



# Wilkes University

PASSAN SCHOOL OF NURSING

## **GRADUATE PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2025-2026**

**Spring 26 Revised Version**

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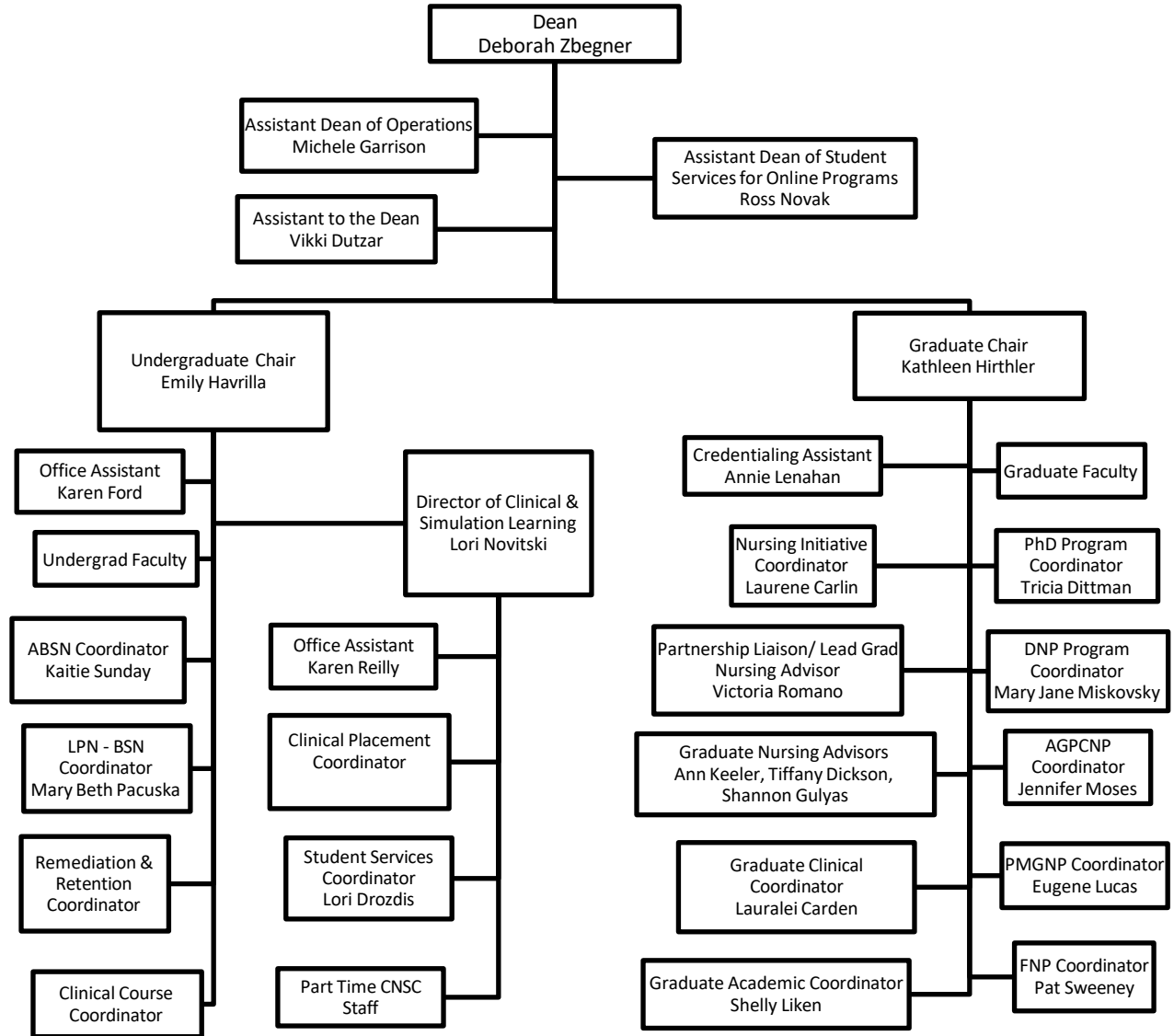
## STATEMENT OF GRADUATE NURSING POLICY AND PROGRAM REVISION

The graduate faculty in the Passan School of Nursing reserve the right to revise requirements of policies, as deemed necessary at any time, to prepare students for new and emerging roles in nursing. If changes are necessary, students will be notified of such changes both by individual email communication at wilkes.edu and posting both notification and nature of change(s) in all graduate courses.

When programs must meet changes to curricular requirements, for example changes in course sequencing, set by external agencies, such as accrediting associations, curricular changes **may be made without prior notice**, and students will be required to conform to such changes when they become effective. See the Accreditation policy below.

Policies and procedures of the Passan School of Nursing Graduate Nursing Program may be more stringent than other University graduate programs as outlined on the following pages. **Students should follow the policies of this handbook unless otherwise directed to follow the *Graduate Bulletin*.**

## PASSAN SCHOOL OF NURSING ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



## **WILKES UNIVERSITY**

### **OUR MISSION:**

To empower our students with transformative educational experiences, civic values and transferable skills through mentoring, individualized opportunities and innovative teaching and scholarship in an inclusive environment.

### **OUR VISION:**

Wilkes University will provide exceptional educational experiences that transform students and develop innovations through scholarly activities that lead to national recognition and shape the world around us.

### **OUR VALUES:**

- **Mentorship:** Nurturing individuals to understand and act on their abilities while challenging them to achieve great things.
- **Scholarship:** Advancing knowledge and stimulating intellectual curiosity and creativity through research and discovery across all disciplines.
- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:** Celebrating diversity among individuals and ideas and ensuring that our community provides equitable, inclusive and accessible opportunities to thrive.
- **Innovation:** Supporting new ideas and programs through sustainable, impactful practices.
- **Community:** Fostering relationships and a sense of belonging through a culture of care, respect and support.
- **Service:** Engaging ourselves and our communities through active citizenship and collaborative partnerships.
- **Stewardship:** Affirming our commitment to intentionally honor University traditions and responsibly secure the evolution of Wilkes and its mission.

### **INSTITUTIONAL GRADUATE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of appropriate theories, methods and standards specific to the field of study;
- Demonstrate appropriate application of the methods, skills and techniques specific to the field of study;
- Demonstrate the ability to engage in the process of systematic inquiry appropriate to the field of study;
- Demonstrate effective written communication skills in the field of study;
- Demonstrate effective oral communication skills in the field of study; and
- Demonstrate understanding of integrity and ethical practice.

### **ACCREDITATION**

Wilkes University is an accredited member of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and its graduate and professional programs are approved by the Department of Education of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In addition to total program accreditation, certain special areas are recognized by professional organizations. The Master's Degree in Business Administration (MBA) program is accredited by both the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), and the graduate programs leading to the Master of Science Degree in Nursing and the Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) are accredited by the Commission on

Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) has granted full accreditation to the Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm. D.) program. The baccalaureate degree in nursing/master's degree in nursing/Doctor of Nursing Practice/, and post graduate APRN certificate programs at Wilkes University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education ([www.ccneaccreditation.org](http://www.ccneaccreditation.org)).

**NOTE: When programs must meet curricular requirements set by external agencies, such as accrediting associations, curricular changes may be made without prior notice, and students will be required to conform to such changes when they become effective.**

## PASSAN SCHOOL OF NURSING

### MISSION

The Passan School of Nursing is dedicated to educating and empowering future nursing leaders through mentorship with immersive clinical experiences, community engagement, innovative teaching and scholarship. The Passan School of Nursing instills a sense of civic responsibility, supports a culture of creativity, and fosters an inclusive environment.

### VISION

The vision of the Passan School of Nursing is to be a recognized leader in nursing education who develops professional nurses based upon essential concepts in the domains and competencies for entry –level professional nursing practice and advanced level nursing education.

### ACCREDITATION

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

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Nursing at Wilkes University is regionally accredited within the institution's scope of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

The curriculum in the graduate nursing program of the Passan School of Nursing applies the principles of competency-based education as a process for assessing measurement of outcomes in nursing for entry level professional and advanced-level nursing education. Behavioral assessment is conducted by students and faculty on the ability to achieve learning goals. The pathway to learning is delineated for students across the program. This knowledge attained is transferrable across settings in clinical practice. *The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education* (AACN, 2021) are met according to the:

- 10 Domains
- 45 Competencies
- 8 Concepts

## **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN NURSING (Ph.D.)**

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Wilkes University Ph.D. in Nursing program prepares nurses to investigate and develop the science that drives nursing practice, research and education. The program is designed for students interested in pursuing academic, and education roles, as well as research roles in healthcare settings. The program culminates in the student's defense of the dissertation, an original research study to advance knowledge in nursing science on a variety of topics. The dissertation is a requirement of the Ph.D. in nursing degree.

### **Ph.D. END OF PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Graduates will be able to:

1. Synthesize empirical and theoretical literature from nursing and other disciplines regarding nursing education and clinical practice.
2. Design a nursing research study that examines, refines, and advances nursing science and theory to transform nursing education and clinical practice.
3. Critically evaluate research findings as applicable to nursing science.
4. Contribute to the field of nursing science through the dissemination of research findings.

### **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants will be evaluated for admission based on the following criteria. These admissions standards represent the minimum eligibility requirements for the program. Admission committee members reserve the right to request additional information from candidates as needed for a more in-depth review of qualifications. Admission is not guaranteed.

- A completed online application.
- Official transcripts showing a master's in nursing degree or completion from an institution with programmatic (ACEN, NLNAC, CCNE) and regional accreditation. Admission is not granted for students who graduated from a non-programmatically or nonregionally accredited institution and meet all other admission requirements.
- A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
- Unencumbered current RN license; APRN license if appropriate. Applications presenting a history of disciplinary action on professional licenses will be subject to an additional review process by the Special Licensure Discrepancy Committee of the university.
- Current curriculum vitae.
- Letter of intent describing your professional goals, research topic and the reason for pursuing the Ph.D. degree.
- Two recommendations from graduate-level nurses or faculty who can attest to your ability to be successful in a Ph.D. program.

\* Applications presenting a history of disciplinary action on professional licenses will be subject to an additional review process by the Special Licensure Discrepancy Committee of the university.

## POST MASTER'S Ph.D. CURRICULUM

Courses are 12 weeks fully online except for a 1-day virtual orientation (NSG 615: Introductory Seminar) and a 2-week competency exam course (NSG 628: Ph.D. Competency).

Course Number	Title	Credits
NSG 615*	Introductory Seminar	1
NSG 616	Philosophy of Science	3
NSG 617	Theory in Nursing Education	3
NSG 618	Health Care Issues and Policies	3
NSG 619	Research Process	3
NSG 620	Seminar I	3
NSG 611	Statistics	3
NSG 622	Writing for Grants and Publication	3
NSG 623	Quantitative Research and Analysis I	3
NSG 624	Qualitative Research and Analysis	3
NSG 625	Quantitative Research and Analysis II	3
NSG 626	Measurement and Data Collection	3
NSG 627	Seminar II	3
NSG 628**	Ph.D. Competency	1
NSG 629	Dissertation Seminar	3
NSG 630	Dissertation Implementation I	3
NSG 631	Dissertation Implementation II	3

**Total Credits: 47**

\*NSG 615 (1-day virtual orientation prior to the initial course start date)

\*\*NSG 628 (2-week course, to include a scheduled comprehensive written examination)

Students who have not successfully completed data collection by the conclusion of NSG 630 will be required to enroll in an additional 3-credit "extension" course. More than one of these "extension" courses may be taken if needed to complete data collection. Students will receive an incomplete for NSG 630 until all course work is satisfied. Students who have not successfully defended their dissertation by the conclusion of NSG 631 will be required to enroll in an additional 3-credit "extension" course NSG 699. More than one of these "extension" courses may be taken if needed to complete the dissertation. Students will receive an incomplete for NSG 631 until all course work is satisfied. Extension courses are Pass/Fail. Students must complete the program, including dissertation defense, within 7 years from the date of enrollment.

## Ph.D. to D.N.P. CURRICULUM

This pathway is for students with a Ph.D. to attain a D.N.P. degree. The D.N.P. courses are 12 weeks fully online except for NSG 608a and NSG 608b which are 15 weeks in length for completion of the D.N.P. Project.

<b>Course Number</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NSG 600	Nursing Informatics	3
NSG 602	Ethical Principles for Advanced Nursing Practice	3
NSG 604	Epidemiology and Environmental Health	3
NSG 605	Collaboration in Health Care Delivery	3
NSG 606	Diversity and Social Issues	3
NSG 607	Leadership in Advanced Nursing Practice	3
NSG 608a	D.N.P. Project (15 weeks)	3
NSG 608b	D.N.P. Project (15 weeks)	3

**Total Credits: 24**

An elective practicum course NSG 609 is available for students entering the M.S.-D.N.P. program with less than 400 hours from their master's degree and Post -Graduate/APRN certificate programs. This course provides students with additional time to complete the required 1000 hours for the D.N.P. degree, prior to the start of the D.N.P. project.

NSG 609: D.N.P. Program Practicum; 250 clinical hours; 3 credits

**D.N.P.to Ph.D. CURRICULUM**

This pathway is for students with a D.N.P. degree to attain a Ph.D. degree. Courses are 12 weeks fully online except for a 1-day virtual orientation (NSG 615: Introductory Seminar) and a 2-week competency exam course (NSG 628: Ph.D. Competency).

<b>Course Number*</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Credits</b>
NSG 615*	Introductory Seminar	1
NSG 616	Philosophy of Science	3
NSG 617	Theory in Nursing Education	3
NSG 619	Research Process	3
NSG 620	Seminar I	3
NSG 611	Statistics	3
NSG 623	Quantitative Research and Analysis I	3

NSG 624	Qualitative Research and Analysis	3
NSG 625	Quantitative Research and Analysis II	3

NSG 626	Measurement and Data Collection	3
NSG 627	Seminar II	3
NSG 628**	Ph.D. Competency	1
NSG 629	Dissertation Seminar	3
NSG 630	Dissertation Implementation I	3
NSG 631	Dissertation Implementation II	3

**Total Credits: 41**

\*NSG 615 (1-day virtual orientation prior to the initial course start date)

\*\*NSG 628 (2-week course, to include a scheduled comprehensive written examination)

Students who have not successfully completed data collection by the conclusion of NSG 630 will be required to enroll in an additional 3-credit “extension” course. More than one of these “extension” courses may be taken if needed to complete data collection. Students will receive an incomplete for NSG 630 until all course work is satisfied. Students who have not successfully defended their dissertation by the conclusion of NSG 631 will be required to enroll in an additional 3-credit “extension” course NSG 699. More than one of these “extension” courses may be taken if needed to complete the dissertation. Students will receive an incomplete for NSG 631 until all course work is satisfied. Extension courses are Pass/Fail. Students must complete the program, including dissertation defense, within 7 years from the date of enrollment.

**NSG 615: Introductory Seminar**

All students will be required to take this introductory seminar (NSG 615) prior to the start of the program and NSG 616. This course is a 1-day, Thursday or Friday virtual orientation prior to the initial course start date, providing students with the opportunity to begin building academic relationships and community, and ease the transition into doctoral level education. Students will be notified of the specific date by the Ph.D. Coordinator.

**Seminar Courses**

All Ph.D. students who do not pass NSG 620: Seminar I or NSG 627: Seminar II with a grade of B (83-86) or greater, regardless of student GPA, must repeat the course Ph.D. Competency, Comprehensive Exam (NSG 628).

