



Nursing Student Guide

2020-2021

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DISCLAIMER

This handbook is a general information publication only. It is not intended to nor does it contain all regulations that relate to nursing students. The provisions of this handbook do not constitute a contract, expressed or implied, between any applicant, student or faculty member and The University of Texas at Tyler or The University of Texas System. The University of Texas at Tyler reserves the right to withdraw courses at any time, to change fees or tuition, calendar, curriculum, degree requirements, graduation procedures, and any other requirements affecting students. Changes will become effective whenever the proper authorities so determine and will apply to both prospective students and those already enrolled.

This handbook is intended to be used in conjunction with The University of Texas at Tyler Catalog. The School of Nursing (SON) reserves the right to revise this handbook at any time.

OVERVIEW

Introduction

Welcome to the School of Nursing (SON) at the University of Texas at Tyler. This handbook has been prepared to introduce you to the nursing program. This guide offers information specific to the nursing program and should be used in conjunction with the [general catalog](#) of The University of Texas at Tyler and the [University Manual of Policies and Procedures for Student Affairs](#). It is the student's responsibility to know the official University regulations as well as the specific requirements for nursing and to comply with them. This information will assist you in fulfilling your educational goals at The University of Texas at Tyler in the School of Nursing.

History

The School of Nursing was originally established as a Division of Nursing in 1975 on the campus of Texas Eastern University in response to local and regional needs for baccalaureate prepared nurses in East Texas. Since that initial designation, the university and the school have undergone several name changes. The Division of Nursing was changed to a School of Nursing in 1997 and designated the College of Nursing in 1999. With a restructuring of the university colleges, the School of Nursing name was again adopted in 2015 as the College of Nursing became part of the College of Nursing & Health Sciences. In 1975 the Division of Nursing program was built on a foundation of human caring. Despite several name changes, the philosophy of caring has been a constant throughout the evolution of the School.

The program was initially designed in 1975 for registered nurses to complete the BSN degree. The current RN-BSN track is offered completely online and can be completed in 15 months of full-time study with part-time study as an option. In 1979 the program received approval from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to offer the generic BSN with the first classes originating in fall of 1982. The baccalaureate program expanded with the addition of two distant education initiatives; one in Palestine, Texas (45 miles to the south) in 1995, and another in Longview, Texas (45 miles to the east) in 1997. The students at the Palestine and Longview campuses attend all classes at the distance site and participate in clinical experiences in their respective geographic regions. All nursing courses are taught by the campus faculty who also lead the clinical experiences for their respective courses. In 2019 the School of Nursing initiated an innovative concurrent program for Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) students to earn a BSN while enrolled in an ADN program; five community colleges were participating in the program by spring 2020.

The School of Nursing also boasts an innovative and progressive graduate program. With a cadre of energetic and motivated faculty, the graduate program is known for its responsiveness to community needs and use of creative and novel approaches including a combination of strategic partnerships. In spring of 1988 the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program was approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), with the first classes offered in fall 1989 and full initial NLNAC accreditation awarded in spring 1992.

Originally the graduate program focused on developing the leadership/management skills necessary to provide expert nursing care. The leadership focus evolved into the current MSN-Administration track, and through a partnership with the College of Business, a dual MSN/MBA degree is offered. The MSN-Education track offers the BSN an opportunity to gain the skills and knowledge to become part of a nursing faculty and lead education departments in clinical settings. The education certificate program also facilitates the transition of the master's prepared clinical nurse into the faculty role. The Family Nurse Practitioner degree is an exemplar of the inventive approaches and creative partnerships developed to meet the educational needs of nurses in our East Texas region and beyond. Initially started as a partnership with Texas Tech University in 1996, the MSN-FNP became the third master's degree offered by the School of Nursing in 2008. A post-master's FNP certificate is also available for the MSN prepared nurse seeking to move into primary care. A fourth certificate-only program in Nursing Informatics was started in 2016. Two new programs are being added in fall 2020: a MSN-Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner degree and post-master's certificate and a degree in MSN-Informatics, Quality, & Safety.

In spring 2005 the College of Nursing was granted authority to develop a doctoral program that admitted the first cohort in fall 2008. The PhD was the first doctoral program at The University of Texas at Tyler. In May 2011, the first four PhD graduates from the College of Nursing and from The University of Texas at Tyler received their degrees. Students are admitted to either the standard post-master's PhD or the alternative post-BSN to PhD. In response to meeting the needs of professional nurses, courses are offered entirely online with an on-campus orientation at the start of the program and a concurrent mandatory summer workshop for returning students.

