



UNIVERSITY OF  
SAINT JOSEPH  

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CONNECTICUT

*Handbook  
for  
Graduate  
Nursing  
Students*

*2023-2024*

*Please note: Every attempt has been made to ensure that the information contained in this manual is accurate at the time of publication. The University of Saint Joseph reserves the right to correct errors or change policies, procedures, and requirements as necessary.*

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**UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH  
GRADUATE NURSING PROGRAMS**

**Welcome Letter**

Dear Student:

For new students, welcome to the Department of Nursing's Graduate Nursing Programs at the University of Saint Joseph. For returning students, welcome to a new academic year. Our programs are designed to prepare graduates for advanced nursing practice roles, including nursing leadership, practice scholarship, nursing education, and advanced practice as a nurse practitioner. We offer Psychiatric Mental Health and Family Nurse Practitioner tracks for both Master of Science and Doctor of Nursing Practice degree programs. We also offer a post-graduate Doctor of Nursing Practice degree program as well as certificates in Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner and Musculoskeletal Health/Orthopedics and Sports Medicine.

Philosophically, the Department of Nursing faculty believe that nurse practitioners need to be educated and prepared at the doctoral level to meet the complex needs of patients and populations in a complicated healthcare landscape. Our nursing organizations, including the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties, call for the DNP degree for all nurse practitioner students by 2025. While we still offer Master of Science degree programs, all nurse practitioner students will be on the same Plan of Study for their first eight semesters earning credits toward the DNP degree. Current students will earn credits towards the DNP degree as we transition courses from the master's degree level to the doctoral level. This means your program of study will be challenging and rewarding but will require a level of scholarly immersion and commitment to succeed. The use of good study habits, regular class attendance, participation in study groups, completion of reading assignments, content remediation, and meeting with and discussing your progress with your faculty advisor/team leader/mentor will help promote success in the program.

This handbook serves as a guide for all Graduate Nursing Programs students. It also provides you with additional important information, such as grading, progression policies, general departmental policies related to classroom and clinical requirements, and University policies related to academic integrity and student life. It contains the most current information about our Graduate Nursing Programs, and I know you will find it a valuable resource throughout your nursing studies. You will need to read through it thoroughly, sign the final page, and submit it to your clinical compliance program, Project Concert.

Some changes that I want to bring to your attention include the change to our Attendance Policy (p. 26), our Clinical Compliance Policy (p. 34), and the explicit prohibition to contact Hartford Healthcare providers directly (p. 34). Another significant change is the increase to 750 clinical hours for the nurse practitioner tracks starting with the Fall 2023 cohort. This change will not impact students who started our program before Fall 2023. This change meets the standard set by the National Task Force on Quality Nurse Practitioner Education.

Our Department of Nursing faculty and administration are committed to your success as a student. Please communicate proactively and we will do all we can to encourage you to do your best work in the program. We are always available to meet with you personally to assist in any way we can. Please feel free to make an appointment to meet with any of us, including myself, at any time.

With best wishes for your success,

Yvonne Joy, DNP, APRN  
Associate Professor of Nursing, Director of Graduate Programs  
School of Interdisciplinary Health and Science  
[yjoy@usj.edu](mailto:yjoy@usj.edu); 860-231-5258

# About the Department of Nursing

## ***Structure***

The University is divided into three schools. The School of Arts, Sciences, Business, and Education; the School of Pharmacy and Physician Assistance Studies; and the School of Interdisciplinary Health and Science. The Department of Nursing is part of the School of Interdisciplinary Health and Science. We follow a hierarchical *chain of command* with reporting relationships. Matters arising can be addressed, beginning with those closest to the problem and ending with those highest in the line of authority should the problem be left unresolved. Our chain of command is as follows:

1. Course faculty or Team Leader
2. Director, Graduate Programs (Dr. Yvonne Joy, [yjoy@usj.edu](mailto:yjoy@usj.edu), 860-231-5258)
3. Chair, Department of Nursing (Dr. Denise Puia, please email Kelley George, [kgeorge@usj.edu](mailto:kgeorge@usj.edu), 860-231-5247)
4. Dean, School of Interdisciplinary Health and Science (Dr. Karl Besel, please email Kim Donovan, [kdonovan@usj.edu](mailto:kdonovan@usj.edu), 860-231-5741)

## ***Accreditation***

The master's degree programs in nursing, Doctor of Nursing Practice programs, and the post-graduate PMHNP certificate program at the University of Saint Joseph are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.ccnaccreditation.org>).

## ***Vision***

The Department of Nursing is an innovative center of nursing excellence that educates a diverse population across all levels of nursing practice. Graduates are prepared to lead the profession utilizing an evidence-based approach to reduce disparities and improve the health of persons, families, and communities.

(Adopted 1.13.22)

## ***Mission***

The mission of the Department of Nursing is to provide a rigorous professional education to a diverse population, built on a firm foundation in the liberal arts and sciences, that prepares students for leadership roles at all levels of nursing practice. The Department is committed to supporting holistic growth, fostering strong ethical values, providing an environment of equity and inclusion, promoting personal integrity, and preparing students committed to social justice.

(Adopted 1.13.22)

## ***Philosophy***

The faculty of the USJ Department of Nursing believe that Nursing is a unique professional discipline with caring and competence at its core. The faculty believe that professional Nursing practice, at all levels, requires an understanding of the self and adherence to strong moral and ethical values. We recognize the imperative to make sound healthcare judgments and the ability to

take appropriate action, utilizing empiric, aesthetic, ethical, personal, and emancipatory knowing (Carper, 1978; Chinn & Kramer, 2019). We embrace a strong commitment to social justice, anti-racism, and mitigation of health disparities.

Further, the faculty believe that the art and science of nursing are operationalized through the application of theoretical models, evidence-based practice, creative alternative approaches, patient advocacy, and caring interpersonal communication. The faculty offer educational programs that specifically challenge nursing students at all levels of practice to critique the status quo and act with moral courage to overcome social injustices, to attain optimal human health and sustainable wellness for all.

The faculty consider Health to be a personally perceived state of well-being that consists of a dynamic interplay among the physiological, spiritual, psychological, social, cultural, and cognitive dimensions inherent in all people. Patients are viewed as diverse individuals, families, communities, or global societies experiencing transitions related to their health needs (Meleis et al., 2012); nurses form partnerships with patients to develop plans of care that encourage healing transitions to promote and sustain health.

The faculty believe in supporting admission and retention of a student population that is diverse in race, religion, ethnicity, cultural background, and gender identity and orientation. We strive to create student-centered teaching and learning environments that encourage, inspire, and challenge each student to develop all aspects of their personhood. Such personal development enables students to develop their own unique, self-reflective practice to create a foundation of human understanding that is grounded in compassion.

The faculty believe that practicing professional Nursing requires an education that adheres to standards of excellence and is firmly grounded in the natural and social sciences and liberal arts. Effective teaching and learning for nursing practice are realized and enhanced through reflective practice, and culturally sensitive education in an environment of inclusivity and mutual respect for all. Faculty collaborate with multidisciplinary scholars, care professionals, and students, to build a cohesive curriculum that considers the ever-evolving and expanding volume of health-related knowledge. Faculty endeavor to integrate and apply technology, responsive practice, and meaningful clinical experiences to engage students to develop strong critical thinking, sound clinical judgment, and consistent growth in clinical skills competency. In striving for overall educational excellence, the faculty holds itself continually accountable for ongoing evaluation and improvement in all aspects of curriculum content and process.

(Adopted 9.1.22)

### ***Department of Nursing Events***

The Department of Nursing has several events throughout the year that students may be required to attend:

1. Convocation is an academic event and marks the beginning of each academic year during the fall semester.
2. Hooding & Awards Ceremony is an academic event that prepares students for Commencement and occurs during their last semester in our program.
3. Commencement is an academic event and occurs annually in May.



4. Symposium Day is an annual spring semester event where students publicly demonstrate their research, scholarship, and creative activities to the campus community. All DNP students are required to attend this event.
5. The Mercy Nursing Lecture is an annual event and features a nurse speaker who exemplifies the art and science of nursing.

## American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses (American Nurses Association, 2015)

### **All graduate nursing students are expected to adhere to the following provisions of the ANA Code of Ethics:**

1. The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.
2. The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.
3. The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.
4. The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and acts consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.
5. The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.
6. The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality care.
7. The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.
8. The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.
9. The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.

## Diversity, Health Equity, & Inclusion Statement

The Department of Nursing strives to foster an environment where student, faculty, and staff similarities and differences are not only embraced and valued but also celebrated. We acknowledge

that institutional diversity creates an environmental cornerstone for the advancement of knowledge, delivery of equitable care, and increasing access to care for all.

By working collaboratively with faculty, staff, students, and our community partners, the Department of Nursing at the University of Saint Joseph strives to educate a culturally responsible and socially accountable healthcare workforce to meet the ever-evolving needs of the diverse populations we serve.

## Professional Ethics and Civility

Graduate students are expected to abide by the American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses and to act professionally and ethically in the classroom and clinical experiences. Students are also expected to follow the Civility Statement (below). Any behavior considered unprofessional, unethical, or uncivil will be reviewed by the Department of Nursing faculty and may be referred to the chairperson. Unprofessional, unethical, or uncivil behavior may be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Examples of unprofessional/ unethical behavior include but are not limited to:

- Conduct that is disruptive and infringes on the rights of fellow students or faculty.
- Habitually arriving late for class or clinical and/or leaving early; failing to notify the preceptor and clinical coordinator about absences from clinical experiences.
- Falsifying a clinical log and/or clinical documentation to misrepresent clients and/or hours completed at a clinical agency.
- Being consistently unprepared for a clinical experience, as observed and documented by the student's clinical preceptor.
- Taking irresponsible actions or demonstrating impaired personal or clinical judgment in the classroom or clinical experiences, as observed and documented by the clinical preceptor, clinical partners, or course faculty.
- Soliciting, utilizing, or distributing papers and exams from previous, current, or future semesters.
- Utilizing and/or compensating an impersonator.
- Assisting another to violate these guidelines.
- Breaching confidentiality of online comments posted by classmates and instructors.
- Failing to notify instructors ahead of time if work will be late.

### ***Civility Statement (DON approved 8.29.19)***

By virtue of our practice and identification with professional nursing ethics and values, all faculty and students in The Department of Nursing are expected to adhere to the ethical provisions of the ANA Code of Ethics (American Nurses Association, 2015). These nine provisions, designed to ensure the highest levels of quality patient care, include specific guidelines and expectations for professional and inter-professional behavior. Several provisions speak directly to the kind of behaviors required of all nurses to establish and maintain a strong professional environment:

- Provision 1: Respect and support for human dignity and worth of every human being;
- Provision 4: Accountability and responsibility for nursing judgments, decisions, and actions;
- Provision 5: Duties to self and others for promotion of personal health, safety, and well-being;

- Provision 6: The mandate to establish, maintain, and improve the ethical environment of work settings;
- Provision 8: The obligation to collaborate with other health professionals for health, human rights, and health diplomacy;
- Provision 9: The mandate to promote social justice in nursing and health policy.

To ensure the ongoing maintenance of a strong professional environment within the Department of Nursing that affirms our professional ethics and values, all students are expected to conduct themselves in a civil manner and demonstrate respect for others in all academic and clinical settings. Civility is defined as always behaving respectfully, professionally, and courteously in all written and verbal communications with fellow students, faculty and staff, patients and the public on campus and in clinical settings. The following guidelines will provide further direction:

Students demonstrate respect for peers and faculty by following these guidelines:

- Supporting the work of their colleagues
- Accepting constructive comments from an instructor, preceptor, or clinical agency personnel
- Discussing conflicts in a constructive manner
- Refraining from public criticism of others
- Refraining from using threatening or belligerent language
- Refraining from inciting others to engage in disruptive conduct or bullying behaviors.

