

COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES  
CANSECO SCHOOL OF NURSING  
TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY



**Master of Science in Nursing**  
**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Revised, August, 2007

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## **PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS**

- ❖ TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
- ❖ COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCE
- ❖ CANSECO SCHOOL OF NURSING
- ❖ CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
- ❖ PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

## **TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT**

Texas A&M International University (TAMIU), a Member of The Texas A&M University System, prepares students for leadership roles in their chosen profession in an increasingly complex, culturally diverse state, national, and global society. TAMIU provides students with a learning environment anchored by the highest quality programs built on a solid academic foundation in the arts and sciences. To fulfill its mission, the University offers a range of baccalaureate and master's programs and the Doctor of Philosophy degree in International Business Administration. In addition to offering excellent undergraduate and graduate programs, the University pursues a progressive agenda for global study and understanding across all disciplines.

Through instruction, faculty and student research, and public service, TAMIU embodies a strategic point of delivery for well-defined programs and services that improve the quality of life for citizens of the border region, the State of Texas, and national and international communities.

## **PHILOSOPHY OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING** (revised 2007)

The Faculty believe that the School of Nursing of Texas A&M International University is in a unique position, as a result of geographic location and institutional affiliation, to prepare professional nurses to improve the well-being of complex and diverse populations. As an international city spanning the border between the United States and Mexico, Laredo (with its sister city Nuevo Laredo) offers a culturally, economically and politically unique setting in which health problems originating in either country merge as residents of Texas and Mexico live and work together. Faculty believe that professional nursing education must address a wide range of health beliefs in combination with dynamic political, social, economic and legal issues. The border setting provides students the opportunity to appreciate that people's health beliefs often vary in significant and meaningful ways, that solutions for health problems are defined by radically different health care contexts, and that measures for resolving or managing health problems are affected by economic and social value systems. Despite the complexities inherent in such an environment, the Faculty are convinced that this bicultural setting affords an ideal opportunity for students to learn to appreciate that clients are unique, worthy of respect, and capable of making their own life choices about matters of health and illness.

The Faculty believe that professional nurses have distinct educational needs and practice responsibilities. As adult learners, students enter the program with a foundation of knowledge and their own unique values, understandings and experiences. The Faculty believe that nursing education is a lifelong process that includes formal and informal components, and that teaching and learning are reciprocal activities during which faculty and students learn from each other. To effectively serve a diverse population and to address rapid changes in health care systems and treatment, nurses must develop critical thinking skills which will enhance creative and flexible problem solving within their own practice. The Faculty believe that diverse and changing health care needs can best be met by practice based on theory and research that is continually evaluating and modifying the standards of care. The Faculty of the School of Nursing are committed to educating outstanding clinicians, scholars, health advocates, mentors and leaders who will be instrumental in addressing the health care needs of communities. The Faculty believe that strong communication skills are essential to enactment of these roles, and that professional nurses must also be increasingly concerned with the ethical, legal, political and socioeconomic dimensions of their practice. The Faculty believe it is essential to promote the personal development and educational advancement of its students, to provide opportunities for research and creative expression, and to remain highly responsive through its educational program to the community. The Faculty believe that nurses graduating from this program will be instrumental in realizing the University mission of improving the quality of life for citizens of South Texas and nearby international communities. Baccalaureate graduates will contribute to enhancing the level of care throughout the community. Masters degree graduates will provide leadership in meeting the community need for mid level providers and nursing faculty.

Nursing is a learned and complex therapeutic process through which the nurse engages individuals, families, or communities for the purpose of meeting health needs. Nurses understand health and illness to be relative conditions of human existence involving intricate balances between life experiences and biological phenomena. To be effective in the nursing role, the nurse is required to develop, synthesize, and work from a broad framework based on the humanities and the social and biological sciences. Furthermore, the unique nature of nurse-client relationships is derived from a broad understanding of persons within their environments and the therapeutic use of self. Effective nurses design and implement innovative strategies that reflect caring through understanding, respect, appreciation, involvement, and advocacy.

Nursing roles and responsibilities in the 21st Century are likely to change significantly from nursing practice as we know it today. The current foundation of health information on which

nurses must base their practices is often unclear concerning how many health problems can be prevented. Until research can provide explanatory and predictive models on which to build effective preventive strategies, much nursing time and effort will continue to be devoted to caring for people with health problems and helping people either regain health status jeopardized by illness or adapt to significant, permanent changes in health. Although the present structure of the US health care system has dictated for decades that most of the nursing care provided to ill persons be delivered within institutional settings, current trends suggest that nurses will be increasingly involved in broader community-based health care models and systems. Institution-based care in the future will serve as a short-term, highly technical, and procedure-driven component of the larger community-based system. Nurses will be responsible for overseeing the health care of members of communities over prolonged time intervals. Demands for such changes in the nurses' role will require added emphases on analytic, education, leadership, and scholarship functions. It is also anticipated that nurses in the emergent health care system will need to provide and manage health care in ways that are cost effective, consumer-oriented, and likely to result in optimal health.

There are many challenges which lie ahead for professional nurses. Community-based health care, including care provided in hi-tech institutions, will have to be culturally appropriate and connected with persons at some very personal and intimate level to be effective. Nursing education in a border community presents opportunities for the advancement of nursing practice through the examination and exploration of concepts of culture and human caring at both the baccalaureate and masters levels.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework of the Canseco School of Nursing is portrayed as a pair of hands joined within a globe. The globe signifies the international context of the nursing program. The hands are joined in such a way that the individual fingers are intertwined and hidden within the clasp of the two hands.



At one level, the clasped hands represent the interaction between nurse and partner, be that client, community, family or other health care provider. In this interchange, the fingers of the two hands become so intertwined that it becomes difficult to determine which fingers derive from which hand.

At another level, the two hands represent the two foci of the curriculum: expertise in clinical nursing care and nursing in partnership with communities. Together these two capacities can effect dramatic changes in the world with which they interact.

The hand clasp can be loosened somewhat to reveal individual fingers that represent the strands of the nursing curriculum, as described by the nine curricular objectives: (1) a broad base of knowledge; (2) cultural competence; (3) critical thinking and the research process; (4) the

nursing process; (5) health promotion; (6) professional nursing roles; (7) societal trends; (8) law and ethics; and (9) life-long learning.



The nine strands are defined within the context of the overall program philosophy of cultural diversity and community partnership, as follows:

- (1) **A broad base of knowledge** includes grounding in the natural and social sciences, the liberal arts as well as awareness of tradition and prior learning and experience in nursing.
- (2) **Transcultural nursing and cultural aspects of care** include awareness of individual and cultural variations in health status, human development, values, beliefs, attitudes, history and environment and how these differences affect the need for and acceptance of nursing care within a global context.
- (3) **Critical thinking** includes the use of problem solving, clinical judgment and the research process to apply appropriate principles for the resolution of ever changing societal and professional problems. It includes a search for structural causes of illness outside the narrow confines of a biomedical paradigm.
- (4) **The nursing process** involves planning, implementing and evaluating theory-based and culturally-appropriate nursing care in collaboration with individuals, families and communities. It requires an understanding of necessary linkages to other sectors and levels - i.e., state, regional, national, international.
- (5) **Health promotion** strategies incorporate the three modes of Transcultural nursing care (preservation, accommodation and repatterning) to promote health of individuals, families and communities within the limits of culturally acceptable behaviors.
- (6) **Professional nursing roles** of the baccalaureate nurse include those of provider of care, health care team member/collaborator, leader/manager, teacher, scholar, advocate, activist, mentor and entrepreneur. Professional nursing roles of the masters prepared family nurse practitioner raise all baccalaureate roles to a higher level of performance, with particular emphasis on the roles of mid level primary care provider and nurse educator.
- (7) **Societal trends** involve analysis of the impact of evolving socioeconomic and political forces on nursing practice and health care systems. Poverty is examined as a primary cause of illness.
- (8) **Legal and ethical principles** that guide professional nursing practice include analysis of the Texas Nurse Practice Act, standards of professional nursing and its specialty organizations, and the application of nursing codes of ethics and statutory and case law and acknowledgment of professional responsibility to strive for systemic change.
- (9) **Life long learning** is a manifestation of professional accountability that involves incorporation of updated knowledge of nursing and health care standards with ongoing service to and empowerment of the community.

## b. Outcomes/Objectives

Terminal Program Outcome Objectives: The purpose of the Master of Science in Nursing degree program is to produce culturally competent nursing leaders who are prepared with role specialization as a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP). The curriculum is designed to prepare nurses for an increasingly active role in evidence-based practice to improve patient/client care outcomes by translating research into practice. Graduates of the program will be eligible to take the national examination for certification as Family Nurse Practitioners.

**Upon completion of the Master of Science in Nursing course of study, graduates will be prepared to:**

1. Critically analyze, interpret, and utilize appropriate knowledge, research, and theories to meet the health care needs of diverse urban and rural patient/client populations across the life span.
2. Collaboratively plan with the individual/family and other health care providers to provide holistic health care within the context of the individual's/family's culture and worldviews.
3. Contribute to the advancement of the nursing profession through evidence-based research and advanced practice nursing.
4. Synthesize the leadership, management, negotiating, teaching/coaching, and consultation roles to foster continual improvement in health care to meet changing societal and environmental needs.
5. Operationalize ethical, legal, political, and economic principles in application to health care delivery across the lifespan.
6. Act as advocates for advanced practice nursing through a commitment to lifelong learning and community service.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

- ❖ TEXAS A&M SYSTEM
- ❖ TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
- ❖ COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES
- ❖ CANSECO SCHOOL OF NURSING

(note: faculty bylaws have been deleted as suggested)



# TAMIU Organizational Chart Pending

TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH  
SCIENCES

**Organizational Chart**

Pending

## STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

Students are encouraged to participate actively in governance of the School of Nursing and of the University. A graduate student representative serves on the overall School of Nursing faculty committee, as well as the graduate subcommittees of the School's committees (Curriculum and Evaluation and Admission, Progression, Graduation and Scholarship). On a university level, student participation is encouraged through student government and a wide array of student organizations.

## **CURRICULUM**

- ❖ DEGREE REQUIREMENTS
- ❖ CURRICULUM
- ❖ SEQUENCE OF COURSES
- ❖ CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING
- ❖ THEORY & CLINICAL LABORATORY HOURS
- ❖ COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

The MSN curriculum is built of three levels of graduate nursing coursework: theoretical core, advanced practice core, and Family Nurse Practitioner-specific clinical courses. This approach facilitates articulation with other graduate nursing programs because of the similarity of both the master's degree core courses and the advanced practice core courses across programs.

### DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING

	FNP courses	SCH
a. Foundation Courses (core courses)	4	12
b. Courses required of all students in the proposed program (advanced practice foundation courses)	3	10
c. Elective courses prescribed for those students (FNP clinical courses)	5	23
d. Courses freely elected by students	0	0
e. Other (specify)	0	0
TOTAL	12	45

The Family Nurse Practitioner curriculum is designed to be completed in two and one half (2 ½) years of part time study, in keeping with the reality of our students' work and family responsibilities. Based on the Standards of the "The Essentials of Master's Education for Advanced Practice Nursing"(American Association of Colleges of Nursing) and the "Advanced Nursing Practice: Curriculum Guidelines and Program Standards for Nurse Practitioner Education (National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculty), the FNP curriculum requires four core courses, three advanced practice foundation courses, and five FNP clinical practicum courses.

The MSN core courses are:

- NURS 5302 Research Methods/Designs in Nursing
- NURS\*5301 Theoretical Foundations of Nursing Practice
- NURS 5304 Advanced Practice Role
- NURS 5310 Diversity and Social Issues in Health Care

The Advanced Practice Foundation Courses are:

- NURS 5406 Advanced Health Assessment
- NURS 5305 Advanced Pharmacotherapeutics
- NURS 5303 Advanced Pathophysiology

The FNP clinical practicum courses are:

- NURS 5211 Diagnostic Lab Applications
- NURS 5407 FNP I: Wellness and Health Promotion
- NURS 5608 FNP II: Management of Acute and Chronic Illness, Part I
- NURS 5509 FNP III: Management of Acute and Chronic Illness, Part II
- NURS 5612 FNP IV: Integrated Clinical Practice

## Schematic Design of the Curriculum

The diagram below shows the placement of courses during the two and one half years of study. This design takes into consideration the other obligations of students. The second chart shows the number of theory and clinical hours required for each course.

	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>
<b>Year I</b>	Theory Research	Pathophysiology Health Assessment	Pharmacotherapeutics Adv. Practice Role
<b>Year II</b>	FNPI Wellness/Hlth Prom Diversity & Soc. Issues	FNP II Acute/Chronic I Dx Lab Applications	FNP III Acute/Chronic II
<b>Year III</b>	FNP IV Integrated Practicum		

### DIDACTIC AND CLINICAL HOURS AND COURSE PLACEMENT FOR FNP STUDENTS

Courses	Didactic Hours	Clinical Hours	Semester/yr	TOTAL SCH
NURS 5301: Theoretical Foundations for Nursing	3	0	Fall 1	
NURS 5302: Research Methods/Design in Nursing	3	0	Fall 1	
NURS 5303: Advanced Pathophysiology	3	0	Spring 1	
NURS 5406: Advanced Health Assessment	2	2 (90)	Spring 1	
NURS 5304: Advanced Practice Role	3	0	Summer 1	
NURS 5305: Advanced Pharmacotherapeutics	3	0	Summer 1	
NURS 5407: FNP I Wellness and Health Promotion	2	2 (90)	Fall 2	
NURS 5310: Diversity and Social Issues	3	0	Fall 2	
NURS 5608: FNP II Mgmt Acute & Chronic, I	3	3 (135)	Spring 2	
NURS 5211: Diagnostic Lab Application	1	1 (45)	Spring 2	
NURS 5509: FNP III Mgmt Acute & Chronic, II	3	2 (90)	Summer 2	
NURS 5612: FNP IV Integrated Practicum	1	5 (225)	Fall 3	
Total Semester Hours	30	15		45
Total Clock Clinical Hours		675		675

The formula for calculating semester credit hours (SCH) for didactic content is one SCH for every hour of class time each week. Thus a 3 SCH theory course will meet 3 hours each week and 45 hours total in a 15 week semester. The formula for calculating clock hours of clinical practice is three hours per SCH. Thus one semester hour of credit (SCH) for clinical equals 3 clock hours per week and 45 hours per 15 week semester. In the summer the shorter 10 week semester results in an increased number of hours each week. Students are given a 10 minute recess for each hour. There are 30 SCH of didactic instruction and 15 SCH (675 clock hours of clinical practice) in the FNP curriculum.

#### **Credit for Prior Learning (from University catalog)**

In keeping with University policy, six (6) hours of graduate level study with a minimum grade of 3.0(B) on a 4.0 scale may be transferred, with the consent of the MSN Coordinator and the Dean, from other accredited institutions of higher education. The graduate Admission and Progression Committee will evaluate courses for consistency with TAMIU curriculum.

## Course Descriptions

**NURS 5301:** Theoretical Foundations for Advanced Practice Nursing (3 semester hours, theory only)

The focus of this course is on the exploration of selected theories and conceptual frameworks, and their relationship to nursing practice and research. Emphasis is on the utilization of theories and models in nursing as a basis for a practice to provide a caring, comprehensive, and holistic approach to health care within a multicultural society.

**NURS 5302:** Research Methods/Designs in Nursing (3 semester hours, theory only)

This course focuses on the study of a variety of designs and methods of the research process to prepare students to be proficient in the evaluation and utilization of research within the clinical practice setting. Students will have the opportunity to critically examine reported research to determine the utilization of scientific knowledge in order to provide high quality nursing health care, initiate change, and improve patient outcomes. Legal and ethical issues related to research and health care are explored and discussed. The interrelationships of theory, research, and practice that serve as the basis for clinical and organizational decision making are analyzed.

**NURS 5303:** Advanced Pathophysiology (3 semester hours, theory only)

This course is a comprehensive study of underlying concepts common to the major pathophysiologic process of the body. The focus of the course is on the interaction of age, life style, culture, gender differences, and intrinsic and extrinsic environmental factors on the dynamic aspects of physiologic mechanisms altered by disease in the human organism. Emphasis is on the pathophysiological concepts essential for understanding the rationale for preventive and therapeutic treatment/intervention.

**NURS 5304:** Advanced Practice Role (3 semester hours, theory only)

This course explores the advanced practice roles of teacher, change agent, researcher, advocate, clinician, consultant, collaborator and manager of systems. The historical development and acceptance of the nurse practitioner and other advanced practice roles are traced through nursing practice acts, requirements imposed by state nursing boards, national certification efforts, third party payment systems, and various professional organizations. Selected issues such as the scope of practice, political, economic and legislative influences are analyzed.

**NURS 5305:** Advanced Pharmacotherapeutics (3 semester hours, theory only)

This course covers the essentials of clinical pharmacological therapeutics for advanced practice nursing. Drugs of choice and alternatives for selected disease management, illness prevention, and health maintenance will be discussed based on patient/client's age, life style, culture, expected outcomes, protocol utilization, cost, and other health conditions.

**NURS 5406:** Advanced Health Assessment (4 semester hours, 2 theory, 2 clinical)

This course explores the method of collecting a comprehensive data base, including complete functional assessment, health history, and physical examination for patients/clients of all ages and in all phases of individual and family life style. Students will learn key symptom-focused physical exams. Communication of findings maintaining privacy and terseness and meeting legal standards of documentation are emphasized. Students will begin formulating differential diagnoses after interpreting the collected data. The clinical portion offers the opportunity to perform and interpret assessments on patients.

**NURS 5407:** FNP I: Wellness and Health Promotion (4 semester hours, 2 theory, 2 clinical)

This course is designed to develop theoretical and clinical competencies of the FNP in health promotion of individuals and families in diverse populations in a variety of settings. The focus of the course is on concepts and skills of health promotion, disease prevention, and health maintenance. The emphasis is on: 1) developing advanced practice skills in comprehensive assessment and management strategies that reflect current nursing and medical knowledge to improve patient/client outcomes; and 2) evidence-based research and theory in the promotion of health and prevention of disease across the life span, in the context of healthy communities.

**NURS 5608:** FNP II: Management of Acute and Chronic Illness, Part I (6 semester hours, 3 theory, 3 clinical)

This course focuses on clinical management of commonly occurring acute and chronic conditions in primary health care settings. Content includes symptom complexes, pathophysiology, epidemiology, clinical management, and prevention of complications. Emphasis is on symptom analysis, diagnostic reasoning, differential diagnosis, prescription and documentation of therapeutic regimens. Attention is given to research-based pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatments, and integration of nursing, developmental, family and transcultural theories to the diagnostic and management process. The clinical practice provides the opportunity for the student to perform comprehensive and episodic assessments, practice advanced skills in health assessments, diagnose commonly occurring illnesses, and suggest treatments and referrals under supervision.

**NURS 5509:** FNP III: Management of Acute and Chronic Illness, Part II (5 semester hours, 3 theory, 2 clinical)

This course builds on the advanced knowledge and skills acquired in FNP I and II. The focus is on developing advanced practice skills in the management of individuals with acute and chronic disorders of selected body systems. Emphasis is on addressing care of unstable and complex health care problems through synthesis and prioritization of historical and immediately derived data. Students critically evaluate clinical guidelines for prevention as well as treatment, and participate in the delivery of care to individuals and families from varying cultures with an emphasis on the financial aspects of primary care.

**NURS 5310:** Diversity and Social Issues in Health Care (3 semester hours, theory only)

This course focuses on global awareness that is necessary to provide culturally sensitive care. The inclusion of this content helps students to develop an understanding and appreciation of human diversity in health and illness and to assure the delivery of appropriate and individualized health care. Students evaluate and appropriately address social issues that affect health outcomes.

**NURS 5211:** Diagnostic Laboratory (2 semester hours, 1 theory, 1 clinical)

This two credit hour course is composed of theory, diagnostic procedures, invasive treatments and protocols designed for the advanced practice nurse. The student will acquire both noninvasive skills and invasive skills in the clinical management of acute and chronically ill clients.

**NURS 5612:** FNP IV: Integrated Clinical Practicum

This capstone course builds on advanced knowledge and concepts from FNP I, II, III and the practicum for each course. The emphasis is on continued study of assessment and clinical management of selected health problems frequently seen in primary health care. The clinical portion provides for the development of clinical competence as the student integrates previously

acquired knowledge into the enactment of the multiple roles of the nurse practitioner, and allows for a greater degree of interdependent practice based on the student's abilities and progress. The student works with one or more preceptors in multicultural urban and rural communities.

## **FACILITIES**

- ❖ OFFICES AND CLASSROOMS
- ❖ LIBRARY
- ❖ INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
- ❖ COMPUTER FACILITIES AND SERVICES
- ❖ CLINICAL SITES

## OFFICES AND CLASSROOMS

The School of Nursing is located in Canseco Hall (CH), on the East side of the TAMIU campus. The main office of the School of Nursing and that of the Dean are in CH 315 and the Graduate Program coordinator's office is in CH 312. Teaching laboratories, classrooms, and the computer laboratory are located on the first floor of the building.

