

Health | Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing *The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA*



2026-2027 College of Nursing Student Handbook **Master of Science in Nursing, Doctor of Nursing Practice & Post-Graduate Certificates**

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Introduction to the Student Handbook

The OU Health Campus, Fran & Earl Ziegler College of Nursing (CON) Student Handbook is published for informational purposes. While every effort is made to present the information accurately, the actual text of the policy, procedure, or law should be consulted as an authoritative source of information. It is the student's responsibility to read the College of Nursing Student Handbook and consult it for information on CON policies and procedures. Due to the specific accreditation requirements for the Certified Registered Nurse Anesthesia (CRNA) program, students in this program have a stand-alone handbook. CRNA students should consult that handbook.

Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing

Welcome to Oklahoma's flagship college of nursing; we are excited for your nursing journey! Founded in 1911, OU College of Nursing is the state's largest nursing school with five program sites in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Lawton, Duncan, and Norman and is dedicated to continuing the leadership and academic excellence that have become synonymous with the University of Oklahoma. Graduate programs are offered on OKC and Tulsa sites only.

[Mission and Goals](#)

[Values](#)

[Leadership](#)

[Faculty](#)

[Staff](#)

[Accreditation](#)

Accreditation Statement

The University of Oklahoma (OU) is regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The Master's degree program in nursing, Doctor of Nursing Practice program and post-graduate APRN certificate programs at The University of Oklahoma Health Campus, Fran & Earl Ziegler College of Nursing is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

Description of the Programs

Master of Science in Nursing

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program is designed to build upon the BSN degree. Students in the MSN program are prepared to function at advanced levels with an expanded knowledge of theory, research, population health, and clinical application. Graduates are prepared to provide evidence-based health care and to work in interdisciplinary teams.

Expected MSN Program Outcomes

Per CCNE accreditation standards, successful completion of the University of Oklahoma College of Nursing Master's Degree Program prepares the graduate to:

- Integrate theories from nursing and support sciences to guide practice and role development
- Use evidence-based and best practice literature to propose and initiate change.
- Promote safe, ethical health care delivery.
- Deliver a broad array of evidence-based, patient-centered nursing interventions to individuals and populations in a specialized area of practice.
- Demonstrate expertise in a specialized area of clinical, teaching, and management/administrative practice and/or initial competence in a functional role (advanced practice registered nurse [APRN], educator, and administrator).
- Employ leadership and management skills in decision making to improve nursing care delivery and the care environment.
- Collaborate with the interprofessional teams to improve nursing care and health care services.
- Contribute to knowledge dissemination through scholarly activities and communication.
- Use critical synthesis to effectively manage resources and systems.
- Demonstrate competency in information analysis, management, and technology consistent with role preparation.
- Engage in lifelong learning and professional development.

Master of Science in Nursing Administration

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Administration program prepares nurses for frontline and mid-level leadership roles in healthcare organizations, with a focus on managing operations and creating healthy work environments that support quality care for patients and populations. Graduates develop the knowledge and skills needed to lead interprofessional teams, coordinate care delivery, and address day-to-day operational challenges across a variety of healthcare settings.

Master of Science in Nursing – Adult Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist

The Master of Science in Nursing, Clinical Nurse Specialist program prepares nurses with the knowledge and skills to function as advanced practice nurses who meet the complex needs of adult and geriatric patients. The curriculum prepares graduates to apply for and sit for the American Association of Critical Care Nurses Adult Gerontology or the American Nurses Credentialing Center Adult Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist certification exam

Doctor of Nursing Practice

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) is a practice-focused doctoral program designed to prepare highly skilled clinical scholars distinguished by advanced leadership, clinical expertise, and a commitment to evidence-based, patient-centered care across diverse populations and healthcare environments. The program has two entry points: a Bachelor of Science in Nursing to Doctor of Nursing Practice program (BSN-DNP) or the Post-master's in nursing to Doctor of Nursing Practice program (MSN-DNP).