**Ph.D. Competency Comprehensive Exam**

All Ph.D. students are required to successfully pass the timed, scheduled, and comprehensive NSG 628: Ph.D. Competency (comprehensive examination) with a grade of B (83-86) or greater, regardless of student GPA, before proceeding to NSG 629: Dissertation Seminar. Students are provided with a specific date and time period to complete the comprehensive examination during NSG 628. If a student is unsuccessful on the first attempt, they may retake the comprehensive exam one time only. If the comprehensive examination is failed a second time, the student will be dismissed from the program and ineligible to return. Students will incur a tuition charge of \$50.00 per question for the retake examination.

**Dissertation**

Early engagement between faculty and students is key to successful dissertation development. Students will select a dissertation chair, and two dissertation members that support the student throughout the duration of the program. This facilitates ongoing dissertation development and guidance throughout the doctoral program and aims to promote dissertation completion.

## DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE (D.N.P.)

### PURPOSE

The distance learning program leading to the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree (D.N.P.) at Wilkes University is linked to the mission statements of the University and the Passan School of Nursing. The *Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education* (2021) are applied to the curriculum for advanced-level nursing education. The doctoral program focuses on two primary elements: applied research and clinical practice. These elements are embedded in courses throughout the program leading to the D.N.P. Project where students integrate acquired knowledge to a clinical practice or health policy change in their preferred specialty area utilizing competency-based education.

### D.N.P. End of Program Outcomes

1. Facilitate the synthesis of theory and research-based knowledge from nursing science and other sciences to inform education, practice, and translational research. (Domain 1)
2. Analyze healthcare data outcomes to develop strategies for evidence-based practice, guidelines, and policies that are person-centered resulting in accountability for outcomes and shared meaning with individuals and families, the healthcare team, and healthcare system. (Domain 2)
3. Incorporate theoretical care delivery models of social determinants of health while assessing epidemiological, environmental, and global health data to reduce disparities and improve health promotion, disease prevention, and population health strategies. (Domain 3)
4. Lead the translation of advanced evidence and knowledge in research and practice to improve health care outcomes and practice changes while following ethical standards of scholarship and dissemination. (Domain 4)
5. Evaluate quality and safety principles using data and quality improvement methods to monitor and evaluate patient outcomes, identify areas for improvement in complex healthcare systems, and implement change in clinical decision-making and systems improvement. (Domain 5)
6. Facilitate interprofessional collaboration to design, implement, and evaluate patient-centered care and population health initiatives across complex healthcare systems. (Domain 6)
7. Summarize how organizational structure, financing, and policy impact care delivery, to provide high-quality, cost-effective, and patient-centered care across diverse populations and settings. (Domain 7)
8. Evaluate data from health information systems to identify trends, support evidence-based interventions, and drive quality improvement. (Domain 8)
9. Model professional standards of advanced practice nursing with integrity and accountability while applying ethical principles, laws, policies, and regulations as a leader in support of safe, equitable, and evidence-based care. (Domain 9)
10. Develop nurse leaders to assume responsibility for professional actions and decisions while engaging in self-care and self-reflection activities for improving systems of care and influencing policy, advocating for change, and guiding interprofessional teams. (Domain 10)

## ADMISSION CRITERIA

Applicants will be evaluated for admission based on the following criteria. These admissions standards represent the minimum eligibility requirements for the program. Admission committee members reserve the right to request additional information from candidates as needed for a more in-depth review of qualifications.

### Admission Criteria

- Completed online application.
- Master of Science in Nursing degree.
- A minimum GPA of 3.0 or higher from a master's or doctoral degree granting institution which is regionally and programmatically (ACEN, NLNAC, or CCNE) accredited. Admission is not granted for students who graduated from a non-programmatically or non-regionally accredited institution and meet all other admission requirements
- Official transcripts from master's degree and post-graduate/APRN certificate granting institutions, as appropriate.
- A current unencumbered RN license.
- A current unencumbered advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) license and national board certification, if appropriate. Applications presenting a history of disciplinary action on professional licenses will be subject to an additional review process by the Special Licensure Discrepancy Committee of the University.
- Curriculum vitae
- Validation of Clinical Hours Form: this form is completed for supervised indirect or direct clinical practice hours during master's and/or post-graduate/APRN certificate program. Verification must be provided by the nursing program where the clinical hours were completed.

\* Applications presenting a history of disciplinary action on professional licenses will be subject to an additional review process by the Special Licensure Discrepancy Committee of the university.

### M.S. to D.N.P. CORE

12-week courses except NSG 608a and NSG 608b are 15 weeks

NSG 600	Nursing Informatics	3 credits
NSG 611	Statistics	3 credits
NSG 602	Ethical Principles for Advanced Nursing Practice	3 credits
NSG 603	Application of Nursing Research	3 credits
NSG 604	Epidemiology and Environmental Health	3 credits
NSG 605	Collaboration in Health Care Delivery	3 credits
NSG 606	Diversity and Social Issues	3 credits
NSG 607	Leadership in Advanced Nursing Practice	3 credits
NSG 608a**	D.N.P. Project	3 credits
NSG608b**	D.N.P. Project	3 credits

\*\*NSG 608a and 608b are completed over the last 2 semesters in the program.

**Total: 30 credits**

### D.N.P. PROJECT

Students are required to complete a D.N.P. Project that demonstrates mastery of theoretical content through analysis and synthesis. Students should have a topic prior to entering the program and will research the topic throughout their D.N.P. degree coursework. The expectation is that students will commit to this topic during their coursework. Students changing topics and not prepared for the start of the D.N.P. Project (NSG 608a) may be asked to take a leave of absence to prepare for a new topic. D.N.P. Project oversight is provided by an assigned D.N.P. Project

Chairperson. One other committee member is chosen by the student and can include graduate faculty members or community members, who are serving as D.N. P. Project mentors. The D.N.P. Project provides outcomes for validation that candidates have achieved competency in *The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education* (AACN, 2021) through the application of research and clinical implementation. The D.N.P. Project is 6 credits and completion is over the last 2 courses of the D.N.P. program. D.N.P. Project clearance requirements are per the policy in this handbook. Students may be required by graduate faculty to seek an editor, if their scholarly writing requires further development.

The D.N.P. project is a pilot study directed at generating knowledge through practice or policy changes. All students are expected to model their project in this fashion. The D.N.P. project 1) is clinically focused, 2) has NO control group, and 3) uses outcome data to support quality improvement for a practice or policy change.

Students must complete 1000 clinical hours for the D.N.P. degree. Included in these hours are the clinically supervised hours conducted in attaining a master's degree in nursing and/or a Post Graduate/APRN certificate. Validation of those hours is required by a letter from the degree granting academic institution verifying the number of practicum hours which is part of the admission process. The remaining hours will be conducted by the student, in collaboration with the D.N.P. Project Chair and the clinical mentor, while completing the D.N.P. Project. Elective practicum courses for obtaining these hours outside the D.N.P. Project courses are available.

D.N.P. Project Chairs will validate the official hours required by students on the clinical log for completion of the 1000 hours to complete the D.N.P. program. Students are expected to complete the required clinical log during the D.N.P. Project documenting all hours and details of their experience. Students entering the program with 1000 documented clinical hours will complete a clinical log to demonstrate the achievement of D.N.P. program and course outcomes. These clinical hours can include: activities related to implementing the D.N.P. project, for example, developing the clinical intervention, recruiting potential participants, meeting with potential participants, obtaining informed consent from participants, collecting data, entering data into a database, storing the data, analyzing data, conferring with a statistician, and conferring with members of the organization regarding your inquiry. Hours are not granted for activities related to course assignments such as writing the D.N.P. project paper, conducting the review of literature, writing the IRB application, editing your paper, and discussion posts. Students are encouraged to discuss with their D.N.P. Project Chair any activities in question.

The final project is presented to the D.N.P. Project committee via webinar. The expectation is that students will complete the project over the last 2 courses of the D.N.P. program. The final project presentation will be scheduled with the DNP Project Chair, then conducted during business hours, Monday - Friday; 9-5 EST. An incomplete grade cannot be provided for NSG 608a unless all course requirements are met and the student is between semesters and wanting to continue plans for the DNP Project. Students who have difficulty in meeting course requirements and timelines due to challenges with the research setting are expected to inform their Chair as soon as the issue

is self-identified. Students will need to take a withdrawal backdated to the last time the student participated in the classroom, go on a leave of absence, and retake NSG 608a when able to complete. Students who are unable to complete their Project over the allocated time frame of 2 courses may be eligible to register for a billable 3-credit hour course in an additional term, one time only, to meet the requirements of the project upon approval of the D.N.P. Project Chair and D.N.P. Program Coordinator.

An elective practicum course is available for students entering the M.S.-D.N.P. program with less than 400 hours from their master's degree and Post-Graduate/APRN certificate programs. This course provides students with additional time to complete the required 1000 hours for the D.N.P. degree, prior to the start of the D.N.P. project.

NSG 609: D.N.P. Program Practicum; 250 clinical hours; 3 credits

<b>Clinical Hours</b>	<b>Elective Courses</b>
400 hours and more	No electives necessary
Less than 400 hours	NSG 609

## MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING (M.S.N.)

### PURPOSE

The distance learning Master of Science in Nursing (M.S.N.) program at Wilkes University is designed to prepare the nurse practitioner for advancing nursing practice and quality within healthcare. The *Essentials* (2021) are applied to the curriculum and students undergo behavioral assessments of competency outcomes in meeting needs for entry level professional and advanced-level nursing education. The program provides a foundation to further advancement of professional nursing education for a doctoral degree in nursing and post-graduate/APRN certificate program. Graduates are eligible for national board certification upon program completion of the respective concentration.

### M.S.N. End of Program Outcomes

1. Apply knowledge from nursing science and other sciences to inform decision making and clinical judgement in nurse practitioner practice.
2. Prepare nurse practitioners with advanced nursing knowledge, communication skills, and techniques which are holistic and engaging of patients as active partners in their health decisions for person-centered care.
3. Identify population-focused health interventions tailored to specific patient needs for competent care and improved quality and ethical health outcomes.
4. Translate current evidence based, advanced practice knowledge to inform nurse practitioner clinical practice and management of patient outcomes.
5. Engage in a culture of ethical principles and standards of evidence-based interventions to ensure safe, high-quality care and enhance health outcomes and systems performance across diverse populations.
6. Demonstrate team-building skills for effective collaboration with other healthcare professionals and stakeholders to deliver patient-centered care, improve health outcomes, and optimize care delivery systems.
7. Examine systems based organizational practices to address gaps in access to care, care coordination, and fiduciary stewardship essential to sustaining clinical practices within complex systems of healthcare.
8. Integrate informatics, healthcare technologies and decision-support tools to support clinical decision-making, improve patient outcomes, and enhance care delivery.
9. Model professional standards of nurse practitioner clinical practice with integrity and accountability while applying ethical principles, laws, policies, and regulations as a leader in support of safe, equitable, and evidence-based care.
10. Develop nurse practitioners to assume responsibility for professional actions and decisions and engage in self-care and self-reflection activities that contribute to lifelong learning and professional development.

### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants will be evaluated for admission based on the following criteria. These admissions standards represent the minimum eligibility requirements for the program. Admission committee members reserve the right to request additional information from candidates as needed for a more in-depth review of qualifications.

- A completed online application.
- Official transcripts showing appropriate degree completion (Associate degree for RN-M.S.N., BS in Nursing for M.S.N.) from an institution with programmatic (ACEN, NLNAC, CCNE) and regional accreditation. Admission is not granted for students who graduated from a non-programmatically or non-regionally accredited institution and meet all other admission requirements.
- A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
- A current, unencumbered RN license. \*Applications presenting a history of disciplinary action on professional licenses will be subject to an additional review process by the Special Licensure Discrepancy Committee of the University.
- Current resume or curriculum vitae
- One year of RN clinical experience (by the start of NP clinical courses)

\* Applications presenting a history of disciplinary action on professional licenses will be subject to an additional review process by the Special Licensure Discrepancy Committee of the university.

## **CURRICULUM**

### **Graduate Nursing Core (24 Credits)**

Courses are 12 weeks.

NSG 500	Advanced Health Assessment	3 credits
NSG 501	Theoretical Foundations of Nursing Science	3 credits
NSG 502	Advanced Nursing Research	3 credits
NSG 504	Advanced Role Development in Nursing	3 credits
NSG 505	Health Policy and Politics for Advancing Nursing Practice	3 credits
NSG 530	Advanced Pathophysiology	3 credits
NSG 533	Advanced Pharmacology	3 credits
NSG 590	Scholarly Review	3 credits

## **CONCENTRATIONS**

### **Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (16 Credits)**

Courses are 12 weeks.

NSG506	Advanced Practice in Adult-Gerontology Clinical I	3 credits
NSG515	Advanced Practice in Adult-Gerontology Clinical II	3 credits
NSG550	Diagnostic Reasoning for Nurse Practitioners	2 credits
NSG554	Nurse Practitioners in Primary Care I	3 credits
NSG555	Nurse Practitioners in Primary Care II	3 credits
NSG556	Health Perspectives of Culturally Diverse, Rural and Underserved Populations	2 credits

### **Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (18 Credits)**

Courses are 12 weeks.

NSG526	Clinical Modalities in Advanced Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing Practice	3 credits
NSG527	Psychopathology, Theories, and Advanced Clinical Modalities	3 credits
NSG535	Advanced Practice in Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing I	3 credits

NSG536	Advanced Practice in Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing II Mental Health Nursing II	3 credits
NSG550	Diagnostic Reasoning for Nurse Practitioners	2 credits
NSG552	Psychopharmacology	2 credits
NSG556	Health Perspectives of Culturally Diverse, Rural, and Underserved Populations	2 credits

**Family/Individual Across the Lifespan Nurse Practitioner (19 Credits)**

Courses are 12 weeks.

NSG 546	Family Nurse Practitioner Clinical I	3 credits
NSG 547	Family Nurse Practitioner Clinical II	3 credits
NSG 548	Family Nurse Practitioner Role with Children and Families	2 credits
NSG 549	Family Nurse Practitioner Clinical with Children and Families	1 credit
NSG 550	Diagnostic Reasoning for Nurse Practitioners	2 credits
NSG 554	Nurse Practitioners in Primary Care I	3 credits
NSG 555	Nurse Practitioners in Primary Care II	3 credits
NSG 556	Health Perspective of Culturally Diverse, Rural and Underserved Populations	2 credits

## RN to M.S.N. PROGRAM

### PURPOSE

This distance learning RN to M.S.N. graduate nursing program is designed for the registered nurse with an associate's degree in nursing (AAN or ASN) who plans to earn a career-enhancing nursing degree to the master's level. Students enter this program as graduate students of the university. The *Essentials* (2021) are applied to the curriculum and students undergo behavioral assessments of competency outcomes in meeting needs for entry level and advanced -entry level nursing education. The curriculum starts with two bridge courses totaling 10 credit hours, which bring the student to the baccalaureate level of study. ***\* A pass-through bachelor's degree in nursing is not granted as part of this program.*** After completing the bridge courses, students continue in completing a concentration of their choice for the Master of Science in Nursing degree (see Master of Science in Nursing section of the handbook). Graduates are eligible for national certification upon program completion of the respective concentration. **RN to M.S.N. students follow the policies of the Passan School of Nursing graduate nursing program.**

### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- See the Master of Science in Nursing admission requirements.