## KILLAM LIBRARY

The Sue and Radcliffe Killam Library at Texas A&M International University in Laredo is a fully automated library facility constructed in 1995. The library occupies the eastern side of the four-floor Sue and Radcliffe Killam Library building. Book holdings are 197,980 titles in 230,000 volumes. The library subscribes to 1,405 print subscriptions in paper and microfilm, of which 61 relate directly to Nursing and the Biomedical Sciences. The library also has access to over 6,300 additional titles electronically through ProQuest Direct, Science Direct, IDEAL, Academic Universe, TexShare, the Health Reference Center, CINAHL and other databases.

Reference librarian services are available, as well as interlibrary loan services, government documents, and GPS access. Detailed information on library services is available on the university web site (<http://library.tamiu.edu>) or by telephone (956)326-2400. Library hours are generally Monday-Thursday 7:30 am – 10 pm, Friday 7:30 am – 5 pm, Saturday 10 am – 6:30 pm and Sunday 12 pm – 8 pm.

The Killam Library is automated using the Voyager integrated online system for online catalog, circulation, cataloging, acquisitions, and serials. Through the Internet, library patrons can access the online catalogs of other Texas A&M University system libraries for interlibrary loan purposes. The library subscribes to both the OVID and the ProQuest Direct versions of Periodical Abstracts Research II and ABI/Inform. It also provides online access to PsycInfo, First Search, Health Reference Center (full text), Science Direct, IDEAL, Academic Universe's Health and Medicine News and Health and Medicine journals, Medline, PreMedline, the Nursing Research Collections I and II, the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, The Christian Science Monitor, the Washington Post, College Source online, the TexShare Gale databases, ERIC, MLA Bibliography, JSTORE, Books in Print, and Marcive among others. A complete list of databases can be found in the following URL: <http://www.tamiu.edu/library/hot-link.htm>

All databases available through Killam library can be accessed both from any computer on campus and from home if you are affiliated with Texas A&M International University.

In CD ROM, the library subscribes to the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, ERIC, CINAHL, LILACS, the Grolier and Britannica multimedia encyclopedias, and Artemisa. The Texas USMTR/NAFTA Information Center supplies the library with access to their home-grown NAFTA database. The library also has full access to the Internet, and over 450 databases through Knight Ridder's Dialog, which includes 49 databases in the categories of medicine, bioscience, and the health care industry).

## Database Descriptions

The **Health Reference Center** database is produced by IAC and uses the Infotrac search engine. It includes indexing and full text of over 364,824 articles from 1996 - present (last update Oct 6, 2000). Subject coverage includes: Fitness, Pregnancy, Medicine, Nutrition, Diseases, Public Health, Occupational Health & Safety, Alcohol and Drug Abuse, HMO's Prescription Drugs, etc. We access the Health Reference Center through any Internet browser at: <http://web2.infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/session/>.

The **Medline** database is produced by the National Library of Medicine and uses the National Library of Medicine search engine. It includes indexing and abstracts of more than 11 million articles from over 4,000 journals published in the United States and 70 other countries from 1965 - present, plus selected monographs of congresses and symposia. Subject coverage includes: medical and biomedical information, the biological and physical sciences; humanities and information science as they relate to medicine and health care. We access Medline through the Internet at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/>

The **CINAHL database** (Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature) is produced by Cinahl Information Systems and uses the Winspirs search engine. It provides authoritative coverage of the literature related to nursing and allied health disciplines. It includes more than 300,000 records from over 950 English-language journals as well as references to healthcare books, nursing dissertations, selected conference proceedings, standards of professional practice, educational software, nurse practice acts, critical paths, and research instruments. It also includes virtually all publications of the American Nurses' Association and the National League for Nursing. It covers relevant material from Biomedicine, management, behavioral sciences, health science librarianship, education, and consumer health. The library accesses the CINAHL through the Internet at: <http://webspirs3.silverplatter.com/cgi-bin/customers/c122909/c122909.cgi>

The **Nursing Collection I** uses the Ovid search engine, and provides full text access, including all graphics, tables, figures and photographs, to the following 14 nursing journals: Advances in Nursing Science, AJIC (American Journal of Infection Control), AORN Journal, Dermatology Nursing, Heart & Lung, Image Journal of Nursing Scholarship, Journal of Advanced Nursing, Journal of Clinical Nursing, Journal of Emergency Nursing, Nurse Researcher, Nursing & Health Care Perspectives on Community, Nursing Management (RCN Publication), Nursing Standard, and RN. Current coverage 1995 to present. Updated monthly. The Nursing Collection I can be accessed at: <http://www.texshare.edu/ovidweb/ovidweb.cgi?T=dbList&D=nurc&S=PHMKBKJPGEDIKK>

The **Nursing Collection II** also uses the Ovid search engine, and provides full text, including all graphics, tables, figures and photographs, to the following additional 14 nursing journals: AWHONN Lifelines, American Journal of Nursing, Cancer Nursing, Computers in Nursing, JONA Journal of Nursing Administration, JNSD Journal of Nurses in Staff Development, JOGNN Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic, and Neonatal Nursing, Journal of Intravenous Nursing, Lippincott's Primary Care Practice, MCN, the American Journal of

Maternal/Child Nursing, Nurse Educator, Nursing Case Management, Nursing Research, and Outcomes Management for Nursing Practice. Current coverage 1996 to present. Updated monthly. The Nursing Collection I can be accessed at:

<http://www.texshare.edu/ovidweb/ovidweb.cgi?T=dbList&D=nc2&S=PHMKBKJPGEDIKK>

*Lilacs* is a database on CD ROM produced in Brazil by the Latin American and Caribbean Health Sciences Information Center (BIREME). *Lilacs* (Latin American and Caribbean Literature on the Health Sciences) covers literature related to the health sciences and has been published in countries of the Region since 1982. It contains articles from about 670 of the most well-known journals in medicine field, reaching approximately more than 150,000 records and other documents, such as: theses, chapters of theses, books, chapters of books, congress and conference proceedings, technical and scientific reports and governmental publications.

*Artemisa* is a database on CD ROM produced in Mexico by the National Health Information and Documentation Center (CENIDS). It is updated on an annual basis. It contains the full text articles of the 28 most relevant Mexican biomedical journals.

One of the most recent database services added in Killam Library is ScienceDirect, which includes the image and full text of thousands of journals.

## **FEDERAL DEPOSITORY**

Killam Library is also a depository for federal documents and research reports produced by various agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services, including but not limited to.

Aging Administration  
Public Health Service  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
National Institutes of Health  
National Cancer Institute  
Center for Disease Control  
Health Care and Financial Administration  
Food and Drug Administration  
Radiological Health Bureau  
National Conference for Health Statistics  
Health Care Policy and Research Agency  
National Clearinghouse on Aging  
National Library of Medicine

## **AHEC Circuit Librarian**

An agreement under the South Texas Initiative links the Killam Library with the “circuit librarian” of the Dolph Briscoe Jr. Library at the University of Texas Health Science Center at

San Antonio. Because the College of Nursing and Health Sciences is the only health science component at TAMIU, the university library cannot be expected to fulfill all the specific, highly specialized needs the faculty and students will have as educational offerings and research and scholarship endeavors expand. This link between the Killam and Briscoe libraries facilitates rapid access to vital health-related information. Outreach Librarians, Linda Levy and Julie Gaines; provide personal targeted retrieval services within office hours. On the following pages are forms to assist in ordering materials. For more information call 1-800-421-2432.

**UTHSCSA/AHEC LIBRARY SERVICES**  
INFORMATION SEARCH REQUEST  
FAX: (210) 567-2463, (210) 567-2473  
PHONE: (800) 421-2432

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Search requested by \_\_\_\_\_  
Institution Texas A&M International University Canseco School of Nursing (Killam Library)

This search is needed for the following:

- \_\_\_\_\_ patient care rush (priority for immediate action; same day delivery if possible)
- \_\_\_\_\_ administrative rush (fax delivery within 24 hours)
- \_\_\_\_\_ class assignment
- \_\_\_\_\_ regular (any information not time sensitive; search usually completed within 24 hours)

Return completed search by

\_\_\_\_\_ fax; fax number \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ mail; address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Search topic** (please state your topic in a sentence or two. It is especially important to let us know the relationships between the subjects. For example, I need articles about adverse effects of the use of \_\_\_\_\_ to treat \_\_\_\_\_. This helps us to provide a search that will meet your specific needs.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
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**Special instructions** \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENT DELIVERY  
REQUEST

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TELEPHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX#: \_\_\_\_\_  
 INSTITUTION: \_\_\_\_\_ OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_  
 DEPARTMENT or address: \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b><u>JOURNAL ARTICLE:</u></b>          UI# or AN# _____          JOURNAL TITLE _____          ARTICLE AUTHOR(s) _____          ARTICLE TITLE _____            YEAR ___ VOLUME ___ ISSUE(____)PAGES ___</p>	<p><b><u>JOURNAL ARTICLE:</u></b>          UI# or AN# _____          JOURNAL TITLE _____          ARTICLE AUTHOR(s) _____          ARTICLE TITLE _____            YEAR ___ VOLUME ___ ISSUE(____)PAGES ___</p>
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O PATIENT CARE RUSH O ADMINISTRATIVE RUSH O CLASS ASSIGNMENT O  
 ROUTINE

TEL: 1-800-421-2432  
 FAX: 1-210-567-2473  
 FAX: 1-210-567-3031

## **THE INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE INSTITUTE**

The International Language Institute (ILI) offers intensive language instruction in English and Spanish as a foreign language. This program is designed to meet the needs of individuals interested in preparing for social/professional growth in either language or for those preparing for academic course work in the United States. The ILI offers six intensive levels of English as a Second Language (ESL). These courses are given in intensive format (2 months) or the semi-intensive format (4 months). Each course consists of a TOEFL Preparation Course to prepare students for either the International or Institutional TOEFL. The Michigan Placement Test is used to evaluate student level.

## **COMPUTER FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

The School of Nursing has adequate and up-to-date computer hardware and software resources. All faculty offices have a computer and printer, with direct on-line access to the Internet and a variety of computer based services, both within the School of Nursing and the University. School of Nursing faculty can access Killam Library services from their offices, including CINAHL (the online Cumulative Index of Nursing and Allied Health) and are directly connected with the rest of the University's 400 staff and faculty computers through e-mail.

The School of Nursing computer laboratory is available Monday-Friday during business hours. Evening and weekend hours are posted each semester, depending on staff availability and student needs. Information is available on hours or specific requests from the School of Nursing office at 326-2450.

