

# UConn School of Nursing Master of Science Program Handbook 2020-2021 Academic Year



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## Welcome to UConn

Greetings Master of Science Nursing students,

Welcome to our UConn Community of Scholars! This document was developed to serve as a reference for students in the Master of Science Program at the University of Connecticut (UConn) School of Nursing (SON). It is to be used in conjunction with the [graduate school catalog](#). It is the University which ultimately awards the degree.

Our faculty & staff will communicate with you through messages to your UConn email or those distributed on the undergraduate listserv [MSNUR-L@LISTSERV.UCONN.EDU](mailto:MSNUR-L@LISTSERV.UCONN.EDU)

We encourage you to visit the school's website to learn about the various [student organizations and leadership positions](#) that you can be involved in, our [education abroad](#) programs, the [Urban Service Track/AHEC Scholars](#) experience, and our [Clinical Learning Simulation Center](#). The website also provides updated information on student [scholarship](#) opportunities. The UConn Graduate School website includes information on [graduate assistantship](#) opportunities and [financial aid](#).

In addition to our world-class faculty scholars and educators in the SON, UConn provides significant [academic support](#) to promote students' success.

- The [Dean of Students Office](#) serves as a centralized resource for connecting students with appropriate university and community programs, offices and individuals, to resolve issues that affect the quality of their academic or community life and personal goals.
- The [Academic Achievement Center](#) is a walk-in service for students to learn effective ways to study and time management strategies, as well as methods of managing stress.
- Free tutoring is available through the [Writing Center](#) with available expertise to help students refine their writing skills in any course.
- Students with disabilities are provided accommodations through the [Center for Students with Disabilities](#).
- For students whose first language is not English, student support is provided through [International Student and Scholar Services](#). All new international students must complete check-in online through the ISSS website.

Your Advisor, faculty, staff and Track Directors are always available to address any questions, concerns or issues. Best wishes for a smooth and satisfying UConn experience.

Regards,

Dr. Ivy Alexander, Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Track Director  
Dr. Sandra Bellini, Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Track Director  
Dr. Kristin Bott, Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Track Director  
Dr. Annette Jakubisin-Konicki, Family Nurse Practitioner Track Director

## UConn School of Nursing Master of Science Program

The School of Nursing (SON), located in Storrs Hall, was founded in 1942 by Carolyn Ladd Widmer. In the years that have passed since, the school has grown significantly. The School of Nursing was initially home to a BS program only but responded to the public need to prepare nurses for advanced nursing practice roles in 1971 by offering tracks in the Master of Science program. Today, the Master of Science program includes four nurse practitioner tracks, including programs of study in Adult-Gerontology Primary Care, Adult-Gerontology Acute Care, Neonatal and Family Nurse Practitioner.

The UConn School of Nursing (SoN) supports students in achieving their highest academic and leadership aspirations through learning experiences that reflect current and future health care needs. Thus, we believe students must be exposed to a broad range of experiences to grasp the foundations of nursing science and practice in the real world, and to gain leadership skills to advance health. The curriculum of the School of Nursing is rigorous, providing you with the foundations of advanced nursing practice and leadership with emphasis on problem-solving and critical thinking.

Upon completion of course work and all prescribed experiences, our graduates are prepared to:

- Synthesize appropriate theories from nursing and related fields to respond to emerging health care challenges.
- Synthesize appropriate scientific findings and theories from nursing and related fields to lead change to improve outcomes.
- Influence health care policy for the benefit of person, community, nursing, and environment.
- Demonstrate PRAXIS at an advanced level of nursing in a selected area of concentration.
- Exert leadership in creating a collaborative and caring health care community.
- Synthesize best evidence and translate into practice to creatively improve health care quality and outcomes.

Upon successful completion of the curriculum, students receive a Master of Science (MS) degree from the University of Connecticut and are eligible to apply for the national certification examination in their respective population focus.

- Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner student can apply for certification through the [American Association of Nurses Credentialing Center](#) or the [American Association of Critical-Care Nurses](#).
- Adult-Gerontology Primary Care and Family Nurse Practitioner students can apply for certification through the [American Association of Nurses Credentialing Center](#) or the [American Academy of Nurse Practitioners National Certification Board](#).

- Neonatal Nurse Practitioner students apply for certification through the [National Certification Corporation](#).

In addition, each graduate has the necessary background for admission to the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) or Philosophy of Science (PhD) programs.

## Our PRAXIS

One of the most important aspects for you to learn early on is the PRAXIS statement that guides our behaviors and actions within the School of Nursing. All members of the School of Nursing are expected to abide by these principles and they are part of your evaluation criteria in many of your courses.

### **The philosophy of the School of Nursing is directed by six guiding principles:**

- Professionalism in behavior, presentation and conduct
- Respectful of the richness and diversity of others and of self
- Accountability for my actions
- eXcellence in Scholarship, practice, teaching and service
- Integrity, inquisitiveness and innovation
- Service to the profession and the community

The School of Nursing expectations are consistent with behaviors that will be required of you in the clinical setting. Rude or disrespectful behavior, bullying or unprofessional conduct is not tolerated. As a student of UConn School of Nursing, this extends to interactions that you have on and off campus as well as through social media. Violations of PRAXIS are a serious offense that can be grounds for dismissal from the School of Nursing.

