



**MENNONITE COLLEGE  
OF NURSING**  
*Illinois State University*

**2019-2020**  
**Doctor of Nursing Practice**  
**Student Handbook**

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# **I. Introduction to Mennonite College of Nursing**

## **A. History of Mennonite College of Nursing**

Mennonite College of Nursing (MCN) became Illinois State University's sixth academic college on July 1, 1999. The rich heritage of Mennonite College of Nursing began in 1919. For over 100 years, the primary mission has been to prepare professional nurses by providing a quality education. This mission continues at Illinois State. Mennonite College of Nursing is located in Edwards Hall.

## **B. Mission, Vision, Values and Philosophy**

### **1. Mission**

Mennonite College of Nursing promotes excellence and innovation in education while striving to improve health locally and globally through exceptionally well-prepared nurses.

### **2. Vision**

To be a community that sets the standard for excellence in nursing practice and education, changing the world one exceptionally well-prepared nurse at a time.

### **3. Values**

We value life-long, curious learners and relationships with one another and our community. We strive to improve health; demonstrate excellence in our work; provide service to and care for others; and display empathy, openness, advocacy, and purposeful action, in an environment that welcomes diversity while promoting inclusion and the celebration of personal and professional accomplishments.

### **4. Philosophy**

At the heart of the College's philosophy is the belief that all people share a common humanity. Each person must be regarded as having special biological, psychological, sociocultural, and spiritual dimensions and possessing the inherent rights and responsibilities of freedom of choice and self-determination. Based on these beliefs, the College strives to grow as a caring community that supports the development of the total individual.

A vital interactive relationship exists between humankind and the environment. Environment affects each person's biological being and extends beyond physical surroundings to encompass roles, relationships, and societal structures. Because all human beings influence and are influenced by their environment, all must assume the responsibility to protect the social and natural environments in which they share.

Health is a dynamic state influenced by individual, environmental and hereditary factors. State of health, which significantly influences quality of life, is shaped by many factors, including an individual's decision-making and behaviors. Pursuit of wellness is the right and responsibility of each person. Nursing holds the potential to strengthen each human being pursuing optimal health and achieving a harmony of body, mind, and spirit.

Nursing is a profession that continues to evolve through research, theory, and practice. Professional nursing, encompassing a range of therapeutic interventions aimed at promoting and restoring health, addresses actual and potential health care needs of individuals, families, groups, and communities. Nursing care is delivered in diverse settings in a systematic manner through use of the nursing process. In providing their professional services, practitioners of nursing manifest role dimensions that are collaborative and independent in nature. Because dynamic social forces influence the nature and scope of nursing practice, critical thinking, effective communication, and caring are abilities required for professional nursing practice in changing environments.

As a profession, nursing adheres to standards of practice and ethical codes as a means of ensuring quality care for all persons. The current Illinois Nurse Practice Act serve as the legal basis for the practice of nursing in the State of Illinois.

Mennonite College of Nursing is committed to cultivating the personal and professional potential of each member of the College community. The faculty believes that learning as a life-long process is promoted when intellectual inquiry, creativity, self-awareness, self-direction, maturity, and responsibility are valued. Learning is a process of developing human potential through the interaction of the individual with the environment. This interaction aims to achieve positive attitude changes, knowledge acquisition, and professional competence.

Mennonite College of Nursing provides opportunities for life-long learning and the attainment of the highest level of educational preparation in nursing through its two doctoral programs: the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP). These programs represent complementary, alternative approaches to attaining the doctoral degree in nursing.

Mennonite College of Nursing is dedicated to furthering the development of new knowledge for the discipline of nursing and the advancement of nursing practice. The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree prepares nurse researchers with expertise in vulnerable populations. The PhD prepared nurse will serve the public health by designing and conducting research on relevant clinical, educational, health systems, and/or health policy topics. The PhD prepared nurse may pursue a research career in the academic, business, government, or industrial setting. PhD prepared nurses may also serve as educators and/or administrators and develop or consult on health care policy in a variety of settings.