Expected DNP Program Outcomes

Per CCNE accreditation standards, successful completion of the University of Oklahoma College of Nursing Doctor of Nursing Practice Program prepares the graduate to:

- Integrate knowledge from nursing and related disciplines to design evidence-based solutions that improve healthcare outcomes.
- Design and/or deliver and evaluate models of care that improve person-centered outcomes across various populations.
- Design and evaluate population health initiatives that improve outcomes across the healthcare continuum.
- Apply and evaluate evidence to inform practice, influence policy, and advance nursing science through scholarly activities.
- Evaluate system performance and implement improvement strategies that enhance quality and safety outcomes.
- Lead and evaluate interprofessional collaboration strategies that improve care coordination and outcomes across healthcare systems.
- Lead initiatives within complex systems of health care that improve quality, safety, and access to care across populations and healthcare environments.
- Use data and technology to inform decision-making and evaluate improvements in quality, safety, and system performance.
- Demonstrate professional accountability and ethical decision-making in leadership and practice contexts.
- Engage in reflective practice and lifelong learning to support professional growth and leadership effectiveness that advances the profession and improves healthcare delivery.

Bachelor of Science in Nursing to Doctor of Nursing Practice Program

The BSN entry to the DNP plan of study prepares students to provide an advanced level of evidence-based care to selected patient populations. The program emphasizes the implementation and evaluation of evidence, systems-level thinking, care quality and safety, and the development of meaningful interventions that may improve outcomes of care for the selected patient population. The program prepares students to serve as leaders in their area of practice.

The BSN entry to the DNP program gives registered nurses with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree the ability to earn a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree without first obtaining a master's-level nursing degree.

There are 7 different tracks/specialties to choose from within the BSN-DNP program.

- Family Nurse Practitioner
- Adult Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

- Neonatal Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Neonatal Nurse Practitioner
- Executive Leadership
- Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist

Post-Master's DNP Completion (MSN-DNP)

This program is for nurses who hold a Master of Science in Nursing. The MSN entry to the DNP plan of study prepares students to provide an advanced level of evidence-based care to selected patient populations. The program emphasizes the implementation and evaluation of evidence, systems-level thinking, care quality and safety, and the development of meaningful interventions that may improve outcomes of care for the selected patient population. The program prepares students to serve as leaders in their area of practice.

Post-Graduate Certificates

The post-graduate certificate option is for Registered Nurses who hold a Master's or Doctoral degree in nursing and wish to obtain an additional specialty or certification as an advanced practice nurse (APRN). There are 5 track options in the program.

- Family Nurse Practitioner
- Adult Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
- Neonatal Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Neonatal Nurse Practitioner

OUHC Student Handbook

Please consult the [OUHC Student Handbook](#) for OUHC policies and procedures:

[Section 1: Academic Degrees Offered](#)

[Section 2: Board of Regents' Policies and Procedures](#)

[Section 3: OUHC Policies and Procedures](#)

[Section 4: Tuition and Fee Policies](#)

[Section 5: Graduation](#)

[Section 6: International Student Services](#)

[Section 7: Veterans Student Services](#)

[Section 8: Resources](#)

OUHC Faculty Handbook

Student policies and procedures are published in multiple University resources to ensure accessibility and consistency. Certain institution-wide policies, including academic integrity, academic misconduct, academic appeals, and related governance policies, are maintained within the OU Health Sciences Faculty Handbook, which serves as the official repository for these University-level policies and applies to all students, faculty, and staff. [OU Health Campus Faculty Handbook](#)

Prerequisites

Students must follow all General Education and graduation requirements of the University of Oklahoma. The College of Nursing will review all course substitutions and will request syllabi and other course materials to determine appropriate substitutions if applicable in accordance with university requirements and accreditation standards. Prior to enrollment, a gap analysis will be performed on students entering a certificate program to finalize the degree plan.

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA)

Due to federal regulations from the Department of Education, the College of Nursing currently accepts applications for its graduate degree programs from residents of the states participating in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA). A list of participating states can be found at [NC SARA Directory](#). Applicants are encouraged to check with their local State Boards of Nursing regarding any specific professional licensure requirements prior to applying or enrolling. Professional Licensure Disclosures

Students are encouraged to review the [Professional Licensure Disclosures](#). Students will be required to sign an attestation if located in a state that does not participate in licensure.

