions and Recruitment
P.O. Box 6510
Morgantown, WV 26506-6510

or

WVU Office of Graduate Admissions and Recruitment
1 Waterfront Place
2nd Floor
Morgantown, WV 26505

Acceptance to the PhD Program
Acceptance decisions for the PhD Program are made by the Graduate Admissions Committee. The Graduate Admissions Committee meets on a regular periodic basis to review applications within 30 days of receipt of the completed application. Candidates for admission are evaluated on the entire admission packet including references and interview scores. The WVU School of Nursing accepts up to 10 new PhD students annually and acceptance is dependent upon space available in the program with the most qualified applicants being accepted

Students admitted to the program will receive an acceptance letter within 45 days of receipt of the completed application. The acceptance letter will provide information regarding orientation, course registration, and qualifications for tuition waivers.

Progression and Graduation Standards

Preliminary Activities to Prepare for Doctoral Study
Prior to the first semester in the program, all accepted and registered PhD students will complete the following:

Orientation
There is a mandatory online orientation program for doctoral students at the School of Nursing. Information will be emailed to you at your WVU mix email address about the online orientation session by August 10 of the year you are enrolling.

CITI Training in Human Subjects Research
It is the student's responsibility to complete [Citiprogram Training](#) and provide the certificate of completion for the basic course for responsible conduct of research to the PhD Program Director and program specialist prior to the start of classes. All PhD students are required to keep the CITI training certifications current for the duration of the program. Based on the type of research that the student engages in with faculty, additional Citi program training courses may be required for participation.

Individualized Plan of Study
PhD students will establish a [Plan of Study](#) based on the WVU Health Sciences Center Plan of Study Guidelines. The individualized study plan [fillable pdf form](#) will be used to enhance student learning and facilitate the student developing expertise in a research topic of interest. Students will refine research interests throughout the program by attending to coursework, participation in online and/or in person journal clubs, attendance at west Virginia university events (virtually and/or in person), attendance at scholarly events at other universities, regular interaction with research faculty and peers, and the guidance of the PhD Program Director.

Required Coursework for Degree Completion

All students in the PhD Program will take required nursing courses as stated in Table 1 *unless* they have worked with the Program Director and Program specialist to transfer in previously accomplished equivalent coursework. Credits for all courses in the list of required courses will be accounted for in each student's individualized plan of study and in DegreeWorks at the WVU Office of the University Registrar.

Table 1. PhD Program of Study	
Nursing Core	Credits
NSG 727: Contemporary Nursing Science	3
NSG 728: Nursing Science Theory/Philosophy	4
NSG 732: Seminar in Nursing Scholarship	2
NSG 735: Principles: Nursing Education	3
NSG 736: Advanced Health Policy and Ethics	3
NSG 737: Leadership	3
Research Core	
NSG 724: Health Research Statistics 1	3
NSG 725: Health Research Statistics 2	3
NSG 729: Quantitative Research Methods	3
NSG 731: Qualitative Research Methods	3
NSG 733: Research Grant Development	2
NSG 734: Use of Data	3
NSG 781: Research Mentorship	3
NSG 783: Dissertation Seminar	1
NSG 795: Independent Study	1
NSG 797: Dissertation Research	9
Cognates*	6
Total Credits	55

*Cognates must include one advanced methodology course (3 credits) and at least one of two courses (3 credits) taken outside the School of Nursing.

Recommended Part-Time Progression Plan for PhD in Nursing Students

	Fall		Spring		Summer	
Year 1	NSG 724 Health Research Statistics 1	3	NSG 725 Health Research Statistics 2	3	NSG 728 Nursing Science Theory/Philosophy	4
	NSG 735 Principles: Nursing Education	3	NSG 732 Seminar in Nursing Scholarship	2	NSG 729 Quantitative Research Methods	3
	Total Credits	6	Total Credits	5	Total Credits	7
Year 2	NSG 727 Contemporary Nursing Science	3	NSG 737 Leadership	3	NSG 733 Research Grant Development	2
	NSG 731 Qualitative Research Methods	3	NSG 734 Use of Data	3	NSG 736 Advanced Health Policy and Ethics	3
			NSG 781 Research Mentorship*	1-3	NSG 781 Research Mentorship*	1-3
	Total Credits	6	Total Credits	7-9	Total Credits	6-9
Year 3	NSG 795 Independent Study (Qualifying Exam)	1	NSG 783 Dissertation Seminar	1	NSG 797***	1-3
	Cognate**	3	NSG 797***	1-3		
			Cognate**	3		
	Total Credits	1-4	Total Credits	2-7	Total Credits	1-3
Year 4	NSG 797***	1-3	NSG 797***	1-3	NSG 797***	1-3
	Total Credits	1-3	Total Credits	1-3	Total Credits	1-3
Year 5	NSG 797***	1-3	NSG 797***	1-3	NSG 797***	1-3
	Total Credits	1-3	Total Credits	1-3	Total Credits	1-3

* Total number of Research Mentorship credits needed = 3

** Cognates = two courses (6 credits); planned with the approval of student's advisor, that individually and collectively enhance understanding of the student's area of research. One course must be an advanced methodology course (quantitative or qualitative, in support of the dissertation) and at least one of the 2 courses must be taken outside the School of Nursing.

Recommended Full-Time Progression Plan for PhD in Nursing Students

	Fall		Spring		Summer	
Year 1	NSG 724 Health Research Statistics 1 NSG 727 Contemporary Nursing Science NSG 735 Principles: Nursing Education	3 3 3	NSG 725 Health Research Statistics 2 NSG 732 Seminar in Nursing Scholarship NSG 737 Leadership NSG 781 Research Mentorship*	3 2 3 1	NSG 728 Nursing Science Theory/Philosophy NSG 729 Quantitative Research Methods	4 3
	Total Credits	**9**	**Total Credits**	**9**	**Total Credits**	**7**
Year 2	NSG 731 Qualitative Research Methods NSG 781 Research Mentorship* Cognate**	3 3 3	NSG 733 Research Grant Development NSG 734 Use of Data NSG 736 Advanced Health Policy and Ethics NSG 795 Independent Study	2 3 3 1	NSG 795 Independent Study (Qualifying Exam) NSG 783 Dissertation Seminar Cognate**	1 1 3
	Total Credits	**9**	**Total Credits**	**9**	**Total Credits**	**5**
Year 3	NSG 797***	1-3	NSG 797***	1-3	NSG 797***	1-3
	Total Credits	**1-3**	**Total Credits**	**1-3**	**Total Credits**	**1-3**

724. **Health Research Statistics 1**. 3 Hrs. (Fall only). This course provides development of statistical knowledge and skills needed for quantitative health research using SPSS. Topics include descriptive statistics, probability, hypothesis testing, analysis of variance, chi-square testing, linear regression, and logistic regression.

725. **Health Research Statistics 2**. 3 Hrs. (Spring only). This course continues the development of statistical knowledge and skills needed for quantitative health research using SPSS, including nonparametric testing, advanced regression topics and diagnostics, ANCOVA, SPSS syntax, classification, and factor, survival, and power analyses.

727. **Contemporary Nursing Science**. 3 Hrs. (Fall only). Focus is on an analysis of the state of the science for a phenomenon for study. Emphasis is placed on the application of the particular phenomenon to a population of interest.

728. **Nursing Science Theory/Philosophy**. 4 Hrs. (Summer only). This course builds on the philosophical basis of nursing. Discovery and verification of scientific knowledge are addressed by focusing on theory development. Methodologies include concept analysis and evaluation of middle range theories of nursing and related sciences.

729. **Quantitative Research Methods**. 3 Hrs. (PR: NSG 724 and NSG 725, Summer only). Quantitative methods and measurement relevant to conducting research in nursing are studied.