Mennonite College of Nursing is also dedicated to the preparation of expert clinicians and leaders. As a practice-focused doctoral program, the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program focuses on practice that is innovative and evidence-based, reflecting the application of credible research findings. Nurses prepared as a DNP with a blend of clinical, organizational, economic, health care improvement, and leadership skills will serve as clinical and/or administrative leaders in healthcare systems. DNP prepared nurses may also serve as educators in a variety of settings.

### C. MCN Administrative Organization and DNP Support Staff

Name	Edwards Hall Room	Telephone	E-mail
Dean Judy Neubrandner	Dean's Suite 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor	Susan Lynch 438-2174	<a href="mailto:slynch@ilstu.edu">slynch@ilstu.edu</a>
Associate Dean for Academics Seon Yoon Chung	Dean's Suite 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor	438-2176	TBA
Director of Graduate Programs Kim Astroth	219	438-2367	<a href="mailto:kmastro@ilstu.edu">kmastro@ilstu.edu</a>
Director of Undergraduate Programs Melissa Jarvill	220	438-7844	<a href="mailto:mmjarvi@ilstu.edu">mmjarvi@ilstu.edu</a>
Associate Dean for Academic Support Janeen Mollenhauer	112 K	438-2417	<a href="mailto:jrmolle@ilstu.edu">jrmolle@ilstu.edu</a>
Director, Business & Finance Diane Folken	308	438-2247	<a href="mailto:dmfolke@ilstu.edu">dmfolke@ilstu.edu</a>
Director, Events and Publications Amy Irving	321	438-7418	<a href="mailto:amirvin@ilstu.edu">amirvin@ilstu.edu</a>
Director, Marketing and Recruitment Emily McMahan	321	438-0763	<a href="mailto:eemcma1@ilstu.edu">eemcma1@ilstu.edu</a>

Director, Technology Chris Morgan	102	438-2637	<a href="mailto:crmorga@ilstu.edu">crmorga@ilstu.edu</a>
Graduate Programs Academic Advisor/Transcultural Coordinator Melissa Moody	112 J	438-7035	<a href="mailto:mkmood@ilstu.edu">mkmood@ilstu.edu</a>
Doctor of Nursing Practice Program Leader Sandi Scheidenhelm	offsite	438-7400	<a href="mailto:slschei@ilstu.edu">slschei@ilstu.edu</a>
Coordinator, Instructional Experience Sarah Patten	221	438-1403	<a href="mailto:sjpatt2@ilstu.edu">sjpatt2@ilstu.edu</a>
Administrative Clerk - Post-licensure Admission and Compliance, Barbara Oldenburg	112 H	438-2252	<a href="mailto:baolden@ilstu.edu">baolden@ilstu.edu</a>

## II. Overview of the Doctor of Nursing Practice

### A. Values

Mennonite College of Nursing is proud to be a part of Illinois State University, a Carnegie Doctoral/Research University institution. The Doctor of Nursing practice program is congruent with the University mission to provide doctoral education in an area of programmatic strength and to meet the compelling need for doctoral prepared nurses in and out of the academic setting.

Mennonite College of Nursing supports ISU's strategic plan *Educating Illinois*, (<http://www.educatingillinois.ilstu.edu/>), with a belief that doctoral education for nurses must reflect the values of Illinois State University, including individualized attention, public opportunity, active pursuit of learning and scholarship, diversity, and innovation. Mennonite College of Nursing espouses complementary values consistent with the discipline of nursing, including altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity, and social justice.

The Doctor of Nursing practice program expands on the University and College values in the following ways:

- Course and clinical expectations are individualized based on prior education and experience.
- The development of a peer network contributes to long-term collaborative relationships important for clinical practice and leadership. An environment that promotes professional collaboration among students is valued.
- The curriculum will be accessible to all enrolled DNP students.
- The curriculum and scholarly project experiences will reflect individual student interests within areas in which there are faculty and/or preceptor experts to mentor students.
- Learning and scholarship at the doctoral level requires a high degree of student motivation and ability. Selection criteria for admission will assure that students are capable of successfully completing the program of study.