End-of-Term Processing and Licensure/Certification Forms

End-of-term processing and transcript certification for Board of Nursing or Board certification forms are multi-step processes. In accordance with University policy, the College of Nursing processes final grades and certifies graduates. The Office of Admissions and Recruitment sends transcripts according to the processes of the testing agency and will send out-of-state forms to the appropriate agencies. Processing commences after final grades are submitted according to the [Academic Calendar](#). See

[Oklahoma Licensure webpage](#) for more information about this process. The [OU College of Nursing Student Affairs](#) team can answer questions about this process.

Academic Integrity

[OUHC Student Handbook Academic Integrity](#)

[OUHC Student Handbook Academic Misconduct](#)

Alternative Plan Processes for Students Off Track

If a student receives the grade of a “W,” “F,” “D,” or “I,” the student is considered an “off-track student”. The student must wait to take the course with the unsuccessful grade until the course is next offered for the cohort, program, and/or site. The student may have to take a leave of absence until the course is next offered in the lockstep curriculum. As outlined in the [Academic Progress Policy of the OUHC Financial Student Services](#), “Each College reviews throughout, and at the conclusion of each academic year, the performance of each student [...] In some cases, the student may be placed on a Leave of Absence until the necessary rotation of coursework is available again.” The College does not develop individualized plans of study for off-track students. The programs are lockstep and must be taken in the order in which they are offered according to the program of study.

Reapplication

[OUHC Student Handbook](#)

Transfer of Credit

The acceptance of transfer credit from another institution for MSN, DNP and Certificate degree programs is not guaranteed and is determined according to the policies and procedures of the College of Nursing and the University. Please see the [transfer credit policy](#) for more information regarding [master’s degrees](#) and [doctoral degrees](#). The OU College of Nursing is in alignment with the [University of Oklahoma Health Campus Graduate College Bulletin](#).

Deferrals

The OU College of Nursing does not offer enrollment deferrals for students except in extreme extenuating circumstances requiring approval by the Dean. Should students choose to defer, students must reapply in a future cycle as the College’s admission requirements may change from year to year in accordance with the degree sheet for that catalog year. If students do reapply, the student can request a one-time waiver code for the supplemental application if the student has military-related

documentation for the request. Please note that this waiver applies only to the supplemental application and does not cover any third-party application fees. Please note the waiver code is available only for the application cycle directly subsequent to the original admission term. If the student does not return in that application cycle, students will need to reapply with the regular application fees.

Change of Major - Graduate Program Tracks

Students cannot change their major from one graduate program track to another without reapplication to the requested track. To reapply, students must meet all application criteria, including good standing, professional behavior, and program requirements of the catalog and apply at the next available application cycle. Any costs associated with re-application are upon the student.

Student Evaluations

Student Evaluation of a course cannot be included as a part of a course grade. Each student is given the opportunity to complete a course evaluation during the final weeks of the course. Instructors use this information as valuable feedback to enhance future iterations of the course. The course evaluation responses are aggregated and provided to instructors. Individual evaluations are not provided for instructor review.

The reports are made available to instructors after final grades have been posted. Student evaluations of the course are anonymous and will not affect student grades.

Auditing of a Course

Due to the clinical capacity and learning site structure, students cannot audit courses offered by the College of Nursing or courses in nursing programs.

Attendance in Enrolled Courses

Students cannot attend any courses (clinical, didactic, skills labs, etc.) in which they are not enrolled. Students cannot attend any sections of courses other than those in which they are enrolled.

Enrollment in the MSN, DNP and Certificate program is contingent upon meeting all required compliance requirements as documented in Complio. Students who are not compliant in Complio are ineligible to enroll in courses.

Students who are not compliant in Complio may not participate in any component of the curriculum, including didactic, laboratory, simulation, clinical, or practicum experiences. Students who are non-compliant will have access to Canvas and other required learning management systems removed until compliance has been restored and confirmed by Complio.