### ***10 Tips for Promoting Respect and Civility (Richmond, 2015)***

- 1) Focus on others' needs and consider how your words and actions will impact others before you speak or act. Approach each interaction with respect, regardless of whether you believe that the other person's behaviors "earn" or even elicit that respect.
- 2) Be intentional in your communications. Plan to listen to the other person without interruption and practice effective listening skills. Develop an awareness of the respect that you display in all areas of your communications, including what you say, how you say it, your voice tone, and the body language that you demonstrate.
- 3) Become a bridge builder and act in a manner that creates an inclusive work environment. Look for various ways to have diversity in work teams and committees as well as in individual associations. Be aware of the downsides caused by labeling and stereotyping others. Replace these behaviors with respect for individual differences.
- 4) Appreciate the value of diverse opinions in developing approaches to varying situations. Recognize that it does not equate to an agreement if you listen, clarify what was said, and ask questions to gain an understanding of others' opinions. In situations where disagreement results, learn to "agree to disagree" respectfully.
- 5) Understand that conflicts will occur in the workplace and take responsibility for your actions, regardless of the situation. Take time to understand your triggers or "hot buttons." Knowing what makes you angry and frustrated will enable you to manage your reactions and respond more appropriately. Practice self-restraint and focus on your overall objectives in responding to potential conflicts. A positive and solution-driven approach will facilitate your ability to resolve.
- 6) Guard against acting impulsively based on negative assumptions about another's intent, as that can lead to damaged relationships. Take time to analyze relevant facts and to reconsider your assumptions.
- 7) Avoid tendencies to become caught up in gossip, complaining, or other forms of negativity in day-to-day interactions. Be mindful of the following quote by Ruth Anne Crouse, "What

Peter tells me about Paul tells me more about Peter than it tells me about Paul.” Recognize that your actions will influence how others perceive you.

- 8) View today’s difficult situations from a broader and more realistic perspective by considering what they mean relative to the overall scheme of things. Ask yourself questions such as, “How will I look back on these circumstances in a week, month, or year?”
- 9) Be supportive of your organization in your communications both inside and outside of the workplace. Ensure that any comments that you make place the organization (including departments and individuals) in a positive yet realistic light.
- 10) Pay attention to how respectful you are in your communications and other actions on an ongoing basis. Rate yourself (for instance, on a scale of 1-10) periodically after interactions to measure your success and identify opportunities for improvement.

## AACN Essentials for Advanced-Level Nursing Education

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing adopted new Essentials in April 2021. We are in the process of implementing these Essentials into our curriculum and will continue to do so over the next few academic years. There are 10 domains of nursing with related competencies for advanced-level nursing education. The full document further outlines sub-competencies that incorporate the necessary curriculum content and expected performance measures of graduate nursing students. For more information, visit <https://www.aacnnursing.org/AACN-Essentials>.

<b>Domain 1: Knowledge for Nursing Practice</b>
Competency 1.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the discipline of nursing’s distinct perspective and where shared perspectives exist with other disciplines
Competency 1.2 Apply theory and research-based knowledge from nursing, the arts, humanities, and other sciences.
Competency 1.3 Demonstrate clinical judgment founded on a broad knowledge base.
<b>Domain 2: Person-Centered Care</b>
Competency 2.1 Engage with the individual in establishing a caring relationship.
Competency 2.2 Communicate effectively with individuals.
Competency 2.3 Integrate assessment skills in practice.
Competency 2.4 Diagnose actual or potential health problems and needs.
Competency 2.5 Develop a plan of care.
Competency 2.6 Demonstrate accountability for care delivery.
Competency 2.7 Evaluate outcomes of care.
Competency 2.8 Promote self-care management.
Competency 2.9 Provide care coordination.
<b>Domain 3: Population Health</b>
Competency 3.1 Manage population health.
Competency 3.2 Engage in effective partnerships.
Competency 3.3 Consider the socioeconomic impact of the delivery of health care.
Competency 3.4 Advance equitable population health policy.
Competency 3.5 Demonstrate advocacy strategies.
Competency 3.6 Advance preparedness to protect population health during disasters and public health emergencies.
<b>Domain 4: Scholarship for the Nursing Discipline</b>
Competency 4.1 Advance the scholarship of nursing.
Competency 4.2 Integrate best evidence into nursing practice.
Competency 4.3 Promote the ethical conduct of scholarly activities.

<b>Domain 5: Quality and Safety</b>
Competency 5.1 Apply quality improvement principles in care delivery.
Competency 5.2 Contribute to a culture of patient safety.
Competency 5.3 Contribute to a culture of provider and work environment safety.
<b>Domain 6: Interprofessional Partnerships</b>
Competency 6.1 Communicate in a manner that facilitates a partnership approach to quality care delivery.
Competency 6.2 Perform effectively in different team roles, using principles and values of team dynamics.
Competency 6.3 Use knowledge of nursing and other professions to address healthcare needs.
Competency 6.4 Work with other professions to maintain a climate of mutual learning, respect, and shared values.
<b>Domain 7: Systems-Based Practice</b>
Competency 7.1 Participate in organizational strategic planning.
Competency 7.2 Incorporate consideration of cost-effectiveness of care.
Competency 7.3 Optimize system effectiveness through application of innovation and evidence-based practice.
<b>Domain 8: Informatics and Healthcare Technologies</b>
Competency 8.1 Describe the various information and communication technology tools used in the care of patients, communities, and populations.
Competency 8.2 Use information and communication technology to gather data, create information, and generate knowledge.
Competency 8.3 Use information and communication technologies and informatics processes to deliver safe nursing care to diverse populations in a variety of settings.
Competency 8.4 Use information and communication technology to support documentation of care and communication among providers, patients, and all system levels.
Competency 8.5 Use information and communication technologies in accordance with ethical, legal, professional, and regulatory standards, and workplace policies in the delivery of care.
<b>Domain 9: Professionalism</b>
Competency 9.1 Demonstrate an ethical comportment in one's practice reflective of nursing's mission to society.
Competency 9.2 Employ participatory approach to nursing care.
Competency 9.3 Demonstrate accountability to the individual, society, and the profession.
Competency 9.4 Comply with relevant laws, policies, and regulations.
Competency 9.5 Demonstrate the professional identity of nursing.
Competency 9.6 Integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion as core to one's professional identity.
<b>Domain 10: Personal, Professional, and Leadership Development</b>
Competency 10.1 Demonstrate a commitment to personal health and well-being.
Competency 10.2 Demonstrate a spirit of inquiry that fosters flexibility and professional maturity.
Competency 10.3 Develop capacity for leadership.

## Graduate Programs Outcomes

1. Demonstrates application of nursing and related sciences to inform clinical judgment in assessing, diagnosing, and managing high-quality healthcare. (Domain 1, 2, 5)
2. Translates advanced-level nursing knowledge to provide holistic individualized care that advocates for diversity, equity, and inclusion. (Domain 1, 2, 3, 6)

3. Applies advanced-level nursing knowledge to health promotion and disease prevention through understanding cost-effectiveness and healthcare delivery systems. (Domain 1, 3, 4, 7)
4. Engages in the scholarship of nursing by critically appraising evidence through an understanding of the principles of research, informatics, and technology. (Domain 2, 4, 8)
5. Applies principles of safety and quality-driven care across healthcare settings and systems. (Domain 4, 5, 6, 7)
6. Demonstrates understanding of the role of interprofessional partnerships in advanced-level nursing practice. (Domain 2, 5, 6, 9)
7. Appraises systems-based practice and health policy as it influences healthcare outcomes through strategic planning, cost-effective care, and evidence-based practice. (Domain 2, 3, 5, 7)
8. Demonstrates adherence to professional standards for advanced-level nursing practice. (Domain 8, 9, 10)
9. Demonstrates commitment to excellence through personal, professional, and leadership development. (Domain 3, 9, 10)
10. Applies nursing philosophical and theoretical concepts in identifying, initiating, and managing advanced practice nursing identity, professional roles, and clinical activities. (Domain 1, 9, 10)
11. Provides individual and population-centered care that is centered on an appreciation of human diversity and advocacy for social justice, equity, and inclusion for all. (Domain 2, 3, 8, 9)

## Master of Science in Nursing Programs

The University of Saint Joseph Department of Nursing Master of Science degree programs in Nursing include a Family Nurse Practitioner Track and a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Track. The Master of Science degree program with nurse practitioner certification is a 52-credit program designed to be completed over eight consecutive semesters with a part-time Plan of Study.

The Family Nurse Practitioner Track prepares graduates for outpatient primary care. Clinical experiences include all patient populations from pediatrics to geriatrics, vulnerable and marginalized populations, as well as uninsured, underinsured, and insured groups. Students complete clinical rotations in a variety of settings including private practices, public clinics, community settings, and schools. Students also gain exposure to a variety of nurse practitioner skills, including well-women exams, interpreting electrocardiograms, and wound treatment, to name a few. Students complete 590 direct patient care hours across four clinical courses. Students are eligible to complete the ANCC or the AANP Family Nurse Practitioner Board Certification examination.

The Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Track prepares graduates for a wide scope of practice. Clinical experiences include all patient populations, including child/adolescents to adult/geriatrics, vulnerable and marginalized populations, as well as uninsured, underinsured, and

insured groups. Students complete clinical rotations in a variety of settings including inpatient, outpatient, intensive outpatient, private practices, public clinics, community settings, and schools. Students also gain exposure to a variety of nurse practitioner skills, including medication management, psychotherapy (including individual, family, and group), electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS), and medication-assisted treatment (MAT), for example, ketamine, medical marijuana, and suboxone. Students complete 540 direct patient care hours across three clinical courses with a minimum of 60 hours caring for the child and adolescent population, and a minimum of 60 hours caring for the geriatric population. Students are eligible to complete the ANCC Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Board Certification examination.

Students may transfer up to six credits of doctoral-level coursework to a core course. The course must have been completed within the last 5 years of the USJ start date and the student must have earned a B or higher grade. Transfer credits will not be accepted for any clinical course.

**\*\*Please note:** For MS students beginning their program in Fall 2023 or Spring 2024, their plan of study will consist of 53 credits over eight continuous semesters, including 750 clinical hours across five clinical courses.\*\* A double asterisk indicates other pertinent information specific to this group of MS students.

### ***Required Core Master of Science Curriculum***

<b>Required Courses</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NURS 519 - Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NURS 535 – Advanced Pharmacology	3
NURS 507 – Advanced Physical Assessment	3
NURS 507L – Advanced Physical Assessment Lab	1
NURS 544 - Assessment and Diagnosis of Mental Health Conditions	3
NURS 709 - Role Development and Scholarly Writing	3
NURS 700 - Nursing Science and Practice	3
NURS 703 - Quantitative Methods/Biostatistics	3
NURS 725 - Research Translation for Evidence Based Practice	3
NURS 723 - Ethics, Healthcare Disparities and Social Justice	3
NURS 702 - Management and Transformational Leadership	3
NURS 706 - Population and Global Health I: Health Policy	3
NURS 708 - Professional Issues	3

Upon completion of the MS degree program, all 700-level courses completed with a B or higher can be applied towards the DNP degree within three years of MS degree conferral.

### ***\*\* Fall 2023/Spring 2024 Required Core Master of Science Curriculum***

<b>Required Courses</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NURS 519 - Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NURS 535 – Advanced Pharmacology	3
NURS 507 – Advanced Physical Assessment	3
NURS 709 - Role Development and Scholarly Writing	3
NURS 700 - Nursing Science and Practice	3
NURS 703 - Quantitative Methods/Biostatistics	3

NURS 725 - Research Translation for Evidence-Based Practice	3
NURS 723 - Ethics, Healthcare Disparities and Social Justice	3
NURS 702 - Management and Transformational Leadership	3
NURS 706 - Population and Global Health I: Health Policy	3

Upon completion of the MS degree program, all 700-level courses completed with a B or higher can be applied toward the DNP degree within three years of MS degree conferral.