There are over 300 student computers on campus, in eight computer laboratories in four buildings, giving a student: computer ratio of 10:1. Computers are available to students 90 hours a week over all seven days. In the Canseco School of Nursing there is a computer laboratory with 30 computers. In addition, an adjacent room presently designated for group study is designed for future expansion of computer laboratory facilities in the Canseco School of Nursing. The Computer Laboratory of the Canseco School of Nursing is used for a variety of computer-assisted tutorials as well as giving students access to the Internet, e-mail and word-processing for the preparation of reports and projects. All computers are networked through fiberoptics building-to-building and floor-to-floor. All students can have e-mail accounts and over half of the 3,000 students at Texas A&M International actually do have e-mail accounts.

The Canseco School of Nursing has access to telecommunications links to the School of Nursing of the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and to the Texas A&M University System. These resources increase student and faculty opportunities for collaboration and enrichment.

Support staff for computer education, troubleshooting and repairs is available within the Canseco School of Nursing and from the University. All staff is knowledgeable about computer utilization, with varying levels of expertise. Specialized knowledge and skills are available from the University Office of Computer and Telecommunications Services. Director Leebrian Gaskins is assisted by 14 part-time and 24 full-time personnel who provide a variety of microcomputer and network services, student computer lab services and audiovisual services, including assistance with videoconferencing.

## Clinical Sites

The table that follows illustrates a variety of community sites in which FNP students and faculty will assist in meeting the health care needs in this underserved area.

<b>Current Clinical Sites</b>	
<b>Inpatient Facilities</b>	<b>Community-Based Settings</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Hospitals</i></p> <p>Laredo Medical Center (LMC) Doctors Hospital (DH) Laredo Specialty Hospital</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Long Term Care Facilities</i></p> <p>Border Region MHMR Regent Care Center Retama Manor West</p>	<p>Bethany House Border Region MHMR Outreach City of Laredo Employee Health City of Laredo Health Department Gateway Community Health Center Laredo Health Coalition Laredo Independent School District LMC &amp; DH Ambulatory Centers Mercy Ministries Private physicians clinics/offices Texas Department of Health United Independent School District</p>

In addition, the CSON has developed partnerships with community organizations and individuals to work directly with a number of underserved communities in Laredo, Webb County, Jim Hogg County, and Zapata County, including inner city neighborhoods, rural towns, colonias, and unincorporated rural population centers. Several times a year, a loosely organized group of providers and organizations provide health services in one or the other of the undeserved or inaccessible communities. In addition, students and faculty in the Community Health Nursing course have linkages with more than nine different communities in Laredo and the surrounding rural areas. As a result of their detailed community assessments, it is clear that a top priority for residents in these communities (some as far as 50 miles from Laredo) is access to appropriate health care services and educational opportunities. One aim of the CSON and the MSN FNP program in particular is to establish a nurse-managed clinic in one or more of these outlying, rural and underserved areas. A grant proposal was submitted to HRSA in December 2003 to support such a clinic. The proposal was approved but not funded in this cycle.

### Preceptors and Sites Used by Family Nurse Practitioner Students

Preceptors appropriate for use in all clinical experiences include: Family physicians, family nurse practitioners in primary care and internists providing primary care.

Pediatricians, family nurse practitioners working with pediatricians and nurse practitioners/nurse midwives working in women's health care would be appropriate preceptors beyond NURS 5406 Advanced Health Assessment. Before that time it would be too specialized for the beginner. There would not be a broad enough experience for Advanced Health Assessment.

The bulk of the clinical experience will be with adults. Generally if students have a minimum of 75 hours with pediatric patients and 75 hours with women's health including working with pregnant women over NURS 5608 Management of Acute and Chronic Illness, Part I; NURS

5509 Management of Acute and Chronic Illness, Part II; NURS 5612 Integrated Clinical Practice, that will be enough exposure to apply the theoretical content to prepare for the certification exam.

In the first clinical course, NURS 5406 Advanced Health Assessment, the student tries to become comfortable working with the preceptor while assessing patients and presenting findings to the preceptor. Clinical faculty discuss strategies to present themselves to the preceptor to reassure them they won't slow them down. Clinical evaluation focuses on the taped history and physical to note what techniques need correcting.

By the second course NURS 5407 Wellness and Health Promotion the student reviews risk factors with patients and suggests primary and secondary preventive strategies. At this time, the clinical faculty makes two site visits and is present in the room while the student interacts with the patient. The faculty member may also ask the patient a few questions to demonstrate useful historical techniques to the student. The faculty is present while the student presents findings and teaching done with the preceptor. Student performance and the interaction between preceptor and student show the faculty whether this is a good site for the student by judging whether the student is thriving and trusted or not? Does the preceptor offer clinical pearls to the student? It helps to match challenging preceptors with students who don't mind the stress.

In general in the beginning courses, students should stay with one preceptor to get an idea of that preceptor's style. Then when the student has gained confidence they can tolerate using more than one preceptor in a course.

## **STUDENT LIFE**

- ❖ RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
- ❖ ACADEMIC HONESTY
- ❖ STUDENT HEALTH
- ❖ TPAPN
- ❖ CONFIDENTIALITY
- ❖ STUDENT FACULTY COMMUNICATION
- ❖ FINANCIAL AID OPPORTUNITIES

## **STUDENT RIGHTS**

1. Students should be encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and engage in a sustained and independent search for truth.
2. The freedom to teach and the freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom: students should exercise their freedom with responsibility.
3. Each institution has a duty to develop policies and procedures which provide and safeguard the student's freedom to learn.
4. Under no circumstances should a student be barred from admission to a particular institution on the basis of race, creed, sex, or marital status.
5. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.
6. Students should have protection through orderly procedures against prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation, but they are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled.
7. Information about student views, beliefs, and political associations which instructors acquired in the course of their work should be considered confidential and not released without the knowledge or consent of the student.
8. The student should have the right to have a responsible voice in the determination of the curriculum.
9. Institutions should have a carefully considered policy as to the information which should be a part of a student's permanent educational record and as to the conditions of this disclosure.
10. Students and student organizations should be free to examine and discuss all questions of interest to them, and to express opinions publicly and privately.
11. Students should be allowed to invite and to hear any person of their own choosing, thereby taking the responsibility of furthering their education.
12. The student body should have clearly defined means to participate in the formulation and application of institutional policy affecting academic and student affairs.
13. The institution has an obligation to clarify those standards of behavior which it considers essential to its educational mission and its community life.
14. Disciplinary proceedings should be instituted only for violations of standards of conduct formulated with significant student participation and published in advance through such means as a student handbook or a generally available body of institutional regulations. It is the responsibility of the student to know these regulations. Grievance procedures should be available for every student.
15. As citizens and members of an academic community, students are subject to the obligations which accrue them by virtue of this membership and should enjoy the same freedoms of citizenship.
16. Students have the right to belong or refuse to belong to any organization of their choice.
17. Students have the right to personal privacy in their living space to the extent that the welfare of others is respected.
18. Adequate safety precautions should be provided by schools of nursing, for example, to and from student dorms, adequate street lighting, locks, etc.
19. Dress code, if present in school, should be established by student government in conjunction with the school director and faculty, so the highest professional standards possible are maintained, but also taking into consideration points of comfort and practicality for the student.
20. Grading systems should be carefully reviewed periodically with students and faculty for clarification and better student-faculty understanding.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**<sup>1</sup>

Students should assume responsibility for:

1. Representative participation in curriculum development by:
  - attending all scheduled meetings
  - preparing ideas, comments, reactions, and suggestions
  - sharing ideas, comments, reactions, and suggestions
  - polling students for their views, comments, reactions, and suggestions
  - formulating mechanisms to increase input
  - following through with assignments regarding curricular activities
  - developing jointly with faculty policies for grading, promotion, and retention
  
2. Participation in curriculum implementation by:
  - attending classes
  - following through with class and laboratory assignments
  - preparing in advance of scheduled classes and laboratory sessions
  - maximizing all learning opportunities
  - resisting a focus limited to minimal achievement
  - sharing learning experiences with peers
  - striving constantly to broaden their general education base
  - transferring previous learning
  - fostering effective relationships with members of the interdisciplinary health team
  - abiding by the established policies and procedures
  - assuming responsibility for their own learning experiences
  - seeking out new and different learning experiences
  - finding opportunities for decision making, independent judgment, and self-direction
  - operationalizing the philosophy and conceptual frameworks
  - contributing to research and scholarly activities.
  - preparing one's own projects, papers, thesis, dissertation, and other assignments
  - maximizing learning through independent study
  
3. Participation in the evaluation of the curriculum by:
  - appraising self in relation to stated course, level, and end-of-program behavioral expectations
  - appraising faculty in relation to their facilitation of the meeting of stated course, level and program goals

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<sup>1</sup>Adopted from the NLN publication by Dorothy Ozimek and Helen Yura. Students Have Responsibilities as Well as Rights

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

The highest standards of academic honesty are expected of the student. Wilson (1985) succinctly described plagiarism in Research in Nursing:

Plagiarism and paraphrasing. Plagiarism means to steal and pass off the work of another as one's own. It usually results from bad paraphrasing or improper referencing. Both paraphrasing that merely substitutes a few word changes for those of the original author and forgetting to use quotation marks and a reference citation are technically considered plagiarism, even if you somehow hypnotize yourself into thinking that those really were your own words to express your own ideas. The only safe way to paraphrase is to read the original over several times and then write your conception of what you've read without looking at the original. In other words, when paraphrasing, keep the source book closed. (p.523)

### I. STUDENT HEALTH

#### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Application to the Canseco School of Nursing includes evidence of current rubella and TD immunization, PPD or chest X ray, Hepatitis B vaccines or signed informed refusal, and physical exam certifying good health/no restrictions.

#### OSHA REQUIREMENTS

An employee should:

- < Read the OSHA poster at the jobsite.
- < Comply with all applicable OSHA standards.
- < Follow all employer safety and health regulations, and wear or use prescribed protective equipment while working.
- < Report hazardous conditions to the supervisor.
- < Report any job-related injury or illness to the employer, and seek treatment promptly.
- < Cooperate with the OSHA compliance officer conducting an inspection if he or she inquires about safety and health conditions in the workplace.
- < Exercise rights under the Act in a responsible manner.

#### DRUG, ALCOHOL, TOBACCO & FIREARM POLICIES

Refer to Texas A&M International University's Student Handbook.

#### NURSING STUDENT CHEMICAL ABUSE OR DEPENDENCY POLICY

Pursuant to the "Nursing Practice Act," any Registered Nurse associated with Texas A&M International University, either as an employee or a student in the Canseco School of Nursing, who has reasonable cause to suspect that the ability of any professional nurse to perform the services of the nursing profession may be expected to be impaired by chemical abuse or dependency must follow the procedures outlined for "Incident Based Peer Review", below.