731. **Qualitative Research Methods**. 3 Hrs. (PR: NSG 728, Fall only). An exploration of the philosophical foundations and methods of qualitative inquiry. Research designs, ethical issues, rigor, integrity, data collection, interpretation, and representation are studied.

732. **Seminar in Nursing Scholarship**. 2 Hrs. (PR: Admission to the PhD Program, Spring only). This course socializes students to clinical scholarship in preparation for the conduct of independent research and for future roles as nurse scholars and nurse scientists.

733. **Research Grant Development**. 2 Hrs. (PR: NSG 781, Summer only) Analysis of the grant-writing process in the context of current federal application guidelines.

734. **Use of Data**. 3 Hrs. (PR: NSG 724, NSG 725, NSG 729, Spring only). This course focuses on the use of the following data bases: clinical, financial, health services, nursing, local, state and national. The uses of existing data in clinical and policy decisions and in research will be explored.

735. **Principles: Nursing Education**. 3 Hrs. (Fall only). This course examines the research base of educational strategies in nursing education in classroom and clinical settings. The course also examines external determinants on nursing curriculum, accreditation issues, and evaluation of nursing programs.

736. **Advanced Health Policy and Ethics**. 3 Hrs. (PR: NSG 732, Summer only). Examination of ethical issues of research and current health policy.

737. **Leadership.** 3 Hrs. (PR: NSG 732, Spring only) Through exploration of contemporary leadership paradigms, this course enables the student to explore leadership principles applicable to academic and research settings.

781. **Research Mentorship**. 1-3 Hrs. In this guided practicum, the student's research skills are developed and cultivated through participation in the mentorship process with an experienced researcher (the chairperson or his/her designee)

783. **Dissertation Seminar**. 1 Hr. (PR: All core courses, one cognate, and 1 credit of NSG 795 for Qualifying Examination). This seminar provides an opportunity for discussion of the dissertation process. Students will participate in proposal presentation and critique.

795. **Independent Study**. 1 -9 Hrs. Faculty supervised study of topics not available through regular course offerings.

797. **Research**. 1-9 Hrs. Research activities leading to thesis, problem report, research paper, or equivalent scholarly project, or a dissertation.

Prerequisites

All prerequisites from preceding semesters must be completed prior to registration for new courses *unless* a student has obtained permission from the PhD Program Director and the course instructor.

Timeliness of Course Completions

Courses are only applicable for graduation credit if they have been taken within the last eight years.

Syllabi for NSG 781, NSG 795, and NSG 797

A detailed syllabus and specific course learning outcomes will be developed each time a research mentorship (NSG 781), independent study course (NSG 795), and/or a research course (NSG 797) is taken with the chair or faculty member. Before the course is released for enrollment, the syllabus must be signed by both the chair and student and a copy provided to the PhD Program Director and the graduate program specialist.

Application of Transfer of Graduate Credit to West Virginia University

Graduate courses may be transferred to the WVU School of Nursing from accredited institutions. In consultation with the academic advisor, the PhD Program Director will evaluate all requests to transfer a graduate course and will make the final determination about whether the course meets the requirements of the PhD program. A maximum of 12 transfer credits may be counted toward the degree. Cognate courses not taken at WVU must be taken at accredited institutions and must be graduate level. The student must obtain the signature of the PhD Program Director on the [Application for the Graduate Credit Transfer](#) Form *prior to* registering for the cognate. Upon completion of the course, the student is responsible for having an official transcript sent to the Office of Admissions and Records.

Grade Information

WVU School of Nursing Grading Scale
The grading scale for nursing as posted in each course syllabus is:
    A = 93-100, B = 85-92, C = 77-84, F = 76 and below.

New grading policies will be implemented Fall 2022 regarding bonus points and rounding. No bonus points will be given in nursing courses, and rounding will occur at the 0.5 level on final grades only. Specific policy details will be published in the Fall 2022 Student Handbook.

Grade Criteria for Progression
Achieve an overall academic GPA of 3.0 in all course work. The following guidelines apply to grades in the PhD program:

o   Grades of C. Students may carry forward one C grade in any course. However, a second C will result in dismissal from the program.

o   *Grades of F.* Students with a grade of F in any course will be dismissed from the program.

o   *Withdrawals*. Students can only have one "W" (class withdraw) while in the PhD program.

o   *Unsatisfactory Grade.* If students earn an unsatisfactory or "U" in NSG 797 Research, the chair and student must devise a plan to rectify deficiencies in the next semester. If another "U" is received, the student will be dismissed from the program.

o   *Incomplete Grades.* The PhD program follows the West Virginia University Policy for grades of Incomplete (I). The policy states that a grade of I (Incomplete) is a temporary grade assignment used when unforeseen, non-academic circumstances arise that prohibit students from completing the last course assignments or examinations at the end of the semester. The grade of Incomplete is typically assigned because of an excused absence from the final examination, or because assignments are unavoidably incomplete, as determined by the instructor. Generally, the student will have been active in the course up until the last day of the 13th week of classes and earned at least a D- to be eligible to request an incomplete.

- An instructor may not assign a grade of I without the student's agreement and an [Incomplete Contract](#). If a student has not requested an Incomplete, or the request for an incomplete grade has been denied, the instructor should assign the grade earned in the course.

- Within the Incomplete Contract, the instructor is required to indicate a grade earned for the course assuming no additional work will be completed. Should the signed contract not be fulfilled, the instructor must either submit a grade of F or the grade indicated in the contract.

- If the student is unable to complete the work during the following term for non-academic reasons, the term of the contract may be extended with permission of the Dean. Additionally, the term of the contract can be extended if the instructor is not available for a portion of the course, for some legitimate reason, and the course cannot be completed within the original time frame.

- An Incomplete grade not changed by the end of the next regular term, (fall and spring semesters) will be replaced with a grade of IF, and the class must be retaken to satisfy degree requirements as necessary. Under legitimate, extraordinary circumstances, with supporting documentation and the approval of the Dean, an instructor can submit a grade change for an IF within five years of when the course was taken.

- All grades of I must either be resolved or replaced with an IF in order to graduate from West Virginia University.

Leave of Absence and Withdrawal

Leave of Absence and Withdrawal Policies

Withdrawal Policy
Students must be continuously enrolled in School of Nursing programs in order to maintain active status. Summer term enrollment is only required if the student's program of study/progression plan is dependent on it for an on-time graduation. A withdrawal is defined as withdrawing from the program, withdrawing from all required courses in a semester, or failing to enroll in any given semester of the progression plan (see summer exception above).
Students who withdraw must follow up with the advisor, who will gather information about the reason for leaving and discuss associated policies. Students who wish to return must follow the LOA policy in order to be eligible for continuation in the program. Students who do not follow this process will not be eligible for continuation or readmission at a later date.

LOA Policy
Students may request a leave of absence (LOA) for extenuating circumstances, such as family emergencies, military duty, parental leave, or significant changes in health status. The student is required to submit the rationale and the time period for the LOA request in writing to the program director. Additional documentation may be required to clarify the circumstances for the request. If approved by the program director and Associate Dean of Academics, the student and advisor will complete the LOA form found at: WVU Registrar LOA Form (undergraduate level) or HSC Graduate LOA Form (graduate level). The student will then be required to withdraw from all nursing courses in the current semester, if applicable.
Students are encouraged to evaluate the WVU Withdrawal Policies, the financial implications of the decision, the effects of the LOA on program progression, and International Student Policies as applicable.
An LOA is not equivalent to a withdrawal or a dismissal, and there are specific limitations.

Students are not permitted to have more than one LOA, and each LOA is limited to one semester. If unforeseen circumstances prevent the student's return to a program following a one-semester LOA, the student may request a one-semester extension. Additional LOAs and extensions are only granted in extreme circumstances.

If a student is on an approved LOA, it is the student's responsibility to notify the advisor to schedule classes for the semester following the LOA and to seek a review of the revised progression plan. If the LOA was due to a significant change in health status, the student may be required to provide documentation from a healthcare provider that he or she is able to return to the nursing program and perform all aspects of the student role.