### ***Required Family Nurse Practitioner Courses***

<b>Courses</b>	<b>Clinical Hours</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NURS 591 – Advanced Practice in Women’s Health	90	3
NURS 508 - Advanced Practice in Pediatric Primary Care	150^	4
NURS 509 – Advanced Practice in Adult and Geriatric Primary Care	175	4
NURS 511 - Advanced Clinical Practicum (FNP track)	175^^	4

^ A maximum of 50 hours may be in an outpatient specialty pediatric area. The 100 remaining hours will be in a pediatric primary care setting.

^^ A maximum of 75 hours can be in an outpatient specialty setting. The 100 remaining hours will be in a primary care setting.

### ***\*\* Fall 2023/Spring 2024 Required Family Nurse Practitioner Courses***

<b>Required Courses</b>	<b>Clinical Hours</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NURS 732 – FNP Skills/Differential Diagnosis	0	3
NURS 544 - Assessment and Diagnosis of Mental Health Conditions	150	4
NURS 591 – Advanced Practice in Gender Health	150	4
NURS 508 - Advanced Practice in Pediatric Primary Care	150^	4
NURS 509 – Advanced Practice in Adult and Geriatric Primary Care	150	4
NURS 511 - Advanced Clinical Practicum (FNP track)	150^^	4

^ A maximum of 50 hours may be in an outpatient specialty pediatric area. The 100 remaining hours will be in a pediatric primary care setting.

^^ A maximum of 75 hours can be in an outpatient specialty setting. The 75 remaining hours will be in a primary care setting.

### ***Required Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Courses***

<b>Required Courses</b>	<b>Clinical Hours</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NURS 530 - Neuropsychopharmacology		3
NURS 502 – Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing I	180+	4
NURS 504 – Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing II	180+	4
NURS 521 - Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing III - Capstone	180	4

+ A minimum of 60 hours must be completed with the child/adolescent or geriatric population in NURS 502. In NURS 504, a minimum of 60 hours must be completed in the other population not completed in NURS 502.



**\*\* Fall 2023/Spring 2024 Required Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Courses**

<b>Required Courses</b>	<b>Clinical Hours</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NURS 731 – PMHNP Skills/Differential Diagnosis	0	3
NURS 544 - Assessment and Diagnosis of Mental Health Conditions	150	4
NURS 530 - Neuropsychopharmacology	150	4
NURS 502 – Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing I	150 <sup>+</sup>	4
NURS 504 – Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing II	150 <sup>+</sup>	4
NURS 521 - Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing III - Capstone	150	4

+ A minimum of 60 hours must be completed with the child/adolescent or geriatric population in NURS 502. In NURS 504, a minimum of 60 hours must be completed in the other population not completed in NURS 502.

**Post-Graduate Certificate Programs**

The University of Saint Joseph Department of Nursing Post-Graduate Certificate programs include a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Track and a Musculoskeletal Health/Orthopedics and Sports Medicine Track.

***Post-Graduate Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Curriculum***

The Post-Graduate Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Certificate Track prepares graduates for a wide scope of practice. Clinical experiences include all patient populations including child/adolescents to adult/geriatrics, vulnerable and marginalized populations, as well as uninsured, underinsured, and insured groups. Students complete clinical rotations in a variety of settings including inpatient, outpatient, intensive outpatient, private practices, public clinics, community settings, and schools. Students also gain exposure to a variety of nurse practitioner skills, including medication management, psychotherapy (including individual, family, and group), electroconvulsive therapy, transcranial magnetic stimulation, medicated-assisted treatment, ketamine, medical marijuana, and suboxone, to name a few. Students complete 250-540 direct patient care hours. A customized Plan of Study is created upon admission. Students are eligible to complete the ANCC Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Board Certification examination. Transfer credits will not be accepted for NURS 544, NURS 530, NURS 502, NURS 504, and NURS 521. Transfer credits will be accepted for NURS 519, 535, and NURS 507 if completed with a B higher within the last 5 years.

Psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner students must complete the PMHNP skills course and 3Ps *for the lifespan*: advanced pathophysiology, advanced pharmacology, and advanced physical assessment. Currently practicing nurse practitioners (defined as practicing a minimum of 1000 hours in the past 2 years) who completed the 3Ps courses (for the lifespan) during their nurse practitioner program with a B or better will have met this requirement. Other applicants who are not practicing nurse practitioners, did not complete a nurse practitioner degree program, or completed a

non-clinical degree, will be required to complete the PMHNP skills course and the 3Ps at the University of Saint Joseph.

***Current RNs with MS Nursing degree***

**Requirements (32 credits and 750 clinical hours)**

Registered nurses who are not practicing nurse practitioners, did not complete a nurse practitioner degree program, or completed a non-clinical MS Nursing degree, will be required to complete the PMHNP skills course and the 3Ps at the University of Saint Joseph (transfer credits will not be accepted).

<b>Required Courses</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NURS 519: Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NURS 535: Advanced Pharmacology	3
NURS 507: Advanced Physical Assessment	3
NURS 731: PMHNP Skills/Differential Diagnosis	3

<b>Clinical Courses</b>	<b>Clinical Hours</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NURS 544 - Assessment and Diagnosis of Mental Health Conditions	150	4
NURS 530 - Neuropsychopharmacology	150	4
NURS 502 – Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing I	150 <sup>+</sup>	4
NURS 504 – Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing II	150 <sup>+</sup>	4
NURS 521 - Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing III - Capstone	150	4

+ A minimum of 60 hours must be completed with the child/adolescent or geriatric population in NURS 502. In NURS 504, a minimum of 60 hours must be completed in the other population not completed in NURS 502.

***Current Nurse Practitioners in Other Specialties***

**Requirements (minimum of 20 credits and 500 clinical hours)**

Currently practicing nurse practitioners (defined as practicing a minimum of 1000 hours in the past 2 years) certified in other specialties must complete these courses:

<b>Required Courses</b>	<b>Credits</b>
If not previously completed for the lifespan:	
NURS 519: Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NURS 535: Advanced Pharmacology	3
NURS 507: Advanced Physical Assessment	3
NURS 731: PMHNP Skills/Differential Diagnosis	3

<b>Clinical Courses</b>	<b>Clinical Hours</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NURS 544 - Assessment and Diagnosis of Mental Health Conditions	100	4
NURS 530 - Neuropsychopharmacology	100	4
NURS 502 – Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing I	100 <sup>+</sup>	4
NURS 504 – Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing II	100 <sup>+</sup>	4

NURS 521 - Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing III - Capstone	100	4
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+ A minimum of 60 hours must be completed with the child/adolescent or geriatric population in NURS 502. In NURS 504, a minimum of 60 hours must be completed in the other population not completed in NURS 502.

### ***Current Psychiatric Clinical Nurse Specialists***

#### **Requirements (12 credits and 250 clinical hours)**

Psychiatric Clinical Nurse Specialists who meet all other curricular requirements for the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Certificate must complete these courses:

<b>Students with Psychiatric CNS</b>	<b>Clinical Hours</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NURS 544: Assessment, Diagnosis and Treatment of Mental Health Conditions	75	4
NURS 530: Neuropsychopharmacology	75	4
NURS 521: Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing III - Capstone	100	4

Psychiatric clinical nurse specialists must also complete at least 250 clinical hours in the population for which they are not currently certified. This means a psychiatric clinical nurse specialist who is certified in Child/Adolescent will need to complete 250 hours in the Adult/Geriatric population. For a psychiatric clinical nurse specialist who is certified in Adult/Geriatrics, they will need to complete their hours in the Child/Adolescent population.

### ***Post-Graduate Musculoskeletal Health/Orthopedics and Sports Medicine Certificate Curriculum***

The Post-Graduate Musculoskeletal Health/Orthopedics and Sports Medicine prepares graduates to care for patients with musculoskeletal complaints in the primary care and specialty settings of orthopedics and sports medicine. This program is intended to broaden the expertise of Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants. Currently enrolled graduate nursing students can add this track to their Plan of Study after completion of NURS 507: Advanced Physical Assessment. Students will need to meet the ONCB (Orthopedic Nurse Certification Board) requirements to be eligible to sit for the ONCB Orthopedic Nurse Practitioner Board Certification examination.

<b>Required Courses</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NURS 602: Musculoskeletal Essentials I	3
NURS 604: Musculoskeletal Essentials II	3
NURS 606: Musculoskeletal Essentials III	3

## **Doctor of Nursing Practice Programs**

The University of Saint Joseph Department of Nursing Doctor of Nursing Practice programs include post-baccalaureate and post-graduate entry. Post-baccalaureate students select Family Nurse Practitioner Track or Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Track. With post-graduate entry,

students are not required to select a nurse practitioner track but may add a nurse practitioner track if they choose. Students in the DNP Program are not eligible for an MS degree.

The Family Nurse Practitioner Track prepares graduates for outpatient primary care. Clinical experiences include all patient populations from pediatrics to geriatrics, vulnerable and marginalized populations, as well as uninsured, underinsured, and insured groups. Students complete clinical rotations in a variety of settings including private practices, public clinics, community settings, and schools. Students also gain exposure to a variety of nurse practitioner skills, including well-women exams, electrocardiograms, and wound treatment, to name a few. Students complete 750 direct patient care hours across five clinical courses. Students are eligible to complete the ANCC or the AANP Family Nurse Practitioner Board Certification examination.

The Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Track prepares graduates for a wide scope of practice. Clinical experiences include all patient populations including child/adolescents to adult/geriatrics, vulnerable and marginalized populations, as well as uninsured, underinsured, and insured groups. Students complete clinical rotations in a variety of settings including inpatient, outpatient, intensive outpatient, private practices, public clinics, community settings, and schools. Students also gain exposure to a variety of nurse practitioner skills, including medication management, psychotherapy (including individual, family, and group), electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS), and medication-assisted treatment (MAT), for example, ketamine, medical marijuana, and suboxone. Students complete 750 direct patient care hours across five clinical courses with a minimum of 60 hours caring for the child and adolescent population, and a minimum of 60 hours caring for the geriatric population. Students are eligible to complete the ANCC Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Board Certification examination.

Students may transfer up to six credits of doctoral-level coursework to a core course. The course must have been completed within the last 5 years of USJ start date and the student must have earned a B or higher grade. Transfer credits will not be accepted for any clinical course.

All DNP students will complete a Scholarly Project. See the separate handbook for the DNP Scholarly Project.

### ***Post-Baccalaureate Doctor of Nursing Practice Program***

Students admitted to the post-baccalaureate Doctor of Nursing Practice Program have a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing. Students select either Family Nurse Practitioner or Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner track in addition to their core doctoral curriculum. Students are eligible to take the respective nurse practitioner board examination at the completion of their final practicum (NURS 511 for FNP students and NURS 521 for PMHNP students). Students are eligible for a license once their degree is conferred.

The post-baccalaureate Doctor of Nursing Practice Program is designed to be completed over twelve consecutive semesters in a cohort model, with courses scheduled on a weekly basis. Students who are employed full-time may be able to keep up their schedule for the first year, but once students reach their clinical courses involving clinical placements, students are expected to rearrange schedules or reduce work hours to have several days available during the week for clinical placements.

## ***Post-Graduate Doctor of Nursing Practice Program***

Students admitted to the post-graduate Doctor of Nursing Practice Program have a Master of Science degree in Nursing. Students complete the core doctoral curriculum and may choose to add Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) or Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) curriculum for certification. Students pursuing certification are eligible to take the respective nurse practitioner boards at the completion of their final practicum (NURS 511 for FNP students or NURS 521 for PMHNP students). Only post-graduate DNP students pursuing PMHNP certification are eligible for licensure before the doctoral degree is conferred.