### CURRICULUM

Successful completion of the following 3 bridge courses is required for the M.S.N. degree conferral. All bridge courses must be taken as part of the RN to M.S.N. degree completion through the University. Transfer credits for these courses will not be approved.

- NSG 410: Transition to Baccalaureate Nursing for the Graduate Nursing Student 7 credits (15-week course)
- NSG 411: Leadership and Management Practicum for the Graduate Nursing Student 3 credits (clinical- 45 hours) (12-week course)
- NSG 412: Graduate Level Academic Writing for Nursing Professionals 1 credit (12-week course)

The total number of credits and degree requirements for completion of the RN to M.S.N. program and conferring an M.S.N. degree is based upon the concentration chosen (see the Master of Science in Nursing section of this handbook). The range is 51-54 total credits.

## POST-GRADUATE/APRN CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

### PURPOSE

The distance learning Post-Graduate/APRN Certificate program is designed for registered nurses who have earned a master's or doctoral degree in nursing and seek to expand their education in a new specialty area. Certificate programs are offered in all NP concentrations available in the Master of Science in Nursing degree program. The *Essentials* (2021) are applied to the curriculum and students undergo behavioral assessments of competency outcomes in meeting needs for advanced entry level education. Student competence is validated in the courses. Graduates are eligible to sit for national board certification examination upon program completion of the respective concentration. A review of official transcripts and syllabi for the gap analysis will determine a student's course of study. A certificate of program completion is awarded, not a degree.

Students admitted to the Post-Graduate/APRN Certificate Program who have previously taken an Advanced Pharmacology course are advised to contact their State Board of Nursing to determine if their Advanced Pharmacology course meets the criteria set for length of time allowed from taking the course to the date of applying for prescriptive privileges.

### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants will be evaluated for admission based on the following criteria. These admissions standards represent the minimum eligibility requirements for the program. Admission committee members reserve the right to request additional information from candidates as needed for a more in-depth review of qualifications.

- A completed online application.
- Official transcripts showing appropriate degree completion (Associate degree for RN-MSN, BS in Nursing for MSN) from an institution with programmatic (ACEN, NLNAC, CCNE) and regional accreditation. Admission is not granted for students who graduated from a non-programmatically or regionally accredited institution and meet all other admission requirements.
- A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
- A minimum grade of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in Advanced Pathophysiology, Advanced Assessment and Advanced Pharmacology from previous graduate nursing work.
- A current unencumbered RN license and APRN license for nurse practitioners. Applications presenting a history of disciplinary action on professional licenses will be subject to an additional review process by the Special Licensure Discrepancy Committee of the University.
- Current resume or curriculum vitae

\* Applications presenting a history of disciplinary action on professional licenses will be subject to an additional review process by the Special Licensure Discrepancy Committee of the university.

### **Adult –Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (27 credits or less pending review of previous coursework)**

All courses are 12 weeks.

NSG 500	Advanced Health Assessment	3 credits
NSG 530	Advanced Pathophysiology	3 credits
NSG 533	Advanced Pharmacology	3 credits
NSG 506	Advanced Practice in Adult-Gerontology Clinical I	3 credits
NSG 515	Advanced Practice in Adult-Gerontology Clinical II	3 credits

NSG 550	Diagnostic Reasoning for Nurse Practitioners	2 credits
NSG 554	Nurse Practitioners in Primary Care I	3 credits
NSG 555	Nurse Practitioners in Primary Care II	3 credits
NSG 556	Health Perspectives of Culturally Diverse, Rural, and Underserved Populations	2 credits
NSG 591	Scholarly Preparation for NP Boards	2 credits

**Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (29 credits or less pending review of previous coursework)**

All courses are 12 weeks.

NSG 500	Advanced Health Assessment	3 credits
NSG 530	Advanced Pathophysiology	3 credits
NSG 533	Advanced Pharmacology	3 credits
NSG 526	Clinical Modalities in Advanced Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing Practice	3 credits
NSG 527	Psychopathology, Theories, and Advanced Clinical Modalities	3 credits
NSG 535	Advanced Practice in Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing I	3 credits
NSG 536	Advanced Practice in Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing II	3 credits
NSG 550	Diagnostic Reasoning for Nurse Practitioners	2 credits
NSG 552	Psychopharmacology	2 credits
NSG 556	Health Perspectives of Culturally Diverse, Rural, and Underserved Populations	2 credits
NSG 591	Scholarly Preparation for NP Boards	2 credits

**Family/Individual Across the Lifespan Nurse Practitioner (30 credits or less pending review of previous coursework)**

All courses are 12 weeks.

NSG 500	Advanced Health Assessment	3 credits
NSG 530	Advanced Pathophysiology	3 credits
NSG 533	Advanced Pharmacology	3 credits
NSG 546	Family Nurse Practitioner Clinical I	3 credits
NSG 547	Family Nurse Practitioner Clinical II	3 credits
NSG 548	Family Nurse Practitioner Role with Children and Families	2 credits
NSG 549	Nurse Practitioner Clinical with Children and Families	1 credit
NSG 550	Diagnostic Reasoning for Nurse Practitioners	2 credits
NSG 554	Nurse Practitioners in Primary Care I	3 credits
NSG 555	Nurse Practitioners in Primary Care II	3 credits
NSG 556	Health Perspective of Culturally Diverse, Rural, and Underserved Populations	2 credits
NSG 591	Scholarly Preparation for NP Boards	2 credits

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

### ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT; PLAGIARISM; AND FEDERAL COPYRIGHT LAW VIOLATIONS

The Graduate Nursing Program in the Passan School of Nursing fosters a professional culture of ethical academic behavior and integrity. Therefore, students who engage in professional and academic misconduct should face appropriate consequences ranging from failing grades to dismissal from the graduate nursing program. The evidence suggests that students who engage in misconduct in academic settings may be more likely to engage in the same behavior in clinical settings. This raises serious concerns about integrity, ethics, patient safety, and the reputation of nursing students within universities.

Academic misconduct including but not limited to plagiarism, cheating, and falsification is a serious issue potentially impacting patient safety and the integrity of the nursing profession. This behavior impacts a level of trust from the larger communities of interest for the nursing profession.

The Graduate Nursing Program and the University are committed to enforcing professional academic integrity with all programming including didactic and clinical courses. Various capabilities are applied in monitoring academic misconduct both internal and external to the University when impacting the integrity of the Graduate Nursing Program. Technology with digitalization enables comprehensive tracking of data as evidence of academic misconduct. This data provides evidence that is authentic, valid, and reliable. The University provides additional levels of support to the Graduate Nursing Program which includes but is not limited to evaluation of digital data through national cybersecurity companies who have expertise in validating academic misconduct to support the claims of the violation and sanctions.

Students are held accountable to academic integrity and honesty during the entire time of enrollment in the Graduate Nursing Program. Students are expected to originate, generate, and responsibly appraise knowledge without the use of external tools or guides in all program coursework. Failing to adhere to personal accountability will lead to the sanctions identified in this policy. Additional sanctions may occur as specific to a student's state licensure according to the regulations of each state.

Individual programs and departments have an academic graduate disciplinary process specific to each program. Students are encouraged to review the program-specific academic disciplinary processes outlined in their department handbooks that pertain to their respective programs.

**Academic Misconduct:** any behavior that attempts to garner an unfair advantage or give another student an unfair advantage: Examples include:

- Distribution of course materials including but not limited to examinations, assignments, course and clinical SOAP notes, discussion information, case studies, research, and study guides which are copyrighted material and protected by the ownership of the University
- Submission of work acquired from another (including another student or commercial source)
- Completion of an assignment for another student
- Use of unauthorized electronics during an exam (i.e. cell phone, calculator, wireless two-way communicators)
- Allowing direct remote access to a proctored exam for another person to take the exam
- Possession of unauthorized copies of an exam and specific course materials as conducted on private social media group sites by specific courses

- Submitting false information or documentation that requests special accommodation from a faculty member
- Sharing patient information from student clinical and research encounters without authorization

The following areas describe and contribute collectively to academic misconduct:

**Cheating:** giving improper aid to another, or receiving such aid from another, or from some other source:

- copy from another student
- allow another student to copy from you
- use unauthorized notes or formula sheets during an exam
- selling of course material to another person, student, or third-party vendor as examples
- uploading course material to a third- party vendor (Course Hero for example) without the express written permission of the University representative
- use of unauthorized electronics during an exam (i.e. cell phone, second screen, calculator, wireless two-way communicators)
- unauthorized use of aids, including but not limited to generative Artificial Intelligence and chatbots, to complete assigned course work

**Collusion:** improper collaboration with another in preparing assignments, computer programs, or in taking examinations:

- collaborating with others to cheat or gain an unfair advantage
- discuss an exam with a student who is scheduled to take the same exam at another time
- taking screenshots/copying the information in any manner from proctored exams during the exam and/or the review
- selling course material to another person, student, or third-party vendor as example
- uploading course material to a third- party vendor without the express written permission of the University representative

**Falsifying:** the fabrication, misrepresentation, or alteration of citations, experimental data, laboratory data, or data derived from other empirical methods or giving false information:

- providing inaccurate or false information about patient care; for example, entering clinical hours not completed or writing inaccurate information on patient reports
- intentionally altering or misrepresenting information.
- create false data for lab reports or other research
- cite materials not used in course work
- misrepresent work done outside the classroom (as it relates to clinical hours)

to ask for special accommodations under false pretenses

**Plagiarism:** the use of another's ideas, programs, or words without proper acknowledgment

- to use an idea, illustration, diagram or other detail from a source without making a reference in the bibliography
- unauthorized use of AI/machine learning software, products, or services to complete an assignment, project, or paper
- to submit any part of another person's coursework such as assignment, discussions as one's own
- to paraphrase without citing a source

- to use a partial phrase from a source without putting it in quotations, or otherwise citing it
- to use information found on the internet without citing the source
- self-plagiarism—reusing your own work for another assignment in another class

The University considers the following as three separate forms of plagiarism:

- **Deliberate plagiarism** centers on the issue of intent. If students deliberately claim another's language, ideas, or other intellectual or creative work as their own, they are engaged in a form of intellectual theft. This is not tolerated in academic, business, and professional communities, and confirmed instances of plagiarism usually result in serious consequences. Similarly, submitting the work of another person or submitting a paper purchased from another person or agency is a clear case of intentional plagiarism for which students will be subject to the severest penalties.
- **Unintentional plagiarism** often results from misunderstanding conventional documentation, oversight, or inattentive scholarship. Unintentional plagiarism can include forgetting to give authors credit for their ideas, transcribing from poor notes, and even omitting relevant punctuation marks.
- **Self-plagiarism** occurs when students submit papers presented for another course, whether for the English department or another department or school. Students may submit papers for more than one course only if all instructors involved grant permission for such simultaneous or recycled submissions.

Students should follow these general principles when incorporating the ideas and words of others into their writing:

- The exact language of another person (whether a single distinctive word, phrase, sentence, or paragraph) must be identified as a direct quotation and must be provided with a specific acknowledgment of the source of the quoted matter using APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition.
- Paraphrases and summaries of the language and ideas of another person must be clearly restated in the author's own words, not those of the original source, and must be provided with a specific acknowledgment of the source of the paraphrased or summarized matter as per APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition.
- All visual media, including graphs, tables, illustrations, raw data, audio and digital material, are covered by the notion of intellectual property and, like print sources, must be provided with a specific acknowledgment of the source as per APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition.
- Sources must be acknowledged using the systematic documentation method required by the instructor for specific assignments and courses.
- As a general rule, when in doubt, provide acknowledgment for all borrowed material. Different disciplines use different documentation methods; therefore, students should consult instructors about the correct use of the appropriate documentation style. Style manuals detailing correct forms for acknowledging sources are available in the Farley Library, at the Writing Center, and at the college bookstore. Additional resources and guidance in the correct use of sources can be obtained at the Writing Center and from individual instructors and courses resources listed in the syllabi for courses in the Graduate Nursing Program.

## **Federal Copyright Law**

The University enforces the Federal Copyright Law. Federal Copyright Law prohibits the reproduction, distribution, public performance, or public display of copyrighted materials without the express and written permission of the University who is the copyright owner, unless fair use or another exemption under copyright law applies.

Student use of copyrighted information include:

- Course materials including but not limited to examinations, assignment papers, course SOAP notes, discussion information, case studies, research, and study guides are all considered copyrighted material. Placing these materials onto any website, including but not limited to websites advertising to assist students in courses by completing their course requirements, such as Course Hero and Hire Course Doers, and for others to view is considered a violation of Federal Copyright Law.
- The University monitors these sites to directly seek the identity of students involved in violating Federal Copyright Law and University policy.
- Students using remote access services for completion of examinations are in violation of Federal Copyright Law and will fail the course and be removed from the Graduate Nursing Program on a first occurrence.
- Selling of course material to another person, student, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of a University representative.

## **Graduate Disciplinary Process for Academic Misconduct**

- The complainant – the person or persons alleging a violation -will email the respondent – the individual or individuals accused of an alleged violation - at the wilkes.edu email address about the alleged violation at the time of discovery. The respondent is expected to respond within 48 hours of the email notification being sent.
- The complainant and respondent will discuss the alleged violation. The complainant will report the details and provide all evidence of the alleged violation to the Chair of Graduate Nursing or designee.
- If the respondent agrees with the alleged violation, the appropriate graduate nursing program administration, faculty, and/ or staff will meet to guide the disciplinary action and recommend sanctioning as aligned with the policy. The Dean of the Passan School of Nursing will be notified of the final decision and the respondent will receive an official communication to their wilkes.edu email address stating the outcome
- If the respondent does not agree with the alleged violation to the complainant an investigator will be assigned to the case. The investigator will review all evidence of the alleged violation and may request interviews with the complainant, respondent, and/or involved third parties such as witnesses. After reviewing all evidence, the investigator will make a recommendation of Responsible or Not Responsible based on the standard of Preponderance of the Evidence – that the evidence is sufficient to determine that the alleged violation is more likely to be true than not.
- If the investigator recommends a finding of Responsible, the appropriate Graduate Nursing Program administration, faculty, and/ or staff will meet to guide the disciplinary action and recommend sanctioning as aligned with the policy. The Dean of the Passan School of Nursing will be notified of the final decision.
- The respondent will receive an official communication to their wilkes.edu email address stating the outcome of the investigation – Responsible or Not Responsible – and, if applicable, any associated sanctions.
- Disciplinary records are maintained for seven years after a respondent's separation from the University. Disciplinary records which involve program dismissal will be maintained

permanently.

### Disciplinary Sanctions

Typical sanctions associated with violations of academic and student misconduct include but are not limited to:

- **Written Warning:** In instances of less serious deviation from Passan School of Nursing and Wilkes University conduct norms the student is formally warned regarding the misconduct. The student is also notified that the consequences of such continued behavior could result in more serious disciplinary action.
- **Course Work Failure:** Deviation from Passan School of Nursing and Wilkes University conduct norms and behavioral expectations results in a failing grade on an associated assignment, exam, activity, coursework, experience, etc.
- **Course Failure:** Deviation from Passan School of Nursing and Wilkes University conduct norms and behavioral expectations results in a failing grade for the associated course(s).
- **Dismissal from the Graduate Nursing Program:** This action is one of involuntary separation of the student from the Passan School of Nursing and is permanent. It is the most severe disciplinary sanction imposed by the Passan School of Nursing.