Reported violations of PRAXIS are placed in the student's file and a thorough investigation is performed by the Associate Dean as delineated by the PRAXIS policy. Please note that other processes are used at the University level to handle violations of the Student Code <https://community.uconn.edu/the-student-code-preamble/> or academic misconduct <https://community.uconn.edu/academic-misconduct/> that can also result in dismissal from the University.

## Your Advisor

Upon admission, you are assigned a SON faculty advisor who will assist you in planning your program of study to meet the program requirements. You must meet with your advisor in order to register for your courses. If you do not receive communication from your advisor about a date/time to meet, please send them an email to set up an appointment.

As part of your orientation to the School of Nursing, you will be asked to complete the Program Planner within the PeopleSoft/Student Administration

system. Please be sure to keep this updated with any changes that are made throughout your program.

Registration holds in Student Administration/Peoplesoft may be placed for any requirements that need to be completed. Please identify the type of hold placed and follow instructions on how to lift the hold or notify the appropriate department. Registration holds may take 24 hours to be lifted after the completed requirements.

#### Hold and Service Indicators in Student Administration/Peoplesoft

Hold	Department	Information	Phone
Bursar hold	Bursar's office	<a href="#">See your fee bill on student admin;</a> <a href="mailto:bursar@uconn.edu">bursar@uconn.edu</a>	860-486-4830
Clinical Compliance	SON Clinical Compliance office	<a href="mailto:sonclinical@uconn.edu">sonclinical@uconn.edu</a> ; <a href="mailto:songradclinical@uconn.edu">songradclinical@uconn.edu</a>	860-486-0881
Advising hold	SON	faculty advisor	
Academic advising hold	SON - undergraduates only	<a href="mailto:Lindsay.Darcy@uconn.edu">Lindsay.Darcy@uconn.edu</a>	860-486-0516
Not anymore	undergrad or grad admissions	<a href="https://studentsuccess.org/SSO/uconn">https://studentsuccess.org/SSO/uconn</a>	860-486-6709
SF Responsibility	Bursar's office	complete requirement on Student Admin	
Immunizations	Student Health and Wellness	<a href="mailto:SHS@uconn.edu">SHS@uconn.edu</a>	860-486-4700
Welcome to the Pack	Undergrad admissions	<a href="https://diversity.uconn.edu/about/welcometothepack/">https://diversity.uconn.edu/about/welcometothepack/</a>	860-486-2422
Immunizations	Student Health and Wellness	<a href="https://shs.uconn.edu">https://shs.uconn.edu</a>	860-486-4700
AlcoholEdu	Student Health and Wellness	<a href="https://alcholedu.uconn.edu/">https://alcholedu.uconn.edu/</a>	860-486-4700
Grad Final Term Hold	Graduate School	indicates term by which student must complete degree requirements	860-486-3617

## Communication

1. The UConn email system is the official communication system in the School of Nursing. You are encouraged to check it regularly (daily) for important updates from the School of Nursing and faculty.
2. School of Nursing e-mail communications between students, staff and faculty should be **addressed within 2 business days** following receipt of the message. This is to foster prompt communication between advisors and advisees as well as assist with coordination of your educational experience.
3. As a general rule, if a conflict arises between yourself and another individual it is best to attempt to address the concern first with the

- individual. If the conflict remains unresolved, one or both parties should address the concern with the course instructor, faculty advisor or track director.
4. In instances where the conflict remains unresolved despite talking with your faculty advisor or track director, the Associate Dean can be contacted to facilitate mediation or deliver a final decision on the matter.

## General Policies

Please note that all nursing students are required to have a laptop computer with a minimum set of specifications including:

- Multi-core processor
- 4GB RAM (minimum); 8 GB RAM is recommended
- 7200RPM SATA or SSD hard drive
- Integrated Gigabit Ethernet
- 802.11 b,g,n wireless
- USB 2.0 or 3.0
- Ability to run:
  - If a PC then Windows 8 (64 bit) or later
  - If a MAC, then IO X 11 (or highest version)
- Ability to run Microsoft Office 2016 Professional
- Anti-virus software
  - There are several comparable free solutions. Please refer to: <http://antivirus.uconn.edu/studentspersonal.html>
- **Suggested Options:**
  - CD/DVD writer (internal or external USB)
  - USB external hard drive or other means of backing up data files
  - 3 year on-site warranty service
  - Insurance coverage for both damage and theft

All University of Connecticut students also have full access to Microsoft Office, Microsoft Windows and other software. All of these resources are delivered at no charge through [the online delivery portal](#).

**Cell Phone & Smart Watch Usage-** Cell phones and smart watch usage in the clinical agency settings will be compliant with the agency policy. Clinical, simulation and classroom instructors may impose additional rules.