## TPAPN

The purpose of TPAPN is to identify and assist Licensed Vocational Nurses and Registered Nurses of Texas whose ability to provide nursing services has been impaired by chemical dependency or mental illness so that they can return to competent practice and be a useful member of the profession. Emphasis of the program is on education, advocacy, and opportunity as opposed to punitive action against the nurse. All aspects of the program are conducted with compassion, dignity, and confidentiality.

TPAPN helps provide referral, support, and monitoring services to nurses whose ability to practice nursing has been impaired by chemical dependency or mental illness. TPAPN also assists the employers of such nurses. For additional information, contact the office of the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences or call TPAPN at 1-800-288-5528.

### **217.19 Incident-Based Nursing Peer Review**

#### (a) Minimum Due Process

(1) The provisions of this subsection (a) apply:

(A) to peer review for both registered nurses (RNs) and licensed vocational nurses (LVNs). Any reference to “nurse” is a reference to both RNs and LVNs. See Texas Occupations Code §303.001(1-3).

(B) only to peer review conducted for purpose of evaluating if a RN or LVN has engaged in unacceptable nursing practice.

(2) Texas Occupations Code §303.001(5), states, “ ‘Peer review’ means the evaluation of a nurse, the qualifications of a nurse, the quality of patient care rendered by a nurse, the merits of a complaint concerning a nurse or recommendation regarding a complaint”. The peer review process is one of fact finding, analysis and study of events by nurses in a climate of collegial problem solving focused on obtaining all relevant information about an event. Once a decision is made that a nurse is subject to peer review, Texas Occupations Code §303.002(e) provides that the nurse is entitled to minimum due process. The purpose of this rule is to define minimum due process, to provide guidance to facilities in developing peer review plans, to assure that nurses have knowledge of the plan, and to provide guidance to the peer review committee in its fact finding process.

(3) A facility conducting peer review shall have written policies and procedures that, at a minimum, address:

(A) level of participation of nurse or nurse’s representative at peer review proceeding beyond that required by Subsection (a)(4)(F) of these rules (e.g., nurse’s or representative’s ability to question witnesses);

(B) confidentiality and safeguards to prevent impermissible disclosures including written agreement by all parties to abide by Texas Occupations Code §§303.006 and 303.007;

(C) handling of cases involving nurses suspected of having problems with chemical dependency or mental illness in accordance with the Texas Occupations Code §301.410;

(D) reporting of nurses to Board of Nursing by peer review committee in accordance with the Texas Occupations Code §301.403; and

(E) effective date of changes to the policies which in no event shall apply to peer review proceedings initiated before the change was adopted unless agreed in writing by the nurse being reviewed.

(4) In order to meet the minimum due process required by the Texas Occupations Code chapter 303, the Nursing Peer Review Committee must:

(A) comply with the membership and voting requirements as set forth in Texas Occupations Code §303.003(a) - (d);

(B) exclude from the committee any person or persons with administrative authority for personnel decisions directly relating to the nurse;

(C) provide written notice to the nurse in person or by certified mail at the last known address the nurse has on file with the facility that his/her practice is being evaluated, that the peer review committee will meet on a specified date not sooner than 21 calendar days and not more than 45 calendar days from date of notice, unless otherwise agreed upon by the nurse and peer review committee. Said notice must include a written copy of the peer review plan, policies and procedures;

(D) include in the written notice:

(i) a description of the event(s) to be evaluated in sufficient detail to inform the nurse of the incident, circumstances and conduct (error or omission), including date(s), time(s), location(s), and individual(s) involved. The patient/client shall be identified by initials or number to the extent possible to protect confidentiality but the nurse shall be provided the name of the patient/client;

(ii) name, address, telephone number of contact person to receive the nurse's response; and

(iii) a copy of this rule (217.19) and a copy of the facility's peer review plan, policies and procedures.

(E) provide the nurse the opportunity to review, in person or by attorney, the documents concerning the event under review, at least 15 calendar days prior to appearing before the committee;

(F) provide the nurse the opportunity to:

(i) submit a written statement regarding the event under review;

(ii) call witnesses, question witnesses, and be present when testimony or evidence is being presented;

(iii) be provided copies of the witness list and written testimony or evidence at least 48 hours in advance of proceeding;

(iv) make an opening statement to the committee;

(v) ask questions of the committee and respond to questions of the committee; and

(vi) make a closing statement to the committee after all evidence is presented;

(G) conclude its review no more than fourteen (14) calendar days from the peer review proceeding;

(H) provide written notice to the nurse in person or by certified mail at the last known address the nurse has on file with the facility of the findings of the committee within ten (10) calendar days of when the committee's review has been completed; and

(I) permit the nurse to file a written rebuttal statement within ten (10) calendar days of the notice of the committee's findings and make the statement a permanent part of the peer review record to be included whenever the committee's findings are disclosed.

(5) Nurse's Right To Representation. A nurse shall have a right of representation as set out in this section. The rights set out in this section are minimum requirements and a facility may allow the nurse more representation. The peer review process is not a legal proceeding; therefore, rules governing legal proceedings and admissibility of evidence do not apply and the presence of attorneys is not required. The nurse has the right to be accompanied to the hearing by a nurse peer or an attorney. Representatives attending the peer review hearing must comply with the facility's peer review policies and procedures regarding participation beyond conferring with the nurse. If either the facility or nurse will have an attorney or representative present at the peer review hearing in any capacity, the facility or nurse must notify the other at least seven (7) calendar days before the hearing that they will have an attorney or representative attending the hearing and in what capacity. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these rules, if an attorney representing the facility or peer review committee is present at the peer review hearing in any capacity, including serving as a member of the peer review committee, the nurse is entitled to "parity of participation of counsel." "Parity of participation of counsel" means "that the nurse's attorney is able to participate to the same extent and level as the facility's attorney; e.g., if the facility's attorney can question witnesses, the nurse's attorney must have the same right.

(6) Confidentiality of information presented to and/or considered by the peer review committee shall be maintained and not disclosed except as provided by Texas Occupations Code §§303.006 and 303.007. Disclosure/discussion by a nurse with the

nurse's attorney is proper because the attorney is bound to the same confidentiality requirements as the nurse.

(7) In evaluating a nurse's conduct, the committee shall review the evidence to determine the extent to which any deficiency in care by the nurse was the result of deficiencies in the nurse's judgment, knowledge, training, or skill rather than other factors beyond the nurse's control. A determination that a deficiency in care is attributable to a nurse must be based on the extent to which the nurse's conduct was the result of a deficiency in the nurse's judgment, knowledge, training, or skill.

(8) If a peer review committee finds that a nurse has engaged in conduct reportable to the Board of Nursing, the committee's report shall include:

(A) a description of any corrective action taken against the nurse and

(B) a statement as to whether the committee recommends that formal disciplinary action be taken against the nurse.

(9) Texas Occupations Code chapter 303 requires that peer review be conducted in good faith. A nurse who knowingly participates in peer review in bad faith is subject to disciplinary action by the Board under the Texas Occupations Code §301.452(b). Examples of bad faith are taking action against a nurse without providing the nurse the rights provided by these rules or taking action based on personal animosity towards the nurse.

(10) A nurse whose practice is being evaluated may properly choose not to participate in the proceeding after the nurse has been notified under Rule 217.19(a) (4) (C). Texas Occupations Code §303.002(d) prohibits nullifying by contract any right a nurse has under the peer review process.

(11) The Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) of a facility is responsible for knowing the requirements of this Rule and for taking reasonable steps to assure that peer review is implemented and conducted in compliance with this Rule. The CNO is the registered nurse who is administratively responsible for nursing services.

(b) Effect of RN Reporting to Peer Review Committee. If a nurse reports a nurse to a nursing peer review committee for conduct that the nurse has a duty to report to the Board, the report to the committee will satisfy the nurse's duty to report to the Board provided that the following conditions are met:

(1) The peer review committee shall report the nurse to the Board, if it finds the nurse engaged in reportable conduct. If the peer review committee finds that the conduct constitutes a minor incident as defined by rule 217.16 (relating to reporting of minor incidents), it shall report in accordance with the requirements of that rule;

(2) The reporting nurse shall be notified of the peer review committee's findings and shall be subject to Texas Occupations Code §303.006; and

(3) the reporting nurse accepts in good faith the findings of the peer review committee.

(Source: BNE website, July 2007)

REPORT FORM- REPORTING RN/LVN/ NURSING STUDENT TO PEER REVIEW COMMITTEE

1. Nurse Being Reported (Please provide the following information about the Nurse being reported.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
RN \_\_\_\_\_ LVN \_\_\_\_\_ Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Incident Being Reported (Describe briefly. Do not use patient's name. Please indicate dates. If more space is needed, use additional sheets.)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
Summary: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Witness (Identify other persons who have information about the incident/conduct.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Minor Incident

Do you consider the incident to be minor? If so, why?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Chemical Dependency or Mental Illness

Do you suspect the nurse's behavior is related to chemical dependency or mental illness?

Dependency \_\_\_\_\_ Mental Illness \_\_\_\_\_ Neither \_\_\_\_\_

6. Report to BNE/BVNE (Optional: It is not required that this section be completed.)

Have you ever reported the incident to the BNE/BVNE? No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Person Making Report (Provide the following information about yourself.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
RN \_\_\_\_\_ LVN \_\_\_\_\_ Lic. # \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

TNA, 1995

## **Confidentiality**

Nurses must know a great deal about their patients in order to plan comprehensive care. The student role requires that some of this information be shared with faculty and other students. Students and faculty share the burden of carefully protecting the privacy of all persons concerned. Please do not identify clients by name in any written work and do not discuss any client information outside of the assigned seminar or class times.

## **STUDENT-FACULTY COMMUNICATION**

### **1. Advisement**

Academic advisement for graduate nursing students enrolled at Texas A&M International University is provided by the graduate nursing advisor. The role of the advisor is to assist students in: (1) planning their course of study, (2) selecting courses congruent with the nursing degree plan and career goals, and (3) utilizing existing University facilities, such as financial aid services.

Students should meet with their advisor prior to or during each registration period. The purpose of this meeting is to inform the student of current offerings and requirements in the graduate nursing program and review the advisee's progress in the degree plan. Each student is responsible for awareness and successful completion of all the degree requirements. In addition, the student is responsible for:

1. Making initial contact with academic advisor
2. Contacting academic advisor for degree planning
3. Contacting academic advisor for pre-registration appointment each term.

The Dean will review course inventories with the registrar one semester before graduation, but students should keep a record of their own progress toward meeting graduation requirements.

### **2. Student Records**

Students' records are maintained in the School of Nursing office. The Open Record Policy is followed whereby students can review their own records within the respective office, but cannot take the record outside the office. All nursing students are responsible for keeping the Registrar's Office and the School of Nursing office informed of any change in name, address, or phone number. In addition, students must provide evidence to the School of Nursing of current nursing licensure (if appropriate), biannual successful BLS Completion, and selected immunizations. These are recorded in the student's file. Such verification has to be made prior to clinical experiences each year.