A students' academic and student conduct history is cumulative throughout the entirety of their tenure at Wilkes University.

Student conduct history, severity of incident, and the number of violations for which a student is deemed responsible are all factors considered in the academic and student conduct disciplinary sanctioning process.

If found responsible for multiple violations involving different Disciplinary Levels, sanctioning will be based on the highest-Level violation.

Disciplinary sanctions to be applied at each Disciplinary Level include but are not limited to

Disciplinary Level:	Violation:	Typical Associated Sanctions
Level 1: Low level offenses occurring because of inexperience or lack of knowledge of academic standards by the person committing the offense.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Academic Misconduct:</i> Self plagiarism.</li> <li>• <i>Academic Misconduct:</i> Unintentional plagiarism.</li> <li>• <i>Academic Misconduct-</i> Proctoring instruction violations, such as not scanning the room and test taking environment; looking away from the camera in all directions; not providing full view of face in the camera; not showing identification; not turning on microphone and camera during the examination</li> <li>• <i>Academic Misconduct:</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>1st Occurrence:</b> Written warning</p> <p><b>2nd Occurrence:</b> Course work failure</p> <p><b>3rd Occurrence:</b> Course failure and graduate nursing program dismissal</p>

	<p><i>Cheating</i> - Using reference materials; having cellphones, a second screen and/or 2-way communication systems available in the exam room.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Academic Misconduct: Falsifying</i> – Fabricating or providing false information in references or citations; misrepresenting source information in assignments or discussions.</li><li>• <i>Academic Misconduct: Cheating</i> – Unauthorized use of generative AI to complete assigned course work.</li></ul>	
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<p><b>Level 2:</b> Mid-level offenses characterized by dishonesty of a more serious nature which affect a more significant aspect or portion of the course work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Academic Misconduct:</i> Deliberate plagiarism.</li> <li>● <i>Academic Misconduct: Collusion</i> - Collaboration with others during the exam electronically or face to face.</li> <li>● <i>Academic Misconduct: Cheating</i> - use of search engines during an exam.</li> <li>● <i>Academic Misconduct: Cheating</i> - Unauthorized usage, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting, photographing in part or in whole, the contents of an assignment, exam, or other course materials.</li> <li>● <i>Federal Copyright Law:</i> Unauthorized reproduction, distribution, selling, providing to others, in part or in whole, the contents of course materials without the express written permission of a University representative.</li> <li>● <i>Academic Misconduct: Cheating</i> - Using, uploading, downloading, or purchasing any online academic resource from third-part vendors (such as Course Hero) without the written permission of the faculty member.</li> <li>● <i>Academic Misconduct-</i> Failure to take directions from the proctor.</li> <li>● <i>Academic Misconduct – Plagiarism</i> – When authorized in a course assignment or discussion, failure to cite and reference the use of generative AI.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1st Occurrence:</b> Course work failure</p> <p><b>2nd Occurrence:</b> Course failure and graduate nursing program dismissal</p>
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<p><b>Level 3:</b> High level offenses characterized by falsification and/or actions/behaviors which impact one's program or essential portion of work done to meet course requirements. Involves premeditation, or is preceded by one or more violations at low and medium levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Academic Misconduct: Falsifying</i> - Falsifying or signing another's name on an academically related form or document.</li> <li>• <i>Academic Misconduct: Falsifying</i> - Falsifying clinical hours entered in InPlace®</li> <li>• <i>Academic Misconduct: Falsifying</i> - Falsifying credentials and/or submitting false information.</li> <li>• <i>Academic Misconduct: Falsifying</i> - Substituting for another person or permitting another person to substitute for oneself for any graded activity, including assignments or examinations. This includes external remote access sites.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1st Occurrence:</b> Course failure and graduate nursing program dismissal</p>
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### Academic Conduct Appeal Process:

If academic disciplinary action results in a student's suspension or dismissal from the graduate nursing program, a student who has been suspended or dismissed from a graduate program may request a review of the case by the Provost. The Provost will review the dismissal and any information submitted as part of the appeal and render a final decision.

### ACADEMIC PROFESSIONALISM; ETHICS; AND STUDENT CONDUCT

Consistent with expectations of the practice of professional nursing, professional behavior, and attitudes are expected and required by students enrolled in all nursing courses. Students are required to adhere to the policies and procedures in the Wilkes University *Passan School of Nursing Graduate Program Student Handbook*. Distance learning is designed as an interactive and collaborative learning environment that requires students to actively and effectively participate in the program with respect and understanding for various points of view.

Graduate students are obligated to observe the regulations governing all Wilkes University students relative to:

- Academic honesty and integrity;
- Respect for the rights of others relative to their safety, welfare, and educational commitments;
- The safety and security of the entire community.

**Professionalism of Nursing:** Students are expected to consistently demonstrate the following professional nursing behaviors and will be held accountable for:

- Ethical behavior according to *The American Nurses Association (ANA) 2025 Code of Ethics*; <https://codeofethics.ana.org/home> (access the provisions under the tab Read the

Code of Ethics).

- Responsible social media use according to *A Nurse's Guide to the use of Social Media* [https://www.ncsbn.org/public-files/NCSBN\\_SocialMedia.pdf](https://www.ncsbn.org/public-files/NCSBN_SocialMedia.pdf) and the Wilkes University Social Media Policy <http://www.wilkes.edu/about-wilkes/offices-and-administration/marketing-communications/web-services/social-media-policy.aspx>
- Maintaining professional boundaries according to *Professional Boundaries in Nursing* - <https://www.ncsbn.org/video/professional-boundaries-in-nursing>
- Adherence to Course Attendance and Late Policy for Didactic and Clinical Courses, and Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Clinical and Research Clearance Requirements.
- Adherence to laws and regulations as set forth by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing and the State Board of Nursing of each student's state of license(s) and as appropriate national board certification. This includes student report of any new or pending disciplinary actions regarding their licenses to their Academic Advisor within 48 hours of notification.
- Positive, respectful relationships with other students, faculty, staff, professionals, and patients/families.
- Respect for the personal and professional growth of oneself and others through non-aggressive and non harassing verbal and written interactions with peers, faculty, and university staff.
- Respect for and adherence to proctoring instructions and proctor directives.
- Acceptance and incorporation of faculty and staff feedback.
- Appreciation of and consideration towards others' positions; attempts to identify with others' perspectives.
- Composure during stressful situations demonstrating emotional intelligence (remains calm, levelheaded, and composed in critical, stressful, or difficult situations).
- Respect for peers, students, faculty, and staff by the use of professional and appropriate verbal comments, tone of voice, and written communication.

**Distance Learning Classroom of Live/D2L:** Distance learning is designed as an interactive and collaborative learning environment that requires students to actively and effectively participate in the program with respect and understanding for various points of view.

Distance Learning students are expected to:

- Be self-motivated, independent, and an engaged learner.
- Actively learn (seeks knowledge; asks questions, searches for information; takes responsibility for own learning).
- Utilize the Wilkes University email system (wilkes.edu) as the primary means of communication for university issues between students, faculty, and staff; and the LIVE/D2L(mail.live.edu) as the primary source for course related communication between the student and faculty.
- Manage communication by checking emails every 48 hours Monday through Friday and responding to faculty and other constituents of the graduate nursing program upon receipt of the initial email.
- Meeting all requirements as per the policies of each course.

**Clinical:** Student behavior in clinical settings reflects not only on the student but on the PERSON School of Nursing and Wilkes University. Students are expected to:

- Comply with any codes of conduct as set forth by affiliated clinical organizations/institutions hosting the student clinical experience. The organization/institution reserves the right to prevent entry or request a withdrawal from

the clinical site of any student they believe constitutes a risk of harm to patients, visitors, or employees or who fail to follow the institution's policies and procedures.

- Comply with all policies and restrictions of clinical partners, affiliated facilities, and the graduate nursing program.
- Maintain regard for self, patients, peers, faculty, staff, interdisciplinary professionals, and university and preceptor clinical site property.
- Maintain a professional appearance including wearing lab coats (not required in the PMHNP program) as appropriate by specialty, wearing Wilkes University student ID and healthcare institutional ID as required by the clinical site, and professional attire.
- Arrive in clinical areas with all the required equipment (e.g., stethoscope, watch, mobile devices for reference etc.) necessary for providing patient care.
- Arrive in clinical areas on the negotiated dates and times.
- Limit cell phone and mobile devices to professional use only for accessing evidence-based practice applications. Texting and answering personal calls are unacceptable during the negotiated clinical hours.
- Adhere to all HIPAA guidelines of patient confidentiality and security of healthcare patient information, including discussion of patient encounters on social media networks. Students violating patient confidentiality on social networks are at risk for immediate dismissal from the graduate nursing program. Students receive HIPPA training during preparations for clinical placement clearance. Students requiring further information on this topic can contact their clinical faculty or access <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/>.
- Integrate best evidence into clinical practice.
- Continuously monitor and upload clinical compliance documents as required of the clinical process while enrolled in clinical courses throughout the lifetime of program enrollment.

### ***Student Conduct Appeal Process:***

Any disciplinary cases arising from a lack of observance of these regulations will be adjudicated by the Dean or designee of the Passan School of Nursing and, as necessary, the Office of Student Life. Appeals from the student conduct decisions of the Dean may be made in written form to the Provost.

### **ACADEMIC STANDING AND DISMISSAL**

The following are the requirements to progress and complete the Graduate Nursing Programs:

- Earn a 3.0 or higher in all graduate nursing courses. Students can only receive a grade below a 3.0 one time in the lifetime of their program enrollment. If a student receives a second course grade less than a 3.0 they will be dismissed from the Graduate Nursing Program. Students who are academically dismissed do not qualify for readmission to the Graduate Nursing Program.
- A student who earns less than a 3.0 in a graduate nursing course MUST repeat only that course the following semester for grade replacement. The repeated course must be taken alone. A student can only repeat a course once to achieve a grade of 3.0 or higher. Students who do not achieve a 3.0 or higher in the repeated course will be dismissed from the Graduate Nursing Program. Students can only replace one course grade in the lifetime of the program.
- Students with unsatisfactory clinical performance, supported by clinical evaluations of faculty and preceptors, may fail the course and/or be terminated from the program.

## ADMISSION

Individual graduate programs retain the right to impose more rigorous conditions on students admitted. Such conditions, if imposed, will be detailed in the letter of admission sent to the student. Students can only be enrolled in one program at a time.

**Regular admission** is granted to students who have completed all requirements of the application process and who have demonstrated an acceptable level of academic work in their undergraduate degree program or previous graduate level coursework, including meeting program-specific, minimum GPA requirements and demonstrating preparedness for work at the graduate level in their field of specialization.

**Rejection** will be used in cases when a student fails to meet the general or academic admissions requirements of the individual program of study.

**Cancellation.** Applicants who have not fully completed the admissions process, and who have not yet started taking academic classes, will have one year to complete their application file. Should the process not be completed within that time frame, the application will be canceled one year after the date of application.

## ADVISING POLICY

Each student will be assigned an Academic Advisor and Student Advisor to assist with advising services throughout their enrollment to a graduate nursing program.

The following is information related to the individual role of each Advisor:

### Academic Advisor:

- 1) Each student will be assigned an Academic Advisor and provided with a Plan of Study at the time of program enrollment, shown in Degree Works, the University system for advising.
  - a. Students can access their Plan of Study by logging in to the Wilkes University Portal:
    - i. On the main page of the Portal, there is a menu on the left-hand side.
    - ii. Click on "Quick Links"
    - iii. Click on "Degree Works" and a new window should open with Degree Works.
    - iv. Students may need to enter their WIN (number that starts with "900")
    - v. Students should see "Plans" next to "Worksheets" at the top of the page on the left-hand side.
    - vi. Click on "Plans".
    - vii. Under "Plan List", please click on the Plan of Study (in blue lettering).
    - viii. Scroll from left to right in the Plan to view courses for each semester.

The Plan of Study must be followed as per the exact order presented which is according to standards of Nurse Practitioner curriculum. The plan is maintained by the Academic Advisor. Changes to plans must be in collaboration with and approved by the Academic Advisor listed on the plan. Students risk not graduating at the expected time period and Financial Aid being affected if the plan is not followed.

- 2) Academic Advisors will communicate regularly with students via their Wilkes University email address (wilkes.edu) as primary means of communication related to the academic

program and advisement on policies, developing plans of study, updating plans with changes as needed, and issues related to classroom activity.

- 3) Academic Advisors will refer students to University resources/departments as needed and collaborate with those departments as needed related to student concerns and issues that arise.
- 4) Academic Advisors will review student progress at the end of each semester and will notify students as appropriate for course retakes or Academic Dismissals from the Graduate Nursing Program.
- 5) Academic Advisors will monitor student requests for leaves of absence and will notify students if they are in violation of the Leave of Absence policy and removal from the program after exhausting 2 leaves of absence permitted by the policy. The Leave of Absence policy in this handbook outlines further details on the process.

### **Student Advisor:**

- 1) The Student Advisor and team will meet with new students prior to the start of classes to introduce themselves, orient students to their program, review Wilkes' email account, provide support and resources, and register students for courses based on the plan of study during their first year. Program policies will also be reviewed.
- 2) The Student Advisor will assist with registration of students who are in their first year of the program based on the student's plan of study. Student Advisors will send instructions for self-registration to students who are eligible if they have been in the program for 1 year or more. The Student Advisor is the point of contact for any questions related to registration or self-registration. Academic Advisors should be contacted if a student has any questions or wishes to make changes to their plan of study prior to registration.
- 3) Student Advisors will communicate with students regarding information on Clinical Placement and are the point of contact for student concerns and questions related to clinical placement prior to the start of the semester of the clinical course, CastleBranch® clearances, and InPlace.
- 4) The Student Advisor will offer the student resources and refer the student to their Academic Advisor for course or academic issues. The general inbox for the Student Advisor Team is: [studentsuccess@onlinenursingdegrees.wilkes.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@onlinenursingdegrees.wilkes.edu)

### **Student Responsibilities Related to Advising:**

- 1) The student is responsible for communicating regularly with their Academic Advisor each semester via their Wilkes University (wilkes.edu) email address and checking this email account on a regular basis as this is the primary method of communication.
- 2) The student is responsible for following their Plan of Study and registering each semester according to their plan as outlined. Students are responsible for communicating with their Academic Advisor to request any changes to their plan of study prior to registering for a given semester. **Failure to follow the Plan of Study may result in a**

**delay in program completion.** The Self Registration policy in this handbook outlines the process.

- 3) Students are responsible for contacting their Academic Advisor with academic, program, and/ or classroom activity issues encountered which can pertain to academic policies, to discuss plans of study, requesting a leave of absence, or if withdrawing from courses or the University.
- 4) Students will reach out to their Student Advisors with any questions related to registration, clinical placement, CastleBranch® clearances, or InPlace.

## APA REQUIREMENTS

Graduate nursing students are expected to follow the most current APA guidelines. The required manuals are listed in the current course syllabus under Required Textbook(s)/Course References. Students not adhering to the APA guidelines, as outlined, are at risk of violating academic misconduct as per the policy in this handbook. The graduate Library and Graduate Nursing Academic Resource Center (See Student Services below) provide resources for graduate nursing students in support of academic honesty and proper APA documentation.