**Procedure for taking an exam-** “Testing Policy: For every quiz or test, students are permitted to only have a writing implement and if needed a plain calculator at their desk. If necessary, plain scratch paper would be provided by the instructor. Additional equipment is permitted at the discretion of the instructor. Students may be asked to present a valid photo ID”

Testing procedures may include assigned seating. There are to be [no smart watches](#), [no cell phones](#), no hats, hooded sweatshirts, or items in student pockets. Student must be in room at the start of the exam, no entry into the room after the exam has begun and if student leaves the room for any reason, the test will be collected/submitted as done. All scratch paper must be submitted to the instructor/proctor at the completion of the exam.

### **Policy and Procedures for missed exams/coursework**

The policy on missed exams states that a student must provide documentation to the Admissions, Enrollment and Student Services (AES) Office for a significant issue; doctor's note, prayer card from a funeral, etc. along with the Missed Exam Form (provided by the AES office). AES will then notify the faculty member that they received the documentation and approval of the student to make up the exam. At this time, faculty are now responsible for providing the makeup exam (which should be given to staff in the AES office) prior to the makeup exam date. If the student still cannot attend that make up the exam date they will have to make other arrangements with the faculty member to take the exam at another time.

### **Final Exams**

In accordance with UConn policy, students are required to be available for their final exam and/or complete any assessment during the time stated. If they have a conflict with this time of the final exam they must obtain official permission to schedule a make-up exam with the [Dean of Students](#). If permission is granted, the Dean of Students will notify the instructor.

### **Religious Accommodation Policy**

The complete [Religious Accommodation Policy](#) grants students excused absences from class or other organized academic activities for observance of a sincerely held religious practice or belief as a religious accommodation, unless the accommodation would create an undue hardship. Students whose religious holidays are not recognized by the University's calendar should provide the instructor or academic activity organizer with the dates they will be absent in advance of the absence. Students requesting a religious accommodation should make the request directly to their instructor with as much notice as possible. Students anticipating an absence or missed coursework due to a sincerely held religious practice or belief should use best efforts to inform their instructor in writing no later than the third week of class, or one week before the absence if a conflict occurs during the first three weeks of class. Being absent from class or other educational responsibilities does not excuse students from keeping up with any information shared or expectations set during the missed class(es). Students are responsible for obtaining the materials and information provided during any class(es) missed. The student can work with the instructor to determine a schedule for making up missed work.

### **Religious Observance Conflict Policy**

“Students anticipating such a conflict regarding religious observances should inform their instructor in writing within the first three weeks of the semester, and prior to the anticipated absence, and should take the initiative to work out with the instructor a schedule for making up missed work.”

### **Grading Policy:**

The University has established the following grading policy for [graduate students](#). All intermediate calculations of grades throughout a course will be expressed on a 0.00-100.00 scale and will be recorded to two decimal place precision -e.g. 95.00 or 92.67. Final numeric grades for a course will be based on averaging of intermediate grades. Typically, the averaging process will give different weights to different intermediate grades -e.g. exam grades may "count more" than homework grades. In the conversion of a final numeric grade to a course letter grade, decimal parts below 0.50 will be "rounded down to the closest whole number -e.g. 92.49 becomes 92 and decimal parts at or above 0.50 will be "rounded up" to the closest whole number -e.g. 92.50 becomes 93.

### **Required GPA**

A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or above must be maintained in order to earn the Master of Science degree. Students must earn a B (3.0) or better in all nursing graduate courses in order to earn credit toward graduation. A student may only repeat one course with a NURS prefix throughout their graduate study. If a student does not earn a C+ or better on the first try, a collaborative decision between the advisor and the student is made to determine if a repeat of the course is appropriate.

### **Grade Appeals**

The University of Connecticut University Senate approved a policy and procedure for when a student believes an error in grading has occurred. The current University of Connecticut policy is located in the graduate catalog. Students will follow the SON procedures for appealing a course grade if this situation should arise.

### **Maintenance of Records**

It is highly recommended that students retain the course syllabus and other documents acquired throughout the program as part of their professional portfolio, as these may be needed to pursue other scholarly activities beyond or following program completion.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students who require accommodations should contact the Center for Students with Disabilities, Wilbur Cross Building Room 204, (860) 486-2020 or <http://csd.uconn.edu/>. Once the student is assessed, appropriate accommodations will be sent by email to the instructor of record. Only students who complete this process will be granted accommodations.

## **Student Requests for Faculty Recommendations**

Student requests for letters of recommendation should be made by sending an email request through the university email system that specifies the records (academic performance information) that may be disclosed, the purpose of the disclosure, and identify the individuals or entities to whom the disclosure may be made. Alternatively, the student may complete and send the [release form](#) found on the University's Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) webpage.

## **Student Requests for Changing Programs or Tracks**

Students who wish to change a program should meet with their advisor to discuss the reason(s) for the change and implications for their program of study. The student must rewrite their personal statement that was completed as part of the admissions process to address new career goals and a career plan, and submit the revision to the current Track Director and proposed Track Director. After submitting the revised personal statement, the student should contact the proposed Track Director to set up an appointment to discuss the change and determine whether any openings exist. If the Track Director approves the change, the student must submit a revised program of study in the program planner within the Peoplesoft/Student Administration system.