The University of Texas at Tyler School of Nursing received final approval to offer the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree from the THECB on January 21, 2016. Following approval, course development began in February of 2016. The program, which offers tracks in clinical practice and leadership, received approval from SACSCOC in 2016 and CCNE accreditation in 2018. The inaugural class was admitted in summer 2016 and the first eight DNP degrees were awarded in spring 2019.

School of Nursing Mission, Vision, & Values

The School of Nursing is guided by the following mission, vision, and values.

SON Mission Statement

To empower students to excel as nurse clinicians, leaders, and scholars in a caring, learner-centered, strengths-based environment.

SON Vision Statement

We aspire to be the leader in transforming lives through excellence in nursing education

SON Values

Six key values are integral to our identity and underpin all programs offered by the SON.

- **Caring:** Professional practice that embodies empathy, presence, and advocacy, resulting in compassionate, patient-centered care.
- **Excellence:** The dynamic effort to exceed professional nursing standards of practice, education, and scholarship.

- **Spirit of inquiry:** A relentless curiosity towards nursing practice resulting in generation of new knowledge, evidence-based decision-making, and improved clinical outcomes.
- **Professionalism:** The outward expression of an individual's respect for self and others; taking responsibility for behaviors that adhere to professional standards and codes of conduct.*
- **Integrity:** Actions that reflect moral accountability in practice, education, and scholarship consistent with professional nursing values.
- **Leadership:** Establishing a clear-shared vision; providing the information, knowledge, and resources to realize that vision; coordinating and balancing varied interests of stakeholders; and inspiring others to engage in achieving mutual goals.

*ANA Code of Ethics (2015). Silver Springs, MD.

*International Council of Nurses Code of Ethics for Nurses (2012).

*Nursing Practice Act, Nursing Peer Review, & Nurse Licensure Compact: Texas Occupations Code and Statutes Regulating the Practice of Nursing (2017).

Conceptual Framework

The SON program curricular are built upon a strengths-based and learner-centered foundation, congruent with the university's [mission](#) to provide a “uniquely balanced student experience in an environment of innovative teaching and research...”. A strengths- based approach is focused on innate individual talents that can be developed into strengths that impact both personal lives and professional practice.



Threaded throughout the curricula are the concepts of

- **Spirit of Inquiry** (Curiosity, Data-Driven Decisions, Research)
- **Quality & Safety** (Technology, Evidence-Based Practice, Reasoning/Decisions)
- **Health Promotion** (Population Health, Wellness, Advocacy)
- **Leadership** (Professionalism and Interprofessional Practice)

Academic Programs

The School of Nursing offers several degree programs and certificates. Detailed information about each program or certificate is linked below.

BSN

The School of Nursing offers three options to obtain a [Bachelor of Science in Nursing](#) (BSN) Degree: the Generic BSN, the concurrent ADN/BSN, and the RN-BSN. Upon successful completion of the generic BSN curriculum at the Tyler, Longview, or Palestine campus, graduates are eligible to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN).

MSN

The School of Nursing offers three different [Master of Science in Nursing](#) Degree programs: the MSN-Administration, the MSN-Education, and the MSN-Family Nurse Practitioner. A dual MSN/MBA degree is also available. Two new programs are planned for 2020: MSN-Informatics and MSN-Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

MSN Certificates

In addition to the MSN degrees, the School of Nursing offers four different [Certificate Programs](#): the post master's certificate in Nursing Administration, the post-master's certificate in Nursing Education, the post-master's certificate in Family Nurse Practitioner, and the post-baccalaureate certificate in Nursing Informatics.

DNP

The [Doctor of Nursing Practice](#) degree prepares nurse leaders as healthcare change agents. Two tracks are available: a clinical practice track and a leadership track.

PhD

The [PhD in Nursing](#) degree prepares nurse scientists to conduct research that contributes to the advancement of nursing science and global health. Degree options include a MS to PhD track and a BSN to PhD track.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

In addition to the School of Nursing policies, students must be knowledgeable of all university policies, deadlines, and processes as outlined in the [general catalog](#) of The University of Texas at Tyler and the [University Manual of Policies and Procedures for Student Affairs](#). A partial list of key policies and resources are listed below.