GRADUATE CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Attendance in Practicum Activities

Practicum experiences in the graduate nursing programs include both **direct care** and **indirect care** activities that support achievement of program outcomes and nursing competencies. Students may not begin practicum activities until course faculty approve, and site approval is granted by the College of Nursing through an affiliation agreement. Students must obtain an affiliation agreement and sign outgoing trainee confidentiality agreement prior to attending clinical practicums. All clinical practicum hours must be performed while enrolled in a practicum course that requires clinical hours. Students are not allowed to attend clinical practicums when not enrolled in a clinical course. The clinical practicum hours must be performed during the semester dates according to the academic calendar.

Intersessions

Intersessions are considered part of the term directly preceding. For example, May intersession is part of the spring term; December intersession is part of the fall term; August intersession is part of the summer term. Students who fail a course in a term will still be enrolled in the intersession associated with that term (if applicable in the student's lockstep curriculum) but will not be enrolled in the next full term (spring, summer, or fall as applicable). Please review the [Academic Calendar](#) for all deadlines associated with each intersession.

Technical Standards

Students admitted to the Graduate Program must be able to meet the College of Nursing Technical Standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, throughout admission, enrollment, progression, and graduation. The Technical Standards describe the essential cognitive, physical, behavioral, communication, and professional abilities required to safely participate in classroom, laboratory, simulation, clinical, practicum, and other experiential learning environments.

Students are responsible for reviewing and understanding the Technical Standards and for notifying the College of Nursing if they believe they may require a reasonable

accommodation. Requests for accommodations are coordinated through Student Accommodation Services (SAS) in accordance with University policy and applicable federal and state laws.

The complete Technical Standards for College of Nursing Program Admission, Retention, Progression, and Graduation are available on the [College of Nursing Website Admissions page](#).

Academic Progress

I. GPA CALCULATION AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Grades

Only courses assigned a letter grade of A, B, C, D, or F are used in calculation of a student's Term, OUHC, Cumulative, and/or Combination GPA.

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory graded courses are GPA neutral and are not used in the calculation of a student's GPA. More information about grading is available in the Handbook, Grading System Section.

B. Grading Scale:

- A (90-100) (4 grade points)
- B (80-89) (3 grade points)
- C (70-79) (2 grade points)
- D (60-69) (1 grade point, not passing)
- F (0-59) (0 grade points, not passing)

C. Grade Calculation

Grades will be calculated using two decimal points. Rounding the final grade in any course is not permissible. For example, a grade of 89.6 cannot be rounded up to 90; it must remain 89. Any course in which the grade of a D or F is received does not count toward degree requirements.

D. Incomplete Grades

[Student Handbook - Grading Regulations Relative to Incompletes](#)

E. Withdrawals and Drops

[Student Handbook - Grading Regulations Relative to Withdrawals and Drops](#)

Withdrawals and Failing Grades

Students will be dismissed from the graduate program if they receive **any combination of two** of the following academic outcomes during their enrollment:

- A grade of D
- A grade of F
- A course withdrawal (W) (for any reason)
- An Incomplete (I) (for any reason)

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- One D and one F
- One D (or F) and one W
- One D (or F) and one I
- Two Ds
- Two Fs
- Two Ws
- Two Is
- Any other combination of two of the outcomes listed above

Licensure

Students in the MSN, DNP or certificate programs must hold an unencumbered and current RN license prior to enrollment and throughout the entire duration of the program. The RN license must be within the state where clinical practicums are to be completed (Oklahoma or a compact state). Students who begin a graduate or professional program prior to RN licensure can enroll in the first semester while waiting to sit for the NCLEX-RN (except the graduate pathways outlined below). However, all students must be licensed before they are able to enroll in any subsequent semesters.

If a student encounters a change in their licensure status, faces disciplinary action from any state board of nursing, DEA, or other body, or loses their RN or APRN license while enrolled in the program, they must notify the Program Director immediately. Failure to make immediate notification is grounds for dismissal from the College.