As identified by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), the benefits of practice focused doctoral programs include:

- Development of needed advanced competencies for increasingly complex practice, faculty, and leadership roles;
- Enhanced knowledge to improve nursing practice and patient outcomes;
- Enhanced leadership skills to strengthen practice and health care delivery;
- Better match of program requirements and credits and time with the credential earned;
- Provision of an advanced educational credential for those who require advanced practice knowledge but do not need or want a strong research focus (e.g., practice faculty); and

- Increased supply of faculty for practice instruction.

## B. Outcome Competencies

### 1. Program Outcomes

Program outcomes are congruent with the Mennonite College of Nursing mission and vision and have been developed to reflect the professional nursing standards and guidelines presented in *The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice* (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2006). Graduates from the DNP program will be prepared to:

- engage in organizational and systems leadership to create practice environments that improve health care outcomes
- participate in evidence-based practice and clinical scholarship to improve health care practice and outcomes
- synthesize scientific, theoretical, and technological data from a variety of disciplines to improve health care systems and health outcomes for individuals and populations
- demonstrate leadership in development and implementation of health policy
- collaborate with intraprofessional and interprofessional teams to create change in health care systems

### 2. Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice

The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (AACN, 2006) delineated foundational outcome competencies for all graduates of a DNP program within eight “essentials.”

#### Essential I: Scientific Underpinnings for Practice

The DNP program prepares the graduate to:

- Integrate nursing science with knowledge from ethics, the biophysical, psychosocial, analytical, and organizational sciences as the basis for the highest level of nursing practice.
- Use science-based theories and concepts to:
  - Determine the nature and significance of health and health care delivery phenomena;
  - Describe the actions and advanced strategies to enhance, alleviate, and ameliorate health and health care delivery phenomena as appropriate; and
  - Evaluate outcomes.
- Develop and evaluate new practice approaches based on nursing theories and theories from other disciplines.

#### Essential II: Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Improvement and Systems Thinking

The DNP program prepares the graduate to:

- Develop and evaluate care delivery approaches that meet current and future needs of patient populations based on scientific findings in nursing and other clinical sciences, as well as organizational, political, and economic sciences.
- Ensure accountability for quality of health care and patient safety for populations with whom they work.
  - Use advanced communication skills/processes to lead quality improvement and patient safety initiatives in health care systems.
  - Employ principles of business, finance, economics, and health policy to develop and implement effective plans for practice-level and/or system-wide practice initiatives that will improve the quality of care delivery.
  - Develop and/or monitor budgets for practice initiatives.
  - Analyze the cost-effectiveness of practice initiatives, accounting for risk and improvement of health care outcomes.

- Demonstrates sensitivity to diverse organizational cultures and populations, including patients and providers.
- Develop and/or evaluate effective strategies for managing the ethical dilemmas inherent in patient care, the health care organization, and research.

### Essential III: Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-Based Practice

The DNP program prepares the graduate to:

- Use analytic methods to critically appraise existing literature and other evidence to determine and implement the best evidence for practice.
- Design and implement processes to evaluate outcomes of practice, practice patterns, and systems of care within a practice setting, health care organization, or community against national benchmarks to determine variances in practice outcomes and population trends.
- Design, direct, and evaluate quality improvement methodologies to promote safe, timely, effective, efficient, equitable, and patient-centered care.
- Apply relevant findings to develop practice guidelines and improve practice and the practice environment.
- Use information technology and research methods appropriately to:
  - Collect appropriate and accurate data to generate evidence for nursing practice
  - Inform and guide the design of databases that generate meaningful evidence for nursing practice
  - Analyze data from practice
  - Design evidence-based interventions
  - Predict and analyze outcomes
  - Examine patterns of behavior and outcomes
  - Identify gaps in evidence for practice
- Function as a practice specialist/consultant in collaborative knowledge-generating research.
- Disseminate findings from evidence-based practice and research to improve healthcare outcomes.