If a student does not return to the program during the contracted semester, it will be considered a withdrawal, and the student will not be eligible for readmission. Exceptions will be granted if required courses are not offered the semester in which the student is expected to return. Retrospective LOA requests will not be accepted.

Additional Expectations for Progression

Student Participation in Online Courses
Students in online courses have the professional responsibility to devote their full attention to the class while it is in session, just as they would in a traditional classroom setting. Students may not attend an online class session while responsible for patient care in the workplace. If a student is permitted by an employer to participate in an online course during working hours, he or she must do so away from the clinical setting and only after being completely relieved of patient responsibilities. Students will not be permitted to make up course work or testing that is missed if called back to the workplace.

Residency Requirements for PhD Education at WVU
The WVU School of Nursing adheres to the residency and graduation requirements of the university. West Virginia University has a residency policy for students in doctoral education. Meeting the requirements outlined in this policy is required for graduation. The WVU Residency Policy for Doctoral Students states: Doctoral education involves many learning experiences that take place outside the formal classroom setting. These involve observing and participating in activities conducted by the graduate faculty, using departmental and University libraries, attending lectures presented by visiting scholars, informally debating other students, and similar activities. To ensure that graduate students experience this kind of informal learning, doctoral programs at WVU generally require at least two semesters in residence on campus. *However, an individual student or graduate committee may propose an alternative plan by which the student can gain equivalent educational experience.* This plan must be submitted in writing, approved by the college or school dean or designee, and placed in the student's program file. The school of Nursing PhD program requires that each student submit a written plan for meeting the university residency requirements to both the Program Director and the Program Specialist. This plan must be related to the student's dissertation focus, cannot be a product of a previous course/funding program/grant. Failure to meet the university residency requirements can result in delayed graduation until these requirements are met or dismissal from the PhD program if requirements are not met within the time limits of the University for Enrollment in the program.

Expectations for Advisor Meetings
Students are expected to meet with his or her advisor at least once and preferably twice annually to review and submit documentation of progression and/or evaluation.

Selection of a Dissertation Chair
The Dissertation Chair serves as a member of the Qualifying Examination Committee and therefore, must be chosen prior to the qualifying examination. During the second semester of the second year, the student and PhD Program Director work together to identify a dissertation chair, who then assumes the role of academic advisor. To be a dissertation chair, a faculty member must be a Regular member of the Graduate Faculty. A current List of WVU Graduate Faculty is maintained and should be reviewed for member status prior to selection of dissertation chair and committee members.

Qualifying Examination Information

Qualifying Exam Description and Requirements for Progression
Successfully complete the QE prior is required to beginning the dissertation. The QE may be repeated one time. *All elements of the QE, both written and oral, must be successfully completed no later than the first semester of the fifth year.* If students pass the 5 year limit without successfully completed the QE, they will be removed from the PhD program and their status will be changed to non-degree at the university level.

Eligibility for and Completion of Qualifying Examination
The Qualifying Exam (QE) allows students to demonstrate the ability to synthesize knowledge gained in coursework in order to be able to progress to dissertation. The QE is comprised of two parts, written and oral. The student is *eligible* to take the Qualifying Exam (QE) when two conditions are met. First, all courses, except **one** cognate and NSG 781 Research Mentorship, must be completed. Second, the student must have submitted a first-authored manuscript that is relevant to the student's focused area of research study to a peer-reviewed journal for publication. Once the student has met these criteria for eligibility, the student must use the [Request for Qualifying Exam to](request) to take the qualifying examination. This form should be submitted the prior to the last day of the semester before the student is requesting to take the examination.

Qualifying Examination Committee Structure
The PhD Program Director will appoint a three-member Qualifying Examination Committee for each student and designate the committee chair. One member of this committee will be the student's dissertation committee chair but that member cannot be the QE Committee chair. The student's QE committee chair will apprise the student of the QE expectations and evaluation criteria. During the semester in which the QE will be taken, the student must register for one credit of NSG 795 Independent Study with the QE Committee chair. A three-week period during this semester (weeks 8 –10) is designated for the written and oral components of the exam.

Written Component of the QE
The written component is the first part of the QE. The student writes a paper in response to questions provided by the QE Committee Chair. The written QE document provides evidence of the student's breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding gained during the program. It is expected that the paper be prepared in American Psychological Association (APA) format and be no more than 15 pages, double spaced. The page limit will be strictly adhered to and only required documents are to be posted as appendices.

Each QE committee member will review the paper and score the written exam separately. Within 1 week of receipt of the paper, the committee will meet to discuss the outcome. If the written examination scores meet the requirement to proceed to the oral examination then the student is notified and If the written examination scores do not meet requirements, the student will be immediately be notified by the QE Committee Chair and a time will be scheduled to meet with his/her dissertation chair and PhD Program Director to identify the next course of action. *The student may repeat the written QE once within one year of the initial date of the QE.* The student cannot progress to the oral exam until the written QE is successfully completed.

Oral Component of the QE
The oral component of the QE requires that all QE Committee members and the student are physically present in the same location for the face-to-face examination. In rare circumstances, with the prior approval of the PhD Program Director, and at most, one committee member may attend by telephone. For the oral exam, members of the QE Committee will develop targeted questions to address knowledge expressed in the paper that need to be clarified, amplified, and/or verified in the oral examination.

During the oral examination, the QE Committee members independently score responses to the predetermined questions and may ask additional questions as necessary. The oral examination is limited to 60 minutes. The committee meets immediately following the oral component, and the results of the QE are communicated immediately to the student. If a student does not pass the oral exam, he/she will be be instructed to meet with his/her dissertation chair and PhD Program Director to identify the next course of action. Students who passed the written examination but not the oral examination *may retake the oral exam within 6 months of the date of the original oral exam.*

Scoring of the Doctoral Qualifying Examination
When the QE is finished, the QE Committee Chair obtains signatures from the QE committee members on the [Doctoral Qualifying Preliminary Examination Form](). The completed form must be submitted to the PhD Program Director for submission to the Health Sciences Office of Research and Graduate Education.

Schedule for the Doctoral Qualifying Examination
The schedule for the QE is as follows:

Week 1   QE Committee chair sets a date for the oral examination during Week 10.

Week 8   Student receives by email from the QE Committee Chair the questions for the written component of the examination.

Week 9   Student electronically submits a paper with responses to the questions on the written component of the examination to the chair of the QE Committee by 9 a.m. on Monday. The QE Committee meets within that week to discuss the outcomes of the paper and to identify questions for the oral exam. The student will be notified by the QE Committee Chair if he/she has passed the written portion of the QE immediately following this meeting.

Week 10   On the date specified in Week 1 and if the student successfully passes the written QE, the QE Committee meets with the student for an oral examination. The student is informed of the oral examination results immediately following that meeting.

Week 11   When the student passes each part of the QE, he or she meets with his or her dissertation chair within 5 working days of the oral examination to discuss his/her next steps in the program. If the student fails either part of the QE exam, he or she meets with his or her advisor and the PhD Program Director within in one week of notification of failure to make an appropriate action plan.

Dissertation Research

Selection of Dissertation Committee

Once the Qualifying Examination is passed, the student works with the dissertation chair to establish a dissertation committee that meets the criteria established by the WVU Health Sciences Center Office of Research and Graduate Education and complete the Dissertation Committee Approval Form

The committee must be composed of a minimum of four members but may include five members. Three or more members must be regular members of graduate faculty at West Virginia University. The dissertation chair and a majority of members must be from Nursing. One member must be from a graduate program in a discipline that is different from Nursing. In addition, Plan of Study must be completed. Finally, Memorandum of Understanding of Dissertation Process must be completed. All signed forms must be submitted to the PhD Program Director for student files and submission to the Health Science Office of Research and Graduate Education.