## **Program Requirements and Milestones**

The curriculum of the Master of Science program is guided by the Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing (AACN, 2011) and prepares students for the nurse practitioner role in accordance with the Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification and Education (July 2008).

All of the tracks in the Master of Science program share a set of courses, called core courses, that include specific learning objectives required for advanced practice nursing. These online courses include:

NURS 5012 Nursing Science and Patterns of Knowing  
NURS 5020 Statistical Methods in Nursing  
NURS 5030 Nursing Research in Advanced Practice  
NURS 5811 Application of Genetics to Health Care  
NURS 5870 Health Policy and Populations-Based Advocacy for the Scholarship of Application

Each of the tracks also address the 3-P requirements of APRN education, providing advanced education in physiology, pharmacology and advanced health assessment. Upon passing the 3-P courses, students begin their clinical courses with a qualified preceptor. During your advanced health assessment course, you will be required to meet all pre-clinical requirements by the published deadlines in order to register for your clinical courses in the subsequent semester.

## Pre-Clinical Requirements

Policy: All students participating in clinical learning experiences at University of Connecticut School of Nursing (SON) must be in compliance with health clearance policies as required by University of Connecticut and clinical agencies in which students perform their clinical hours. The student is responsible for providing UConn SON with evidence of health status, immunity and education by the published deadline as well as maintaining compliance throughout their academic program. Inability to meet deadlines or meet compliance standards will limit the student's ability to be placed in a clinical agency and complete the program. Students are required to create an account in American Databank's (ADB) [Complio](#) system, enter their information and upload the required documents by the published deadlines.

### Health Requirements/ Background Checks / Drug Testing

Nursing students are required to complete a series of clinical learning experiences in order to successfully meet the learning outcomes of their program of study. Prior to participating in clinical learning experiences, students are required to complete health and immunization requirements, a criminal background check and a drug test by the published deadlines. Each clinical facility has policies regarding required health documents, possible convictions and potential drug use that may bar students from being accepted at the facility for clinical placement. If a student is not accepted to an assigned placement because of their health or immunization status, the findings of a background check or drug screen, UConn School of Nursing does not guarantee an alternate clinical placement. School of Nursing policy dictates that students who are unable to complete clinical requirements for any reason will be subject to dismissal from the program. The procedure for completing a criminal background check and a drug test is done through the American DataBank Company. Please note that each student is responsible for covering the costs for their health requirements, background check and the drug screen. If you have any questions or concerns related to the background check or drug screen, please contact the student support team at [support@americandatabank.com](mailto:support@americandatabank.com) or call 1-800-200-0853.

Purpose of Policy: UConn School of Nursing students have clinical learning experiences and are expected to provide direct care to patients in a variety of clinical settings as part of their training. This contact places students at risk for both exposure to and transmission of communicable diseases and blood-borne pathogens. Therefore, specific procedures are needed to: (1) decrease health risks to students, (2) protect patients and other healthcare professionals with whom the student interacts, and (3) comply with UConn School of Nursing healthcare agency contracts, federal Occupation Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations, and Connecticut State Department of Health policies. Please note that all health clearance requirements are based on the requirements mandated by clinical agencies where students complete their clinical hours.

While in clinical or practicum experience and prior to each subsequent clinical or practicum experience, all nursing students must maintain compliance for the items below based on their annual expiration date or a date designated by the school program in order for their hours to be applied to the program requirements. All other contractually-determined agency specific requirements must be met. These requirements are subject to change based on renewal and revision of agency affiliation agreements. Lack of immunization history or immunity for any of the below health requirements, or any findings on the criminal background check or drug screen, may limit clinical/residency placements as determined by agency policy and/or contract. Failure to complete all required clinical activities will prevent a student from graduating from the School of Nursing.

### **Criminal Background Check**

A criminal conviction or positive drug screen while a student at UConn School of Nursing may be in violation of the School of Nursing's PRAXIS code and may be subject to disciplinary action, which could include dismissal from the School of Nursing. The School cannot guarantee that a student will be accepted into any required clinical placement sites if the student cannot meet the compliance requirements. The results of a criminal background check or drug screening may prevent a student from completing a clinical placement as well as eligibility for [licensure](#).

Under the provisions of [Sec. 19a-14\(a\)](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended by Public Act 86-365, the Department of Public Health and Addiction Services of the State of Connecticut may deny licensure to applicants who have been convicted of a felony or are addicted to drugs or alcohol. Copies of this law are available in the School of Nursing Admission and Enrollment Services Office. Students are responsible for being aware of what the licensure requirements are in the State in which they intend to apply for a license.