The post-graduate Doctor of Nursing Practice Program is designed to be completed over nine-to-twelve consecutive semesters in a cohort model with weekly classes. Students who are employed full time may be able to keep up their schedule for the first year, but if students are taking clinical courses involving clinical placements, students are expected to rearrange schedules or reduce work hours to have several days available during the week for clinical placements.

Students who previously completed a nurse practitioner program must:

1. Complete Appendix A *Documentation of Previous NP Clinical Practicum Experience*
2. Submit a statement from their institution indicating the number of precepted clinical hours as part of your MS program. A maximum of 750 hours from an MS program will be credited toward the 1000 DNP required hours.

## ***Required Core Doctoral Curriculum***

<b>Courses</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NURS 709 - Role Development and Scholarly Writing	3
NURS 700 - Nursing Science and Practice	3
NURS 703 - Quantitative Methods/Biostatistics	3
NURS 725 - Research Translation for Evidence Based Practice	3
NURS 723 - Ethics, Healthcare Disparities and Social Justice	3
NURS 702 - Management and Transformational Leadership	3
NURS 706 - Population and Global Health I: Health Policy	3
NURS 708 - Professional Issues	3
NURS 707 - Population and Global Health II: Health Advocacy	3
NURS 701 - Healthcare Quality and Informatics	3
NURS 704 - Systems Thinking and Fiscal Analysis	3
NURS 726 – DNP Scholarly Project I	3
NURS 780 – DNP Scholarly Project II	3
NURS 781 – DNP Scholarly Project III	3
NURS 782 – DNP Scholarly Project IV**	6

\*\*Starting with the Fall 2023 cohort, NURS 782 will be changed to 3 credits

## ***Required Family Nurse Practitioner Courses***

<b>Required Courses</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NURS 519 - Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NURS 535 – Advanced Pharmacology	3

NURS 507 – Advanced Physical Assessment	3
NURS 507L – Advanced Physical Assessment Lab	1
NURS 544 - Assessment and Diagnosis of Mental Health Conditions	3

Clinical Courses	Clinical Hours	Credits
NURS 591 – Advanced Practice in Women’s Health	90	3
NURS 508 - Advanced Practice in Pediatric Primary Care	150^	4
NURS 509 – Advanced Practice in Adult and Geriatric Primary Care	175	4
NURS 511 - Advanced Clinical Practicum (FNP track)	175^^	4

^ A maximum of 50 hours may be in an outpatient specialty pediatric area. The 100 remaining hours will be in a pediatric primary care setting.

^^ A maximum of 75 hours can be in an outpatient specialty setting. The 100 remaining hours will be in a primary care setting.

**\*\* Fall 2023/Spring 2024 Required Family Nurse Practitioner Courses**

Required Courses	Credits
NURS 519 - Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NURS 535 – Advanced Pharmacology	3
NURS 507 – Advanced Physical Assessment	3
NURS 732 – FNP Skills/Differential Diagnosis	3

Clinical Courses	Clinical Hours	Credits
NURS 544 - Assessment and Diagnosis of Mental Health Conditions	150	4
NURS 591 – Advanced Practice in Gender Health	150	4
NURS 508 - Advanced Practice in Pediatric Primary Care	150^	4
NURS 509 – Advanced Practice in Adult and Geriatric Primary Care	150	4
NURS 511 - Advanced Clinical Practicum (FNP track)	150^^	4

^ A maximum of 50 hours may be in an outpatient specialty pediatric area. The 100 remaining hours will be in a pediatric primary care setting.

^^ A maximum of 75 hours can be in an outpatient specialty setting. The 75 remaining hours will be in a primary care setting.

**Required Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Courses**

Required Courses	Credits
NURS 519 - Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NURS 535 – Advanced Pharmacology	3
NURS 507 – Advanced Physical Assessment	3
NURS 507L – Advanced Physical Assessment Lab	1
NURS 544 - Assessment and Diagnosis of Mental Health Conditions	3

Courses	Clinical Hours	Credits
NURS 530 - Neuropsychopharmacology		3

NURS 502 – Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing I	180 <sup>+</sup>	4
NURS 504 – Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing II	180 <sup>+</sup>	4
NURS 521 - Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing III - Capstone	180	4

+ A minimum of 60 hours must be completed with the child/adolescent or geriatric population in NURS 502. In NURS 504, a minimum of 60 hours must be completed in the other population not completed in NURS 502.

**\*\* Fall 2023/Spring 2024 Required Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Courses**

Required Courses	Credits
NURS 519 - Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NURS 535 – Advanced Pharmacology	3
NURS 507 – Advanced Physical Assessment	3
NURS 731 – PMHNP Skills/Differential Diagnosis	3

Courses	Clinical Hours	Credits
NURS 544 - Assessment and Diagnosis of Mental Health Conditions	150	4
NURS 530 - Neuropsychopharmacology	150	4
NURS 502 – Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing I	150 <sup>+</sup>	4
NURS 504 – Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing II	150 <sup>+</sup>	4
NURS 521 - Advanced Practice in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing III - Capstone	150	4

+ A minimum of 60 hours must be completed with the child/adolescent or geriatric population in NURS 502. In NURS 504, a minimum of 60 hours must be completed in the other population not completed in NURS 502.

***DNP Hours***

DNP students are required to complete 1000 post-baccalaureate hours. The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education’s (CCNE, 2018) Standards defines clinical practice experiences as “planned learning activities in nursing practice that allow students to understand, perform, and refine professional competencies at the appropriate program level” (p. 21). Key Element III-E in the Standards states that the planned clinical practice experiences “enable students to integrate new knowledge and demonstrate attainment of program outcomes” (p.15).

Doctor of Nursing Practice: Current Issues and Clarifying Recommendations (DNP White Paper) (Auerbach et al., 2015) provides additional guidance, including, “Practice experiences should be designed to help students achieve specific learning objectives related to all of the Doctoral Essentials, role outcomes, and application of theory and evidence to practice” (p. 8).

DNP hours must be preapproved by the course faculty, team leader, or Graduate Programs Director. You will use Project Concert, an electronic tracking system, to document and track all of your DNP hours. The following items are excluded from clinical hours: drafting the proposal, as well as writing and editing the completed scholarly project. At USJ, these 1000 hours are divided as

follows:

Scholarly Project Hours: Students must complete a minimum of 250 hours directly related to their project, regardless of the number of previously completed hours in a master's program. This can include, but is not limited to, project implementation, conference attendance, meeting with a subject matter expert, assisting a researcher, or working with a statistician.

NP Hours: 590 hours (FNP students), 540 hours (PMHNP students). During these hours, students are providing direct patient care. Post-master's DNP students who are not pursuing a NP certification are not eligible to complete these hours. \*\*Starting with the Fall 2023 cohort, students will complete 750 NP hours.

Other Hours: Post-baccalaureate FNP students may complete up to 160 other hours and PMHNP students may complete up to 210 Other Hours. Other Hours may be completed during any course but must be preapproved by the course faculty, team leader, or Graduate Programs Director. Other hours may be completed through a variety of activities related to any course content such as leadership, fiscal analysis, advocacy, advanced clinical practice, informatics and/or quality improvement, or by shadowing leaders within an organization (such as CEO, CFO, COO, CNO). \*\*Starting with the Fall 2023 cohort, this category of hours will no longer exist.

All DNP Hours accrued while at USJ will be documented in Project Concert, a clinical tracking system. The Graduate Programs Director will confer with the student and team leaders to monitor progress in the program. Failure to meet timelines, lack of progress with the project, and/or unacceptable clinical and academic performance will be addressed with the student. These students will be reviewed by the Graduate Programs Admissions and Progression Committee of the Department of Nursing who will make the final determination about their standing in the program, probation, or dismissal.

## Expectations for Academic Work

The actual amount of academic work that goes into a single semester credit hour is calculated as follows: graduate-level courses are typically more intensive than undergraduate courses, and for each 3-credit-hour course you will need to plan about 5 hours per credit per week, equating to 15 hours per week of study and coursework, over the duration of the semester. This expectation is a standard based on the Carnegie Unit system and refers to the amount of academic work a student is expected to give to their learning to earn the knowledge credits assigned to the course.

A typical part-time workload of 6 credits per semester with an expectation of 5 hours of work per credit per week, equates to 30 hours of work per week. When students are completing 10-15 hours of clinical experience per week, the total academic workload exceeds 40 hours per week. Planning your time accordingly will ensure your success.

## Academic Advisement

All graduate students will develop a Plan of Study with the Graduate Programs Director after acceptance into the program. Students will also be assigned an advisor from the graduate faculty. Students may schedule an appointment to discuss any concerns they have about their Plan of Study with their advisor or the Graduate Programs Director. Any time a student is considering changing



their Plan of Study, the student must seek approval from the Graduate Programs Director via a formal appeal.

Students taking a clinical course are required to work collaboratively with the Director of Graduate Clinical Nursing Experiences to secure a preceptor for their clinical hours before the start of the course. Those students who have not followed through with the requirements for securing a preceptor may be asked to drop the course and meet with their advisor to revise their Plan of Study. Students should plan to meet with their nursing faculty advisor at least once a semester. It is the student's responsibility to come to the appointment prepared to discuss their Plan of Study, clinical possibilities, or concerns. It is expected that each student in the Department of Nursing will:

- Schedule appointments with an advisor and be on time for those appointments.
- Be familiar with the Graduate Nursing Handbook and specific policies.
- Be prepared for the advising session.
- Know academic requirements for continued enrollment and graduation.
- Ask questions about policies, procedures, or requirements that are not understood.
- Keep copies of relevant records.
- Obtain, complete, and process any necessary forms and signatures required for registration, requests for extensions, course changes, or related affairs within specified deadlines.
- Meet course prerequisites and select specific courses.
- Obtain approval before making changes to an agreed-upon Plan of Study.
- Make final decisions and be actively responsible for their academic career.

Students in the Department of Nursing have a right to expect their advisor to:

- Be available to students during reasonable hours.
- Establish a means through which students can schedule appointments and/or communicate through other modalities.
- Understand the curriculum, graduation requirements, and university policies.
- Provide accurate information.
- Discuss with students the specific university and departmental requirements, procedures, and deadlines.
- Help students define and develop realistic goals and discuss academic preparation and career opportunities.
- Help students identify any special needs and refer students to services and programs available to meet these needs.
- Monitor the student's progress and keep accurate records.
- Respect the student's right to privacy and discuss confidential information regarding the student only with appropriate individuals.
- Help the student assume responsibility for the student's own actions.

## Policies Related to Academics

### *Orientation*

New students are required to attend Graduate Nursing Student Orientation before their first semester of coursework.

## ***Attendance***

Attendance is mandatory and necessary for all delivery formats, including with cameras on for remote synchronous sessions. Work responsibilities do not excuse students from attending class and arriving on time for class. Attendance is not included in the calculations of the weighted total course grade. However, for each absence after the first one, 2 points are subtracted for each occurrence from the final course grade. The instructor expects to be notified of anticipated lateness to class or the need to leave class early; repeated lateness (2 or more occurrences) or leaving class early (1 or more occurrences) will result in a final grade deduction of 2 points per occurrence from the final course grade.

Students should plan personal vacations only during breaks in the academic calendar. For more information about the calendar, visit <https://www.usj.edu/academics/registrar/academic-calendar/>

Students must attend the class that is listed on their schedule. Our enrollments are tracked not only for seats in classrooms but also for campus safety to know who is on campus and when. Any extraordinary circumstances must be approved ahead of time by the program director or department chair.

## ***Exit Exam***

All students completing a nurse practitioner track (either the family nurse practitioner or the psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner) will complete an Exit Exam during their final nurse practitioner course (NUR 511 for FNP students or NURS 521 for PMHNP students). The Exit Exam includes completion of a nationally standardized test plus satisfactory remediation. The Exit Exam also meets the University's requirement for the comprehensive evaluation.