Responsibilities of Dissertation Committee Members

All members of the dissertation committee, to include the student, the chair, and the committee members have specific responsibilities. Based on the PhD Curriculum Committee approved MOU of Dissertation Process Responsibilities Form, each member is expected to do the following:

Student:
1. Be prepared and knowledgeable in a specific area of interest.
2. Formally select a dissertation chair by end of 2nd year, spring semester.
3. Identify committee members by 3rd year, spring semester.
4. Define and carry out the research protocol approved by dissertation committee.
5. Actively request feedback/ask questions from the chair and committee members before, during, and after completion of research and as the thesis is written.
6. Respond to and act on feedback from the chair and committee within established time limits.
7. Apply and maintain ethical standards in the conduct of research and in the completion of the dissertation.
8. Develop research protocol in Kuali coeus system with chair oversight.
9. Disseminate knowledge/expertise/research via podium/poster presentations and articles in peer-reviewed journals.

Chair:
1. Determine feasibility of the student's research proposal/dissertation plan.
2. With student assistance, identify potential committee members. It is the student's responsibility to meet with potential members and to secure their involvement.
3. Clearly define, in writing, to the student and committee members, expectations for the protocol defense, IRB submission, conduct of research, and writing of the thesis.

4. Maintain documentation of the student's plan of study, to include cognates via NSG 795 syllabi (as needed) and completion of research via NSG 797 syllabi each semester.
5. Confirm no conflicts of interest in research with committee/chair concerning student's area of study and department/research responsibilities.
6. Be available to the student by establishing a time schedule that will include committee meetings for each semester the student is engaged in dissertation related work.
7. Chair all meetings of the dissertation committee and thesis defense.
8. Review/approve/submit the student's research protocol to the IRB.
9. Facilitate networking, funding, and publishing/presentation opportunities for the student to promote development of their expertise in their area of study.
10. Follow Guidelines for Authorship as noted on page 34. .
11. Provide constructive feedback to the student and committee members as needed.
12. Complete all paperwork within deadlines as required by the graduate office. Review in PhD handbook under "Dissertation Committee Chair Responsibilities" what specific program forms need to be completed and when they are due.
13. Guide the student in the research/dissertation writing process.
14. Review proposal defense and thesis prior to sending out to committee members.
15. With distribution of the dissertation drafts to the committee, include the Dissertation Committee Defense Rubric to document readiness for oral defense.
16. Oversee dissertation revisions as requested by the committee
17. Resolve faculty conflict without involving the student in a timely manner so as not to impede the student's research progression.
18. If a committee member needs to be replaced, the chair will notify the PhD Program Director as soon as possible. It is the chair and students responsibility to identify a replacement and notify the PhD director the name of replacement with a confirmatory email from the new member. The "Change of PhD Committee Membership" form will be completed by the PhD Program Director at that time.

Committee Member:
1. Determine feasibility of the topic/proposal/dissertation plan.
2. Critically read/comment on the student's proposal defense and thesis.
3. Provide constructive feedback to the student and chair within deadlines specified by the chair.
4. Identify learning opportunities for the student to assist them in developing expertise in their research area.
5. Be available and respond to the student in person, by email, or by phone throughout the dissertation process.
6. Independently evaluate student performance in the final thesis defense. Utilize the

dissertation committee defense form distributed by the chair to document thesis review/oral defense readiness/oral defense questions.
7. Follow SON Research Authorship Policy.
8. Work directly with chair to resolve any conflicts in a timely manner, without involving the student.
9. Notify the chair of need to be replaced in a timely manner and assist in identifying the new member.
10. Sign all documents related to the doctoral program as required by HSC graduate office/PhD Program Director/Committee Chair.

Change of Dissertation Committee Members
Should it be necessary to change a member of the dissertation committee, the student must complete the Change of Thesis/Dissertation Committee Membership form. Requirements for faculty substitutions are stipulated that the faculty substitute must be at the same graduate faculty status or higher, and in the same expertise; or in the case of replacing the member from outside of the program, the new member must also be from outside the program.
The change of membership form must be signed by the dissertation chair, the PhD program Director, and a representative from the WVU Health Sciences Office of Research and Graduate Education.

Dissertation Proposal Defense and Advancement to Candidacy
It is a requirement of the university that dissertation defenses be announced on the university calendar. After formation of the dissertation committee, the student, with the assistance of the chair and committee members, writes and orally defends a dissertation proposal. Once the defense is completed, the dissertation chair obtains signatures from the dissertation committee on the Doctoral Candidacy Examination Form. This form is then submitted to the PhD Program Director and subsequently submitted to the Health Sciences Office of Research and Graduate Education.

The dissertation proposal defense is a 20-minute presentation of the student's proposed research followed by questions of clarification from the dissertation committee. In consultation with the dissertation committee, the student writes a dissertation proposal that adheres to APA format and contains the following components:
1. Describes a problem of significance to nursing and health care.
2. Clearly delineates measurable study aims.
3. Clearly states feasible research questions and/or hypotheses.
4. Addresses the suitability of a conceptual framework to the problem of significance, the study aims, and approach.
5. Synthesizes relevant literature or state of the science supporting the study, including evaluation of the level of existing knowledge, identification of gaps, and rationale for the study.
6. Selects a research design that fits the proposed research aims and hypotheses.
7. Specifies the type of design, the advantages and limitations of the design, rationale for choice of design, and sampling methods appropriate to the design.

8. Theoretically and operationally defines all study variables.
9. Clearly articulates the procedures for data collection, including rationale, strengths, limitations, and logical progression.
10. Specifically describes an appropriate analysis plan.
11. Details the ethical considerations related to study implementation.
12. Describes the feasibility of the proposed research, provides a study timeline, and documents written approval from the study site.
13. Describes expected outcomes, including future clinical, educational, research, administrative, and policy implications (as appropriate).

The process of developing/reviewing the dissertation proposal by the dissertation committee is as follows:

- ▢ Under the guidance of the dissertation chair and members of the dissertation committee, the student develops the written proposal. Many drafts are often required until a workable proposal is developed.
- ▢ At least 3 weeks prior to the desired proposal defense date, the student sends the written proposal to all dissertation committee members for review. The dissertation committee is encouraged to use the Dissertation Committee Defense Worksheet to document areas needing improvement and to provide written feedback to the student.
- ▢ With the assistance of the PhD Program Director, the dissertation committee chair coordinates a time for the oral dissertation proposal defense and communicates it to the student and committee members.
- ▢ All dissertation committee members are to be present for the proposal defense. One committee member (but not the chair) may attend by audio or videoconference, but should be available electronically during the entire time of the proposal defense.
- ▢ Immediately following the proposal defense, the committee meets privately to determine whether the student has passed the proposal defense and then immediately informs the student.
- ▢ If the student passes the proposal defense with no revisions required or if the student fails the exam, the dissertation chair obtains signatures from the dissertation committee on the Doctoral Candidacy Examination Form on the date of the proposal defense and submits it to the PhD Program Director.
- ▢ If the student passes the proposal defense but the proposal requires revisions, the dissertation committee has two options: 1) Sign the Doctoral Candidacy Examination Form that day and authorize the dissertation committee chair to oversee the revisions, or 2) Wait to sign the form and instruct the student to revise the written proposal and send the revised proposal to the entire committee for approval. Each committee member signs the Doctoral Candidacy Examination Form after individually approving the revisions.
- ▢ Written notification of the completion of required revisions or, in the case of revisions requiring more than 30 days to complete, an action plan for the completion of the revisions must be provided to the PhD Program Director by the dissertation committee chair within 30 days of the proposal defense date.