### Essential IV: Information Systems/Technology and Patient Care technology for the Improvement and Transformation of Health Care

The DNP program prepares the graduate to:

- Design, select, use, and evaluate programs that evaluate and monitor outcomes of care, care systems, and quality improvement including consumer use of health care information systems.
- Analyze and communicate critical elements necessary to the selection, use, and evaluation of health care information systems and patient care technology.
- Demonstrate the conceptual ability and technical skills to develop and execute an evaluation plan involving data extraction from practice information systems and databases.
- Provide leadership in the evaluation and resolution of ethical and legal issues within healthcare systems relating to the use of information, information technology, communication networks, and patient care technology.
- Evaluate consumer health information sources for accuracy, timeliness and appropriateness.

### Essential V: Health Care Policy for Advocacy in Health Care

The DNP program prepares the graduate to:

- Critically analyze health policy proposals, health policies, and related issues from the perspective of consumers, nursing, other health professions, and other stakeholders in policy and public forums.
- Demonstrate leadership in the development and implementation of institutional, local, state, federal, and/or international health policy.
- Influence policy makers through active participation on committees, boards, or task forces at the institutional, local, state, regional, national, and/or international levels to improve health care delivery and outcomes.
- Educate others, including policy makers at all levels, regarding nursing, health policy, and patient care outcomes.
- Advocate for the nursing profession within the policy and healthcare communities.
- Develop, evaluate, and provide leadership for health care policy that shapes health care financing, regulation, and delivery.
- Advocate for social justice, equity, and ethical policies within all healthcare arenas.

Essential VI: Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes

The DNP program prepares the graduate to:

- Employ effective communication and collaborative skills in the development and implementation of practice models, peer review, practice guidelines, health policy, standards of care, and/or other scholarly products.
- Lead interprofessional teams in the analysis of complex practice and organizational issues.
- Employ consultative and leadership skills with intra-professional and interprofessional teams to create change in health care and complex healthcare delivery systems.

Essential VII: Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving the Nation's Health

The DNP program prepares the graduate to:

- Analyze epidemiological, biostatistical, environmental, and other appropriate scientific data related to individual, aggregate, and population health.
- Synthesize concepts, including psychosocial dimensions and cultural diversity, related to clinical prevention and population health in developing, implementing, and evaluating interventions to address health promotion/disease prevention efforts, improve health status/access patterns, and/or address gaps in care of individuals, aggregates, or populations.
- Evaluate care delivery models and/or strategies using concepts related to community, environmental and occupational health, and cultural and socioeconomic dimensions of health.

Essential VIII: Advanced Nursing Practice

The DNP program prepares the graduate to:

- Conduct a comprehensive and systematic assessment of health and illness parameters in complex situations, incorporating diverse and culturally sensitive approaches.
- Design, implement, and evaluate therapeutic interventions based on nursing science and other sciences.
- Develop and sustain therapeutic relationships and partnerships with patients (individual, family, or group) and other professionals to facilitate optimal care and patient outcomes.

- Demonstrate advanced levels of clinical judgment, systems thinking, and accountability in designing, delivering, and evaluating evidenced-based care to improve patient outcomes.
- Guide, mentor, and support other nurses to achieve excellence in nursing practice.
- Educate and guide individuals and groups through complex health and situational transitions.
- Use conceptual and analytical skills in evaluating the links among practice, organizational, population, fiscal, and policy issues.

American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2006). *The essentials of doctoral education for advanced nursing practice*. Washington, DC: Author.

### C. DNP Program Degree Requirements

Students must successfully complete thirteen courses, including 3 Scholarly Project courses and 3 Clinical Residency courses, for a total of 34 credit hours, and the required dissemination endeavors. The program is designed so that a student with a Master of Science in Nursing Degree will be able to complete the DNP degree within 7 semesters of study, depending on the individual's plan of study.