All students who score less than 70 on their first attempt will be required to take a second Exit Exam two weeks after their first attempt. Students who score less than 70 on the second attempt will be offered a third attempt. Students will complete satisfactory remediation for each attempt.

## ***Examinations (reviewed, edited, and approved DON 4.15.19)***

Students are required to complete examinations and assessments on laptops. To facilitate academic integrity and student ethical behavior, the following policy is to be followed for all examinations in the Department of Nursing:

- All students must arrive on time for testing with the exam downloaded. Students who are more than 5 minutes late for testing will forfeit the right to take the test and earn a zero.
- Students must upload their completed exam before leaving the classroom or they will receive a zero.
- All belongings must be placed in the front of the room.
- All smartwatches (Apple, Samsung, Fitbit, etc.) must be removed and stored in the front of the room prior to starting an exam.
- Students are not permitted to leave the room during exams. If a student leaves the exam for any reason, the exam will be collected and assumed to be complete.
- Faculty will supply any scrap paper used and it will be returned at the end of the exam.

- No electronic equipment, including cell phones, are permitted during exams. At the faculty's discretion, basic calculators and laptop computers may be utilized for testing and may be deemed acceptable.
- No hats, caps, jackets, or overcoats will be worn during exams.
- All exams are considered secure and are not released to students.
- No exam will be reviewed except in the presence of the faculty.
- During exam reviews, all the above apply.
- Students must notify the instructor in advance if they will be absent due to illness or emergency.
- Students who have formally documented accommodations for testing must notify the instructor prior to any testing date.
- Students are not permitted to speak to one another during testing.

Review of unit exams and quizzes are scheduled. The following procedures will be enforced in all situations in which students are given the opportunity to review an exam.

- A. Students are not permitted to copy any materials, take notes or pictures, or in any other way record during test review.
- B. No personal belongings including writing instruments shall be on the desk during the review.

### ***Missed Examinations***

Quizzes and examinations must be taken at the assigned time on the course syllabus. Make-up examinations are administered at the discretion of the course faculty and may be different in format from the original examination administered to their peers.

### ***Grading***

- Grading in the Department of Nursing follows the University policy articulated in the Student Handbook for the University and the University catalog.
- Final course grades will be rounded up to the nearest whole number if the one-hundredth decimal place is 0.50-0.99.
- No GPA will be rounded under any circumstances.

<b>USJ Grading Scale</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>GPA</b>	<b>100 Point Scale</b>
A	4.00	100-93
A-	3.66	92-90
B+	3.33	89-87
B	3.00	86-83
B-	2.67	82-80
C+	2.33	79-77
C	2.00	76-73
C-		72-70
D+		69-67
D		66-63
D-		62-60
F		Less than 60

## ***Incomplete Grades and Extensions, and Grade Appeals***

The University policies on Incomplete Grades and Extensions, and Grade Appeals can be found on the Academic Policies and Procedures page located at:

<http://catalog.usj.edu/content.php?catoid=13&navoid=680>

Request for Incomplete Grades and Extensions should not be used to help a student who is failing the course to have time to do better or to offer an opportunity to complete work that all other students didn't have the same opportunity to complete.

Please note: Students that have an appeal in process may enroll in a clinical course (NURS 544, 530, 502, 504, 521, 591, 508, 509, 511) but may not attend clinical until a final decision is rendered. If the appeal is granted, they are eligible for a course extension to complete their clinical hours.

## ***Academic Grievance Policy***

Students who wish to file a grievance should refer to the [Accessibility Services](#) page on the USJ website and/or MyUSJ.

## ***Progression***

The Graduate Admission and Progression Committee meets at the end of every semester to review the academic records of graduate students. The Committee will make the final determination about standing in the program, including progression, probation, or dismissal. Graduate students must meet the following requirements of their program:

### **MS and Post-Graduate Certificate Program Requirements for Progression**

- Earn a grade of B- or higher in all courses on their Plan of Study.
- Maintain a GPA of 2.67 or higher throughout the program.
- Make satisfactory progress in the clinical competencies required for each clinical course.

### **DNP Program Requirements for Progression**

- Earn a grade of B or higher in all courses on their Plan of Study.
- Maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher throughout the program.
- Make satisfactory progress in the clinical competencies required for each clinical course.

## ***Time to Degree***

Requirements for the degree should be completed within six years from the date of matriculation. The Department Chair may grant an extension for completion of the degree at their discretion.

## ***Probation***

After a careful review of a student's transcript, the student will be placed on Probation for the following:

MS and Post-Graduate Certificate Program students who:

- Earn a grade of C-, C, or C+ in any course on their Plan of Study and will be required to repeat the course.
- Earn a GPA of less than 2.67 and will have the next 6 credits to improve their GPA.
- Do not make satisfactory progress in clinical competencies and will fail the clinical course, earning a maximum grade of C+. The student will be required to repeat the course and clinical hours.

DNP Program students who:

- Earn a grade of C-, C, C+, or B- in any course on their Plan of Study and will be required to repeat the course.
- Earn a GPA of less than 3.0 and will have the next 6 credits to improve their GPA.
- Do not make satisfactory progress in clinical competencies and will fail the clinical course, earning a maximum grade of C+. The student will be required to repeat the course and clinical hours.

Other policies:

- Students may only repeat one course once.
- Students may only withdraw from one course once.
- Students may only be placed on probation once.
- Should conditions be met for a second probation, academic dismissal proceedings will commence.
- Failure to increase the GPA to the requirement in the subsequent 6 credits following probation will result in dismissal from the program.
- Probation cannot be appealed.

### ***Dismissal***

- Failure to earn a satisfactory grade (defined as B- for MS and certificate students, B for DNP students) in the second attempt of a course will result in dismissal from the program.
- A student who earns grades of C+, C, or C- or below in two or more courses will be dismissed from the program.
- Any student who earns a D or an F in any course will be dismissed from the program.
- Failure to increase the GPA to the required level (defined as 2.67 for MS and certificate students, 3.0 for DNP students) in a subsequent 6 credits following probation will result in dismissal from the program.
- Dismissal can be appealed. Students may refer to the University catalog for the procedure.

A student may be dismissed for factors other than grades upon the recommendation of a committee of department faculty, the Chair of the Department of Nursing, the Graduate Programs Director, or the Dean of the SIHS. The University reserves the right to exclude from further enrollment any graduate nursing student whose conduct is deemed improper or prejudicial (inclusive of academic integrity issues) to the best interests of the University. The SIHS Dean together with the Graduate School Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee will handle such cases.

### ***Student Compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)***

According to the regulations of HIPAA, nurse practitioner students are permitted to have access to Protected Health Information (PHI) when observing and performing direct patient/client care as part of their learning activities. As such, they must follow approved HIPAA policies on the usage of PHI. Students must comply with requirements and expectations for appropriate storage and transmission of patient information. No PHI can leave a covered entity site unless it is de-identified.

To de-identify information HIPAA requires the removal of all the following identifiers:

- Names or initials
- Geographic subdivisions smaller than a state, e.g., county, city, Indian Reservation. In certain circumstances, the first 3 digits of a zip code can be used.
- All elements of dates (except year) for dates directly related to an individual
- All ages or dates indicating an age over 89 (they can be lumped into one category of 90 or older)
- Telephone numbers
- Fax numbers
- Social security number
- Medical record numbers
- Health plan beneficiary numbers
- Account numbers
- Certificate/license numbers
- Vehicle identifiers and serial numbers
- Web universal resource locators (URLs)
- Internet Protocol (IP) address numbers
- Biometric identifiers, including finger and voice prints
- Full face photographic images and any comparable images
- Any other unique identifying number, characteristic or code

### ***Student Accessibility Services***

The University of Saint Joseph is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for students with disabilities. At USJ, the Accessibility Office ensures a university experience that gives individuals with disabilities the same access to programs, opportunities, and activities as all others. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the University of Saint Joseph provides reasonable accommodations to eligible students. The Student Accessibility Office at USJ services are designed to meet the unique educational needs of all students with documented permanent and temporary disabilities. If you have a disability which may impact your academic achievement in this course and you require accommodations, you must provide the appropriate documentation to the Students Accessibility Office. Please note that academic accommodations cannot be provided prior to your professor's receipt of an Accommodation Letter. Please visit the Student Accessibility Services page on MyUSJ for information about registering for services. You can also contact the office directly at [Accessibility@usj.edu](mailto:Accessibility@usj.edu).

### ***Pregnancy and Parenting Policy***

The University of Saint Joseph is committed to creating and maintaining a community where all individuals enjoy freedom from discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of sex, as mandated by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX). Sex discrimination, which can include discrimination based on pregnancy, marital status, or parental status, is prohibited and illegal in admissions, educational programs and activities, hiring, leave policies, employment policies, and health insurance coverage. The University of Saint Joseph puts forth this policy for the protection and equal treatment of pregnant individuals; persons with pregnancy-related conditions; and new parents. Please visit the full policy in MyUSJ at [https://my.usj.edu/ICS/icsfs/22.23\\_Active\\_USJ\\_Parenting\\_Pregnancy\\_Policy.pdf?target=54e5c4a8-1dc0-45f2-933a-b3b4cab0d66d](https://my.usj.edu/ICS/icsfs/22.23_Active_USJ_Parenting_Pregnancy_Policy.pdf?target=54e5c4a8-1dc0-45f2-933a-b3b4cab0d66d)

### ***Center for Academic Excellence (CAE)***

The Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) is here to build your understanding and skills, so you can learn more faster and complete assignments more efficiently with fewer errors. We provide graduate students with tutoring to assist with enhancing their academic skills and writing. All tutoring is done through 1:1 appointments, either in-person or virtually. You are encouraged to make appointments for tutoring at any stage in the writing process and for any type of writing assignment. The CAE is located on the second floor of the Pope Pius XII Library. To make an appointment, visit <https://traccloud.go-redrock.com/usj/>, email [caeappt@usj.edu](mailto:caeappt@usj.edu), or call 860-231-5514.

### ***ExamSoft/Examplify***

ExamSoft/Examplify is a computerized testing process that enables faculty to create exams, administer them, score, and then analyze the statistics for each question. There are multiple benefits to computer-based testing including preparation for certification exams, reduction in academic integrity issues related to testing, mapping of test questions to the curriculum and program outcomes, standards and competencies, high-quality statistical analysis, and the creation of a question “bank” that can be refined over time to improve the academic integrity of our tests and exams. A \$55.00 per student per calendar year fee will be attached to certain courses to cover the cost of this product.

### ***Student Responsibilities Regarding ExamSoft/Examplify***

If a course is using ExamSoft/Examplify, students will be enrolled by the program administrator and will receive a username and password via email. When students receive their ExamSoft/Examplify username and password, they will need to visit the University of Saint Joseph website at <https://ei.examssoft.com/GKWeb/login/usjnursing> and log into their account. Passwords can then be changed if desired. A practice test will be administered to check the systems and give students a chance to see what it will be like prior to the real test. Students should plan to bring a laptop computer fully charged on exam day. In addition, each student should complete the tutorial prior to the start of classes. Each test will be downloaded prior to ‘taking it’ so students will not be working ‘online’ during a test and there is no risk of being ‘booted out’ of a test in process.

### ***Blackboard and USJ Email***

The Department of Nursing utilizes Blackboard as a platform for all courses. Students should access Blackboard once each day to check for announcements or course updates. All grades will be posted on Blackboard for student review. Learning materials, assignments, and the syllabus will be posted on Blackboard for all courses. Any student needing technical assistance with Blackboard can contact the IT Help Desk by emailing [myIT@usj.edu](mailto:myIT@usj.edu), calling 860-231-5310, or visiting the Help Desk in person on the first floor of the Library. The web address for Blackboard is [Bb.usj.edu](http://Bb.usj.edu). Students are encouraged to download the Blackboard app onto their smartphones. This will allow students to receive push notifications.