Approval by the IRB for Dissertation Research

To be able to conduct the research outlined in the defended proposal, the dissertation chair (PI) and the student (Co-I) must work together to write/submit a protocol to the WVU Institutional Review Board (IRB) via the WVU Kuali Coeus dashboard system (kc.wvu.edu). *It is the responsibility of the dissertation chair to be listed as principal investigator on the IRB protocol for a student dissertation and the dissertation chair must review the protocol prior to IRB submission.*

In some cases, the student may be required to obtain additional written approval from specific clinical/research sites to be able to conduct human subject research. Once an IRB approval letter to conduct research is obtained, the student can begin the dissertation research. While doing the research, the student must be enrolled in NSG 797, Research.

Under the guidance of the dissertation committee, the student carries out the research and writes the dissertation. The Dissertation committee must evaluate students annually while they are engaged in dissertation research. One meeting per year is mandatory. Dissertation committee chairs must complete the [Dissertation Committee Evaluation Form](#) . This document must be signed by the student and program director. The annual evaluation is then submitted to the WVU Health Sciences Center Office of Research and Graduate Education.

Distribution of the dissertation to the dissertation committee is scheduled by the dissertation chair, but must be at least one month prior to the oral dissertation defense. Students are encouraged to meet with committee members to discuss comments, questions, and recommended revisions regarding the final version of the dissertation before the oral dissertation defense.

Requirements for Dissertation Defense

1. Student must be within five years of advancing to candidacy.
2. Student must maintain active student enrollment status
3. Student must have completed all courses in the Study Plan
4. Student must have met the requirements for residency
5. Student must have produced one first-authored, peer-reviewed journal publication (published or in press) that is directly related to the student's area of research.
6. Have the dissertation defense date finalized three weeks prior to the defense to allow processing of paperwork through the WVU HSC Office of Research and Graduate Education
7. Provide the following information three weeks prior to the defense date; student full name including credentials, dissertation title, dissertation abstract, and list of committee members to the PhD Program Specialist for the production of the dissertation defense announcement flyer.
8. Complete the shuttle sheet request form three weeks prior to the defense date and submit the form to the PhD Program Specialist. [Shuttle Sheet Request Form](#). All committee members must sign the shuttle sheet and it must be submitted to the PhD Program Director.
9. Three weeks prior to the defense, the dissertation chair/committee must have an approved dissertation draft

Dissertation Defense, Submission, and Graduation

The oral dissertation defense is a public event to which the scholarly community is invited. All dissertation committee members are to be present for the oral dissertation defense. One committee member (but not the chair) may attend by audio or videoconference, but should be available electronically during the entire time of the defense. During the dissertation defense, the student presents the research to the dissertation committee and scholarly community and responds to questions. The defense is limited to the PhD candidate's research subject and relevant areas and should not exceed two hours.

To assist the review of the dissertation by committee members, they are encouraged to use [Dissertation Committee Defense Worksheet](#).

Once the form is completed, it should be returned to the chair so he/she can communicate to the student what needs to be addressed. Immediately after the defense, the candidate and the public are excused from the room, and the dissertation committee discusses whether the student has passed the dissertation defense. After the discussion, a vote is taken. To be recommended for the award of the doctoral degree, candidates must receive a vote with no more than one dissenting member of the total dissertation committee. The committee then informs the candidate of the result.

Electronic Submission of Dissertation

After successful completion of the dissertation defense, the student must complete [Electronic Submission of Dissertation](#) to the West Virginia University Libraries. The ETD submission deadline each semester is strictly enforced by the WVU Office of Graduate Education. The dissertation chair is responsible for ensuring the inclusion of appropriate modifications and required revisions, if any, in the final version of the dissertation. The student should schedule the defense at least one month prior to the deadline.

Applying for Graduation

The student must complete the graduate application form located at [Application for Graduation](#) at the beginning of the semester in which he or she intends to defend the dissertation.

There is a [Checklist of Graduation Requirement for WVU Health Sciences Center](#) PhD students that can be used.

Advising and Course Registration

Academic Advising

The PhD Program Director will serve as academic faculty advisor to all new students for their first year and/or until a dissertation chair is identified. The program specialist works with the program director as advisor to facilitate maintenance of student's academic records, and compliance with health sciences center graduate office and West Virginia university regulations for progression and graduation. The program director will complete yearly evaluations of student progression.

Registering for Courses

To maintain active status, graduate students must register every term during which coursework is required in the progression plan (summer, fall, and spring).

Students receiving financial aid from the University or other agencies, international students with certain types of visas, and students who wish to use various University services and facilities may have specific registration requirements. These students are responsible for obtaining information about such requirements from the appropriate offices.

Students receiving financial aid from the University or other agencies, international students with certain types of visas, and students who wish to use various University services and facilities may have specific registration requirements. These students are responsible for obtaining information about such requirements from the appropriate offices. The PhD program maintains a SOLE site that shares information about scholarship and research funding opportunities for PhD students.

Additional Program and University Expectations

HIPAA Requirements

All students are required to provide verification of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) training prior to collecting data in any clinical site or health record system. If you have not had HIPAA training, you must complete the training prior to the first week of nursing classes (training is offered to students in the HSC programs free of cost; information on how to access the course will be provided in the admission letter). All students enrolled in the WVU SON Graduate Program are required to provide verification or complete training on HIPAA to the Program Specialist.

Student Health Insurance and Responsibility for Medical Expenses

Students must have health insurance while they are enrolled in the WVU SON. Health insurance

is available through the Student Health for students who are enrolled in 6 or more credits. Students who have private health insurance can apply for a waiver of insurance coverage through WVU. The insurance waiver application to show proof of insurance and opt-out of the WVU sponsored health insurance plan may be required.

Social Media

Students are personally responsible for the content they publish on blogs, wikis, social networks, forum boards, or any other form of user-generated media. Failure to maintain these responsibilities may result in dismissal from the program and infringements may be reportable to the State Board of Nursing, and may result in disciplinary action from the WVU SON.

Remember that all content contributed on all platforms becomes immediately searchable and can be immediately shared. This content immediately leaves the contributing individual's control forever and may be traced back to the individual after long periods of time.

Students enrolled in the WVU SON are required to follow the guidelines of the University, HSC, and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) regarding social media and online social networking throughout their entire program of study until graduating or leaving the program and must:

1. Be cognizant of the potential impact of each post made, with the understanding that patients, classmates, instructors, employers, and other personal or professional contacts may view an individual's online activity as a reflection of the individual's career as well as the nursing profession in general.
2. Stay informed about the privacy settings of the social media sites they utilize, as privacy settings often change.
3. Utilize social networking sites by actively maintaining an awareness of how their professionalism may be affected by friends' and peers' usage of the same sites.
 4. If elected/appointed to an office within the student government or School of Nursing students should restrict their personal activity to family and friends, and maintain a second option for their "public face" for colleagues, classmates and peers while in office. This is also recommended for graduate nurses who want to maintain a separation of their personal lives from their professional lives.
 5. Not share, post, or otherwise disseminate any information, that can identify a patient, or in any way violate a patient's rights or privacy. Limiting access through privacy setting is not sufficient to ensure privacy of patients.
6. Never refer to anyone in a disparaging manner, even if the person cannot be identified with the information stated.
 7. Never make threatening, harassing, sexually explicit, or derogatory statements regarding any person's race, ethnicity, gender, age, citizenship, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, religious beliefs, political views, or educational choices.
8. Never make disparaging remarks about any college, university, or school of nursing, including the students, faculty members and staff within the WVU School of Nursing or University in general.

9. Not post content or otherwise speak on behalf of any college, university, school of nursing, or other student nurses association unless authorized to do so.

10. Remember that standards of professionalism are the same online as in any other circumstance.

11. Not share or post information or photos gained through the nurse-patient relationship.

12. Maintain professional boundaries in the use of electronic media. Online contact with patients blurs this boundary.

13. Never take, or post from others, any photos or videos of patients on personal devices, including cell phones.

14. Promptly report a breach of confidentiality or privacy to faculty as soon as discovered.

[WVU Social Media Guidelines](#)

[HSC Information Technology Social Networking Sites, Blogs, and Instant Messaging Policies](#)

Technology Requirements for the PhD Program

The graduate programs at WVU make use of the latest in technological advances. You will need to have access to appropriate hardware, software, and systems to be successful. The following is a guide and recommendations for technology.