### **3. Student Participation on Faculty Committees**

Student representatives attend and participate in General Faculty, Curriculum and Admission/Progression committee meetings.

#### **4. Bulletin Boards**

Two bulletin boards are maintained in the Nursing Resources Center for student faculty communications related to classroom and clinical assignments, projects, deadlines, etc. Please stop by and check the boards for relevant information.

In addition, hallway bulletin boards offer information on programs, activities, employment opportunities and current events of interest to nurses and other health care providers.

#### **FINANCIAL AID OPPORTUNITIES**

Refer to the Texas A&M International University's Student Handbook. In addition, students should ask advisor about any special financial aid opportunities, which may be available to nursing students. Students may also find many additional opportunities through the Internet.

## **PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

### **❖ CANSECO SCHOOL OF NURSING**

- ADMISSION
- PROGRESSION
- PROBATION/DISMISSAL/READMISSION
- GRADUATION

### **❖ UNIVERSITY GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

The purpose of the Master of Science in Nursing degree program is to produce culturally competent nursing leaders who are prepared with role specialization as a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP). The curriculum is designed to prepare nurses for an increasingly active role in evidence based practice to improve patient/client care outcomes by translating research into practice. Graduates of the program will be eligible to take national certification examinations in their specialty.

## CURRICULUM

The curriculum includes coursework required by the Texas Board of Nursing (BON) to be qualified as an Advanced Practice Nurse (APN). The Texas Board of Nursing (BON) defines APNs as:

"registered nurses who hold authorization from the board to practice as advanced practice nurses based on completing an advanced educational program acceptable to the Board. The term includes a nurse practitioner, nurse-midwife, nurse anesthetist, and a clinical nurse specialist. The advanced practice nurse is prepared to practice in an expanded role to provide health care to individuals, families, and/or groups in a variety of settings including but not limited to homes, hospitals, institutions, offices, industry, schools, community agencies, public and private clinics, and private practice. The advanced practice nurse acts independently and/or in collaboration with other health care professionals in the delivery of health care services." (<http://www.bne.state.tx.us/default.htm>)

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

See Academic Regulations-Graduate Degrees for Specific TAMU regulations.

To be admitted to the School of Nursing, applicants must submit an application for Graduate Studies to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. A complete application includes:

1. A valid RN license without restrictions in the State of Texas
2. A minimum of one year of work experience as a Registered Nurse
3. A baccalaureate nursing degree from a nationally discipline accredited college or university
4. Successful completion of an undergraduate statistics course
5. A minimum grade point average of 3.0 or better (on a 4.0 scale) for all college work and a 3.0 in all upper division courses
6. A personal interview with a faculty member
7. Three academic and professional references indicating achievement and motivation for graduate study. At least one reference should be from a faculty member who taught in the applicant's baccalaureate degree.
8. Special conditions:
  - a. In addition to the above, applicants to the Post-Masters certificate option must have a Master of Science in Nursing from a nationally discipline accredited college or university.

- b. Degree-seeking students who are Registered Nurses with baccalaureate degrees in disciplines other than nursing and who meet all other requirements for admission into the MSN degree program are required to enroll in 27 hours of undergraduate nursing coursework, designated as follows: NURS 3314, NURS 3315, NURS 4375, NURS 4440, NURS 4470, NURS 4463 and NURS 4622.
  - c. Graduates of baccalaureate level foreign nursing schools may be eligible to enroll in collaborative MSN degree programs between TAMIU and collaborating schools of nursing in Mexico and Latin America.
9. Criminal and Drug Screening Waiver Agreement read, signed and notarized.

Provisional Admission Requirements: If the requirements for full admission are not met, provisional admission may be available. The Admissions Committee of the School of Nursing will review any application for provisional admission.

Post-Master's Certificate and Special Student Enrollment: Based on certain circumstances, it may be appropriate for an individual to enroll for coursework in Master of Science in Nursing courses as a special non-degree seeking student. Enrollment would be limited to selected courses and would not grant the student admission to the degree program. Students with Master's Degrees in advanced practice nursing may enroll as special students in the Nurse Practitioner's Post Master's option, depending on review of credentials and space available.

## **PROGRESSION POLICIES**

### **Grading Policy**

The Graduate Program of Canseco School of Nursing has adopted a grading scale in line with other Texas Schools of Nursing.

- A –90-100
- B –81-89
- C – 75 –80
- F -- 74 and below

Graduate nursing students must achieve a grade of B or better in order to remain in good academic standing. In addition, students must pass both clinical and theory components of a course in order to pass that course. In keeping with university policy, a student may receive no more than two Cs.

Clinical evaluation is covered in depth in the Preceptor Handbook. Both preceptors and faculty will evaluate student clinical performance. Clinical evaluation tools specify the behaviors that must be demonstrated to meet the clinical objectives of each course. Satisfactory clinical performance requires a score of 3 or better on all critical elements and a score of 2 or better on all other elements of grading.

## **Examination Policy and Guidelines**

The following examination policy and guidelines are in addition to the policies in the current catalog.

Examinations and/or Quizzes:

1. All personal belongings are to be placed under the desk or in a designated area.
2. A #2 lead pencil and Scantron (if appropriate) will be required. Scratch paper will be provided.
3. Faculty will determine what additional aids may be used during the examination and/or quiz.
4. Exams and/or Quizzes will be proctored.
5. Students who need to leave the examination area will be required to leave the exam/quiz, Scantron, etc. with the proctor.
6. At the conclusion of the examination period, the examination booklet, Scantron, etc. will be collected by the proctor.
7. Students found obtaining information from sources other than what has been allowed by the proctor will be given a ZERO (0) for that Exam/Quiz.
8. Review of exams and/or quizzes will be announced and written in the syllabus.
9. Exam and/or Quiz item answers may be challenged in writing delineating rationale for challenge following the review of the Exam and/or Quiz.
10. Exam and/or Quiz challenges will be accepted on the day of exam or at exam review.
11. An Exam and/or Quiz challenge item determined to be accurate will be adjusted for that exam and/or Quiz.
12. Exams and/or Quiz grades may be posted by permission of student and at the discretion of the instructor.
13. Make-up exam/quizzes are not routinely given, and are at the discretion of the instructor.
14. No Exam grade will be dropped in determining the final grade.
15. Pop quizzes may be given at the discretion of the course instructor(s).
16. A ZERO (0) will be awarded to any student who is absent at the time a Quiz is administered.

## **Grievance**

It is expected that faculty and students will fulfill their obligations to the instructional process. If, however, a complaint does arise, the parties should meet in an effort to resolve the matter. Students are encouraged to discuss problems using the following chain of communication for resolution, before resorting to the official appeals process.

- (1) Clinical instructor (where appropriate)
- (2) Course Manager
- (3) Advisor
- (4) Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences

If the problem cannot be resolved by this procedure, the Dean should be contacted. If this contact fails to satisfy the complaint, the University's published grievance procedures should be followed. (See also TAMIU's Student Handbook)

### **Add, Drop, Withdraw, and Incomplete**

The School of Nursing follows the general policies of Texas A&M International University as outlined in the catalog with respect to add, drop, withdraw and incomplete. In addition the following policies apply to Nursing Courses:

1. The faculty of the School of Nursing supports the idea that the use of an "I" or "W" to hide unsuccessful performance is inappropriate.
2. After the 10th week or 2/3 of class both the course faculty and the Dean must approve the withdrawal. Adds or drops must be signed by School of Nursing faculty.
3. All students must maintain a satisfactory 3.00 grade point average:
4. Students must achieve a grade point average of 3.00 or better in each nursing.
5. A student receiving an "F" grade in either the theory or the clinical portion of any nursing course will fail the course.
6. Under certain circumstances, students may receive an "I" (incomplete) in a course, in keeping with TAMIU policy. The student and course faculty will contract for completion of course requirements.
7. Students who are unable to maintain active continuous enrollment at TAMIU School of Nursing must apply for a Leave of Absence from the School in order to remain in good standing. Such students will be permitted to reenter the School of Nursing on a space available basis and will be given priority for available space.

### **PROBATION/ DISMISSAL/ READMISSION**

Probationary status is a warning to a student to improve his/her academic performance in order to remain in the program.

1. A student is placed on probation if she/he does not maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00. The final grade report will carry official notice of academic probation.
2. A GPA must be returned to minimum of 3.00 to remove probationary status.

3. Students who fail to attain a 3.00 cumulative grade point average for two full-time consecutive semesters will be suspended from the School of Nursing.
4. Students may also be dismissed from graduate studies for any of the following reasons:
  - a. Academic misconduct such as any act of dishonesty involving academic work.
  - b. Unsafe clinical practice.
  - c. Falsification of credentials.
  - d. Conduct unbecoming to a student as described in the University Student Conduct Code.
5. Academic suspensions and dismissals are nonreversible. However, a student may appeal the course grade which resulted in suspension or dismissal within one semester of the award of the grade. (See grievance procedure)

### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

The School of Nursing adheres to all general requirements and procedures of the University for Graduation. For deadlines and requirements, see TAMIU catalog.

## **UNIVERSITY GRADUATE PROGRAMS** (from University catalog—check website for updates)

### **ACADEMIC REGULATIONS - GRADUATE**

The aim of graduate academic work at Texas A&M International University is to provide an opportunity for further study in chosen fields. Such study should lead to greater breadth, but especially to greater depth of knowledge in the field selected. Emphasis is placed on (1) how to find knowledge, (2) how to evaluate it, (3) how to organize it, and (4) how to apply it.

### **GRADUATE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

A person who has earned a baccalaureate degree and is earning university credit hours is considered a graduate student.

**IMPORTANT:** Students must visit the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for program admission information/requirements on graduate programs.

The Office of Admissions receives, processes and forwards the application and any additional documentation to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. The Office of Graduate Studies and Research coordinates the evaluation of the application by the college or department Graduate Admissions Committee and informs the applicant of the program admission decision.

To be admitted to the University as a Graduate or Post-Graduate Student, an applicant must submit the following information to the Office of Admissions: (For additional requirements see Graduate Admission Requirements under Student Services and in each College).