### **Drug Screening**

Use of drugs, prescribed or otherwise, may create a risk of being denied a clinical placement. This includes, but is not limited to, prescribed medical marijuana or opiates. If the findings of a required drug screening prevent you from being placed in a clinical agency for your experience, you will not be able to complete the nursing program. If you have any concerns about your current prescriptions in relation to securing a clinical placement, please contact your health care provider. Please be aware that there are certain over-the-counter medication or foods that can result in a positive drug screen, including: Cold remedies, hay fever remedies, nasal decongestants, diet pills, sleep aids, poppy seeds or hemp food products. In addition, over-hydration immediately prior to drug testing can result in a "dilute" sample that is considered to be a flagged/positive finding. A finding of a dilute sample will be considered a failed drug screen and you will be required to repeat the drug screening and pay for a

new order. Students are only allowed to repeat drug screening once for a dilute sample. Drug screen results will be disclosed to clinical agencies in order to ascertain if the student can be placed at the clinical facility. Two attempts will be made to place a student with a flagged/positive finding for clinical placement. If a student cannot be placed, the student has the option of rolling back to the next academic year or withdrawing from the program. If you have questions or concerns about potential results from either a background check or drug screening please contact the University Clinical Case Manager at 860-486-0928 or [clinicalcasemanager@uconn.edu](mailto:clinicalcasemanager@uconn.edu) who can discuss the University policy and process for flagged screenings with you.

Prior to the initial clinical or practicum experience all nursing students must have the following health documentation on file with ADB's Complio system by the posted deadlines. For graduate nursing students starting clinicals in:

- Spring Semester full compliance for all clinical requirements (except drug and criminal background screening) must be completed in ADB by October 1st and screening bundles for drug and criminal background screenings must be ordered by November 1st and complete by the prescribed deadlines along with onboarding paperwork in order to secure clinical placement.
- Summer Semester full compliance for all clinical requirements (except drug and criminal background screening) must be completed in ADB by March 1st and clinical bundles for drug and criminal background screening must be ordered by April 1st and complete by the prescribed deadlines along with onboarding paperwork in order to secure clinical placement.

### **Health Clearance Requirements**

A. Required Annually (every 12 months based on the date recorded)

1. [Clinical Rotation Health Review Form](#): Students must have a history and physical performed yearly by a licensed healthcare professional. The date of the history and physical must be indicated on the form along with clearance verifying that the student does not have any conditions that prohibit them from participating in their clinical rotation.
2. **Tuberculosis (TB) Test**: Students must submit evidence of a negative TB status documented by one of the following:
  - i. A two-step (4 visit) non-reactive PPD/TST with 10-14 days between PPDs/TSTs within the past 12 months. The date the PPD test was administered and the date the test was determined negative or positive must be indicated on the Clinical Rotation Health Review Form. **OR**
  - ii. A negative blood assay for M. tuberculosis (BAMT) within the past 12 months. The laboratory report and test results must be submitted. **OR**
  - iii. For those with a previous positive reaction, a negative chest x-ray which must be repeated every 3 years or as dictated by agency policy and

documentation from a licensed healthcare provider stating that the individual is not infectious and any required treatment/prophylaxis.

3. **Influenza Vaccination:** Students must have an influenza vaccination annually during flu season (September-May). The date of vaccination, manufacturer, product name, lot number, expiration, dose, injection site, and name/title/license number of person administering the vaccination as well as their signature must be recorded and submitted by October 1<sup>st</sup>.
4. **Criminal Background Check** including, but not limited to: a social security number (SSN) trace, national sex offender search, Office of the Inspector General (OIG)/General Service Administration (GSA) searches, state and/or country criminal search done in all states of residence for the prior seven years; and a Fraud and Abuse Control Information Systems (FACIS) III screening both of which will be repeated annually. If you have lived outside of the United States for more than 90 days consecutively in the past 7 years you will need to have an international criminal background check completed.
5. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (**HIPAA**) Training and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (**OSHA**) Training for blood borne and airborne pathogens through the **Connecticut Hospital Association's Health & Safety Training Course** which will be repeated annually.
6. For Master of Science (MS) or post-MS DNP students - **Current RN license** in state of residence if distance learning student or in Connecticut for practicum/residency experience in CT. For post-MS DNP students who are APRNs - **Current Advanced Practice RN (APRN) License** in state of residence if distance learning student or in Connecticut for clinical practicum/residency experience in CT.

B. Required One Time Only:

1. **Information Release Waiver** using the University's *Student Clinical Placement or Other Experiential Learning Experience Authorization/Consent for Review and Disclosure* form.
2. **Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR):**
  - All students must submit a copy of his/her vaccination history for Measles, Mumps, and Rubella: documented doses of MMR vaccine.
  - All students must submit quantitative IgG titers (a laboratory blood test for the antibodies) for Measles Mumps and Rubella. All students must submit copies of laboratory reports with MMR titer results.

For Negative, Equivocal, or Indeterminate MMR Titer Results: ACTION REQUIRED

- If a student demonstrates lack of immunity for Measles, Mumps and Rubella, vaccination is required: 2 documented doses with the second dose at least 28 days after the first dose with a final repeat titer.

### 3. **Varicella:**

- All students must submit a copy of his/her vaccination history or documented incidence of disease.
- All students must submit a quantitative IgG titer for Varicella. All students must submit copies of laboratory reports with Varicella titer results.

#### For Negative or Equivocal Varicella Titer: ACTION REQUIRED

- If a student demonstrates lack of immunity for Varicella, vaccination is required: 2 documented doses: second dose at least 28 days after the first dose with a final repeat titer.