WVU Login

All students are assigned a WVUID number, username, and account. You must obtain your WVUID prior to claiming your account. If you previously attended WVU, your WVUID and username will be the same, but you will still need to reclaim your account if it has not recently been active. Please follow the steps below to find your WVUID and claim your username and account:

Find your WVU Login

1. Go to https://login.wvu.edu/self-service
2. Under Alternate WVUID Lookup, enter your date of birth, then select "Social Security Number" from the ID Type drop down box and enter your SS#.
3. Click Look Up.
4. Write down your WVUID number and memorize it! (Or at least keep it where you will be able to easily find it again.)

Claim Your Account

1. Go to https://login.wvu.edu and click the Claim Account button
2. Enter your name and date of birth
3. In the ID Type drop-down field, select WVUID and enter your 9-digit WVU ID number found on your admission letter
4. Answer the validation question
5. Read and accept the Annual Security Responsibility Statement
6. Choose if you would like to extend your password from 90 to 180 days and complete the instructions listed
7. Select three different security questions
8. Create a password

9. Write down and memorize your username and password. You will use this for all WVU logins unless otherwise instructed.

WVU Student MIX Email System

All students in the University have access to email through the Mountaineer Information Express (MIX) system. You must use this email system for all graduate program coursework and any related communication. No other email addresses will be used by faculty or administrators to contact you or to notify you of course related or program related information. You can access MIX from any computer or mobile phone with internet access at portal.wvu.edu. You will need a user name and password.

You should access MIX as soon as possible. The WVU SoN and faculty will send you important information through this account, and request that you check your account daily. You will be accountable for any information found in your MIX email. The MIX homepage has a great tutorial that you should complete before your classes begin. Use MIX to your best advantage during your program!

Distance Course Delivery

The courses you will take in the graduate program will be delivered via distance education technologies using the SOLE (Study, Observe, Learn, Engage) platform for course deliveries. Technologies used within SOLE include Collaborate and Panopto webcast.

SOLE (Study, Observe, Learn, Engage) Online Platform

SOLE is the WVU Health Sciences Center's (HSC) portal for online education and information. It is a web-based tool for students to access courses and for instructors to build and maintain those courses. SOLE was developed by HSC Information Technology Services as an open-ended system for online course development and management with a single-login and user-friendly environment. Login to SOLE using your WVU Login username and password. You are expected to check your SOLE courses and mix e-mail on at least a daily basis. If you need assistance with SOLE, please do not hesitate to contact SOLE Support.

Panopto Webcast

Webcast technology is used for many of the asynchronous lectures that you will be watching in your home, place of employment (when off-duty), or local library. Webcast uses web-based streaming video and synchronized multimedia presentation. The West Virginia University School of Nursing has adopted webcast technology to deliver some core graduate nursing content.

Blackboard Collaborate

Collaborate delivers synchronous real-time online classes. When you log into SOLE, on the home page of each course you will see links to the Collaborate sessions. You will be an active participant in the Collaborate sessions, discussing issues using your microphone or answering live poll questions. Because exchange of ideas is an important function of University education, you are required to be present for these real-time Collaborate sessions, unless otherwise instructed by faculty. Prior to your first live class in Collaborate, you need to be sure your

computer meets the following requirements:

You must complete the *Audio Wizard* as soon as possible to be sure that your computer supports Collaborate. You should complete the wizard on every computer that you will use to access coursework. You may need to repeat the audio wizard each time you access Collaborate. You will need to have high speed internet access through a cable modem, DSL, or satellite.

Computer Specifications
- Microsoft Office (includes Word, Excel, Power Point, and Outlook) is required for all WVU SON coursework and may be obtained free at [Download Microsoft Office for Free](#)
- Microphone and speakers; headsets are preferable.
- Webcam, if your PC or MAC is not video enabled.
- Supported browsers and operating system for SOLE and Collaborate are available at [Supported Browsers for SOLE](#)
- OIT has extensive [Student Resources](#) including tech recommendations, information about logins and passwords, how to setup Two-Factor authentication, and much more.
-

High speed internet connectivity is essential. Please be advised that when you purchase your high speed internet access there is usually an additional cost for the fastest connectivity. The recommended minimum speed for online coursework is 10 mbps. Consult your internet service providers regarding your connection speed for your membership. Or, students may check his/her speed by an Internet Speed Test (search in Google). DSL and high-speed cable are not available in some rural areas and students must resort to high-speed satellite internet service. Dial-up connections do not work with online classroom technology. If dial-up is the only access available, looking for alternate sites to attend class where high speed connection is available, is recommended.

A wireless internet connection is not recommended. The platforms for live classes work best with a wired internet connection.

Computer skills
It is an expectation that students be familiar with operating and using electronic technology. The skills of word processing on Microsoft Word, database utilization, internet competence, and email use, including the use of attachments, are essential to course work in the graduate program. It is an expectation that you are proficient with these computer skills. We recommend you visit the [Microsoft Training Site](#) for online tutorials to help with Microsoft Office product use.

WVU Student Identification Card

Students who wish to obtain a WVU Student Identification (ID) Card must have paid the special fees included in their tuition and fees invoice. To get the ID card, take a copy of the paid invoice to the Student ID Office in the Mountainair or to the Student Services Office in Charleston. The personnel there will validate the invoice and take a picture. The cards are usually ready in five to seven working days. Students must have a valid photo ID when picking up the card. For

information on obtaining a photo ID call 304-293-2273. For a non-photo student ID email [wvucard@mail.wvu.edu.](wvucard@mail.wvu.edu)

Maintenance of Licensure as a Registered Nurse

All PhD students are required to maintain continuous RN licensure during enrollment in the PhD program. Annual renewal of RN licensure must be submitted to the Program Specialist. If the student's RN license lapses or becomes encumbered due to a disciplinary action, the student will be dismissed from the PhD program.

Tuition and Other Costs

Students pay tuition and fees shown in the WVU Graduate Catalog, plus special fees and deposits as required based on the ([Tuition and Fee Schedule](#)). Fees are subject to change without notice. Students' expenses vary widely according to their individual course of study.

Expectations for Scholarship and Graduate Education

A major purpose of graduate education at West Virginia University is to cultivate an understanding of and capacity for scholarship, independent judgment, academic rigor, and intellectual honesty.

Graduate education is a socialization process exposing the student to professional scholarship. Thus, graduate research and learning experiences offer opportunities to foster relationships that encourage freedom of inquiry, demonstrate personal and professional integrity, and foster mutual respect. This shared responsibility between students and faculty extends to all of the endeavors of graduate students as students, employees, and members of the larger academic community. Faculty and graduate students have complementary responsibilities in the maintenance of academic standards and the creation of high quality graduate programs. Excellence in graduate education is achieved when both faculty and students are highly motivated, possess the academic and professional backgrounds necessary to perform at the highest level, and are sincere in their desire to see each other succeed. The following principles illustrate what students should expect from the program and what the program should expect from students:

1. The PhD program provides coursework and other learning experiences that are structured to socialize students to the creative and independent scientist role and to prepare students to compete for leadership positions in academic, government, industry, and health care settings.
2. The PhD curriculum consists of rigorous coursework in: nursing science and theory; research methodology; and education, leadership, ethics, and health policy.
3. Students are selected for admission into the program based on evidence for academic success and the research match between each student's interest and the faculty expertise.
4. The WVU School of Nursing Graduate Faculty are fully engaged as mentors with students throughout their program of study.
5. The PhD curriculum includes opportunities for interprofessional learning and

6.   The PhD program is sufficiently flexible so that coursework can be tailored to students' research interests and needs.