Academic Calendar

Academic Calendar [link](#). Important deadlines for graduation applications, course withdrawals, and other dates are also found on the academic calendar. The student is responsible for reviewing these dates to ensure compliance with meeting requirements.

Transient Form

After a student is admitted to UT Tyler, he or she cannot register for any course(s) at any other institution until approval is granted by the Registrar's Office. Approval by the student's Adviser, Executive Director, Dean and the University Registrar is required to assure that the course taken at another institution will count toward the student's degree. A student should not register at another institution until the request for undergraduate transient admission form has been completed and approved. More can be found at this [link](#).

Veterans Resources

The Manual of Policies and Procedures can be found at this [link](#).

If a student should be called to active duty while in the program this [link](#) contains information related to withdrawals, excused absences, readmission and the 6-drop rule.

The student is expected to notify the academic advisor as soon as information is available related to potential deployment. The appropriate program director must also be notified.

Scholastic Conduct and Discipline/Academic Dishonesty

Students at the University neither lose the rights nor escape the responsibilities of citizenship. Students are expected to obey and conduct themselves in accordance with penal and civil statutes of the local, state, and federal government, Rules and regulations of the Board of Regents, University regulations and administrative rules.

UT Tyler Honor Code

*I embrace honor and integrity. Therefore, I choose not to lie, cheat, or steal,
nor to accept the actions of those who do.*

Since the value of an academic degree depends on the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for the degree, it is imperative that the student maintains a high standard of individual honor in

his or her scholastic work. **Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline** as per Chapter 8 of the [MOPP for Student Affairs](#).

It is the student's responsibility to abide by and be aware of The University of Texas at Tyler's academic [dishonesty policies](#). "Scholastic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor, providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or the attempt to commit such an act.

Regulation Awareness: It is the responsibility of the student to become familiar with the regulations of the University and to satisfy them in the proper way. Disciplinary policies and procedures are also described in the University of Texas System Board of Regents Rules and Regulations, Part One, Chapter VI, Section 3 and are printed in The UTT Student Guide.

Academic Probation/Suspension

For policies related to academic probation and suspension go to this [link](#)

If the student is dropped from the nursing program, the student may re-apply after she/he demonstrates the potential to be successful as evidenced by:

- 1) Good academic standing at UT Tyler,
- 2) Undergraduate students a GPA at UTT of 2.0 or better and for graduate students a GPA of 3.0 or better
- 3) A clear plan of how to remain successful if readmitted to the nursing program.

Excessive semester credit hours (Undergraduates)

The policy is found in this [link](#)

Grade Replacement

The policy and forms are obtained through this [link](#)

Academic Grievance Policy

See web site [link](#) and in the UT Tyler General catalog, current edition for guidelines.

1. Individual course instructors retain primary responsibility for documenting the course grade earned by the student and the instructor's judgment is final unless compelling evidence demonstrates discrimination, differential treatment to a select few students, or procedural irregularities.
2. It shall be presumed that the instructor documented the proper grade until proven otherwise.
3. The grade documented by the instructor shall remain in effect until the appeal process is concluded.
4. Any associated effects (loss of eligibility or privilege) shall be invoked even though an appeal is pending.
5. All grade report records and related materials shall be maintained for a period of six months or until the case is resolved.

6. The burden of proof rests with the student.

Non-Academic Grievance Policy

See web site [link](#) for the *Manual of Policies and Procedures for Student Affairs*, Chapter 1, current edition for guidelines.

Students with Special Needs Disability Accommodations

The procedure for accommodating a student who may have medical, psychological, learning or physical special needs is as follows:

1. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with the faculty concerning their disability/special needs.
2. The faculty refers the student to the [Office of Student Accessibility and Resources](#) (SAR) located in the University Center.
3. The SAR office will forward to the faculty an accommodation report once it has been determined the student has special needs. This should be taken care of 30 days prior to the start of classes each semester to prevent delay in initiation of accommodations.

Students who receive testing accommodations while in the nursing program, are eligible for the same accommodations to take the NCLEX-RN®. Special paperwork must be submitted at the time of application to the [Texas Board of Nursing](#).

Release of Student Information

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Texas Public Information Act, Texas Government Code §552.001 et seq., the University policy on release of student information is found in the UT Tyler catalog.