Please note that Neonatal CNS, Neonatal Nurse Practitioner, and MSN Administration must have the unencumbered and active RN license at the time of enrollment in the first semester, due to the required clinical experience component.

All students (regardless of track/program) must hold an unencumbered, active RN license prior to enrollment in the second semester of any MSN, DNP, or Post-graduate certificate programs.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

A. Academic Progression and Retention Standards

The following standards are required of students for progression and retention in the CON:

1. Students shall comply with all University, College, and program policies, including the Student Professional Behavior in an Academic Program policy and in the [Faculty Handbook](#):
2. Students must maintain a Cumulative GPA of 3.0 (graduate) to be in Good Academic Standing.
3. The CON has determined that students successfully complete (with satisfactory final course grades) all aspects of the program within five years of matriculation to the DNP program and six years for MSN program in accordance with the [University of Oklahoma requirements](#)

See also the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Student Handbook, [Leave of Absence](#)

III. ACADEMIC ACTIONS

The College of Nursing Student Affairs Team will monitor the academic progression of all students through the application of this policy to student academic performance.

A. Academic Retention

A student meeting the Academic Progression and Retention Standards in Section II A will be recommended for Academic Progression and Retention unless a compelling academic and/or professionalism deficiency is present.

B. Academic Probation

1. For the purposes of this policy, Academic Probation is the academic status assigned to a student who fails to meet academic standards and demonstrate satisfactory progress using criteria detailed in this section. Student Affairs monitors performance and makes academic status recommendations to Academic Affairs and the Dean at the completion of each term.
2. A student who is not on Academic Probation at the beginning of a term but whose Cumulative GPA at the end of that term is less than 3.0 will be placed on Academic Probation and will be allowed to enroll in the subsequent term.

A student who has been placed on Academic Probation based on a Cumulative GPA of less than 3.0 shall be recommended for continuation on Academic Probation provided they earn a Term GPA of 3.0 or higher.

A student who earns a subsequent Term GPA of less than 3.0 while on Academic Probation shall be dismissed in accordance with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Policy, [Institutional Admission and Retention](#).

A student on Academic Probation obtaining both a Term GPA of 3.0 or greater the subsequent term and whose Cumulative GPA is 3.0 or greater will be removed from Academic Probation.

3. Each student on Academic Probation will be evaluated by Student Affairs each term after final grades are available.

4. If a student's current GPA makes it mathematically impossible for the student to obtain a Cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater upon completion of all courses required for graduation, the College of Nursing Student Affairs Team shall recommend to Academic Affairs and the Dean that the student be dismissed from the program.

C. Dismissal

The following conditions will result in the recommendation to dismiss a student from the CON:

1. Failure to complete the program within the specified time frame.
2. Students must maintain the minimum cumulative GPA required for their graduate program. In addition, no more than 25% of the letter grades earned in required program coursework may be grades of C.

A student will be dismissed from the graduate program if either of the following occurs:

- The student's cumulative GPA falls below the program's minimum GPA requirement; or
 - More than 25% of the letter grades earned in required program coursework are grades of C, regardless of the student's cumulative GPA.
3. Failure to meet the minimum requirements for graduation imposed by the Program and University in the Student Handbook, [Graduation Guidelines](#).
 4. Inability to attend the clinical locations for reasons related to academic, professional, or behavioral considerations, or refusal of a clinical site to host a student on these bases.
 5. Students will be dismissed from the graduate program if they receive any combination of two of the following academic outcomes during their enrollment:

- A grade of D
- A grade of F
- A course withdrawal (W) (for any reason)
- An Incomplete (I) (for any reason)

6. A student dismissed from a graduate program in the College of Nursing will not be able to reapply to a graduate program in the College of Nursing

7. Academic Misconduct Violations or Professionalism Concerns as documented by Professionalism Concerns Reports.

[Leave of Absence](#)

[Withdrawals](#)

Academic Appeals

The policy and procedures regarding academic appeals are detailed in the OUHC [Faculty Handbook](#). A student may seek guidance about academic policies and procedures from the College of Nursing Student Affairs and/or the OUHC Vice Provost for Academic Affairs.