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

The Graduate Nursing Program is committed to educating students for entry into practice with foundational knowledge based on current, relevant peer-reviewed resources and teaching-learning methods. Based on this foundational knowledge, critical thinking and decision-making skills are acquired as essential for delivering the highest quality care and improving patient outcomes. In accordance with the ANA’s Position Statement on AI (2022), which is that:

The appropriate use of AI in nursing practice supports and enhances the core values and ethical obligations of the profession. Use of AI that appears to impede or diminish these core values and obligations must be avoided or incorporated only in such a way that these values and obligations are protected (pg. 1), we assert that the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to generate text and ideas and draw conclusions “impedes and diminishes core values and obligations” (ANA, 2022) of nursing education.

Words, ideas, and conclusions generated by AI are not peer-reviewed or considered original work. As such, using AI to complete any graded assignments is prohibited unless otherwise indicated by course faculty. The unauthorized use of AI is considered Academic Misconduct and is sanctioned as such. If authorized, use of AI must be cited per APA 7th Edition guidelines.

If unauthorized use of AI is suspected, faculty will gather supporting evidence - which may include reports from AI detectors, such as the Turnitin AI Writing Report (refer to Turnitin Policy on page 57 but must also include reference to the student’s actual work where one or more of the following is noted:

- A significant improvement in quality, style, or complexity of writing and ideas compared to previous work, or in other documents, such as emails.
- Use of words, ideas, and/or conclusions drawn that have a highly sophisticated writing style, inconsistent with a student’s education and/or experience.
- Complex ideas that exceed the student’s skill level, including advanced conclusions or posits that are beyond what the student has been taught and/or capable of. This includes the lack of references that would support the conclusions drawn.

- References which contain inaccurate information, are unverifiable, are not cited within the course work, or references whose citations misrepresent information contained in the source material.

Students are expected to understand the difference between **editing tools** (such as Grammarly Editor), which provide suggestions to improve your writing, and **generative AI tools** (such as Grammarly's Generative AI), which create new text based on prompts. Editing tools that check for typographical, spelling, grammatical, or sentence-structure errors are unlikely to cause text to be flagged as AI-generated. In contrast, tools that generate or suggest new text, ideas, or content based on prompts are likely to be flagged in AI-detection reports.

Students are also responsible for ensuring that any **embedded generative AI features** in software, applications, or web browsers used for coursework are disabled. Examples include:

- **Microsoft Copilot** in Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
- **Google Gemini** in the Chrome browser
- **Generative AI features in Grammarly**, which can be turned off by navigating to: *Grammarly* → *Account* → *Settings* → *Feature Customization* → *Generative AI* and disabling all four AI features.

The Passan School of Nursing expects that all student work will be checked for accuracy prior to submission. Ensuring that citations do not misrepresent the source material, that all listed references are cited within your work, and that references are correctly formatted and contain accurate information assists in validating the originality of submitted work and acts as a safeguard against Academic Misconduct allegations. **References should include DOI or URLs, which provide direct access to the source material** (see the [APA 7<sup>th</sup> Edition Reference Guide for Journal Articles, Books, and Edited Book Chapters](#) at the following link for formatting information: <https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/reference-guide.pdf>). **Should reference concerns arise, students are expected to provide instructors with copies of the source materials in question upon request.**

The Wilkes University E.S. Farley Library offers [an online guide on Citation Management](#) here: <https://wilkes.libguides.com/citation/tools>. In addition to information on APA 7<sup>th</sup> Edition reference and citation standards, the guide includes information on citation management tools which allow users to save articles, chapters and more in one place and ensure sources are cited consistently and correctly throughout assignments.

Additionally, prior to the last semester of enrollment, students in the Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing (Ph.D.) or the Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P) programs must attest that all dissertation or project research is based upon original, peer-reviewed, academic articles and that all referenced source materials can be produced upon request. Information regarding the attestation process will be shared by the Program Coordinators of the respective programs.

Students are responsible for the content of course work they submit. Failure to disable generative AI functionality, unless authorized by the instructor, increases the risk of work being flagged as AI-generated; introduces the possibility of fabricated or misrepresented information, citations, or references; may result in incorrect formatting; and increases the risk of plagiarism. Any of these issues may result in Academic Misconduct violations and disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from graduate nursing programs.

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Career opportunities are provided to graduate nursing students on a continuous basis. The following information can guide a career search

<http://www.liquidcompass.com/institutions/wilkes>

## CLINICAL AND RESEARCH CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS

- I. **Clinical Preceptor/Mentors and Referrals:** Students play an active role in organizing their clinical experiences. Students are responsible for selecting clinical preceptors in collaboration with the Clinical Placement Team for the RN-M.S.N., M.S.N., Post - Graduate/APRN Certificate programs, and mentors for the D.NP. Program. Students will communicate directly with their Student Advisor regarding clinical placement inquiries who will be the liaison between the student and the Clinical Placement Team. Although all avenues for sourcing clinical placement will be explored, clinical placement is **not** guaranteed each semester. The Clinical Placement Team does rely on student referrals for preceptors/mentors. It is recommended for students to provide a referral with whom the student feels would be a good fit for both their needs and the specific preceptor/mentor and clinical course requirements. Students should address any questions they have regarding clinical placement to their Student Advisor.
  - a. If a student is informed that a preceptor referral is required for a clinical course (Ex. where they declined a clinical placement arranged by the Clinical Placement Team in the previous semester, the student was removed from a clinical agency based upon a preceptor request, or new disciplinary actions on their unencumbered licenses from the time of enrollment), they must provide the referral by the specified referral deadline. Failure to do so will render them ineligible for that semester's clinical rotation, resulting in an incurred LOA. Furthermore, students must submit a new referral for that clinical course to continue, as referrals are specific to the course rather than the term. If a student is informed that they need to provide a referral for a clinical course by the referral deadline, but do **not** provide one, they will be ineligible for clinical in that semester and will incur a counted LOA. Referrals must be submitted no later than four weeks before the start of the term.
  - b. Please note that students may **not** choose family members as preceptors or mentors.
  
- II. **Required Clearances:** Due to the ever-changing nature of healthcare environments leading to factors out of control of the university, the effectiveness of support services is determined by student participation and cooperation throughout the placement process.
  - a. To obtain full clearance for clinical placements, students must complete all required clearances within CastleBranch®, submit the Mandatory Clinical Placement Form (MCPF) (formerly called the “Intake Form” or “Intake Survey”) for that specific semester, and complete any agency requirements which may be additional and beyond the Passan School of Nursing requirements and requests. A student will not be enrolled in the clinical course if the clinical clearance and background check and any additional agency requirements related to the practicum experience that exceed those required by the Passan School of Nursing are not met within 7 days before the start of the clinical course. Please be aware that individual clinical agency requirements may be subject to change and may vary according to each site. Students not willing to provide the individual clinical agency with the exact requested information will need to forfeit the clinical site and become part of the preceptor referral process for clinical placement the following semester. Students will not be permitted to initiate or continue their clinical or practicum rotations for the upcoming

semester and will be required to take a counted Leave of Absence (LOA) subject to the LOA policy outlined in the Graduate Nursing Student Handbook.

- b. Students are required to submit all necessary documentation to CastleBranch® and, specifically for Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) students, to the Graduate Clinical Coordinator, by the established deadlines provided each semester. Creating an account with CastleBranch® is mandatory for all students; it serves as an online portal to manage both medical and non-medical documentation necessary for university required clinical placement services. Approximately 4 to 6 months before the commencement of each semester, the Clinical Placement Team will communicate compliance deadlines for clinical clearance to students via their wilkes.edu email accounts and students will also receive reminders from CastleBranch® directly regarding any items that are expiring. Students are urged to monitor this email account throughout the semester regularly, every 24-48 hours is strongly recommended. Required clearances and the MCPF are essential for clinical eligibility and will be provided to students every clinical semester. Please note that the MCPF link is unique to each student for that semester, and must be filled out for each semester of clinical.
- III. **Affiliation Agreements:** If an Affiliation Agreement (AA) is **not** approved for the clinical site, students may **not** begin clinical with that clinical site. Students may continue to check InPlace® for site approval and once approved in InPlace®, may begin hours there.
  - IV. **Deadlines:** All documentation and the semester specific MCPF must be submitted no later than the Friday of Week 2 of the semester prior to the semester when the student is starting clinical, (Ex. the Fall 2025 clinical clearance deadline is May 30, 2025). **Non-compliance with this deadline will result in ineligibility for clinical placements that semester.** Any inquiries regarding clearances, the MCPF, or clinical placement should be directed to the designated Student Advisor.
  - V. **CastleBranch®:** Students are responsible for continuously monitoring and uploading their clinical clearance compliance documents to CastleBranch® prior to their expiration to prevent any interruptions in meeting the required standards. Students are provided with reminders from CastleBranch® of these requirements in advance of the expiration dates. Engaging in or continuing a clinical or practicum rotation while not compliant constitutes a violation of professionalism, ethics and student conduct and will lead to a review in accordance with graduate program policies.
  - VI. **Deferment and Leaves of Absence related to Clinical:** The Clinical Placement Team will assist students in securing clinical placements until the end of the first week of the semester. If a placement is not secured by this time for the current semester clinical, the student will be placed on an uncounted LOA and prioritized for clinical placement in the subsequent semester
    - a. For first-semester new RN MSN, MSN and Post-Graduate/APRN Certificate students, missing the clinical clearance deadline for the following semester will result in removal from current semester courses. Furthermore, admission will be deferred by an additional semester and the student will need to meet the next semester's clinical clearance deadline.

- b. Continuing RN MSN, MSN and Post-Graduate/APRN Certificate students, will not be removed from current courses if the clinical clearance deadline is not met. However, a LOA will be incurred for the following semester, which will defer clinical placement to the next semester (Ex. A student is not cleared for the Fall 2025 semester. They will incur a LOA for the Fall 2025 semester and need to meet the Spring 2026 clearance deadline in order to be eligible and proceed with clinical in the Spring). Additionally, if two LOA semesters as outlined in the LOA policy are exhausted, the student will face removal from the program and need to reapply.
- VII. **InPlace®:** All clinical hours logged by students for course requirements must be completed on unpaid work time via InPlace®. This pertains to all degree programs and concentrations. Any questions or issues that arise regarding InPlace® should be directed to a student's Student Advisor and students should also notify their clinical course faculty if any issues arise. Further information is provided in the policy for InPlace®.
- VIII. **Background Checks/Specific Clinical Clearance Information:** The clinical clearance process is transparent, as healthcare agencies may independently review students' backgrounds before granting acceptance for clinical/practicum/research and may deny the student the experience based on these reviews.
- a. Students preparing for clinical clearance compliance who have a felony or other criminal record(s) within the past 5 years, a positive urine drug screen, or new disciplinary actions on their unencumbered licenses from the time of enrollment will be solely responsible for securing their clinical placements.
- b. Students who have a positive urine drug screen due to a prescribed medication must provide a written statement from their prescribing provider confirming that the medication is prescribed for medical use. Students with a positive cannabis drug screening will be required to provide their medical marijuana card if they live in a state where medical marijuana use is legal but recreational use is not.
- IX. **Clinical Issues/Disciplinary Action:** If any issues arise as students are preparing for a clinical placement, students should inform their Student Advisor and Academic Advisor. If any issues arise in a clinical course during the semester, students should immediately inform their clinical course faculty and their Academic Advisor directly for further assistance, who can then communicate further if needed in following the chain of command for Graduate Nursing Administration. Students dismissed from a clinical course by a preceptor due to academic conduct, student conduct, professionalism, and/or ethics and a comprehensive investigation by the appropriate individuals of the Graduate Nursing Program validates the misconduct the student will be academically withdrawn from the clinical course and co requisite didactic course. Based upon the level of sanctions imposed, if not dismissed from the program the student will need to provide referrals for all future preceptor clinical assignment sites while enrolled in the program. If a student is dismissed from the same clinical course by a preceptor 2 times they are academically withdrawn from the Graduate Nursing program.  
**Statement on Student Financial Responsibility: Students are responsible for payment for any referral submitted which requires payment. Students will not be reimbursed for any preceptor payment.**
- X. **Address Changes:** If an address change occurs, please consult the State Authorization website here: <https://onlinenursingdegrees.wilkes.edu/state-authorizations> to ensure that

the new residence is in an approved state. Students are required to update both their Academic and Student Advisor, and fill out an address change form on file with the University.

- a. If the new state of residence does not comply with our state authorizations, then a student will not be permitted to continue in the program and must either withdraw from the program or move to an approved state.
- b. Students may be required to provide a referral for a new location depending on where the clinical placement cycle is in the term.

XI. **Resources and Information:** Please refer to the Wilkes University Placement SOP (Standard Operating Procedures) for further information regarding clinical placement. The SOP may be accessed online via the Online Graduate Virtual Welcome Packet at the link: <https://onlinenursingdegrees.wilkes.edu/welcome-packet> under the section titled, “Clinical Placement Onboarding.”

- a. Other information regarding clearances, clinical placement, preceptor requirements, etc. may also be accessed online via the Online Graduate Virtual Welcome Packet at the link in IX under the section, “Clinical Placement” and/or by inquiring with the assigned Student Advisor.

## **COURSE ATTENDANCE AND LATE POLICY FOR DIDACTIC AND CLINICAL COURSES**

Students are expected to participate in online didactic and clinical classes from the first day of each semester. The requirements for teaching learning activities in each course contribute towards meeting program and course outcomes. These teaching learning activities can include but are not limited to written assignments, discussion posts, interactive course software, proctored exams, and clinical webinars for case studies. The LIVE/D2L electronic week starts Monday, 12:01AM ET to Sunday, 11:59 PM ET. Students should validate the electronic week and due dates of discussions and all other written assignments as per the following with their course faculty to ensure meeting appropriate deadlines of the course.

- 400 and 500 level courses: Initial discussion post is due Thursday by midnight; the peer response is due Saturday by midnight; all other written assignments are due Sunday by midnight.
- 600 level courses DNP Program: Initial discussion post is due Wednesday by midnight; both peer responses are due Saturday by midnight; all other written assignments are due Sunday by midnight
- 600 level courses PhD Program: Initial discussion post is due Wednesday by midnight; both peer responses are due Sunday by midnight; all other written assignments are due Sunday by midnight.

A student unable to meet course requirements as outlined is expected to notify the instructor in advance of the potential conflict. Faculty are not obligated to give credit or make concessions for student missed assignments or time.

### **Discussions:**

- Students must post in each course during week 1 prior to 11:59 pm EST of the first Sunday of the semester to demonstrate participation and maintain course enrollment for the semester to avoid being administratively dropped from the course during Week 2. An administrative withdrawal will not result in any notation on a student's transcript, and the student will not incur fees for the course.
- Students are expected to participate weekly in the course discussion as per the requirements of the discussion for that week and the discussion rubric as posted in the course.
- Discussions are graded using the discussion rubric in each course.
- Discussions are submitted within the weekly timeframe and not ahead of the current module or after the respective timeframe.
- Incomplete discussion requirements will be graded according to:
  - No discussion posts with in the assigned weekly module: 0.0
  - Partial, late, and missing discussion posts: grade deduction for 400 and 500 level courses is based upon each post worth 50%.
  - Partial, late, and missing discussion posts: grade deduction for 600 level courses is based upon each post worth 33%.

### **Assignments**

Assignment expectations are according to the syllabus and directions provided in each course resource section.