### 4. **Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis Vaccine (Tdap):**

- All students must present evidence of the date of vaccination for Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis Vaccine (Tdap). If no documentation is presented a single dose of Tdap is required as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice ([ACIP](#)). Tdap booster is required every 10 years.

### 5. **Hepatitis B (HBsAB and HBsAg titers):**

- In accordance with OSHA regulation 29 CFR 1910.1030 (see also CPL2-2.69) healthcare professionals who perform tasks that may involve exposure to blood or body fluids should receive a 3-dose series of hepatitis B vaccine 0, 1, and 6-month intervals. Healthcare professionals should be tested for hepatitis B surface antibody (anti-HBs) to document immunity 1 to 2 months after receiving the third dose.
- If the HBsAB titer is positive the person is immune. No further serological testing or vaccination is recommended.

#### For Negative or Equivocal HBsAB Titer:

- If the HBsAB titer negative, the person is considered unprotected against hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection. The [recommendation](#) is to revaccinate with a 2 or 3-dose series. Retest HBsAB level 1 to 2 months after the last dose.
- If HBsAB is negative following booster vaccine, the student is a non-responder and a [Non-Responder Form](#) must be uploaded in ABD/Complio.

### 6. **Polio:**

- Students are instructed to submit a copy of their vaccination history for Polio.
- If students do not have their polio immunization history, they must submit a titer for Polio immunization with copies of laboratory reports documenting titer level results. If non-immune, evidence of a booster immunization must be submitted.

7. **Drug Screening** – negative 12-panel urine drug screen test. The program placement coordinator will follow University policy and process for placement issues related to positive findings. Drug screening will need to be repeated if there is a lapse in any of your clinical rotations.
8. **American Heart Association (AHA) Healthcare Professional Basic Life Support** – includes infant, child, adult, one- and two-person CPR with use of automated external defibrillator (AED) and in-person skills demonstration EXCEPT Neonatal graduate students will have current Neonatal Resuscitation Program certification (NRP). Recertification is required prior to the certification end date.
9. **Resume** listing current contact information and work history.
10. **Picture in passport format** – head and shoulders only with white background. Religious head coverings are permitted but must be plain in appearance.
11. Documentation of **personal health insurance**.

Additional requirements may be prescribed by certain healthcare agencies/clinical sites that includes documentation and/or training. If required, the program placement coordinator will contact students on an individual basis.

Students who miss a clinical day for any health impairment, hospitalization, physical condition or mental illness that renders the individual contagious and/or incapable of safely performing nursing student clinical responsibilities must submit health clearance authorization from an appropriate healthcare provider prior to returning to the clinical area to complete a rotation.

All students in active clinical practicum experiences are covered by the University group policy for Malpractice Liability Insurance.

Students who do not provide written documentation as noted above by the specified deadlines will not be allowed to begin clinical practicum and risk having to defer clinical/residency activity. Removal from a clinical or residency agency is grounds for failure in the course. The School of Nursing Faculty reserve the right to make final decisions regarding clinical placements and to modify placements to facilitate a student's completion of course outcomes. These are current contractual requirements and may be subject to change at any time. The School of Nursing Faculty reserve the right to recommend a student's withdrawal from the program for reasons of health.

Notes on Immunization Records: As a student of the University, you were required to submit an immunization history and should have access to your immunization record through Student Health Services. If this is not possible,

check with your healthcare provider or public health clinic. Parents or other caregivers may also have records of your childhood immunizations through baby books, immunization passports or other saved documents from your childhood. If you played any sports as a child your parents or caregivers may have a copy of the required physical examination, which includes immunizations. Check with your high school, board of education, and/or college health services for dates of any immunizations. You can also check with previous employers, including the military that may have required immunizations. Some states have registries or immunization information systems that include adult vaccines. CT residents born 1/1/1998 or later are automatically enrolled in the Connecticut Immunization Registry and Tracking Systems (CIRTS).

## Pre-Clinical Requirement Deadlines for AGACNP, AGPCNP and FNP Students

Starting in the semester preceding your first clinical course, you will be required to begin pre-clinical requirements by registering an account with Complio/American DataBank (ADB). Meeting compliance requirements can take time, thus the following required schedule is organized to help you meet each of the compliance requirements for your first clinical placement.

September 15	Deadline to enroll with American DataBank (ADB) for compliance tracking; serum IgG titers for mumps, measles, rubella, varicella, and Hep B (HBsAb) uploaded to ADB HIPAA/OSHA training opens
October 1	Deadline to have your immune status resolved on ADB; HIPAA/OSHA requirement due and uploaded to ADB  Full compliance deadline for all clinical requirements on ADB except background check and drug screening  Drug and background check bundles available to order through ADB
October 30	Deadline for ordering ADB screening bundles through ADB
November 1	Drug and background check screenings begin
November 15	Drug screening ends Onboarding paperwork due to <a href="mailto:songradclinical@uconn.edu">songradclinical@uconn.edu</a>
December	Clinical placement attestation letters are sent to assigned clinical agencies to verify that students meet requirements. The clinical placement schedule will be communicated to you via email by the first day of classes.