While enrolled in the WVU SON PhD program, students are **expected** to present posters and papers at regional, national, and international meetings each year and record scholarly activities on the WVU SON website. Instructions on how to submit this data is available from the PhD Director or the SON Office of Nursing Research.

Integrity in Research, Scholarship, and Education

The School of Nursing follows the [WVU Campus Student Code](#), including the ownership of ideas and protection of intellectual property. Students must consistently submit their own work, cite others when appropriate, acknowledge funding as appropriate, cite themselves as appropriate, , and obtain written permission when using copyrighted materials.

School of Nursing Appeal of Academic Penalties or Sanctions

General Information about the Student Appeals Process
The primary purpose of the appeal procedure is to allow review of a penalty or sanction in cases in which a student believes that due process was not followed or that the penalty or sanction was imposed unfairly or inconsistently with regard to course requirements and policies or with program and university standards and regulations. Students have the right to appeal a final grade, charge of academic dishonesty, or academic penalty that they believe reflects a capricious, arbitrary, or prejudiced academic evaluation or reflects discrimination based on race, gender, age, handicap, veteran status, religion or creed, sexual orientation, color, or national origin. Additional grounds for appeal may include: unreasonable severity of the penalty, demonstrable prejudice in the decision-making process, a belief that the evidence does not support the finding of responsibility (in the case of academic dishonesty) or the choice of penalty, or additional evidence or new information that was not considered in determining the penalty.

If a student does not appeal an academic penalty or fails to follow the appeal procedures described below, the academic penalty will be upheld. The complete policy and general procedures concerning academic standards and appeals is available in both the [Undergraduate Catalog](#) and [Graduate/Professional Catalog](#).
Student Appeals Procedure
Provided below are separate descriptions of the procedures for appeals of a final grade, appeals involving a charge of academic dishonesty, and appeals of other academic penalties (such as program suspension or dismissal).

Appeal of a Final Grade
For the School of Nursing, the Level 1 appeal should be submitted thorough WVU email to the associate dean of academics, and Level 2 appeals are submitted to the dean. Please refer to the [WVU Policy for Appealing a Final Grade](#) for more information.

Appeal of an Academic Penalty (Other Than a Final Grade and Not Based on Academic Dishonesty)(includes appeal of admission decisions)

Students may also appeal academic penalties other than a final grade, such as program dismissals, probation, or progression policy penalties. This type of appeal is not used for academic dishonesty cases. Please refer to the WVU Policy for Appeal of an Academic Penalty for additional information.

In the School of Nursing, the Academic and Professional Standards Committee presides over the first level of this type of appeal. The letter of appeal should be submitted through WVU email to the associate dean of academics, who will forward the appeal to the committee chairperson. Level 2 appeals of this type are submitted through WVU email to the dean, and Level 3 appeals are submitted through WVU email to the appropriate associate provost.

Appeal of a Charge and/or Penalty Based on Academic Dishonesty

There is one appeal level for academic dishonesty cases. If the case is reviewed through the course-level process, the student will submit the appeal through WVU email to the School of Nursing dean. If the case is managed by the Office of Academic Integrity through the university-level academic dishonesty conduct process, appeals should be submitted to the Office of the Provost. Please refer to the WVU Policy on Appeal of a Charge of and/or Penalty Based on Academic Dishonesty for additional information.

Students should consult the complete WVU Policy on Student Academic Integrity, additional student resources, and SON academic integrity statement in the appropriate student handbook.

Academic Integrity Statement

It is the desire of the SON faculty to create and foster a positive learning environment that promotes professionalism, integrity, and mutual trust. The WVU SON follows the WVU Policy on Student Academic Integrity. In addition, students can find detailed information about the SON procedures for academic dishonesty charges, outcomes, sanctions, and appeals in the appeal policy in the program's student handbook.

It is important that instructors and students adhere to rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and on all assignments and coursework to maintain the integrity of the education provided and ensure the validity of student assessment. In addition, RN licensure and safe nursing practice require that students exhibit characteristics of good moral character, including honesty and integrity. Studies have suggested that students who are dishonest in the academic setting are more likely to engage in those behaviors in the work environment (LaDuke, 2013) and the clinical setting (Kreuger, 2014).

All forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited. Nursing students are expected to act with integrity and honesty in all didactic and clinical settings, regardless of the nature of the assignment or activity or percentage weight toward course grade. For example, the SON places as high an expectation on academic integrity for quizzes and short discussion board writing submissions as it does for exams or end-of-semester papers.

WVU defines academic dishonesty in its policy referenced above and includes any dishonest act during didactic or clinical activities that violates professional nursing standards. Such standards

can be found in the American Nurses Association [(ANA) Code of Ethics](#) (2015) and the [ANA Scope and Standards of Practice](#) (2015). Specific examples of academic dishonesty in nursing programs include, but are not limited to:

- Engaging in any act which may give an unearned advantage in a student's evaluation or performance
- Manipulating, altering, or destroying another student's academic work or faculty material
- Using the ideas, language, or work of another without permission and acknowledgement
- Allowing someone to or paying someone to complete an assignment or portion of an assignment to be submitted as your own
- Facilitating academic dishonesty
- Asking someone to commit dishonest acts
- Altering or misrepresenting data
- Lying or committing fraud or forgery
- Adjusting or falsifying clinical or service hours
- Entering assessment data not observed or falsifying medical records or clinical documents
- Using unauthorized resources to complete assigned work
- Engaging in unauthorized collaboration
- Accessing potential test questions by any means or discussing tested or evaluated materials with other students
- Committing plagiarism (copying and pasting someone else's words, omitting sources or quotation marks, reusing your own work for multiple assignments or courses without authorization, and replacing another person's key words with synonyms while maintaining the original structure)

Students are strongly encouraged to ask a faculty member or administrator if they are unsure if a practice would be considered academic dishonesty prior to engaging in that practice. Students and faculty are expected to model the highest professional standards and to report possible instances of academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty in a nursing program may result in course failure and/or program dismissal. A list of possible sanctions can be found in the [WVU Policy on Student Academic Integrity](#), and sanctions range from a change in course grade to university expulsion.

Any questions about professional standards or policies may be directed to the instructor, program director, or associate dean of academics.

Kreuger, L. (2014). Academic dishonesty among nursing students. *Journal of Nursing Education, 53*(2), 77-87.

LaDuke, RD. 2013. Academic dishonesty today; unethical practices tomorrow? *Journal of Professional Nursing, 29,* 402-6

Responsible Conduct of Research

PhD Students must adhere to all policies set forth by the WVU Office of Research Integrity & Compliance. [Policies of the WVU Office of Research & Compliance](#). According to these policies, students are required to obtain written approval from the IRB to conduct research with human

subjects <u>PRIOR</u> TO conducting ANY research throughout the program, including pilot studies and course-related projects using human subject data. Advisors are responsible for facilitating this process. In addition, students are accountable for declaring conflicts of interest; respecting the culture and heritage of research subjects; honoring research subjects' confidentiality; and safeguarding and ensuring the accuracy of all research data.

Policies for Authorship for Presentations and Publications

PhD students are accountable for their professional publications, presentations, and posters. As such, scholarly products must be based on sound scientific principles and conform to ethical best practice guidelines that include transparency on sources of funding, attribution of proper authorship, acknowledgement of mentorship, and limited redundancy in publications. The PhD program has adopted the [ICJME Reporting and Authorship Guidelines](#) for the conduct, reporting, editing, and publication of scholarly work in Medical Journals established by the ICJME in December 2019.