- Students are expected to meet the required submission dates as per the course syllabus.
- Assignment criteria and/or rubrics for faculty grading and student view are provided for each course assignment in D2L.
- Assignments submitted late without previous faculty approval will receive a five-point deduction for every day late during the expected module timeframe for the submission.

### **Course Examinations and Honorlock® Proctoring**

All examination times are 7:00 am ET Friday to 11:59 pm ET Monday during the module the examination is scheduled. Students should verify test dates with faculty. Course exams are proctored using a hybrid model of AI and live proctors through Honorlock®.

#### **Honorlock®**

Honorlock® is the proctoring service for examinations in the Graduate Nursing Program. Comprehensive details on accessing the proctoring service are provided during orientation and in the LIVE classroom of each course with exams. The proctoring is conducted through a hybrid model of AI and live proctors and is recorded. The recordings along with transcripts of student activity are available to faculty after submission of exams. To use Honorlock®, students will need Google Chrome and to add the [Honorlock® Chrome Extension](#). All students are required to meet the [Minimum System Requirements](#) for this proctoring service throughout the duration of their program.

Faculty review exam videos which are flagged as violations by the proctors. Follow up to students is according to the degree of infraction flagged as suspicious. Data is compiled to validate the findings of academic misconduct and violations will be set forth as per the policy

in this handbook. Students in violation of ethics and integrity of test taking for example, but not limited to, using notes during the examination, use of a mobile device at any point during an exam, and/or using remote entry software while violating copyright in allowing hired outsiders to take the student exams will be removed from the university immediately upon validation of the evidence of the behavior.

The standard open examination period for the Graduate Nursing Program is **Friday, 7:00 am ET to Monday, 11:59 pm ET** during the module the examination is scheduled.

Students unable to complete the exam within the standard open examination period must inform the faculty member prior to or during that open period of time. Extensions are never guaranteed, and requests may require appropriate documentation. Examinations not taken during the assigned period of time will receive a grade of zero.

Each course contains a practice exam for students to complete prior to taking official examinations. This process ensures compatibility with the technological specifications of Honorlock®. If this process is not completed and a technology issue is encountered on an official exam, no consideration will be given to a review of the incident. Students must reach out to Honorlock's® 24/7/365 support for any technical assistance. Support can be reached by visiting [honorlock.com/support](https://honorlock.com/support) or via the live chat bubble when accessing the exam. [Prep.honorlock.com](https://prep.honorlock.com) is an additional resource that can be leveraged to become familiar with the tool. The grade will be based upon questions answered or a 0.0 will be provided if no questions were answered. Students are expected to begin their exam with sufficient time left in the 4-day exam window or risk running out of time and earning a grade of 0.0.

Students taking screen shots of the exam or recording exam questions in any way are in violation of the copyright laws and are subject to disciplinary action as per policy in the Graduate Nursing Program.

It is the policy of the Graduate Nursing Program that no examinations can be retaken. No extra credit is provided to support increasing examination grades.

### **Clinical Course**

Application of classroom didactic theory in the clinical setting is the expectation with learning. InPlace® software system is used in the NP program for documentation and tracking of required NP clinical hours and patient encounter details for each clinical course. Clinical courses are designed for completing and documenting required hours of the NP specialty while demonstrating progression in meeting course outcomes. Faculty are required to validate these hours timely each week to ensure students are meeting course outcomes as required. National board certification agencies are newly requiring students at the time of application to send entire logs of required patient encounters for review before granting approval to take boards. Faculty need time during the course to review and validate that each student has met the requirements of the specific NP specialty.

Students complete clinical hours while officially enrolled in a clinical course at the start of the semester and under direct supervision of a preceptor and course faculty. Professional liability insurance is not provided to students through the university until the first day of a clinical course start. Students conducting and/or recording hours in InPlace® outside of a clinical course enrollment are subject to violations of professionalism and academic misconduct which lead to Graduate Nursing Program withdrawal.

- Students have up to 14 days to document patient encounters in InPlace®. If hours are not logged as current at the every 2-week review cycle, a 0.0 is documented for that grading period. **There are no grade reversals for updated hours of that review cycle once it is past.** The Clinical Log is an assignment like any other in a course with timelines of expected due dates. Progression of hours for completion of course evaluations include at 6-8 weeks being at or past the mid semester requirement and at the 12<sup>th</sup> week the total required hours should be completed. If the hours are not documented then they were not completed and mid and final clinical evaluations cannot be completed by faculty as validation of meeting course outcomes.
- Students found falsifying hours on clinical logs as supported by evidence of preceptors, faculty, and Graduate Nursing Program resources will receive a 0.0 in the course and be dismissed from the Graduate Nursing Program.
- Incompletes are not granted for clinical course grades under any circumstances and clinical hours cannot be split and transferred to a next semester. **Students having difficulty meeting the required hours are to notify the clinical course faculty as soon as the possibility is recognized.**
- At the end of each semester, students are required to keep a copy of the clinical activity for all patient encounters. This information is requested by employers during application processes. It is the responsibility of the student to provide this information if requested during the employment application process. These hours are needed in addition for validation with national board certification and also for any future plans for pursuing a doctoral degree or post -graduate /APRN certificate.

### **COURSE TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION**

Students are responsible for the compatibility of their computer systems with Wilkes University technology requirements and all course related technology. Please see the following link for further required technical information:

<https://www.wilkes.edu/academics/technology-teaching-learning/techreq.aspx>

### **DEGREE AND GRADUATION AUDIT COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS**

Students will be awarded the master's or doctoral degree upon satisfactory completion of all graduate degree requirements and the following specific requirements:

1. A completed application file;
2. Full admission into a graduate program;
3. Satisfactory completion of all requirements for the degree or certificate programs from the date of matriculation as validated by the Academic Advisor through a formal graduation audit at the time of program completion.
4. Students have 6 years to complete program requirements; Ph.D. students have 7 years; and
5. A minimum GPA of 3.0 for graduate work.

The expectation is that students will maintain continuous enrollment in the graduate nursing program. Any registration changes (course drops, course withdrawals, LOAs, etc.) will affect the course sequence. This handbook contains the specific course and credit requirements for each graduate nursing program and concentration. Students should review their Plan of Study in Degree Works on a regular basis and communicate with their Academic Advisor to ensure timely program completion.

It is the responsibility of master's, post graduate/APRN certificate, and doctoral students to ensure they are registered for a graduation audit prior to the date of the Commencement Exercise at which the student expects to graduate.

### **Master's, D.N.P. and Ph.D. Students**

This is done by registering for the Graduation Audit (GRD-000) (0 credits) during the beginning of the final term before graduation. Students should consult with their Academic Advisor if they have any questions regarding the process. Transfer credits (approval forms, syllabi, and official transcripts) must be received before each semester's graduation clearance deadline.

- GRD-000-B is for Master's students
- GRD-000 Doctoral is for DNP students
- GRD-000 PHD is for PhD students.

### **Post-Graduate/APRN Students**

Students should register for GRCT-000-N (0 credits/see Certificate Completion fee) at the beginning of the final term of certificate completion. Students should consult with their Academic Advisor if they have any questions regarding the process. Transfer credits as related to the gap analysis review (approval forms, syllabi, and official transcripts) must be received before each semester's graduation clearance deadline.

Degree students and certificate completion students may participate in commencement exercises held during the calendar year. Students will receive an email from the Registrar's Office with information on registering for the regalia and diploma or certificate for each commencement ceremony. Students are responsible for completing this electronic submission. These exercises occur in May and September of each year. Diplomas and certificates given during September ceremonies will always be dated as the fourth Saturday in August. Diplomas and certificates conferred for the fall semester with a Spring graduation ceremony will be dated as the second Saturday of January.

### **DISABILITY/DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES**

The Disability Support office provides support and accommodations for self-identified students with documented disabilities. To receive accommodations of disability support, one must provide the appropriate documentation of the disability through the Disability Support office. For more information on Disability Support Services, see the following link:

<http://wilkes.edu/academics/colleges/university-college/disability-support-services-dss>

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION ON LICENSES AFTER PROGRAM ENROLLMENT**

Students must report any new or pending disciplinary actions regarding their licenses to their Academic Advisor within 48 hours of notification. Failure to report can result in dismissal from the University as per the policy in this handbook on Professionalism. Academic Advisors will notify the Chair of the Graduate Nursing Program upon receiving reports. Students with encumbered licenses will be removed from the graduate nursing program as the enrollment requirement is unencumbered licenses. Those with unencumbered licenses and violations since enrollment will be solely responsible for securing their clinical placements.

## FEES

Additional fees exist for graduate nursing programs, promote student achievement of course outcomes in the distance learning environment.

Category	Course(s) Required	Approximate Fee
Shadow Health®	NSG 500	\$119.99/course The fee is separate for each course using the software learning program.
FNP Mastery	NSG 554 and 555	157.50 in NSG 554 157.50 in NSG 555
DERM for Primary Care	NSG 526, 527, 535, and 536	\$265.00/12 months
CastleBranch®	Clinical and research courses for RN to M.S.N., M.S.N., post-graduate/APRN certificate, D.N.P., and Ph.D. program students (PhD students only as deemed necessary).	Varies by state of residence due to criminal background checks; range is a one-time fee of a minimum \$100.00 and higher. Students may be required to pay a CastleBranch® Bridge fee based upon requirements of the health care agency.
Honorlock® Live Proctoring	NSG 500, 530, 533, 550, 552, and most NP specialty theory courses.	Test and posttest student review \$12.50/exam
Respondus Lockdown Browser	NSG 533, 590, and 591	\$12.00 /exam
SPSS®	NSG 611	\$90.99/year; provides 2 licenses
Professional Liability Insurance for Students in Clinical and Research Courses	Clinical and research courses when completion of NP direct clinical hours or research are a course requirement.	This fee is collected by the university for each research or clinical course; \$28.00/ course
D.N.P. Project	NSG 608b	55.00/project binding
Graduation Degree/Certificate Audit	Completed the last semester of each program to validate all terms are met for program completion, the graduation ceremony, and degree/certification conferral	\$200.00/audit

\*Fees are subject to change during the academic year.

## FINANCIAL AID

Students are encouraged to collaborate with the financial aid office each award year to ensure their academic needs are met timely and accurately. It is not always possible to schedule each semester according to financial aid requirements for reasons such as availability of courses and sequencing from transfer credits and LOAs; lesser summer course loads; single course repeats due to the academic progression policy as per this handbook; and decreasing number of courses/semester due to personal reasons. Therefore, students may experience times in which

financial aid eligibility requirements are not able to be met. Therefore, students are encouraged to contact the financial aid office with these circumstances to discuss how to best meet their needs with financial aid utilization throughout each academic year and award year. The following link provides pertinent information <https://www.wilkes.edu/admissions/financial-aid/financial-aid-graduate/index.aspx> .

### **FORM COMPLETION**

Current information on form completion for licensure and national board certification is provided in final coursework prior to program completion of NSG 590 and NSG 591. Two weeks is the required timeframe for completion of all forms received by the Graduate Nursing Program for both current students and alumni. The forms should be sent to [grdnsglicbrdfms@wilkes.edu](mailto:grdnsglicbrdfms@wilkes.edu)

### **GOVERNANCE**

The organizational structure of the Passan School of Nursing includes an undergraduate and graduate program. Committees in the Graduate Nursing Program include Graduate Nursing, Graduate Curriculum, and Graduate Student Affairs. Student representation is granted for committees at the availability of the student and as per the terms outlined in the Passan School of Nursing Bylaws. Students are provided other opportunities both formal and informal during each academic year to participate in program feedback for governance purposes.

### **GRADE POLICY**

#### **Structure**

The following grading structure is applied to grading for graduate nursing work within the Passan School of Nursing:

- 4.0/94-100=A Academic achievement of superior quality
- 3.5/87-93= B+ Academic achievement of good quality
- 3.0/83-86= B Academic achievement of acceptable quality in meeting graduation requirements
- 2.5/78-82= C+ Academic achievement of adequate quality but below the average required for graduation
- 2.0/73-77 =C Academic achievement below the average required for graduation
- 0.0/72 below=F Failure. No graduate course credit.

A grade of "X" indicates assigned work yet to be completed in a given course. Except in the D.N.P. Project and Ph.D. Dissertation courses grades of "X" will be given only in exceptional circumstances. Grades of "X" must be removed through satisfactory completion of all course work no later than 4 weeks after the end of the final examination period of the semester in which the "X" grade was recorded. Failure to complete required work within this time period will result in the conversion of the grade to a 0.0. An extension of the time allowed for the completion of work should be endorsed by the instructor in the form of a written statement to the Graduate Nursing Academic Coordinator who will collaborate with the Program Coordinators on final approval. Faculty will continue to follow students until the requirements of an incomplete are met.

## GRADE APPEAL PROCESS

Students have the right to submit a grade appeal related to a final grade which is in violation of a course, Graduate Nursing Program and/or University policy(ies). The following areas as outlined do not qualify for the appeal process unless a policy was not followed wherein the final course grade could be appealed:

- a) Individual test/quiz grades;
  - b) Individual assignment grades;
  - c) Individual discussion grades;
  - d) Accommodations not officially approved at the time of a grade in question; and
  - e) Student personal issue statements and/or letters of support presented on behalf of a student.
- 1) Students should first contact the course instructor to attempt to resolve any dispute.
  - 2) If a resolution is not reached and the student qualifies for the final grade appeal process, the student should contact their Academic Advisor, who will send the student the Graduate Nursing Grade Appeal Form. The student should complete the Graduate Nursing Grade Appeal Form (Appendix A of this handbook) and submit the form with all supporting documentation back to their Academic Advisor. Appeals must be made by the end of the 4th week following the course being appealed-
  - 3) An appeal containing all required information regarding a violation of a policy will be sent by the Academic Advisor to the CHE Assistant Dean of Student Services for Online Programs who coordinates the grade appeal process and informs the Chair of the Graduate Nursing Progression and Appeals Committee of pending appeals.
  - 4) The following information will be reviewed by the Committee of 3 to include graduate faculty and/or Academic Advisors.
    - a) The complaint/appeal
      - a. If the appeal request does not meet the requirements as outlined in the policy and/or the form is not complete, the appeal form will be returned to the student and **the appeal denied.**
    - b) Evidence presented by the student
    - c) Course information
    - d) Faculty member and student input if warranted
  - 5) After review, the Committee will communicate its findings and recommendations to the Chair of Graduate Nursing and to the Dean of the College of Health & Education.
  - 6) The Dean of the College of Health and Education will send a letter via email reflecting the findings on behalf of the Graduate Nursing Program to the student via the [wilkes.edu](mailto:wilkes.edu) email within a minimum 2 weeks of filing for the appeal.
  - 7) Grade appeal decisions that do not result in programmatic dismissal are final. If the appeal process results in programmatic dismissal, the student shall have the right to appeal the dismissal to the Provost. The Provost will review the dismissal and any information submitted as part of the appeal and render a final decision.

## **GRIEVANCE POLICY/ INTERNAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

The purpose of this policy is to serve as a guide for students who wish to file a complaint about any aspect of Wilkes University's operations/policies/procedures or about the actions of any student, visitor, or employee of Wilkes University. This policy is to be implemented only when dealing with circumstances not covered by existing academic or student conduct procedures.