1. **Application for Graduate Admission.**
2. **Graduate Application Fee of \$25.00; late fee, \$10.00.** (Refer to Admissions Deadlines section)
3. **Official college/university transcript(s)**, from institutions other than Texas A&M International University, must be sent directly from each institution attended. Degree must be posted on transcript. The degree must be from a college or university of recognized standing with degrees from institutions outside the US evaluated for equivalence to US degrees.
4. The **Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT)** scores are required only if pursuing a degree with the exception of COED that requires GRE scores for all graduate work that will lead to a degree. Official test scores must be sent directly from Educational Testing Service (ETS) and be dated within five years of enrollment. No admission decision will be made prior to the receipt of an official GRE or GMAT score.
  - The **College of Arts and Sciences** requires the GRE from all applicants, except for Spanish majors who are required to take an additional departmentally administered examination.
  - The **College of Business Administration** requires the GRE or GMAT from all applicants. Students pursuing the MBA taught in Spanish may choose to take the *Examen de Admisión*. No admission decision will be made prior to the receipt of an official GMAT, GRE, or *Examen de Admisión* scores.
  - The **College of Education** requires the GRE from all applicants pursuing a degree.
  - The **College of Nursing and Health Sciences** requires the GRE from all applicants.
5. The **Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)** is required of all students having academic studies from a country where English is not the native language.

A minimum TOEFL score of 213 (Computer-based) or 550 (Paper-based) is required.

For Ph.D. in International Business Administration applicants, a minimum TOEFL score of 100 (ibt TOEFL) or 600 (paper-based) or 150 (Computer-based) is required for consideration for admission to the doctoral program; however, an applicant who has received a graduate degree from an Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accredited U.S. institution within two years of the date of application may be exempt from this requirement.

**This score must be sent directly from the Educational Testing Service (ETS) and dated within two (2) years of enrollment.**

*Note:* International students must also complete requirements listed under International Student Admission.

**Provisional admission** may be granted to students who have not submitted all documents or test scores for admission and allowed to attend for one semester (i.e., enroll in up to 6 graduate semester credit hours and earn a 3.0 or better grade point average.) Provisional admission is not available for all degree programs and is not available for international students. Students should check with the chair of the department/division delivering the program to determine provisional admission availability.

**Probationary admission** may be granted to students who have submitted all documents for admission but do not meet all requirements for full admission such as a low overall grade point average, low GRE/GMAT scores, departmental requirements or lack of appropriate background for the chosen master's program. Probationary status will be changed to full admission upon completion of 12 semester credit hours with a 3.0 or better overall graduate grade point average.

Admission to graduate programs is through departmental admission committees. The student's entire record will be considered including the completed application for admission, undergraduate overall GPA, upper level GPA, GPA in the discipline, a Statement of Purpose, letters of recommendation, GRE or GMAT scores (evaluated in compliance with HB 1641), and professional and/or academic experience.

Individual departments may require other indicators of potential for success. Applicants should check the specific program admission requirements. Contact the Dean's/Director's Office in the College or School for additional information.

The **College of Arts and Sciences (COAS)** reviews applicants prior to the beginning of each long semester; May for Fall applicants and November for Spring applicants. **All COAS master program applicants must submit GRE scores to be admitted.** Spanish majors must also pass a departmentally administered examination.

The **College of Business Administration (COBA)** Graduate Admissions Committee will make admission recommendations based upon review of the applicant's portfolio, which must include, at a minimum, the applicant's upper level grade point average, standardized test scores (e.g., GMAT/GRE/*Examen de Admisión*), statement of purpose, résumé, and two letters of recommendation. Students admitted with conditions must satisfactorily complete those conditions to remain in graduate school.

The **College of Education (COE)** reviews applicants for admission to its graduate programs prior to the beginning of each semester: November 30th, April 30th, and July 30th. Applicants are reviewed on the basis of their completed application for graduate school, academic record as reflected on transcripts, GRE scores, letters of recommendation, interviews, and other relevant documentation. The College may grant conditional admission for a maximum of six graduate hours to students who have not submitted all relevant documentation and who hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Conditional status must be removed at the end of the six semester credit hours and before any other coursework can be taken.

The **Canseco School of Nursing** reviews applicants in June prior to the beginning of graduate coursework in Fall. All MSN program applicants must apply directly to the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.\*

### **GRADUATE STUDY FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS**

A senior student in the last semester or summer session of undergraduate work may complete a normal load with graduate work as provided below:

- Must be within 15 semester credit hours of graduation
- Must have a 3.0 cumulative grade point average in upper-division work
- Must not enroll for more than 15 semester credit hours total and must not enroll for more than 6 semester credit hours of graduate work
- Cannot count work in graduate courses towards the bachelor's degree. Graduate courses will be reserved for credit toward the graduate degree when fully accepted into a graduate program. (Not applicable to students pursuing the BA/MA degree.)
- Must have approval from the Department/Division Chair and the Dean of the College in which the work is offered.

### **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE DEGREES:**

1. **Character of Graduate Work:** The principal aim of graduate study is to develop in the student the power of independent work. Consequently, the character of work expected of graduate students is different from that of less-advanced students. A wide knowledge of the major subject and related subjects will be expected. To this end, the student will do assigned readings, attend lectures, and conferences, and make use of the library in equipping himself/herself to do effective study.
2. **Hours Required:** Thirty to forty-eight hours of approved graduate courses depending on the degree. No more than six (6) hours of 4000 level coursework may be used to satisfy degree requirements.
3. **Residence:** All coursework must be taken at this University. See #4 below.
4. **Transfer of Graduate-level Study:** Six hours of graduate level study with a minimum grade of 3.0 ("B") on a 4.0 scale may be transferred, with the consent of the Department Chair, from other accredited institutions of higher education.
5. **Grades Required:** A minimum grade point average of 3.0 ("B") on a 4.0 point scale computed on all graduate work attempted must be maintained as well as in the major and in the minor. No more than six (6) semester credit hours with a letter grade of "C" earned at this university will be accepted as credit for a master's degree.
6. **Correspondence Work:** In no case will courses taken by correspondence be accepted for graduate credit.

7. Graduation Under a Particular Catalog: A degree seeking student may receive his/her master's degree upon satisfying the requirements of the catalog under which he/she first earned resident credit for graduate work, or upon satisfying the requirements of the catalog of any subsequent year in which he/she earned credit as a resident student in the University. All requirements for a master's degree must be completed within a period of five years or within the time specified for the particular program. No credit more than five/six years old, counting from the catalog year in effect at registration, will be recognized as graduate credit applicable toward a graduate degree. Students whose coursework has expired may repeat the expired course(s) or request an appropriate substitute.

8. Conferring of Degrees: No degree will be conferred except publicly and on Commencement day of the spring, summer or fall semesters.

## **ENROLLMENT - GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Semester Credit Hours**

The semester hour is the unit of credit and is defined as the amount of credit given for one recitation hour a week for one semester. Each recitation hour requires two hours of preparation on the part of the average student.

Normal Load: The normal load for a graduate student for a long semester is nine (9) semester credit hours. The normal load for summer school is six (6) semester credit hours per session.

For a graduate student employment in a full-time public school teaching position, the University recommends a load of six (6) hours each long semester. Please Note: a graduate student carrying a load of six (6) hours in a long semester will be considered part-time, as per the definition below.

Full-Time: A full-time graduate student is defined as one carrying a minimum load of nine (9) semester credit hours. A graduate student registered for less than nine (9) semester credit hours is considered a part-time student. Full-time during each summer session is a graduate student carrying six (6) semester credit hours.

Maximum Number of Hours: The maximum load for a full-time graduate student is twelve (12) semester credit hours per semester and six (6) semester credit hours each summer term. **Any semester credit hour load in excess of the maximum load must be approved by the Dean of the appropriate College.**

A graduate student may enroll for up to nine (9) semester hours in one summer session only if he/she meets both of the following criteria:

- needs the nine semester hours to complete graduation and/or certification requirements in August; and
- has at least a 3.5/4.0 grade point average based on all valid graduate work taken up to the present time. Total semester hours earned in the summer may not exceed fifteen (15) SCH.

## **COURSE INFORMATION**

The term “course” shall be understood to mean a definite unit of work in a subject and may continue through two semesters. Credit allowed for each course is written out in full immediately following the title of the course.

Graduate Courses: Courses numbered 5000 or above are open only to students with graduate standing. Some courses at the 4000-level carry graduate as well as undergraduate credit (not available in the College of Business Administration). These courses are identified in the course description section for each College.

Repetition of a Course: If a student repeats a course that may not be taken for additional credit, it is the policy of the University to count only the last grade received in the course, whether passing or failing, other than a grade of “W” (see Grades below).

## **GRADING POLICIES**

Grades are recorded from “A” to “D/F”, inclusive, and are ~~mailed to each student~~ \*available via the web to each student\* at the end of each semester. Numerical values corresponding to these letters are as follows (please note carefully the difference between the scales in the \*College of Nursing and Health Sciences\* and the University):

A	90-100, excellent	90-100 (CNHS)
B	80-89, good	81-89 (CNHS)
C	70-79, average	80 (CNHS)
D/F	Below 70, failure	F below 75
S/CR	Satisfactory (credit)	
U/NC	Unsatisfactory (no credit)	
IP	In Progress	
W	Dropped or withdrawn	
I	Incomplete	

No more than two courses with the grade of “C” will be accepted as credit for any master’s degree.

CR/NC, Credit/No Credit: Courses taken in residence on credit/no credit basis are not computed in the grade point average. Special projects designed to provide staff development for teachers and which carry academic credit will be taken on the credit/no credit basis. Grades assigned will be “CR” for satisfactory completion of the objectives and “NC” for unsatisfactory completion of the objectives, and these grades may not be used to satisfy degree requirements.

S/U, Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory: This grading criteria applies only to courses in the College of Business Administration. This grade can be given for only predesignated courses and may be used to satisfy degree requirements (e.g., business internships). For undergraduate students, a grade of “S” indicates achievement of 70 percent or greater for

the course requirements; for graduate students, a grade of “S” indicates achievement of 80 percent or greater for the course requirements.

IP, In Progress: Given to a student in a thesis course who is passing but has not completed all required work. Student must re-enroll in thesis.

W, Dropped/Withdrawn: Given when a student has officially dropped or withdrawn from the University by the deadline in the official University calendar, regardless of student’s standing in class.

I, Incomplete: Given to a student who is passing but has not completed a term paper, examination, or other required work. Students electing to complete unfinished work in the course must sign an incomplete contract along with the instructor specifying assignments to be completed and the due date. Failure to sign contract, and have on file in the Registrar’s Office, will result in the “I” being converted to an “F” through an administrative action of the Registrar.

For the student, the grade of “I” may be removed under certain conditions:

- if the student elects to complete the course, they may, within the time specified by the instructor, but not exceeding twelve months from the date the “I” was recorded, complete the work in the course and request that the instructor submit a change of grade form to the University Registrar. Extensions of time in cases of merit may be granted by the Dean of the appropriate College.
- if the student elects not to complete the course and the signed contract within a period of twelve months, the “I” will be converted to a grade of “F” through an administrative action of the Registrar.
- a student may not register for a course for which he/she has a current grade of “I”.