SCHOOL OF NURSING POLICIES

In addition to the University policies, students must be knowledgeable of all School of Nursing policies, deadlines, and processes. School of Nursing policies addressing professionalism, academics, and clinical are found [here](#).

NURSING ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

All nursing majors will communicate with an assigned academic advisor for release to enroll and submit required documentation. Appointments are made by using this [link](#) for undergraduate and MSN students. Potential doctoral students are advised by the Doctoral Program Director or Doctor of Nursing Practice Director. Admitted doctoral students are assigned a faculty advisor.

The student and advisor will sign a degree plan before the end of the first semester. Students are responsible for contacting their advisor each semester to review their progress. No student will be allowed to register for the next semester unless all transcripts are received, all immunizations are documented, CPR, and nursing license is current, if appropriate. **The student is ultimately responsible for meeting the requirements for graduation.**

All students enrolled in a clinical degree program must have all requirements completed in the Castle Branch system before they attend clinical. Failure to produce documentation of met requirements will result in a missed clinical day.

Responsibilities:

The Advisor will:

1. Review the student's permanent file, which includes an approved degree plan (approved during the student's first semester in the program), and maintain dated notes of contacts with students.
2. Be available to students during posted office hours and respond to requests for appointments.
3. Provide academic advisement regarding course selection, requirements for progression and graduation, and resources and referrals as needed.
4. Identify potential scholarships/awards nominees.
5. Complete degree plans and graduation evaluations.

The Student will:

1. Review and sign a degree plan during the first semester.
2. Maintain a current name, address, email, and telephone number in their file from time of admission through graduation. Failure to maintain current contact information could delay receipt of important SON messages.
3. Promptly submit transcripts to the Registrar's Office for courses completed at other colleges/universities prior to the end of the first semester of admission.
4. Prior to registration each semester make an appointment with the designated advisor. If unable to keep the appointment, advisor must be notified, and the appointment rescheduled.
5. Prior to withdrawing from a course, students are required to consult with the academic advisor. Failure to consult with academic advisor prior to withdrawal may jeopardize the student's continuation in the program.
6. If encountering difficulties in academic or clinical matters, seek guidance, resources, and/or referrals from the course faculty and the academic advisor.
7. Notify the appropriate advisor in writing/e-mail for changes in student status such as part-time, withdrawal, or change in progression.

COMMENCEMENT AND CONVOCATION

Filing for Graduation

1. University graduation requirements are outlined in [The University of Texas at Tyler Catalog](#)
2. The student is ultimately responsible for meeting the requirements for graduation.
3. Students follow the process to [apply for graduation](#) and will meet the expected deadline date.
4. Students may apply for graduation as early as 9 months prior to the final filing deadline for graduation (see link in #3).
5. **No applications are accepted after the final deadline date.**

University Commencement

[Commencement](#) is traditionally held the afternoon of the convocation (pinning) ceremony at the end of the fall and spring semesters. There is not a summer commencement and those students with a summer graduation date may opt to attend the fall ceremony.

Nursing Convocation (Pinning) Ceremony

The [Convocation Ceremony](#) celebrates the accomplishments specifically of nursing graduates. The ceremony is typically held the evening prior to the commencement ceremony of The University of Texas at Tyler.

Graduates are encouraged to participate in both ceremonies. Convocation is uniquely nursing. Information and instructions pertaining to the convocation ceremony for BSN graduates can be obtained at: <http://www.uttyler.edu/nursing/college/undergraduate/convocation.php> Information for graduates of the master's and doctoral programs is distributed by the graduate advisor and program directors.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Recognition is given to graduating students and alumni during the Convocation ceremonies.

DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nursing Students

The [DAISY Foundation](#) was established in 1999 by members of the family of Patrick Barnes, who died at age 33 of complications an auto-immune disease. The DAISY Foundation created an award to recognize the extraordinary care Pat and his family received from Pat's nurses. The DAISY Award® for Extraordinary Nurses honors nurses who go above and beyond and make extraordinary differences in patients and families experiences in healthcare. The DAISY Foundation also created an award for students. The [DAISY Award® for Extraordinary Nursing Students](#) is given each semester to a nursing student who exemplifies the delivery of clinical care in an extraordinary and compassionate way to patients and their families as they are learning.

Dr. Marian Rowe Community Service Award

This award is named in honor Dr. Rowe, of one of the three founding nurses who started the nursing program at UT Tyler and who was known for her dedication to the community. The BSN student demonstrating highest commitment to service during his or her time at UT Tyler and who posted the most community service hours is recognized at each convocation.