### **Procedures and Guidelines**

1. Complaints, other than those being filed against persons, should be directed, in writing, to the appropriate Administrator (Director/Dean)/Department Chair/Faculty Member). It is the responsibility of that person to address the situation and, if possible, see that it is corrected. This must be done within a reasonable amount of time which will of course, depend upon what must be done to rectify the situation. The Administrator (Director/Dean)/Department Chair/Faculty Member should inform the student in writing of the measures that were taken or are being taken to address the issue. If a student does not receive a response from the Administrator, Department Chair, Faculty Member within two weeks from the date of originally filing the complaint, the student may then bring the complaint to the appropriate Vice President or the Provost.
2. Complaints being filed against a person, should be directed, in writing, to that person's immediate supervisor. If it is an anti-harassment complaint (including sexual harassment and sexual misconduct) the procedures, outlined in the [Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Nondiscrimination Policy](#) should be followed. Information regarding these procedures can be found at: [wilkes.edu/titleix](http://wilkes.edu/titleix). If the complaint is not one of anti-harassment, then it is the responsibility of the supervisor to address the issue with the respondent. The supervisor must inform the student, in writing, of the measures that were taken or are being taken to address the issue. If the student does not receive a response from the supervisor within two weeks from the date of originally filing the complaint, the student may then bring the complaint to the appropriate Vice President or Provost.
3. In all instances of a student filing a complaint, the student must be assured in writing that no adverse action will be taken against the student for filing a complaint.
4. All documentation regarding a complaint, as well as its disposition, must be securely stored in the office of the person who received the complaint and acted upon it. These records must be maintained for a period of six (6) years from the date final action was taken on said complaint.
5. If a student feels that a response to a complaint is unacceptable and/or unreasonable, the student may bring the complaint to the immediate supervisor of the person who initially acted in response to the matter. If a student does not receive a response from that supervisor within two weeks from the date of originally filing the complaint with that person, the student may then bring the complaint to the appropriate Vice President or Provost.

## **HARASSMENT AND NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY (INCLUDING SEXUAL HARRASSMENT)**

The University's Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Nondiscrimination Policy prohibits all forms of discrimination within the campus community.

Sometimes, discrimination involves exclusion from or different treatment in activities, such as admission, athletics, or employment. Other times, discrimination takes the form of harassment or, in the case of sex-based discrimination, can encompass sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, sexual exploitation, dating violence or domestic violence.

The Title IX Coordinator or a Deputy Coordinator will assist the Complainant in identifying the appropriate University grievance procedure to resolve the complaint in a prompt and equitable manner.

The policy can be accessed at <https://www.wilkes.edu/about-wilkes/offices-and-administration/title-ix/index.aspx>

### **HONORLOCK®**

Honorlock® is the proctoring service for examinations in the Graduate Nursing Program. Comprehensive details on accessing the proctoring service are provided during orientation and in the LIVE classroom of each course with exams. The proctoring is conducted through a hybrid model of AI and live proctors and is recorded. The recordings along with transcripts of student activity are available to faculty after submission of exams. To use Honorlock®, students will need Google Chrome and to add the [Honorlock® Chrome Extension](#). All students are required to meet the [Minimum System Requirements](#) for this proctoring service throughout the duration of their program.

Faculty review exam videos which are flagged as violations by the proctors. Follow up to students is according to the degree of infraction flagged as suspicious. Data is compiled to validate the findings of academic misconduct and violations will be set forth as per the policy in this handbook. Students in violation of ethics and integrity of test taking for example, but not limited to, using notes during the examination, use of a mobile device at any point during an exam, and/or using remote entry software while violating copyright in allowing hired outsiders to take the student exams will be removed from the university immediately upon validation of the evidence of the behavior.

The standard open examination period for the Graduate Nursing Program is **Friday, 7:00 am ET to Monday, 11:59 pm ET** during the module the examination is scheduled.

Students unable to complete the exam within the standard open examination period must inform the faculty member prior to or during that open period of time. Extensions are never guaranteed, and requests may require appropriate documentation. Examinations not taken during the assigned period of time will receive a grade of zero.

Each course contains a practice exam for students to complete prior to taking official examinations. This process ensures compatibility with the technological specifications of Honorlock®. If this process is not completed and a technology issue is encountered on an official exam, no consideration will be given to a review of the incident. Students must reach out to Honorlock's® 24/7/365 support for any technical assistance. Support can be reached by visiting [honorlock.com/support](https://honorlock.com/support) or via the live chat bubble when accessing the exam. [Prep.honorlock.com](https://prep.honorlock.com) is an additional resource that can be leveraged to become familiar with the tool. The grade will be based upon questions answered or a 0.0 will be provided if no questions were answered. Students are expected to begin their exam with sufficient time left in the 4-day exam window or risk running out of time and earning a grade of 0.0.

Students taking screen shots of the exam or recording exam questions in any way are in violation of the copyright laws and are subject to disciplinary action as per policy in the Graduate Nursing Program.

It is the policy of the Graduate Nursing Program that no examinations can be retaken. No extra credit is provided to support increasing examination grades.

## IMPAIRED COGNITIVE FUNCTION POLICY

Circumstances may occur in which a student needs to take over-the-counter or prescribed medications or substances. The medications or substances may impair cognition and the student's ability to function safely in the clinical environment. This occurrence may endanger patients or the student. Hence, the student holds the responsibility for being aware of the effect these medications/substances may have on their ability to function safely in the clinical setting.

Any student who demonstrates signs and/or symptoms of impaired function, altered neurocognitive function, or who consumes substances that impair function which affects the ability of the student to administer safe care in a clinical health setting will be immediately removed by the clinical instructor/preceptor from providing patient care, and follow the health care institutions policy for cognitive impairment. Any fees for this follow up is the responsibility of the student. Student continuation in clinical is dependent on the healthcare institution's decision to allow the student to return or the ability of the student to find a new clinical site, and compliance with state regulations of licensure for impairment as appropriate to the student's state requirements.

## INPLACE ® FOR CLINICAL HOURS

InPlace® software systems are used in the NP program for documentation and tracking of required NP clinical hours and patient encounter details for each clinical course. This information is used by faculty and future employers to ensure that required clinical hours for each course are met, students are seeing an appropriate patient mix related to age and NP specialty as per national standards of practice, and total clinical hour requirements to sit for national board certification and state certification or licensure are met. Additionally, students can use the information as a portfolio for an employment application after graduation. Failure to submit and complete clinical hours as scheduled will may result in course failure.

Students gain access:

- Once a student's contact information is uploaded KP CRM (upon admission to their program, their information is integrated into InPlace® and they must log in with their Wilkes credentials.
- Students will only be able to see their site(s) once confirmed for that semester  
Students will receive the InPlace® information (see below) 1.5 semesters prior to their first clinical semester.

Students complete clinical hours while officially enrolled in a clinical course at the start of the semester and under direct supervision of a preceptor and course faculty. Professional liability insurance is not provided to students through the university until the first day of a clinical course start. Students conducting and/or recording hours in InPlace® outside of a clinical course enrollment are subject to violations of professionalism and academic misconduct which lead to university withdrawal.

Students have up to 14 days to document patient encounters in InPlace®. If hours are not logged as current at the every 2-week review cycle, a 0.0 is documented for that grading period. **There are no grade reversals for updated hours of that review cycle once it is past.** The Clinical Log is an assignment like any other in a course with timelines of expected due dates. Progression of hours for completion of course evaluations include at 6-8 weeks being at or past the mid semester requirement and at the 12<sup>th</sup> week the total required hours should be completed. If the hours are not documented then they were not completed and mid and final clinical evaluations cannot be completed by faculty as validation of meeting course outcomes.

Students conducting and/or recording hours in InPlace® outside of a clinical course enrollment are

subject to violations of professionalism and academic misconduct which can lead to graduate nursing program withdrawal.

At the end of each semester, students are required to keep a copy of the clinical activity for all patient encounters. A summary is submitted to the Assignment Folder of LIVE/D2L by the course end.

This information is requested by employers during the application processes. It is the responsibility of the student to provide this information if requested during the employment application process. These hours are needed for validation with national board certification and also for any future plans for pursuing a doctoral degree or post-graduate /APRN certificate.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE (LOA)

Students unable to continue course work due to medical or personal reasons are eligible for an approved graduate nursing program leave of absence. Two leaves of absence are allowed during the completion of a graduate nursing program and are based upon summer, fall, and spring semesters. LOAs that DO NOT count toward the 2 allowed include those for one semester of maternity leave, active military, and inability of the clinical placement team to identify clinical placement. These students will remain listed as active at the University. Students should notify and consult with their Academic Advisor regarding the need for the LOA.

Once a decision has been reached, the *Leave of Absence Form* should be completed by the student. This is available at: <https://www.wilkes.edu/academics/registrar/forms/index.aspx>, under *Miscellaneous*, locate the [Graduate Nursing Leave of Absence Request](#). This leave of absence form will be received and processed by the Academic Advisor. The Plan of Study will be updated accordingly. Students will be removed from the University if they do not return after 2 LOAs. At that time, students will be notified by their Academic Advisor and removed from the University.

The expectation is that students will maintain continuous enrollment in their respective Graduate Nursing Program. Students looking to return from LOA and be guaranteed course availability are required to reach out to their Academic Advisor to inform them of their return from LOA and clear any remaining balances due with the University Bursar's Office in order to register for courses during the first 7 days of the registration period for the next semester. Students must communicate with their Academic Advisor on a regular basis regarding their return to the program by the prescribed deadlines as enrollment in courses is not guaranteed. If enrollment in a course is not completed during the registration period, students will not be guaranteed a return and are subject to incurring another LOA which counts towards the 2 permitted by this policy. The Graduate Nursing Program is not responsible for student registration into courses if the proper policy is not followed as outlined above. Readmission after being removed for exhaustion of permitted LOAs is not guaranteed.

### NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS

National board certification is offered through several professional organizations for nurses who have met requirements for clinical or functional practice in a specialized field. Further information on specific certification is available to students during the scholarly review courses (NSG 590, NSG 591). Information on form completion is provided in the NSG 590 and 591 courses as well. The required timeframe for completion of forms is 2 weeks from the time the forms are received in the graduate nursing division. Students are prepared for the following national board certification examinations in the graduate nursing concentration programs **with the expectation of exams being taken within 1 year of program completion:**

<b>Program/Concentration</b>	<b>National Board Certification Exam</b>
Adult -Gerontology Primary Care	ANCC AANP Adult Gerontology Primary Care Certification
Family/Individual Across the Lifespan (FNP)	ANCC AANP Family/Individual Across the Lifespan (FNP) Certification
Psychiatric/Mental Health NP	ANCC AANP Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (Across the Lifespan) Certification

Starting **January 1, 2026 (Beginning Spring 2026 (May) Graduates)**, ANCC will implement a policy change to the certification eligibility for APRN applicants. Candidates for ANCC APRN certification must pass their examination within five (5) years of degree conferral from their applicable APRN degree or post-graduate certification program.

## **ORIENTATION**

New Student Orientation (LMSO 000) is mandatory for all new students and readmitted students to be completed in the semester in which they begin the program. Previously completed orientation will not be honored due to policies that may change or be updated. Students are responsible for being aware of and following all current policies of the Graduate Nursing Student Handbook and Wilkes University. Students will need to begin completion orientation prior to the semester in which they begin the program in its entirety in order to progress in their program.

Orientation will open 1 month prior to the student's initial semester beginning. The deadline to complete New Student Orientation in its entirety will be the end of Week 8 of the semester (Sunday). It is preferred that student's complete orientation prior to Day 1 of the semester in order for students to achieve the highest degree of academic success in the classroom and program. *A reminder will be sent by a student's Student Advisor in week 3 or 4 of the semester and 1 week prior to the completion deadline in Week 7 for students who have not yet completed orientation.* Students who do not complete orientation by the deadline will be notified by email from their Academic Advisor with their Student Advisor copied on the email, deregistered from the current semester's orientation course, and re-registered for orientation in the next semester. Academic Advisors will update a student's Plan of Study.

Students not completing the orientation are unable to proceed with registration for the next semester. Orientation must be completed in that semester in order for a student to be registered for the following semester. Students will incur a counted leave of absence for the semester in which they do not complete orientation, and if 2 leave of absence semesters are taken and exhausted due to not completing orientation, students will be removed from the program as per the Leave of Absence Policy. Readmission to the program after being removed for exhausting leaves of absence is not guaranteed.

Any questions regarding orientation should be directed to a student's Student Advisor.

## PROGRAM CHANGE

Students requesting a program change should notify their Academic Advisor for information and discuss the change. Requests to change programs are based upon a thorough review of present and past academic outcomes and program openings; no grades of less than 3.0 and an overall GPA of greater than 3.0. A change in program is not guaranteed.

## REGISTRATION/SELF REGISTRATION

### Self-Registration:

If students have been enrolled in their program for 1 year or more, they are eligible for self-registration. Students can expect to begin self-registering between Weeks 6-8 of the current semester for the upcoming semester and should register according to their Plan of Study in Degree Works. Students should receive an email from their Student Advisor (SA) with instructions and further information on self-registering. Once registration opens if a student has any questions regarding the registration process, they should communicate directly with their SA for further assistance. If changes to the Plan of Study are desired, students should reach out to their Academic Advisor (AA) to discuss prior to registering for courses. Self-registration will end 2 weeks prior to the semester beginning. After self-registration concludes and up until the Wednesday before the semester begins, students should reach out to their SA for further assistance with registration for classes.

### Registration:

If students have been in the program for less than 1 year, they will be registered for courses through their SA based on their Plan of Study in Degree Works. Students will receive an email from their SA with further information on the registration process. If changes to the Plan of Study are desired, students should reach out to their AA to discuss prior to being registered for courses. If students have any questions regarding registration, they should reach out to their SA.

Registration/ Self-registration will guarantee that a student is registered for a course, however **it does not guarantee a specific faculty or course section**. Students are registered according to availability. Requests for specific faculty will **not** be accepted and course sections are subject to change through the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the semester to equalize the number of students as necessary amongst course sections. It is recommended that students save their work in a separate file in case they are moved as coursework will not move with a student if a section is changed. A student will be assigned a different faculty member if one is available if the student is retaking a course due to failing the course

## SCHOLARLY REVIEW

The M.S.N. and Post Graduate/APRN program scholarly review validates that candidates have achieved competency in the graduate nursing program. The scholarly review is 2 credits (NSG 591, for PGAC students) or 3 credits (NSG 590, for MSN students) credits and completion is the last semester/term of the program. These courses are required to be taken in the last semester of the program with other program courses. Students will synthesize and review issues relevant to their chosen specialty for clinical practice. An overview of the graduate core courses and specialty focused review prepares students for national board certification and transition into advanced nursing practice. These courses are required to be taken in the last semester of the program with other program courses.

## STATE AUTHORIZATION AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Only students who reside in authorized states may be admitted into the distance learning graduate nursing programs. Students who move to an unauthorized state during their

enrollment will not be qualified to continue in their respective program. State authorization is the legal mandate that requires higher education institutions to be in compliance with the laws and regulations of each state where it conducts business. Each state has the authority to regulate educational activities delivered within and across its borders, including distance/online education. Additionally, states have the right to determine the process by which out-of-state colleges and universities can obtain approval. The need for higher education institutions to seek such approval depends on the requirements of each state's licensure and/or department of education regulations and the types of activities an institution is conducting in the state. There can be significant consequences to institutions that are not in compliance with state authorization regulations, so Wilkes University takes this requirement very seriously.