The Department of Nursing also utilizes only USJ email for correspondence. Students should access their USJ email account once each day to check for important and timely messages. Students needing technical assistance with USJ email can contact the IT Help Desk by emailing [myIT@usj.edu](mailto:myIT@usj.edu), calling 860-231-5310, or visiting the Help Desk in person on the first floor of the Library. There are multiple ways to access USJ email including My.USJ.edu and myoffice.usj.edu. A free download of Microsoft Office 365 is available to all students. Students are encouraged to download the Microsoft Outlook app onto their smartphones. This will allow students to receive emails via their smartphones. Faculty will respond to students within 24 to 48 hours, Monday through Friday.

### ***Using Your Credentials***

When creating any type of correspondence, students should only use academic credentials that are already fully earned. Students should not use amended forms of a degree (e.g., MS-s or DNP(c)) to indicate partial completion of a program [student or candidate status], as none of these designations are accepted credentials by USJ and using them may confuse others. An example of correct academic credentials is:

Oliver B. Smith, BSN, RNC  
DNP FNP Student  
Class of 2026

### ***Hybrid Courses***

Graduate Nursing Program courses are offered in formats that encompass a variety of hybrid models. Courses may require students to meet on campus and/or remotely for all or a portion of the semester, based on curricular needs. Students will be notified by their course faculty at the start of the semester when classes will meet on campus or remotely. Students should check their USJ email regularly to ensure they have received timely communication. Graduate students should become familiar with the Information Technology Department at the University of Saint Joseph on the first floor of the Library (860-231-5310).

### ***Linda DelFavero Morasutti '83, M '13 and Robert M. Lee Nursing Education and Simulation Center***

The Nursing Education and Simulation Center provides an environment where nurse practitioner students study and practice clinical skills. The graduate program has a dedicated space located in McDonough Hall Room 209. The following are services provided through the lab:

- Skill practice and simulations



- Study space for group work
- Practice with low and high-fidelity simulators
- Access to the video library and other references covering a wide variety of topics

### ***Rules of Conduct for the Nursing Education and Simulation Center***

1. The Center is NOT a latex-free environment. Please notify the Director of Nursing Simulation if you have a latex allergy.
2. No lab participant shall infringe upon the privacy, rights, privileges, health, or safety of other participants.
3. Adherence to the University of Saint Joseph dress code is expected. You must be in uniform or wearing a lab coat to participate in any Simulation activity in the lab.
4. All electronics including smartphones and video recorders should be turned off during simulations.
5. Equipment should be disposed of in the appropriate container i.e., sharp containers, biohazard trash containers, and laundry bins.
6. The lab should be left the way it was found. Please make all beds, change exam table paper, and return equipment to the appropriate storage area before leaving the lab.
7. In accordance with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), all sharps are to be handled safely and disposed of properly. In the event of a “clean” needle stick, the Director of Nursing Simulation should be notified immediately so first aid can be provided and a minor injury report completed. In the event of a major injury, Public Safety will be notified.
8. Exceptions to the above rules are at the discretion of the Director of Nursing Simulation or course faculty only. Failure to adhere to the rules may result in removal from the lab activity.

### ***Academic Integrity***

It is the policy of the University of Saint Joseph that all members of the community act with integrity. By enrolling in or working at the University, all members implicitly agree to uphold the University’s policy of Academic Integrity (AI). This means that all work that is presented to satisfy course requirements be the result of your original scholarly efforts that ultimately improves student skills and knowledge and places value on the USJ degree. Should you cheat or plagiarize an AI report will be filed with the Academic Integrity Office and sanctions could range from a reduced grade on the assignment to an F for the course or in extreme cases suspension or expulsion.

Please note that students are prohibited from sharing course materials, exam questions, or assignments from one course with students from another course. This includes posting any course content on websites, such as Course Hero. This is an example of unassigned collaboration and is in violation of the University's AI policy.

Students are encouraged to review the AI policy located on MyUSJ (my.usj.edu) in the “Academic Integrity Office” tab to understand their rights and the process.

[https://my.usj.edu/ICS/icsfs/USJ\\_Academic\\_Integrity\\_Policy\\_.pdf?target=ba6f34fe-ece5-4e25-9cc7-9df36e8bd804](https://my.usj.edu/ICS/icsfs/USJ_Academic_Integrity_Policy_.pdf?target=ba6f34fe-ece5-4e25-9cc7-9df36e8bd804)

## **Clinical Policies**

Students are expected to work collegially with the Director of Graduate Clinical Experiences and comply with all requests in preparation for clinical.

### ***Clinical Compliance***

Students must be 100% compliant with all clinical requirements (Project Concert or Castlebranch) no later than two weeks before the beginning of any semester that has a clinical course (NURS 544, 530, 502, 504, 521, 508, 509, 591, 511) Otherwise, the student will be administratively removed from clinical courses until they are in full compliance and will need to re-enroll once determined by the nursing department to be in compliance. Failure to meet these requirements will impact the student's progression in the program.

### ***General Policies Related to Clinical***

1. Students are not permitted to miss a scheduled class to attend clinical.
2. Students cannot begin their next clinical experience until their current clinical hours are completed.
3. Students cannot use the same preceptor for more than 180 hours (\*\*150 hours starting with the Fall 2023 new students).
4. Students cannot use the same clinical site for more than 180 hours (\*\*150 hours starting with the Fall 2023 new students).
5. Students are not permitted to complete NP clinical hours on a unit in which they work or float.
- 6. Students are prohibited from contacting a Hartford Healthcare (HHC) provider directly for potential clinical placement. Placement will be denied if a student contacts an HHC provider directly.**
7. Students are not permitted to change a clinical placement unless advised by the course clinical faculty or the director of graduate nursing clinical experiences.
8. Students will evenly distribute their required clinical hours over the entire length and duration of each clinical course unless emergent changes in the preceptor's schedule require modification. In such cases, students are required to discuss the situation with their course instructor and receive clearance to alter their pattern of clinical attendance.
9. No more than 1/3 of the total NP hours may be in telehealth.
12. During clinical, students must always remain under the direct supervision of their preceptor of record. Students are permitted to observe clinical encounters or meetings performed by other providers only at the suggestion of their preceptor, and it is expected that all such encounters will be discussed with the preceptor to enhance the learning process.
13. Students who are licensed as nurse practitioners in another area are not permitted to bill, code, or prescribe under their license or NPI number while attending clinical as a USJ student.
14. Students may not change from one preceptor to another or add a preceptor during a clinical course unless this need is addressed with and agreed to by the course faculty, in which case all necessary paperwork for such a change must be filed.
15. Students will receive their final course grades only when all clinical hours have been posted and approved by the preceptor in Project Concert; all clinical encounters have been posted and approved by course faculty in Project Concert; and all clinical evaluations and site visits have been performed, documented in Project Concert, and approved by faculty. Students are responsible for assuring that all necessary hours, encounters, and evaluations are up to date.

## ***Requirements and Responsibilities of Preceptors***

Clinical preceptors must be licensed clinicians with at least one year of advanced practice experience. Family nurse practitioner students must be precepted by nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, certified nurse midwives, physician assistants, or physicians (MD, DO). Psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner students must be precepted by psychiatric mental health clinical nurse specialists, psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners, or psychiatrists.

For further clarification, the primary responsibilities of a preceptor/mentor are to:

- Assume complete care of the patient/client while supervising the student.
- Promote the professional growth of the student.
- Document an evaluation of the student's clinical skills at midterm and at the end of the semester.
- Verify and approve clinical hours documented by the student in Project Concert.
- Communicate with the faculty regarding student progress.
- Work collaboratively with the Site Visitor.

Preceptors accomplish these responsibilities through a supportive, non-threatening relationship with students, helping them to become more therapeutic and competent in the role of an advanced practice nurse. Any incident of unprofessional, inappropriate, or unsafe behavior must be reported to the course professor immediately and be followed promptly by written documentation.

## ***Responsibilities of Faculty within Clinical Courses***

The responsibilities of faculty teaching clinical courses include:

- Clinical course faculty will approve clinical practicum sites prior to the beginning of the semester. Criteria for approving clinical sites include but are not limited to the following:
  - a. The site provides opportunities to deliver care along a continuum including acute and chronic care for PMHNP students; outpatient primary care settings for FNP students.
  - b. The site provides opportunities for the student to collaborate with interdisciplinary and intra-disciplinary teams.
  - c. The site provides students with an opportunity to work within and across diverse outpatient healthcare delivery environments and communities for FNP students, and inclusive of inpatient settings for PMHNP students.
  - d. The practice provides care for diverse populations, including varying ages, gender, ethnicity, healthy and ill populations, and those with acute and chronic health states.
  - e. The preceptor will serve as a role model for the student and helps the student transition from an RN to an APRN role.
- Course faculty and students will clarify course and clinical expectations and responsibilities to the clinical preceptor prior to the beginning of the semester.
- Course faculty will maintain communication with the preceptors and the site visitor who will be visiting/observing students at their practice site.
- Course faculty and preceptors will review and discuss with the student their learning progress during the semester and at the end of the clinical experience.

## ***Graduate Student Clinical Dress Code Policy***

All USJ graduate students are expected to wear appropriate professional attire while attending clinical. Clinicians' appearance must be neat and clean to reflect a professional image, which always includes clean clothes and clean shoes. In most clinical settings, white (lab) coats are appropriate; however, personnel in certain clinical settings may be expected to wear only business attire or possibly hospital scrubs. It is expected that students will be aware of and adhere to well-established institutional dress codes of their clinical practice sites. In all cases, students must dress in accordance with the institution's policies. Although hospital scrubs are not usually considered professional attire for primary care patient encounters, some individual institutions may require this if it is part of their established dress code.

## ***Project Concert***

Project Concert is a third-party vendor used by the Department of Nursing for clinical compliance, tracking of clinical hours, and student management. Students will be prompted to open their Project Concert account during their first semester of enrollment. A fee is associated with this program and varies depending on the length of your program.

## ***Background Check***

All graduate nursing students must have a complete background check the semester before they start clinical. The background check will be part of the Project Concert package that the student will purchase.

The following is included in the background screen:

- 7-year County Criminal Search
- Current, Maiden, and Alias Names Nationwide
- Healthcare Fraud & Abuse Scan
- Nationwide Federal Criminal Record
- Nationwide Record Indicator with Sex Offender Index
- Social Security Alert
- Residency History

Any student with an open felony case, closed felony case, open misdemeanor case, or recorded history of healthcare fraud or abuse should be aware that this information must be shared with the agency to which the student is assigned for clinical. Also, any student listed on the Sex Offender registry will be shared with the clinical agency. The decision to accept the student into the agency for clinical is dependent on the specific agency's policy regarding criminal history. Most of the clinical agencies will not accept a nursing student with a criminal record.

Students should be aware that if the Department of Nursing is unable to secure a clinical placement because of a past criminal record the student will be unable to progress in the academic program and will be dismissed from the program.

Closed misdemeanor charges do not require reporting to the clinical agency for approval prior to placement.

Confidentiality of the information from the background check will be maintained consistent with FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) guidelines.

Certain placements require background checks and drug testing to be obtained within 45 days of the beginning of the clinical experience. Students that attend such placements will have to repeat the background check and drug test for an additional cost at the student's expense.

There may be clinical placements that require state and federal fingerprinting to be obtained prior to the beginning of the clinical rotation. Students that will attend such placements will complete this requirement through Project Concert for an additional fee.

### ***Drug Screen Policy***

A negative drug screen is required for all graduate Nursing students prior to entering the clinical phase of their program.

The drug screen must be completed the semester before they start clinical Project Concert will create the lab requisition for an 11-panel drug screen once the package is purchased. The drug screen can be done at a designated lab. A secured report will then be available to the Director of Clinical Experiences.