## Pre-Clinical Requirement Deadlines for NNP Students

February 15	Deadline to enroll with American DataBank (ADB) for compliance tracking; serum IgG titers for mumps, measles, rubella, varicella, and Hep B (HBsAb) uploaded to ADB HIPAA/OSHA training opens
March 1	Deadline to have your immune status resolved on ADB; HIPAA/OSHA requirement due and uploaded to ADB  Full compliance deadline for all clinical requirements on ADB except background check and drug screening  Drug and background check bundles available to order through ADB
March 30	Deadline for ordering ADB screening bundles through ADB
April 1	Drug and background check screenings begin
April 15	Drug screening ends Onboarding paperwork due to <a href="mailto:songradclinical@uconn.edu">songradclinical@uconn.edu</a>
May	Clinical placement attestation letters are sent to assigned clinical agencies to verify that students meet requirements. The clinical placement schedule will be communicated to you via email by the first day of classes.

## Clinical Policies

In addition to the pre-clinical requirements, there are other aspects that you need to prepare for as part of your clinical placements. These include the following requirements and policies:

### Transportation

Students must have a means of reliable transportation and cover cost of travel and parking to the clinical agencies. There is no guarantee that a student's clinical site will be on a bus or train line or near other students for carpooling. Carpooling, cab, Uber or other similar services are not a form of reliable transportation to use for clinical rotations. Students without a means of reliable transportation cannot enroll in clinical courses, and risk dismissal from a clinical course if not able to meet clinical requirements due to transportation issues.

### Requirements for clinical practice in five areas of motor, sensory, communication, behavior and critical thinking skills

The clinical setting presents unique challenges and responsibilities for nursing students caring for patients in a variety of health care environments. In addition to academic qualifications, UConn nursing students must possess the ability to consistently demonstrate a proficiency in five core areas for nursing students. Specifically: motor, sensory, communication, behavior and critical thinking skills. These areas reflect the reasonable expectations of a nursing student performing the common functions of a registered nurse and/or an advanced practice nurse. In adopting these standards we are mindful of the patient's right to safe and quality health care.

The ability to consistently demonstrate these personal and professional competencies are essential from admittance to graduation. Students must be capable of performing the skills of a nursing student.

Therefore, each nursing student must have the ability to learn and perform the following competencies and skills:

**Motor:** The student must possess sufficient motor capabilities to execute the movements and skills required to provide safe and effective nursing interventions. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Coordination, speed and agility to assist and safely guard (protect), with safe and proper body mechanics, patients who are ambulating, transferring, or performing other activities.
2. Ability to adjust and position equipment and patients, which involves bending or stooping freely to floor level and reaching above the head.
3. Ability to move throughout the classroom/clinical site, sit and stand for long periods of time to carry out patient care activities.
4. Ability to perform patient care duties for up to 12 hours at a time, day or night;

5. Ability to move or position patients and equipment, which involves lifting, carrying, pulling, up to and including 30 pounds.
6. Ability to guide, resist, and assist patients, or to provide emergency care, which involves the activities of standing, kneeling, sitting, or walking.
7. Ability and dexterity to manipulate the devices used in giving nursing care.
8. Ability to administer CPR without assistance.

**Sensory:** The student must possess the ability to obtain information in classroom, laboratory or clinical settings through observation, auscultation, palpation and other measures, including but not limited to:

1. Visual ability (corrected as necessary) to recognize and interpret facial expressions and body language, identify normal and abnormal patterns of movement, to read or set parameters on various equipment, to discriminate color changes, and to interpret and assess the environment.
2. Auditory ability (corrected as necessary) to recognize and respond to soft voices, auditory timers, equipment alarms, call bells, and to effectively use devices for measurement of blood pressure, breath sounds, etc.
3. Tactile ability to palpate a pulse and to detect changes or abnormalities of surface texture, skin temperature, body contour, muscle tone, and joint movement.
4. Sufficient position, movement and balance sensations to assist and safely guard (protect) patients who are ambulating, transferring or performing other activities.

**Communication:** The student must be able to utilize effective communication with peers, faculty, patients and their families, and other health care providers. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Ability to read at a competency level that allows one to safely carry out the essential functions of an assignment (examples; handwritten chart data, printed policy and procedure manuals).
2. Ability to effectively interpret and process information.
3. Ability to effectively communicate (verbally and in writing) with patients/families, health care professionals, and others within the community.
4. Ability to access information and to communicate and document effectively via computer.
5. Ability to recognize, interpret, and respond to nonverbal behavior of self and others.

**Behavior:** The student must be capable of exercising good judgment, developing empathic and therapeutic relationships with patients and others, and tolerating close and direct physical contact with a diverse population. This will include people of all ages, races, socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds, as well as individuals with weight disorders, physical disfigurement and medical or mental health problems. This also includes, but is not limited to:

1. Ability to work with multiple patients/families and colleagues at the same time.
2. Ability to work with classmates, instructors, health care providers, patients, families and others under stressful conditions, including but not limited to providing care to medically or emotionally unstable individuals, situations requiring rapid adaptations, the provision of CPR, or other emergency interventions.
3. Ability to foster and maintain cooperative and collegial relationships with classmates, instructors, other health care providers, patients and their families.