Change of Grade: After being reported to the Office of the University Registrar, grades other than “I” may not be changed unless a computation error has been made by the instructor.

Grade Points: A student’s grade average on university work is expressed in grade points. Each semester hour of “A” counts four points, “B” three points, “C” two points, “D” one point, and “F” ZERO points. Thus a “B” average, which is the minimum overall average for any master’s degree, is expressed as a 3.0 grade point average.

### **ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students are expected to inform themselves thoroughly concerning the regulations of the university and the course requirements for the degree they seek and to make inquiries in case of doubt. It shall not be the university's responsibility should complications arise because of failure to follow regulations and requirements. Regulations will not be waived nor exceptions to requirements made on a plea of ignorance of the regulation or requirement. Students, therefore, should become familiar with all of the information related to the program contained in the printed university bulletin and addenda.

Each student, by registering, enters some college of the university and, except as to conduct, is thereafter under its jurisdiction with regard to the student's program of study and degree requirements. Students should work directly with the person in their major department who is assigned the responsibility of supervising their programs concerning course requirements and options, deficiencies, degree plan and special regulations. Requests to waive regulations and/or requirements should be directed in writing to the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

## **REGISTRATION**

**Degree Plan:** The student should select his or her major field of study as early as possible. The planning of a course of study should be exercised in consultation with a faculty advisor. Final degree plans must be approved by the Dean or Chair of the appropriate department. Students will be required to present it during faculty advisement. A degree plan may be superseded by a new one according to the provision explained under Graduation Under a Particular Catalog in this section.

**Schedule:** The student's class schedule should be worked out in conference with a faculty advisor. Students are urged to confer with their advisors well in advance of registration day in order to avoid difficulties in scheduling.

**Early Registration:** A period of early registration is scheduled each semester for the following semester(s). During that time a student is responsible for making an appointment with a graduate advisor in the appropriate college to discuss the degree plan, determine the courses to be taken during the next semester, and complete the registration form.

**A student is not officially enrolled until all fees have been paid.**

**Registration for a Course:** The only way to become a member of a class is to officially register for it or by adding a course after registration is completed. In any case, the instructor receives the students' names on the official class rosters distributed by the Office of the University Registrar and immediately on their online rosters available on UONLINE.

**Waitlist Policy:** A student may request to be waitlisted for a closed course. If space becomes available, waitlisted students will be added in the order the requests were received **without prior notification to the student**. It is the student's responsibility to check his/her status in the course. Requesting to be waitlisted makes the student liable for all tuition and fees due if a space becomes available. A drop must be processed by the student if the class is no longer desired. Please note: a student may not be waitlisted for one section of a course and registered in another section of the same course.

**Adding a Course:** To add a course to a schedule after initial registration, an add form is obtained in the Office of the University Registrar. A student should obtain permission

from his/her assigned faculty advisor to add the course. The faculty advisor must sign the add form. (See Maximum Number of Hours in this section.)

**Auditing a Course:** Any person may audit a course except for individual instruction courses. Auditors do not have the privilege of submitting papers, taking part in class discussions, or participating in laboratory or field work. Auditors pay tuition and fees according to the published semester credit hour fee schedule. Deadline to request permission to audit a course is the Census Date of the semester.

## **REGISTRATION POLICIES**

### **Definitions - Dropping and Withdrawal**

A student is "dropping" a course or courses if he or she remains enrolled in a minimum of one (1) credit hour at the end of the course change process. A student is considered withdrawn from the University if no semester credit hours remain at the end of the course change process.

### **Dropping a Course**

A course may be dropped by completing a drop form with the Office of the University Registrar in person, by mail or by fax. Courses cannot be dropped by phone

All course drops must be completed by the deadline stated in the University calendar published in this catalog.

If a student chooses not to attend a class or classes, he or she is responsible for officially dropping or withdrawing through the Office of the University Registrar. Students who decide not to attend and do not officially notify the Office of the University Registrar may be responsible for tuition fees and any other circumstances resulting from failure to officially drop or withdraw. Students must not assume that they will "automatically" be dropped from their classes if they do not attend or do not pay. (Although the student may not have paid for classes personally, payment may have been posted to his or her account by a financial assistance agency. It is important that the student officially notify the Office of the University Registrar of his or her intention not to attend.) Refer to the published Schedule of Classes for refund schedules.

### **Withdrawal from the University**

Students who find it necessary to withdraw from all courses must notify the Office of the University Registrar in person, by mail or by fax. Refund of Fees section of the catalog for refund schedules.

### **Financial Aid Impact of Dropping or Withdrawal**

Students who have received a federal student loan through Texas A&M International University and are dropping below six hours or withdrawing from the university must also receive approval from the Office of Financial Aid and attend loan exit counseling at the time of the drop or withdrawal. Failure to do so will cause the student to have a hold placed on the release of their student records and may impact the awarding of future loans.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Absence from Class: It is assumed that a vital part of every student's education is regular attendance of class meetings. Every faculty member keeps a current attendance record on each student. Any absences tend to lower the quality of a student's work in a course, and frequent or persistent absences may preclude a passing grade or cause a student to be dropped from one or more courses by the respective faculty with approval of his or her Chair and Dean. Additional information is available in the current Student Handbook.

## **CONTINUATION OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

### **Minimum Grade Point Average for Good Standing**

To continue in graduate studies, a student is expected to maintain a nominal "B" average (3.0/4.0). This means that the student's record must show a grade of "A" to offset each grade below a "B" on work taken for graduate credit and applicable toward the master's degree. No grade lower than "C" can apply to a master's degree. No grades below "B" will be accepted for the Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology degree.

### **Academic Probation**

If at the end of any semester the student's grades have fallen below the "B" level, the student will be considered on academic probation until the required average is restored by higher grades on subsequent courses applicable to the degree.

### **Academic Suspension**

If, while on academic probation, a student allows his/her average for any semester to fall again below the nominal "B" average, the student will be placed on academic suspension during the next semester. The student may petition through the Office of the University Registrar to register again on scholastic probation after an absence from the University of one long semester, or longer.

## **OTHER PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

### **Official Summons**

Answering an Official Summons: Occasionally it is essential that a student be summoned to one of the administrative or academic offices on the campus; A student who fails to answer an official summons promptly will be subject to suspension from all classes until the particular matter of business has been concluded and the student has been granted permission to return to classes.

### **Change of Address**

Students who change their home address while attending Texas A&M International University are expected to notify the Office of the University Registrar immediately. Changes of local address must also be made with the Office of the University Registrar. Address updates may be made via the web.

### **Student Conduct**

Upon registration, students automatically become members of the University community and, as such, assume full responsibility for proper conduct until their separation from the University. All University students should be familiar with the ordinary conventions of

adult society governing their behavior. In addition, the University student must be acquainted with and bound by the University rules and regulations covering student conduct as stated in the Student Handbook which is available on-line or from the Office of Student Life.

Texas A&M International University reserves the right, through due process, to place on probation, suspend, or expel any student for improper conduct.

## **HAZING**

Hazing is a criminal violation under Texas law. A person may be found guilty of criminal conduct for hazing, encouraging hazing, permitting hazing, or having knowledge of the planning of hazing incidents and failing to report in writing his/her knowledge to the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs.

Both failing to report hazing and hazing that does not result in serious bodily injury are Class B misdemeanors. Hazing that results in serious bodily injury is a Class A misdemeanor. Hazing resulting in a death is a state jail felony. An organization found guilty of hazing may be fined \$5,000 to \$10,000 or, for incident causing personal injury or property damage, an amount double the loss or expenses incurred because of the hazing incident.

It is not a defense to prosecution that the person hazed consented to the hazing activity.

Any person reporting a specific hazing incident to the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs or other appropriate institutional official is immune from civil and criminal liability unless the report is in bad faith or malicious.

This state law does not limit or affect an education institution's right to enforce its own penalties against hazing.

The Education Code defines hazing as "any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution by one person or acting with others, directed against a student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization." The statute contains a list of conduct which constitutes hazing.

## **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION**

**Residence Requirement:** All coursework must be taken at Texas A&M International University. Some graduate-level study may be transferable from other accredited institutions of higher education. The amount transferable is determined by the individual College. See the appropriate Department Chair about transfer of graduate-level credits.

**Correspondence Work:** Credit earned by correspondence will not be accepted for graduate credit.

Graduation Under a Particular Catalog: A student may graduate according to the curricular requirements as stated in the catalog of the year in which the student first registered for work in residence at Texas A&M International University; or may be graduated under any later catalog of a year in which the student registered for residence work, provided that requirements are met within five years of the date of the catalog chosen. Also provided that the institution offers the courses listed as requirements in the catalog. Students whose coursework has expired may repeat the expired Course (s) or request an appropriate substitute.

Application for Candidacy for Master's Degree: A student intending to have a master's degree conferred at Texas A&M International University must file an Application for Candidacy with the Office of the University Registrar and pay the graduation fee to the University Business Office by the Census Date of the semester in which the student wishes to graduate.

Graduation in-Absentia: Students intending to graduate in-absentia should notify the Office of the University Registrar upon application for candidacy.

Degree Conferral and Eligibility for Participation in Graduation Ceremonies: It is the policy of Texas A&M International University that only students who have completed their degree requirements participate in graduation ceremonies. There are two graduation ceremonies each year. May graduates attend the May ceremony. Students who finish requirements in any of the summer terms receive their diploma in late August and are invited to attend the following December ceremony along with the December graduates. No degree will be conferred except publicly and on Commencement Day of the spring, summer and fall semesters.

Additional Master's Degree Policy: In the College of Arts and Sciences, students pursuing the Master of Public Administration as an additional master's degree, may obtain the degree upon successful completion of the major curriculum and substituting hours attained in the first masters program for nine hours of electives. In the College of Business Administration only, a student seeking a second master's degree must complete twenty-one (21) semester credit hours of graduate-level business courses beyond the coursework in the degree plan(s) for all prior master's degree taken in the COBA and must meet all other requirements for the additional master's degree. In the College of Education, students shall not be permitted to apply the same course credit to more than one master's degree.

## **Appendix A Graduate Faculty Roster**

### FULL-TIME

Louise Autio, PhD, RN, FNP-BC  
Coordinator / Associate Professor  
University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago,  
Texas Woman's University

Natalie Burkhalter, MS, RN, CS-MS, FNP-BC  
Interim Director / Associate Professor  
Corpus Christi State University, Incarnate Word College,  
Midwestern State University

Irma Lara, MS, RN, FNP-BC  
Assistant Professor  
Corpus Christi State University, TAMU-Corpus Christi

### PART-TIME

Whitney R. Bischoff, DrPH, RN  
Assistant Professor  
University Hawaii, Manoa, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi,  
University of Texas School of Nursing, Houston