Any student with a positive drug screen will undergo a medical review through Project Concert. The medical review officer will reach out to the student to see if there is a current prescription for the drug that tested positive. If the medical review officer is satisfied with the prescription provided, the drug screen will be reported as negative.

If the student does not have a prescription for the drug, they should be aware that this information must be shared with the clinical agency to which the student is assigned. The decision to accept the student into the agency is dependent on the specific agency's policy. Students should be aware that if the Department of Nursing is unable to secure a clinical placement because of a positive drug screen without a proper prescription, the student will be unable to progress in their academic program and may be dismissed from the program.

Students are not permitted to be under the influence of any drug, legal or illegal while participating in any clinical activity. If the student is suspected of being under the influence, they will be required to repeat the drug test at their cost. The student will not be able to participate in clinical until the results of the drug test are complete. In compliance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 19a-12e, any faculty, preceptor, site visitor, or fellow student must report an impaired clinician.

The drug screen tests for the following:

Amphetamines	Methamphetamines	MDMA Ecstasy
Barbiturates	Methadone	Cocaine
Benzodiazepines	Opiates	Oxycodone
Phencyclidine	Cannabinoids	

Confidentiality of the information from the drug screen will be maintained, consistent with FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) guidelines.

## ***Connecticut Hospital Association***

All students must complete the Health and Safety Training Course Modules and complete the post-test with a minimum score of 85%. The modules and post-test can be found at <https://cthosp.org/education/ct-health-and-safety-training-course/>

### ***Health Services and Immunization Requirements***

Any student with a latex allergy is required to notify the faculty each semester and provide documentation from a health care professional (MD, DO, APRN, PA), clearing the student for clinical and allowing the student to work in the Nursing Education and Simulation Center (which is NOT latex free).

**All the following documentation is to be uploaded to Project Concert.** Students are responsible for maintaining current documents throughout each clinical semester. Students must maintain clinical compliance during all clinical courses.

#### **1. Health Insurance**

- Every January, upload a copy of your current health insurance card (both front and back of card) to Project Concert. If the name on the card does NOT match the student's name, verification of coverage from **the insurance company** is required. Monthly-issued insurance is NOT acceptable.

#### **2. Physical examination** within one year of admission and updated every two years. Please utilize the physical exam form available at [usj.studenthealthportal.com](http://usj.studenthealthportal.com)

#### **3. Hepatitis B**

- There must be documentation of one of the following:
  - 3-shot vaccination series or completion of the vaccine declination form.
  - Positive antibody titer (lab report required)

#### **4. Influenza**

- Submit documentation of a flu shot administered during the current flu season on a date determined by the Department in compliance with agency protocols.

#### **5. Tetanus, Diphtheria & Pertussis (Tdap)**

- There must be documentation of a Tdap booster within the past 10 years OR a Td booster within the past 2 years.

#### **6. Varicella (Chicken Pox)**

- There must be documentation of one of the following:
  - 2-shot vaccination series
  - Positive antibody titer (lab report required)

#### **7. Measles (Rubeola)**

- There must be documentation of one of the following:
  - 2-shot vaccination series
  - Positive antibody titer (lab report required) for Measles (Rubeola)

## 8. Mumps

- There must be documentation of one of the following:
  - 2-shot vaccination series
  - Positive antibody titer (lab report required) for Mumps

## 9. Rubella

- There must be documentation of one of the following:
  - 2-shot vaccination series
  - Positive antibody titer (lab report required) for Rubella

## 10. COVID Vaccine

- There must be documentation of one of the following:
  - Pfizer COVID vaccine, both doses
  - Moderna COVID vaccine, both doses
  - Janssen COVID vaccine

## 11. TB Skin Test

- There must be documentation of one of the following:
  - 2 step TB Skin test (1-3 weeks apart)
  - Past 2 Step TB Skin test PLUS all subsequent annuals
  - QuantiFERON Gold Blood Test (lab report required)
  - If positive results, provide a clear Chest X-Ray (lab report required) AND the annual Tuberculosis Risk/Symptom Inventory form.
  - Annual TB testing is required either through a PPD, QuantiFERON Gold blood test or completion of an annual Tuberculosis Risk/Symptom Inventory.

## *CPR Certification*

CPR training/certification in BLS (Basic Life Support) for Providers is required of all nurse practitioner students prior to participation at clinical sites.

- CPR certification must remain current throughout the entire program.
- There must be documentation of training from an **American Heart Association Healthcare Provider course**. **NO OTHER COURSES WILL BE ACCEPTED AND FAILURE TO COMPLETE THIS REQUIREMENT WILL PREVENT A STUDENT FROM CLINICAL PARTICIPATION.**
- The certificate **MUST** be good for two years. Copy must be of the front and back of the card, and the card must be signed.

## *Nursing License*

Students must maintain an active RN license (and APRN license, if applicable) in the state where they plan complete clinical hours (CT or MA). Students will upload a copy of it every year into their Project Concert account.

## *NP Student Malpractice Insurance*

Students completing a nurse practitioner track are required to carry student NP malpractice insurance. If you have your own malpractice as an RN, you can add a rider to your policy. If you do not have RN coverage, you can purchase STUDENT NP insurance through NSO.com, proliability.com, HPSO.org, cmfgroup.com, etc. A minimum \$1,000,000/\$3,000,000 policy is suggested.

Please note: Students are covered by the University's liability policy, *not* professional malpractice.

### ***Informed Consent and Release of Information***

Signing the handbook implies acknowledgment and consent for the Department to disclose any background check and drug test results or provide the date of completion for clinical placement. It is possible that the results of a background check or drug test could limit or disqualify a student from clinical placement(s). In such instances, a student may be unable to complete the clinical component of the program which would result in termination from the program.

### ***Graduate Nursing Student Agreement***

1. HIPAA: I understand that information I may obtain during any Nurse Practitioner Supervised Clinical Experiences may be confidential information and is protected by the HIPAA Privacy Rule (42 C.F.R. Parts 160 and 164) (the "Privacy Rule") of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, as amended ("HIPAA") and other state and federal laws and regulations.

a. I agree that I will not disclose to any unauthorized parties any information received and/or generated through the course of the Nurse Practitioner Supervised Clinical Experience. I agree to comply with HIPAA and all other state or federal laws and regulations.

b. I understand that unauthorized use or disclosure of protected information may subject me to criminal and/or civil penalties, fines, and/or imprisonment. I also understand that I must reimburse the institution for any damage caused by any disclosure by me of any protected information.

2. Bloodborne Pathogens: I agree to comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration of the United States Department of Labor ("OSHA") regulations related to Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens and all other applicable OSHA rules and regulations.

3. Clinical Partners: I agree to follow all policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of our Clinical Partners.

4. Contact with Clients: I agree to comply with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States Department of Health and Human Services ("CDC") guidelines related to contact with clients and/or patients during clinical experiences.

5. Physical Health: I agree to provide evidence of passing a physical examination and that I know of no health issues that would place any clients and/or patients at risk. I agree to comply with the immunization requirements of our Clinical Partners and the University of Saint Joseph.



6. Cost of Personal Medical Care: I agree that I am solely responsible for the cost of any medical care rendered to me.
7. Health Insurance Coverage: I agree to comply with the USJ Department of Nursing health insurance coverage requirements and to provide evidence of health insurance coverage.
8. Transportation to Clinical Experiences: I agree that I am solely responsible for the cost of transportation to and from clinical experiences.
9. Identification during Clinical Experiences: I agree to always wear University identification and a name tag while participating in the Nurse Practitioner Supervised Clinical Experience at the clinical site.
10. Loss or Damage to Personal Property: I acknowledge that the University of Saint Joseph will not be responsible for loss or damage to my personal property while on the Institution's premises during the Nurse Practitioner Supervised Clinical Experience.
11. Indemnity: I agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Institution and the University, their respective agents, faculty, staff, students, and employees from any claims, damages, liabilities, costs, and expenses including without limitation, reasonable attorney's fees, arising out of, or caused by my negligent acts or omissions while on the Institution's premises and during the Nurse Practitioner Supervised Clinical Experience.

## ***Technical Standards***

### **Introduction**

Technical standards consist of all the nonacademic functional abilities essential for the delivery of safe, effective nursing care. The ability to meet the technical standards is a required component of satisfactory progression through the graduate nursing program and is necessary to meet the clinical competencies established in specific courses. Please sign the attestation page and submit this to Project Concert annually.

The following abilities and characteristics, defined as technical standards, are required for admission, progression, and graduation. Students who find that they need reasonable accommodations to meet the Department's technical standards should contact the Coordinator of Student Accessibility Services at USJ.

### **SENSORY ABILITY**

- The graduate nursing student must be able to acquire information through observation and participate in didactic courses and simulated learning opportunities.
- A graduate nursing student is expected to be able to use the senses of vision, touch, hearing, and smell, or the functional equivalent to accurately acquire information from patients to assess findings. Input received by the senses must be integrated, analyzed, and synthesized consistently and accurately. The student is also required to have the ability to distinguish color; and perceive pain, pressure, temperature, position, equilibrium, and movement.
- The graduate nursing student must have sufficient capacity to make accurate visual observations and interpret them in the context of laboratory studies, medication

administration, and patient care activities. In addition, the student must be able to document these observations and maintain accurate records.

### **COMMUNICATION ABILITY**

- The graduate nursing student is expected to be able to communicate effectively in the classroom and clinical settings. Students must be able to present information in a professional, logical manner and provide patient counseling and instruction to effectively care for patients and their families. Each student must have the ability to record information accurately and clearly to communicate in English with patients, their family members, and other professionals in a variety of healthcare settings.

### **MOTOR ABILITY**

- Students must possess the capacity to perform physical examinations and diagnostic maneuvers.
- The graduate nursing student must be able to respond to clinical situations in a variety of settings that require physical mobility, coordination of both gross and fine motor neuromuscular function, and balance and equilibrium.

### **INTELLECTUAL-CONCEPTUAL ABILITY**

- The graduate nursing student must be able to develop and refine problem-solving skills that are crucial to practice as an advanced practice nurse. Problem-solving involves the ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize objective and subjective data. Each student must demonstrate an ability to formulate and test hypotheses while they incorporate new information from peers, faculty, preceptors, and the nursing and medical literature to formulate sound judgment in patient assessment, intervention, evaluation, teaching, and setting short- and long-term goals.

### **BEHAVIORAL/SOCIAL PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDES**

- The graduate nursing student is expected to have the maturity and emotional stability required for the full utilization of their intellectual abilities. They must exercise sound judgment, complete all assessments and interventions related to their curriculum, and develop sensitive interpersonal relationships with patients, families, the health care team, members of the Department of Nursing and others responsible for health care.
- The graduate student is expected to have the ability to function effectively under highly stressful situations, adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and manage the uncertainty inherent in the care of patients in the health care system. Students must be of the highest ethical and moral behavior and exhibit the professional values of justice, integrity, professionalism, excellence, leadership, and service.

### **Accommodations**

Students with physical or mental conditions that interfere with their ability to meet the technical standards of the Nursing Program may contact the University's Accessibility Coordinator to discuss the issue. The Accessibility Coordinator will work with the student to identify the extent of the student's limitations and determine whether and how reasonable accommodations can be made available. Reasonable accommodations will be directed toward providing equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities while adhering to the standards of nursing practice for all students. Documentation from the student's healthcare provider may be required. The student and the accessibility coordinator may collaborate with nursing faculty to assist students in obtaining,

testing out, and utilizing any equipment or other modality that can assist the student in meeting technical standards.

If there is a change in the ability to meet a technical standard during a student's course of study, the student needs to contact the Accessibility Coordinator as soon as possible. In addition, students should inform course faculty, the Director of Clinical Experiences, and the Chair of the Department about these activities promptly so that a change in ability does not interfere with the completion of course requirements. This may be accomplished with an email. Students are not required to discuss specifics of their medical diagnosis but are advised to contact the Accessibility Coordinator to discuss reasonable accommodations that would allow the student to meet the technical standards.