Changes in Student Name or Address

Forms may be obtained [here](#).

Computer Requirements

- [Laptop Encryption requirements](#)
- [Computer specification requirements](#)
- [Acceptable Use of Information Systems](#)

Academic Calendar, Including Final Examinations

All students must plan to be in class for the duration of the semester as defined in the [Academic Calendar](#). Information about final examinations can be found in the [Academic Calendar](#).

Pets on Campus

Protecting and Safeguarding Protected Health Information (PHI)

Youth Protection Policy

Financial Student Services

Students carry financial responsibility for their education. Students must contact the Bursar and the Financial Aid Office for any actions taken in their educational record.

- [Student Financial Aid](#)
- [Bursar](#)
- [Financial Aid and Scholarships](#)
- [CON Student Scholarships](#)

Drug Screening

Drug screen results may impact your ability to participate in clinicals. Some clinical partners have very strict policies (e.g., some facilities enforce a zero-tolerance policy). If the drug screen results prohibit clinical placement, students would be withdrawn/dismissed due to inability to complete the program. Please see the [Drug Screening](#) policy in the OUHC Student Handbook.

Student Professional Behavior

Students must adhere to the college and university expectations for [professionalism](#), as outlined in the Student Professional Behavior in an Academic Program Policy in the Faculty Handbook Appendix C.

Accommodations

- [Student Accommodation Services, OU Health Campus](#)
- [Student Accommodation Services, OU Tulsa Campus](#)
- [Reasonable Accommodation Policy](#)

English Proficiency

- [Teacher English Proficiency](#)
- [English Language Proficiency](#)

Student Rights and Responsibilities Code and Procedures

- [Student Handbook](#)
- [Student Conduct](#)

General Copyright Information

- Students cannot buy or sell items (including, but not limited to, clothing, merchandise, study materials, etc.), that would infringe upon copyright law: [Copyright Information](#).

College of Nursing Policies

- [Admissions Decisions](#)
- [GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE](#)

Artificial Intelligence Policy

Students should consult the course syllabus for details about AI use in each course. Guidance for AI use can be found here:

<https://oupolicy.policystat.com/policy/18775650/latest/#autoid-r72d4>

Clinical Practicum Hours and Rotations

With the exception of MSN Administration and Post-Master's DNP Completion programs, all clinical hours must be performed in the state of Oklahoma. Clinical rotations outside the state of Oklahoma are not allowed in APRN tracks.

Affiliation Agreements

An active affiliation agreement between OU Health Campus, OU College of Nursing and the facility where the student will be performing clinical hours must be in place prior to the student performing any clinical hours, shadowing, or working on the DNP project at that facility. Students who violate this rule are subject to dismissal from the program.

Please consult the OUHC Student Handbook regarding affiliation agreements and student placements for clinical/practicum placements. Each program has different

requirements for clinical hours and rotations. More information can be found on the OU College of Nursing website.

<https://studenthandbook.ouhsc.edu/hbSections.aspx?ID=333>

Compliance

Students must comply with the OU College of Nursing and the facility's requirements prior to starting a clinical rotation at that facility. Each clinical facility has different requirements for compliance, and it is the student's responsibility to ensure they meet compliance requirements. They must remain in compliance throughout the entire rotation and academic semester in order to continue performing clinical practicum hours at that facility. If a student is out of compliance, they will be removed from the rotation until compliance is obtained. Compliance relates to but is not limited to things such as vaccine records, background check, health insurance, car insurance, RN license, etc.

Logging Clinical Hours

Clinical hours are logged using an online tracking system and students will be given login credentials and have training on how to use the system. If a student falsifies clinical attendance, they may be dismissed from the program.

Clinical Course Requirements

Clinical practicum courses are courses that contain clinical hours to be completed as part of the course requirements. Students who fail the clinical hour requirement for any reason cannot pass the clinical course despite what grade they have in the course. Passing the clinical hour requirement portion of the course is required to progress in the program to the next course.