**Critical Thinking:** The student must possess sufficient abilities in the areas of calculation, critical problem solving, reasoning, and judgment to be able to comprehend and process information within a reasonable time frame as determined by the faculty and the profession. The student must be able to prioritize, organize and attend to tasks and responsibilities efficiently. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Ability to collect, interpret and analyze written, verbal and observed data about patients.
2. Ability to prioritize multiple tasks, integrate information and make decisions.
3. Ability to apply knowledge of the principles, indications, and contraindications for nursing interventions.
4. Ability to act safely and ethically in the college clinical lab and in clinical placements within the community.

If a nursing applicant or student is unable to meet one or more of these areas, due to a disability (long or short term), s/he may request consideration for an accommodation through the [Center for Students with Disabilities](#). Prompt notice is essential for full consideration. The requirements for clinical practice apply for all programs which include a clinical component.

### **Social Media Policy**

The SON has adopted the American Nurses Association 2011 Six Principles for Social Networking as outlined on the ANA website:

1. Nurses must not transmit or place online individually identifiable patient information. Nurses must know their legal and ethical responsibilities, as well as their own organization's policies, regarding their responsibility to protect patient privacy, whether online or offline. Merely removing someone's name (or face, in the instance of images) from a communication does not necessarily protect that person's identity. Under federal law (HIPAA), protected "individually identifiable information" includes health information that identifies the individual or *can reasonably be used* to identify the individual, in any form (oral, written, or otherwise)

- that relates to the past, present, or future physical or mental health of an individual.
2. Nurses who interact with patients on social media must observe ethically prescribed patient-nurse professional boundaries. The precepts guiding nurses in these matters are no different online than in person.
  3. Nurses should evaluate all their postings with the understanding that a patient, colleague, educational institution, or employer could potentially view those postings. Online content and behavior has the potential to either enhance or undermine not only the individual nurse's career, but also the nursing profession.
  4. Nurses should take advantage of privacy settings available on many social networking sites in their personal online activities and seek to separate their online personal and professional sites and information. Use of privacy settings and separation of personal and professional information online does not guarantee, however, that information will not be repeated in less protected forums.
  5. As the patient's advocate, nurses have an ethical obligation to take appropriate action regarding instances of questionable healthcare delivery at an individual or systems level that reflect incompetent, unethical, illegal, or impaired practice. Nurses who view social media content posted by a colleague that violates ethical or legal standards should first bring the questionable content to the attention of the colleague so that the individual can take appropriate action.

If the posting could threaten a patient's health, welfare, or right to privacy regarding health information, the nurse has the obligation to report the matter to a supervisor or designated person within the institution or entity for follow-up. If the questionable practice is not addressed in the employment setting and seriously jeopardizes the patient's safety and well-being, the nurse may need to report the problem to external authorities. Accurate reporting and factual documentation—not merely opinion—should always support such responsible actions.

6. Nurses are encouraged to participate in the development of policies and procedures in their institutions and organizations for handling reports of online conduct that may raise legal concerns or be professionally unethical. Such official channels can protect the rights of those participating and can offer remedial action for the patient, while offering fairness, support, and non-punitive correction and training for a nurse's inadvertent mistakes.

## **Body Fluids Exposure**

In the event a UCONN Nursing student or faculty is exposed to blood or body fluids during a clinical practicum the following protocol is to be implemented.

1. Administer first aid
  - a. Irrigate the exposed area as soon as possible.
  - b. STUDENT: Notify your clinical instructor immediately.
  
2. Gather information
  - a. Identify the source patient and mechanism of exposure/injury
  - b. Identify source patient's HIV and Hepatitis status
  
3. Present to the nearest Emergency Department immediately (this will be at student/faculty expense)
  - a. Post-exposure treatment for HIV must begin 1 – 2 hours post-exposure
  
4. Follow-up Care
  - a. STUDENTS
    - i. Present to Student Health Services Infection Control nurse after you have been treated in an Emergency Department
    - ii. Participate in 3 and 6 month follow-up at Student Health Services
  
  - b. FACULTY
    - i. Present to your own personal health care provider

## **REMEMBER**

This exposure needs to be documented in an "Incident Report" at the agency where the exposure took place using agency guidelines.

## Resources

### 1. Curriculum

<https://masters.nursing.uconn.edu>

### 2. Net Id and listserv

<https://its.uconn.edu/services/applications/uconn-lists-listserv/>

### 3. CNS&I

<https://cnsi.uconn.edu>

### 4. Writing resources

<https://writingcenter.uconn.edu/overview-of-grad-support/>

### 5. Insurance

<https://shs.uconn.edu/insurance-information/>

### 6. Academic calendar

<https://registrar.uconn.edu/academic-calendar/>

### 7. Forms

<https://registrar.uconn.edu/forms/>

### 8. University of Connecticut Policies

<https://policy.uconn.edu>

### 9. Financial Support

Financial resources for graduate students are listed on our webpage at <https://nursing.uconn.edu/financial-assistance/>

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