Appendix 1. Memorandum of Understanding Related to Course Progression during Appeal Process after the Dean has rendered an Academic Decision

Students are allowed to continue progression within the undergraduate or graduate program (continue enrollment in the following semester courses) during the time that a course final grade or program dismissal appeal is being processed and a final decision made. However, students who are unsuccessful in their appeal must withdraw from current classes within the School of Nursing consistent with University deadlines and policies. In addition, the refund of tuition and fees depends on the student's particular situation, the semester, the date of the withdrawal from a course or courses, etc. In order to determine what, if any, refund of tuition, you may be eligible to receive, you will be asked to review the WVU website that illustrates the Reduction (Refund) Schedule:

https://studentaccounts.wvu.edu/refunds

I_____have elected to maintain enrollment and progression in the School of _____ according to my originally planned program progression plan for the upcoming _____ (term) while a decision related to my appeal of_____is being finalized. I acknowledge that if my appeal is denied, I will not be able to continue my progression as planned. I agree to withdraw from the course(s) in which I am not able to progress, and I will immediately stop participating in these courses after the final decision to deny the appeal is made.

I also acknowledge that upon withdrawal from the course(s) in which I am enrolled, my tuition and fees as well as documentation of withdrawals will be consistent with the current University deadlines and policies in place at the time.

_____
Student Signature

_____
Student Services representatives

Appendix 2. Writing Rubric

Criteria	Evaluation Standard/Comments				
	Unacceptable	**Poor**	**Satisfactory**	**Good**	**Excellent**
Paragraph structure (logic): Development Coherence Clarity	There is no clear topic sentence. The paragraph does not build upon and support a single coherent idea. Sentences have no clear relationship. Transition words are inappropriate or absent.	The topic sentence is not the first sentence in the paragraph. The order in which ideas in the paragraph are presented is not coherent. Transition from sentence to sentence, or paragraph to paragraph is abrupt.	The topic sentence is the first sentence in the paragraph but the relationship of topic sentence to paragraph development is difficult to discern. Transition words are limited.	One idea is stated in each paragraph topic sentence (first sentence) but not adequately developed in the paragraph. Transition words are used inconsistently.	The topic sentence is the first sentence in each paragraph. One idea is stated in the paragraph topic sentence and developed logically in the paragraph. Transition words are used consistently to maintain the flow of thought.
Sentence structure (syntax): Parallel construction Subject verb agreement Noun pronoun agreement Precision Economy of expression	Most sentences are flawed by errors in parallel construction, subject verb agreement, noun pronoun agreement, precision, and economy of expression.	Sentence structure is adversely affected by many errors in parallel construction, subject verb agreement, noun pronoun agreement, precision, and economy of expression.	Sentence structure is weakened by more than a few errors in parallel construction, subject verb agreement, noun pronoun agreement, precision, and economy of expression.	Sentence structure meets criteria except for occasional errors in parallel construction, subject verb agreement, precision, and economy of expression.	Sentence structure demonstrates correct use of parallel construction, subject verb agreement, noun agreement, precision, and economy of expression.
Word choice: Appropriate word choice for topic and audience Appropriate verb tense Avoidance of jargon Avoidance of anthropomorphism Avoidance of gender bias Avoidance of errors with referents Avoidance of pretentious words	Poor word choice is very frequent and may include incorrect use for topic, audience and verb tense. There are many errors in jargon, anthropomorphism, gender bias, referent error, and use of	Poor word choice is frequent and may include incorrect use for topic, audience and verb tense. There are many errors in jargon, anthropomorphism, gender bias, referent error, and use of pretentious words.	Word choice does not meet criteria and may incorrect use for topic, audience and verb tense. There are more than a few errors in jargon, anthropomorphism, gender bias, referent error, and use of pretentious words.	Word choice meets criteria except for occasional errors in correct use for topic, Audience and verb tense. There are few errors in jargon, anthropomorphism, gender bias, referent error, and use of pretentious words.	Word choice demonstrates correct use for topic, audience and verb tense. There is avoidance of errors in jargon, anthropomorphism, gender bias, referent error, and use of pretentious words.
Mechanics: Spelling Punctuation APA (*Faculty should delete this from the rubric if APA style is not appropriate for a given assignment.*)	Errors in spelling and punctuation are very frequent. There is little to no evidence of an understanding of the APA style for citation in text, reference list headings, or paragraph length.	Writing is adversely affected by errors in spelling and punctuation. There is little evidence of an understanding of the APA style for citation in text, reference list headings, or paragraph length.	Writing is weakened by occurrence of errors in spelling and punctuation. There are more than a few violations in APA style for citation in text, reference list, headings, and paragraph length.	Writing demonstrates meeting the criteria except for minor errors in spelling and punctuation. There are few violations in APA style for citations in text, reference list, headings, and paragraph length.	Writing demonstrates correct use of spelling and punctuation. APA style for citations in text, reference list, headings, and paragraph length are followed.

Writing Rubric Definitions and Resources

- **Paragraph development**
  - Definition: A process resulting in the clear statement of a main idea and supporting details in multiple sentences.
  - Resource: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/606/01/
- **Paragraph coherence**
  - Definition: Singularity of focus in a paragraph. Ideas are linked through logical or verbal bridges.
  - Resource: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/561/04/
- **Paragraph clarity**
  - Definition: Each idea presented relates directly to the paragraph's topic sentence.
  - Resource: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/600/01/
- **Parallel construction**
  - Definition: Using similar patterns of words to show that 2 or more words have the same importance.
  - Resource: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/623/1/
- **Subject verb agreement**
  - Definition: A singular subject takes a singular verb, while a plural subject takes a plural verb.
  - Resource: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/599/01/
- **Noun pronoun agreement**
  - Definition: Pronoun should be consistent with the noun it replaces.
  - Resource: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/595/01/
- **Precision**
  - Definition: Using the exact words needed and eliminating extraneous words.
  - Resource: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/engagement/index.php?category_id=2&sub_category_id=2&article_id=66
- **Economy of expression**
  - Definition: Limiting word usage to a clean, direct style that is most effective in expressing the idea.
  - Resource: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/572/01/
- **Word choice for topic and audience**
  - Definition: Selecting words that are appropriate for the age, culture, and education of the reader.
  - Resource: http://www.umuc.edu/writingcenter/onlineguide/chapter2-04.cfm
- **Verb tense**
  - Definition: Consistency of verb tense within the paragraph and paper.
  - Resource: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/601/1/
- **Jargon**
  - Definition: Language specific to one group or profession that might not be understandable to everyone.
  - Resource: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/608/01/
- **Anthropomorphism/personification**
  - Definition: Attributing human characteristics to anything other than a human being.
  - Resource: http://www.uwf.edu/edd/internal/Documents/Anthropomorphism.htm

- **Gender bias**
  - Definition: The use of gender-specific pronouns when referring to nouns that include both genders.
  - Resource: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/14/
- **Referent**
  - Definition: A clear connection between the pronoun and the noun that precedes it.
  - Reference: http://www.towson.edu/ows/proref.htm
- **Pretentious or flowery words**
  - Definition: Dramatic, flamboyant words that do not necessarily convey the desired meaning.
  - Resource: http://www.uhv.edu/ac/newsletters/writing/grammartip2005.11.15.htm
- **Punctuation**
  - Definition: Proper use of symbols to indicate structure and organization of thought, including commas, quotation marks, apostrophes, and hyphens.
  - Resource: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/6/
- **Spelling:**
  - Definition: The forming of words with letters in the correct sequence.

Appendix 3. West Virginia University School of Nursing PhD Handbook Signature Page

I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to read and clarify my understanding of the contents of the WVU PhD in Nursing Student and Advisor Handbook and to access my WVU email account at least weekly while I am a student at WVU. The PhD Handbook is updated regularly, and emails are distributed regularly by the PhD Program Office. These documents represent formal means of communication between PhD students and the University/School of Nursing. Receiving information distributed to students through these mechanisms is the responsibility of the student.

I have received and read the 2021-2022 PhD in Nursing Student and Advisor Handbook.

Please sign, date, and submit to the PhD Program Director within the first week of courses.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____