Wilkes University continually evaluates programs against the education and licensure requirements of other states, so that we can best serve our students. Please note that students who change their residency to a state which Wilkes University is not approved to operate may be unable to remain enrolled at Wilkes University or may have their academic progression delayed until proper approvals may be obtained. As such, students are required to contact their advisor with any anticipated address changes as soon as possible.

As part of that process, we periodically contact the departments of education and professional licensure boards or agencies and review their websites to obtain approval requirements and determine program alignment. In many cases, Wilkes' programs meet these requirements; however, we cannot guarantee that all programs that meet the Pennsylvania's board of education and licensure requirements will also satisfy the education and licensure requirements of other states and territories. Some professions, such as nursing education, vary dramatically between states. Any questions related to the University's approval to offer graduate nursing programs in a specific state should be forwarded to graduate admissions prior to program enrollment and a graduate nursing program advisor once enrolled in a program.

Further information can be located at <https://www.wilkes.edu/about-wilkes/accreditation-and-rankings/state-authorization-and-registration.aspx>

### **STUDENT ENROLLMENT STATUS**

A graduate student's status as full or half-time is determined by the number of graduate credits the student carries in a semester. Nine (9) graduate credits per semester is the minimum number of credits a graduate student may carry to be considered a full-time graduate student. A graduate student registered for at least six (6) credits is considered a half-time student.

### **TEXTBOOKS**

Textbook information for the course can be found at <https://www.wilkes.edu/campus-life/colonel-corner/index.aspx>.

Please note that the Colonels Are Covered free textbook program is currently available only to undergraduate students.

## **TRANSFER CREDITS FOR DEGREE PROGRAMS AND GAP ANALYSIS REQUIREMENTS FOR THE POST-GRADUATE/ APRN CERTIFICATE**

### **Master's and Doctoral Degree Programs**

A maximum of 9 graduate level credits toward a master's degree or doctoral degree completed at another U.S. regionally and programmatically accredited university or college may be applied toward the requirements for the degrees. Transfer credits must be a B (3.0) or higher to qualify for transfer. Advanced Pathophysiology, Advanced Health Assessment and Advanced Pharmacology (the 3 P's) are required as across the life span and address advanced practice registered nurse requirements. These eligibility requirements have been validated by the national board certification agencies in order for students to receive approval to take boards in NP specialty programs across the lifespan. Students are required to submit a transfer credit form provided by the enrollment team at the time of admission and a matching year and term syllabi to the transcripts for the requested course reviews. Transferred academic degree credits must have been completed within 6 years prior to the date of admission under review to the master's or doctoral degree graduate program at Wilkes University. This includes students who are readmitted and completed courses while enrolled at Wilkes University on a previous admission. Advanced Pharmacology and Psychopharmacology courses should be within 5 years prior to the date of admission. Approval for any transferred credits toward a degree program may be granted by the Chair of Graduate Nursing or other PSON academic officer appointed by the Chair.

Transfer credits are not approved for the 3 bridge courses in the RN to M.S.N. program and NSG 603, 608a, and 608b in the D.N.P. program. There is no exception to this policy. -Academic officers who are agents of Wilkes University will review the syllabus to determine if the course contains graduate level learning objectives, a sufficient number of contact hours (40-45 for a three-credit course), and an appropriate content outline containing assessments and assignments that clearly delineate student performance. Grades earned in transferred courses are not included in the computation of the cumulative grade point average at the University.

Based upon the number of transfer credits and the exact courses it is not always possible to schedule courses sequencing each semester according to financial aid requirements, Students may experience times in which financial aid eligibility requirements are not able to be met.

Wilkes University does not transfer credits for 1) courses titled as workshops; 2) other courses that are determined not to meet academically rigorous standards; 3) courses that do not align with the goals and objectives of existing Wilkes University courses; or 4) courses taken as Pass-Fail, unless the "Pass" can be substantiated by the former institution as being equivalent to a grade of B (3.0) or better.

Current Wilkes graduate students who seek to take a graduate course at another accredited university or college in order to transfer the credits into their current respective program at the University must complete a "Pre-Approval Form" prior to registering for the course.

A student cannot be approved for graduation until all transfer credits are approved by the respective program designee, an official course syllabus and transcript has been received at Wilkes University from the institution granting the credit, and the approved transfer credits are posted to the Wilkes University transcript. All paperwork must be received prior to each semester's Wilkes graduation clearance deadline.

### **Post -Graduate/APRN Certificate Program and Gap Analysis Review**

For students applying to the Post -Graduate/APRN Certificate program, the enrollment team

automatically reviews for transfer of credits towards the gap analysis and submits a request on behalf of the student for the Graduate Nursing Program. These are reviewed by the Chair of Graduate Nursing or other PSON academic officer appointed by the Chair who will review the match of the syllabus or course description to the year of completion on the transcript. The gap analysis process is aligned with the expectations of national certification boards as outlined above. Syllabi or course descriptions and official transcripts are required to be granted a review. The following requirements are applied:

- A grade of 3.0 or higher in each course review
- Advanced Pathophysiology, Advanced Health Assessment and Advanced Pharmacology (the 3 P's) across the life span and address advanced practice registered nurse requirements as per national standards of NP curriculum in 3 separate courses.

Students educated as nurse practitioners with a master's or doctoral degree or post graduate/APRN certificate and do not have clinical experience as a nurse practitioner along with current APRN licensure and national board certification as nurse practitioners **or** are not formally educated as nurse practitioners need to meet in addition:

- Advanced Pharmacology and Psychopharmacology (as appropriate) courses within 5 years prior to the date of program admission

Students who have previously taken an Advanced Pharmacology course which meets the criteria as set forth for approval in the transfer or gap analysis review above are advised to contact their State Board of Nursing to determine if their Advanced Pharmacology course meets the criteria set for length of time allowed from taking the course to the date of applying for prescriptive privileges.

### TURNITIN®

The Passan School of Nursing uses Turnitin® software as a formative process to help students develop and improve scholarly writing skills, while promoting academic honesty. TurnItIn is required for all course discussions and written assignments, prior to submitting work.

The Turnitin® service which identifies matching text with online databases of written works is available for use in selected LIVE/D2L nursing courses of the learning management system. The software produces an Originality Report which contains a similarity index. This guides instructors and students to identify matching text that could lead to violation of academic honesty in the form of plagiarism. The software cannot identify or interpret plagiarized material – it can only report on similarity of matches in text. Sources for matching in the Originality Report as noted in the similarity index include internet (current and archived web pages), publications (journals, chapters of books, and other specific reports) and student papers. The reports become formative feedback and can aid in the development of scholarly writing skills.

Appropriate references to the use of Turnitin® appear in the course syllabus. Students are required to check the Assignment folders of each course to see if Turnitin® is integrated into the LIVE/D2L Assignment folder tool and required in that class. An icon will appear in the Assignment folder area next to each assignment as appropriate. Once the student submits the assignment and Turnitin® is integrated into the LIVE/D2L Assignment folder tool similarity reports are automatically produced for any submissions. This option provides students the ability to improve the level of original scholarly writing.

Multiple submissions are allowed in the Assignment folder to produce new Originality Reports on each assignment. Students must allow additional time for processing the reports before

assignment due dates. Extensions on assignments and excusal from the Academic Honesty policy will not be awarded based upon late submissions to the Assignment folder and Originality Reports not being received for review. The time frame for receiving a report can be 15 mins to 24 hours.

The Originality Report contains a similarity index. The similarity index of assignments should be scored at 24% and less and have a green or blue score attached. A similarity score of less than 24% is satisfactory and required for the final submission. It is at the discretion of the faculty to accept any score higher than 24% based upon the review of the similarity report. The similarity index is according to the following:

**Blue** - no matching text

**Green** - one word to 24% matching text

**Yellow** - 25-49% matching text

**Orange** - 50-74% matching text

**Red** -75-100% matching text

Students are expected to use the Originality Report to correct deficiencies and lower their percentage scores from the similarity index with their subsequent submissions of assignments to the Assignment folder and Turnitin®, until a similarity index of 24% or less is received. An algorithm to guide this process is available from the Passan School of Nursing and is located in the Course Resource Section of the learning management system. Once the deficiencies are corrected and the similarity index is 24% or less, nothing further needs to be done with the assignment. The faculty member will correct the last assignment submission and Originality Report as attached.

***Exceptions to the 24% similarity match include discussions that are based on case studies, and/or use a template (e.g., SOAP note). Assignments that are iterative and build upon prior assignments are also exceptions. These similarity reports are reviewed manually by faculty.***

In addition to the Originality Report, work submitted through Turnitin also generates an AI Writing Report. Turnitin AI Writing Reports provide instructors with a percentage of text in submitted work which is likely AI-generated or AI-paraphrased. At this time Turnitin limits AI Writing Report output only to instructors, the Passan School of Nursing is unable to provide students access to this tool as it does the Turnitin Originality Report.

The policy for Academic Misconduct-Plagiarism-and Federal Copyright Violations is applied by faculty and graduate nursing administration to academic misconduct and pursuant to imposed violations of the graduate nursing program.

Various resources are available to students and faculty for Turnitin® in each Course Resource section of LIVE/D2L and in the Writing Resource Center for graduate nursing students.

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM COURSE**

**Students can only withdraw once from a course.** Students will be denied the withdrawal at any time of the semester if the request is a second time for a same course. Students who wish to withdraw will need to withdraw from the University and readmission is not guaranteed.

A student may withdraw from a course during the first and second week of the course without any penalty by informing the faculty member and completing the Etrieve form: ***Drop or Withdraw from a Graduate Nursing Course*** located at: <https://www.wilkes.edu/academics/registrar/forms/index.aspx>

A student may withdraw from a course the **second week through the eighth week (for 12-week courses); and the second week through the tenth week (for 15-week courses)** only with the approval of both the faculty member and the student's Academic Advisor. To withdraw from a course at this time, consult with the course faculty member and complete the Etrieve form: ***Drop or Withdraw from a Graduate Nursing Course*** located at:  
<https://www.wilkes.edu/academics/registrar/forms/index.aspx>

This "W" granted after the **second** week of the semester reflects a decision on the part of the student, after consultation with the instructor and advisor, not to be enrolled in a course.

A student may not withdraw from a course after the 8<sup>th</sup> (for 12-week courses) or 10<sup>th</sup> week (for 15-week courses) for poor academic performance or concern for receiving a low grade. The student will receive the final grade earned.

Week 1: Students can add or drop a course without penalty-- Continuing students without any registration for that semester would incur a LOA. Students should fill out a Course Withdrawal/Drop Form (but it is not required during Week 1) and a LOA form as per the policy. Student refunds are per the table below.

Week 2: Students can drop a course without penalty-- Continuing students without any registration for that semester would incur a LOA. Students should fill out a Course Withdrawal/Drop Form (required) and a LOA form as per the policy. Student refunds are per the table below.

Weeks 3-8 for 12-week courses or 3-10 for 15-week courses: Students will have a "W" on their transcript if they withdraw from courses during this time. A LOA is not incurred. Students should fill out a Course Withdrawal/Drop form (required). Student refunds are per the table below.

Theory and clinical courses for the NP specialties are required as corequisites of the approved curriculum. These courses are both dropped automatically at the time of a withdrawal request. One cannot be taken without the other as per national standards of NP education. NSG 590 and 591 are taken in the last semester of the NP programs as corequisites to the accompanying courses of theory and clinical; NSG 590 and 591 are dropped automatically at the same time as the clinical and theory courses. Completed clinical hours taken in the clinical course from which a student withdraws will not transfer to the next semester and be applied to the total required clinical hours for graduation from the NP program. If the clinical course is retaken, and the preceptor requires payment, students are responsible for the preceptor payment.

Once a student consents to a course withdrawal they are not to access the course in LIVE/D2L. Students who access courses after being withdrawn face potential withdrawal from the university. Students are responsible for knowing their plan of study and how they will pay for the program. Students are advised that withdrawing from a course(s) may have financial implications. Refunds are based upon the percentage of course completion per the table below:

#### **12- and 15-Week Courses**

<b>Percentage of Course Completion</b>	<b>12-Week Course Days Completed</b>	<b>15-Week Course Days Completed</b>	<b>Percentage of Reimbursement</b>
0-13%	Days 1-11	Days 1-14	100%
14-20%	Days 12-17	Days 15-21	75%

21-27%	Days 18-23	Days 22-28	50%
28% end of course	Days 24-84	Days 29-105	0%

## STUDENT SERVICES

### **University 24/7 Crisis Support Line:**

The University Counseling Center provides support/consultation for any student in a crisis or urgent situation. The University has a 24/7 crisis support line [570-408-CHAT (2428)] that is available to both undergraduate and graduate students.

### **Disability/Disability Support Services:**

For more information on Disability Support Services, see the following link:  
<http://wilkes.edu/academics/colleges/university-college/disability-support-services-dss>

### **Financial Aid Services:**

For more information on graduate Financial Aid Services, see the following link:  
<https://www.wilkes.edu/admissions/financial-aid/financial-aid-graduate/index.aspx> .

### **Graduate Nursing Academic Resource Center:**

This center provides resources for library, writing, and statistical services in promoting academic success in the classroom. For more information see the following link at  
<http://wilkes.libguides.com/gradnursing>

### **Graduate Student Mental Health Services:**

Wilkes University partners with Uwill for graduate student mental health services which can be accessed at: <https://www.wilkes.edu/campus-life/counseling-center/graduate-mental-health.aspx>. Uwill offers up to four free, confidential and secure teletherapy sessions as well as an on-demand library of video wellness resources to support graduate students.

### **IT Help Desk:**

Wilkes University IT Help Desk offers 24/7 LIVE/D2L and computer/email support to students on- and off-campus. In addition, support from LIVE/D2L End-User Support Services (EUSS) is available to students during Wilkes' Help Desk off-hours including weekends.

Passwords cannot be reset by the EUSS service. For more information on the Help Desk, see the following link: <https://www.wilkes.edu/about-wilkes/offices-and-administration/information-technology-services/index.aspx>

### **Library:**

For more information on the Library, see the following link:

<http://www.wilkes.edu/library>

The Library is a student service for support in the virtual classroom. It is the expectation of the Passan School of Nursing faculty that graduate nursing students master the skills for scholarly research. Tutorials on accessing Library resources are available in the student orientation session and on the Library web site.

## Appendix

### Appendix A

#### Graduate Nursing Final Grade Appeal Form

- 1) Please complete and submit this form and supporting documentation to your Academic Advisor for further review. Please be advised that the review cycle to a final decision can take a minimum of 2 weeks. The Chair of the Graduate Nursing Progression and Appeals Committee will send a letter via email reflecting the findings on behalf of the Graduate Nursing Program to the student via the [wilkes.edu](mailto:wilkes.edu) email within a minimum 2 weeks of filing for the appeal.

The following areas as outlined do not qualify for the appeal process unless a policy was not followed wherein the final course grade would be appealed:

- 1) Individual test/quiz grades;
- 2) Individual assignment grades;
- 3) Individual discussion grades;
- 4) Accommodations not officially approved at the time of a grade in question; and
- 5) Student personal issue statements and/or letters of support presented on behalf of a student.

Date Submitted:

Academic Advisor:

- Student Name:
- WIN:
- Course Number and Section:
- Course Faculty:
- Semester, Year:
- Details on the Reason for the Appeal: (This section must include the exact policy of the appeal and the source.)
- Provide Supporting Documents for the Appeal (Attach additional pages if needed. This section would also contain emails of communication with course faculty related to the inability to resolve the policy issue):