Students should follow these guidelines in requesting accommodations in the academic or clinical setting:

- Seek advisement from the Accessibility Coordinator as soon as possible after admission to the Nursing Program to facilitate the timely development of a plan for accommodation, which would ideally be in place at the beginning of the Program. Alterations in a plan for accommodation must be arranged with the Accessibility Officer.
- Applicants seeking admission into the Nursing Program who may have questions about the technical standards and reasonable accommodations are invited to discuss their questions with the Accessibility Officer.
- It is the student's responsibility to self-disclose to the Accessibility Coordinator and request accommodations. No student will be assumed to have a disability based on poor performance alone and students will be held to their performance, with or without accommodation.
- If, despite reasonable accommodations, a student is unable to demonstrate their capacity to meet the Technical Standards, the student may be dismissed from the nursing program.

### ***Clinical Experience Documentation***

All students will document their nurse practitioner student clinical experiences in Project Concert. Documentation of hours and encounters is a required component of all clinical courses. Students who do not complete documentation within the prescribed course dates will fail the clinical course.

#### ***NP Hours***

Students will document their nurse practitioner clinical hours (time in and time out) within 5 days of that clinical experience. Late entries will not be accepted. Nurse practitioner clinical hours include only direct patient care hours. Orientation at a clinical site, attending conferences, and doing projects at the clinical site do not apply toward NP hours. ANCC states that NP hours must be direct patient care hours.

#### ***Patient Encounters***

Students will document all patient encounters they are involved in, regardless of the level of student participation, within 5 days of that clinical experience. Late entries will not be accepted. This includes all experiences whether observing a preceptor, sharing the visit with the preceptor, or managing the visit independently. The expectation is that students will see at least one patient per

hour and therefore document a minimum of 540 encounters for PMHNP students and 590 encounters for FNP students. Students must use the appropriate ICD10 and Common Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes for every encounter, including the primary Evaluation and Management code.

### ***Clinical Evaluation***

Students will have a clinical evaluation by every preceptor. If the experience is more than 100 hours, the preceptor will complete a midterm evaluation (at the halfway point of your planned hours) and a final evaluation. If the experience is less than 100 hours, one evaluation at the end of the clinical experience is acceptable. It is the responsibility of the student to submit the evaluation(s) within the clinical course as directed by the course faculty. Additionally, students complete an evaluation of their clinical sites and preceptors for program review and evaluation.

- Faculty reserve the right to dismiss a student from a course based on the faculty member's judgment of the student's clinical performance and/or classroom behavior. Evaluation of student performance is based on the written clinical evaluation tool and discussion of the student's performance between the course faculty and preceptor.
- Students should bring any concerns they have about their clinical setting to their course faculty and if it is determined it may not be a good fit, alternative placements will be considered based on preceptor availability. If a student is doing well in clinical (passing), they may have the option to withdraw from the course or petition the registrar for a late withdrawal from the course. If a student is not doing well (failing clinical) and a new preceptor is not able to be secured during the semester, the situation will be reviewed by the Department Chair, the Graduate Programs Director, and the course faculty. Possible outcomes are that the student may be able to withdraw, or possibly receive an F for the course. In the latter scenario, students may be dismissed from the program, asked to repeat the course, or assigned other remediation.

### ***Site Visitors***

Students will have at least one site visit in each clinical course. Students are responsible for responding to the site visitor's request to set up a visit. Students may require a second visit during a clinical course if their performance is rated as marginal or unsatisfactory.

### ***Student Illness/Medical Leave of Absence***

If a student is ill or infectious, the student must notify the clinical faculty, and their preceptor before the expected absence at the clinical site. In the event the student arrives at the clinical site ill or infectious, the preceptor will determine whether the student should be excused from clinical activities and sent home.

Students who become ill or physically injured (excluding exposure to bodily fluids) during clinical activities are responsible for obtaining their medical care. In an emergency, care will be provided by the clinical agency and any cost of emergency care will be the responsibility of the student. Students who experience a blood-borne pathogen shall follow the University's post-exposure protocol.

[https://my.usj.edu/ICS/icsfs/EXPOSURE\\_PROTOCOL\\_07152021.pdf?target=68765401-9197-4d8a-b8d0-f0d36d2303cf](https://my.usj.edu/ICS/icsfs/EXPOSURE_PROTOCOL_07152021.pdf?target=68765401-9197-4d8a-b8d0-f0d36d2303cf) (Login to My.USJ.edu before clicking on this link.)

Any student with an existing health problem that has the potential of affecting the student's ability to perform their student activities or which may compromise their health and safety, or the health and safety of patients, should discuss the health problem with the Student Accessibility Coordinator before the first day of clinical. Please visit the Student Accessibility Services page on MyUSJ for information about initiating services.

Students with more serious health issues may require a medical leave of absence. Please discuss this with the Graduate Programs Director and the Director of Graduate Nursing Clinical Experiences. Proper forms need to be completed along with documentation from a health care provider.

### ***Student Records***

The Department of Nursing and the University need to monitor student outcomes throughout the program. This is one aspect of program evaluation. Nursing faculty will be reviewing student data available to the Department of Nursing and analyzing trends that can inform program improvements. The information will be used internally by the Department and University in summary form. Students will not be identified individually outside of the University. Anonymous descriptive information may also be shared with organizations that evaluate the program such as the Connecticut State Board of Examiners for Nursing, or the accrediting body of the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

### ***Student Conduct in the Clinical Setting***

Every student is fully responsible for their conduct in the clinical setting. Students are expected to exhibit personal and academic integrity, and safe clinical behaviors always. There is zero tolerance for conduct violations. A student who demonstrates inappropriate conduct will be required to leave the clinical setting. Students will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to probation, course failure, suspension, or dismissal.

Patient safety is of primary importance. Students should seek guidance from their preceptor to maintain patient safety. Errors (commission or omission) in the clinical area must be reported and discussed with your preceptor immediately. Students should also be aware that the course faculty and Graduate Programs Director will also be notified.

Inappropriate and unsafe clinical performance are defined as deficiencies in knowledge, skills and/or attitude that violate the procedures or policies of the Department of Nursing or the assigned agency.

#### **Examples of unacceptable behaviors may include but are not limited to:**

- Falsifying attendance records
- Profanity, vulgarity, disrespect, or rudeness to patients, visitors, faculty, students, or staff.
- Destruction of equipment or property
- Patient abandonment
- Negligence
- Unsafe practice
- Incompetence and/or lack of knowledge or previously learned skills
- Breaches in confidentiality as defined by HIPAA

- Concealing one's errors or those of another
- Falsification of data in patient records
- Omission of relevant data from patient records
- Verbal or physical abuse of a patient, visitor, faculty, staff, or peer
- Violation of the Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Violation of scope of practice

It is the responsibility of all students to report any violations.

### ***Nurse Practitioner Certification Exams***

Students who complete either of the nurse practitioner programs with the required clinical hours are eligible to sit for the National Certification Exam leading to licensure as either a family nurse practitioner (FNP) or a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner (PMHNP). Psychiatric mental health graduates can only test with the American Nurse Credentialing Center (ANCC). Family nurse practitioner graduates have the choice of testing with ANCC or the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) testing service. Credentialing as a family nurse practitioner permits nurses to work in a variety of outpatient, primary care practice settings.

The ANCC FNP or PMHNP candidate handbook can be found at [https://www.nursingworld.org/~4aae16/globalassets/certification/certification-policies/ancc-generaltestingrenewalrequirements4-1-2017\\_final.pdf](https://www.nursingworld.org/~4aae16/globalassets/certification/certification-policies/ancc-generaltestingrenewalrequirements4-1-2017_final.pdf)

The AANP FNP candidate handbook can be found at <https://www.aanpcert.org/resource/documents/AGNP%20FNP%20Candidate%20Handbook.pdf>

The certification exams are very rigorous! It is recommended that all NP students plan to attend a comprehensive review course during their final practicum course or immediately following graduation. **Students should plan to review for their boards for at least 2-3 months following graduation to be successful on the exam.** When requesting transcripts for applications to test, please make sure to check on the form that you want your final transcript sent so the certifying agencies can see the degree conferral date.

After passing the certification exam, students may apply for an APRN license. DNP students will not be eligible to apply for an APRN license until their degree is conferred. Once the degree is conferred, request a copy of the official transcript from the Registrar which will need to be sent to the Department of Public Health (DPH) for licensure. Please remember to notify the DPH and the Registrar if there has been a recent name change.

## Department of Nursing Honors and Awards

### ***Sigma Theta Tau Honor Society***

The purposes of Sigma Theta Tau are to recognize the superior achievement of scholarship, to recognize the development of leadership qualities, to foster high professional standards, to encourage creative work, and to strengthen commitment to the ideals and purposes of the profession. Graduate students are required to achieve and maintain a 3.5 GPA. They are also

expected to meet the expectation of academic integrity. Students are required to have completed one-fourth of the program of study to be considered for membership.

Sigma Theta Tau's philosophy of membership is based upon the purposes of the Society. Membership is a reward for achievement of the criteria for Sigma Theta Tau. Awarding membership encourages, fosters, and actively supports further professional development, thus promoting nursing scholarship, leadership, creativity, and commitment to nursing.

### *Awards*

The faculty of the Department of Nursing present select awards at the Graduate Nursing Hooding Ceremony held near the end of the fall and spring semesters.

## References

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## Appendix A— Documentation of Previous NP Clinical Practicum Experience

All DNP degree candidates must document a minimum of 1000 post-baccalaureate hours (as per AACN guidelines). Practicum hours used toward the DNP degree must be approved by the Graduate Programs Director. Only previously obtained nurse practitioner hours apply. Practicum hours for MS in Nursing Education are not applicable.

Please fill out a separate copy of this form for each graduate institution where you completed NP practicum hours.

Institution/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree or Certificate: \_\_\_\_\_

Year Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Nursing Specialty Area: \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a statement from your institution indicating the number of precepted clinical hours as part of the program.

Students who received their graduate degree from the University of Saint Joseph do not need to submit additional documentation.

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

### ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL:

Action Taken: Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Denied \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Director, Graduate Programs: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B - Graduate Nursing Student Handbook Signature Sheet

Please upload this form to Project Concert within one week of receipt.

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

Directions: Please initial each item.

\_\_\_\_ 1. Handbook for Graduate Nursing Students: I acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the 2022-2023 University of Saint Joseph Student Handbook for Graduate Nursing Students. I furthermore agree to abide by all the rules, regulations, and policies stated herein. I acknowledge that I am responsible for following these policies, and if I do not understand them, it is my responsibility to seek clarification PRIOR to an issue. This applies to all the documents listed below.

\_\_\_\_ 2. Release of Photograph to Clinical Agencies: I give permission to release my photograph to clinical agencies upon their request. These will be used for facility-specific identification.

\_\_\_\_ 3. Academic Integrity Policy: I have reviewed the University of Saint Joseph Academic Integrity policy [https://my.usj.edu/ics/icsfs/USJ\\_Academic\\_Integrity\\_Policy\\_.pdf?target=ba6f34fe-ece5-4e25-9cc7-9df36e8bd804](https://my.usj.edu/ics/icsfs/USJ_Academic_Integrity_Policy_.pdf?target=ba6f34fe-ece5-4e25-9cc7-9df36e8bd804)

\_\_\_\_ 4. Technical Standards: I attest that I have read the Technical Standards for the University of Saint Joseph Graduate Nursing Program, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about these requirements. I affirm that I can meet the technical standards expected of a student in the University of Saint Joseph Graduate Nursing Program as outlined above with or without reasonable accommodations.

\_\_\_\_ 5. Nursing Student Agreement for Clinical Experiences: I agree to abide by the policies outlined in the Nursing Student Agreement for Clinical Experiences document.

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