Each doctoral student will agree to a plan of study listing these thirteen courses and the semester that each course will be taken. This form will be part of the student's permanent file. In addition, all applicants will be evaluated individually based on prior educational work as well as current experience. The plan of study will be designed to include additional coursework, if necessary, to best position the student to achieve the educational objectives of the curriculum. The plan of study should be reviewed each semester and any revisions to the plan must be approved by the Graduate Programs Academic Advisor and the Faculty Advisor. If approved, a revised plan of study form must be submitted to the Graduate Programs Academic Advisor with appropriate signatures.

Students must complete a minimum of 1000 faculty-supervised clinical hours post-baccalaureate degree. A graduate level epidemiology course and a current statistics course are co-requisites to the post-master's DNP curriculum.

The DNP program is based on national expectations and competencies for graduates of DNP programs as stated by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.

### D. Courses and Sequencing for the Post-Master's DNP

Course #	Course title/description	Semester Hours
509	Introduction to Nursing Informatics	3
511	Health Policy	3
562	Leadership in Health Care Systems	3
564	Evidence-Based Practice	3
565	Changing Health Care Systems: Quality Science and Management (Prerequisites: Evidence-Based Practice and Finance courses) <sup>1</sup>	3
451 or 569	Financial and Resource Management of Health Systems (for APN DNP students), or Advanced Financial and Resource Management for Health Care Systems (for NSA DNP students) or equivalent approved by DNP Program Leader	3
535	Applied Data Management and Analysis	3
543	Scholarly Project I (development) <sup>2,3</sup>	3
545	Scholarly Project II (implementation) <sup>3</sup>	2
547	Scholarly Project III (evaluation/dissemination) <sup>3</sup>	2
550	Clinical Residency I <sup>2,3,4</sup>	2
552	Clinical Residency II <sup>3</sup>	2
554	Clinical Residency III <sup>3</sup>	2
	TOTAL HOURS	34

<sup>1</sup> May take Finance course concurrently.

<sup>2</sup> Before beginning the Scholarly Project I and Clinical Residency I courses, all other course work including at least 600 clinical hours must be passed.

<sup>3</sup> Scholarly Project and Clinical Residency courses are to be taken concurrently, in sequential order (I, II, III), and in consecutive academic terms.

<sup>4</sup> If the student has less than 640 hours from their master's degree curriculum, additional course hours (see below) or additional clinical hours in Clinical Residency I will be needed to achieve the required 1000 faculty-supervised clinical hours post-BSN.

560	Advanced Nursing Practice Experience (up to 150 clinical hours may be accumulated with 1 academic credit hour)	1-4
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## E. Clinical Residency and Preceptor Information

Students must complete any deficient clinical/practicum hours to meet the required 640 hours as well as 360 clinical/practicum hours that are part of the DNP program. It is necessary to follow the protocol for obtaining and securing a preceptor for those hours. Please see the DNP website, Advising Tab, and Forms for Clinical Residency Guidelines, Preceptor Agreement form, and other related forms.

<http://nursing.illinoisstate.edu/dnp/advising/>

## F. Graduate Statistics Requirement

Statistics preparation is an expectation of incoming DNP students. Students may either take a statistics placement exam to demonstrate statistics proficiency, or take a Master's level statistics course, NUR 409 Understanding Statistics or equivalent, the first summer session of the DNP program.