Dr. Doris J. Rieman Professionalism in Nursing

The award for 'most professional' is a long-established tradition at UT Tyler School of Nursing. In spring 2017, it was renamed the Dr. Doris J. Rieman Professionalism in Nursing in honor of one of the founders of the UT Tyler School of Nursing. The BSN student receiving this award must be of good character, be an active member of a professional student nursing organization and maintain an overall grade point average of 3.0 or higher. The students must also demonstrate a commitment to the nursing profession, excellence in nursing standards and professional values.

Graduate Excellence Award

Each semester faculty nominate and the vote to honor a master's student to receive the Graduate Nursing Excellence Award. Criteria for the award include grade point average, academic activities, professional growth and community service. The recipient demonstrates clinical expertise, commitment to human caring, professional and community involvement, and promotes a positive image of nursing.

Outstanding DNP Scholarly Project Award

Each year, faculty nominate and select one graduating DNP student whose work is an exemplar of excellence in evidence-based practice to receive the Outstanding DNP Scholarly Project award.

Outstanding Dissertation Award

Each year, faculty nominate and select one graduating PhD student whose work is an exemplar of excellence in research and dissemination to receive the Outstanding Dissertation award.

Outstanding Nursing Alumni Award

The SON recognizes a BSN, MSN, or doctoral graduate who has made a significant contribution to the profession of nursing through leadership, education, clinical practice, research, health policy, service, or entrepreneurial initiative. The [Outstanding Nursing Alumni Award](#) is conferred each year in the spring.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Nursing Organizations

The University of Texas at Tyler Nursing Students Association (UTTNSA)

More information is available at <http://www.nсна.org/>

Nurses Christian Fellowship (NCF)

More information is available at <http://ncf-jcn.org/>

SIGMA International Honor Society of Nursing

More information is available at <http://www.nursingsociety.org> and <http://iotanu.nursingsociety.org/IotaNuChapter/Home/>

UT Tyler Alumni Association

More information available at <https://www.uttyler.edu/alumni/>

Library Resources

The UT Tyler [Robert R. Muntz Library](#) offers an extensive collection of online databases. A librarian designated to the College of Nursing can offer assistance with online searches. The librarians will also assist students in obtaining necessary research articles through interlibrary loan.

The Louise Herrington Patriot Center

Physical well-being is critical for student success. More information about the student recreation center is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/recsports/hpc/index.php> or e-mail: hpc@uttyler.edu

The University of Texas at Tyler Health Clinic

A partnership exists between UT Health Center at Tyler and UT Tyler, The U Health Clinic is dedicated to the highest quality treatment and care of the students, faculty, and staff of UT Tyler. Immunizations required by the SON can be obtained at the Clinic. For information about services provided and hours of operation, go to <http://www.uttyler.edu/clinic>.

Campus Computing Center

The [Campus Computing Center](#) can provide assistance with student e-mail accounts and UT Tyler learning management sites. It also provides discounted software for purchase.

Bookstore

The [UT Tyler Barnes & Noble Bookstore](#) offers onsite and online services to purchase books, supplies, discounted software, and UT Tyler merchandise.

Financial Aid

The [Financial Aid Office](#) offers an extensive list of federal, state, and private financial aid opportunities with over \$5 million in financial aid available.

Registrar's Office

From registration steps to graduation procedures, the [Office of the Registrar](#) can help. Their office also handles loan deferments, name/address changes, and many other vital items related to your university experience.

College of Nursing & Health Sciences Office of Research

The [College of Nursing & Health Sciences Office of Research](#) offers research support to nursing faculty and students. The staff will assist with Institutional Review Board (IRB) applications and grant submissions. All IRB applications are reviewed by the CNHS Office of Research prior to submission for IRB approval.

Writing Center

The Writing Center is available to assist online students and those on campus. The Center provides assistance with APA formatting, reading/critiquing, tutoring in grammar and usage, mechanics, and sentence structure. Students are encouraged to utilize the services with writing assignments. The Center can be accessed in this link: <https://www.uttyler.edu/writingcenter/>

Office of Research and Scholarship

The [ORS](#) at UT Tyler assists in securing external funding by providing technical assistance during proposal preparation, handling administrative matters with sponsors and reviewing