The placement exam covers content from the Master's level statistics course such as descriptive statistics, probability, normal distribution, hypothesis testing, correlation, regression, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Students who obtain above 80% on the placement exam will have demonstrated proficiency and will have met the graduate level statistics requirement allowing enrollment in the Applied Data Management and Analysis course according to their individual plan of study. Students who obtain below 80% on the placement exam will take NUR 409 or an equivalent course the first summer session of the DNP program. The placement exam will be taken on the ISU campus and will be proctored by a MCN staff member. The placement exam must be completed within one year prior to the first summer of enrollment in the DNP program. This timeline is to ensure that the student can enroll in the graduate level statistics course in the first summer of the program if completion of the placement exam is below 80%. The student may only take the placement exam one time to show proficiency. If the student does not show 80% proficiency on the first placement exam, the student will be required to register for NUR 409 the first summer in the DNP program or an equivalent course. Students who wish to take the exam may schedule a time to do so by calling the, Office of Student Services, 309-438-7400.

Course currency requirement for graduate level statistics is one year from the start of the DNP program. If a student successfully completed NUR 409 or a graduate level statistics transferrable equivalent within one year of beginning the DNP program, they will have met the graduate level statistics course requirement. If the student successfully completed a graduate level statistics course but it was taken more than one year ago, the student may choose to take the statistics placement exam to demonstrate proficiency as noted above or they may enroll in NUR 409 and audit the course. If the student completes the placement exam but fall below the 80%, they will be required to enroll in NUR 409. Requirements for auditing the course are the same as for a student taking the course for a grade, full participation to include successful passing of exams is required to demonstrate proficiency. Auditing a course does not impact the GPA as no letter grade is assigned.

### Statistics Course Description

- NUR 409: Understanding Statistics

Introduction to basic concepts, issues, and procedures related to descriptive and inferential statistics.

## **G. Writing Competency**

To ensure that students in the DNP program have the required writing competency skills needed for success in the program, the college will address writing skills during the mandatory orientation that takes place prior to the beginning of the DNP program as well as during the intensive sessions that take place in May each year. If students need additional writing assistance, ISU has the Visor Center which has basic writing resources available at their website: <https://universitycollege.illinoisstate.edu/help/resources>. Students in need of writing assistance should also contact the DNP Program Leader for a list of resources.

## **H. Required On-Campus Visits**

Students will be required to attend yearly scheduled on-campus intensive sessions throughout the program on the Illinois State University campus. These intensives are scheduled in the month of May. The exact dates are communicated the prior semester for students to plan their schedules.

New students will also be required to attend an orientation on campus prior to the beginning of the program. Details about the orientation will be included in acceptance letters or by email.

# **III. Program Guidelines**

## **A. Scholarly Project**

### **1. Purpose**

All students are expected to design and conduct a Scholarly Project, and then disseminate the findings of the project through a variety of venues. The project demonstrates synthesis of the student's work and provides the foundation for future scholarly endeavors. The project is to demonstrate identification and resolution of a practice problem through the scholarship of application. The primary objective of the project is the improvement of patient health outcomes in the practice setting.

### **2. Committee Selection**

The Scholarly Project will be under the direction of a Mennonite College of Nursing faculty member. The structure of the committee will be two to three individuals. The size of the committee should take into account the strengths and limitations of both the DNP student and his/her faculty chairperson, with two goals in mind. First, there needs to be an alignment of the DNP student with appropriate research and/or content experts in the area of the proposed Scholarly Project. Second, the committee structure needs to be such that the project can be completed in a timely manner so as to increase the impact of the project on the intended clinical site and/or population.

The student's Faculty Advisor will serve as chair of the scholarly project committee. Ideally, students are matched with a doctoral-prepared faculty member upon admission to the program who has a scholarly interest or expertise in the student's area of focus for the Scholarly Project. That faculty member will serve as the student's advisor and chair of the Scholarly Project committee. The second member of the committee will be the preceptor (master's or preferably doctoral-prepared) within the organization or setting where the project is taking place. If needed, a third person may be added to the committee who has specific expertise applicable to the project.

Selection of Scholarly Project committee members should be completed prior to the student's enrollment in the Scholarly Project I course. The "Request for Appointment of Scholarly Project Committee" form is to be completed and submitted to Mennonite College of Nursing Office of Student Services. Any changes in the committee composition must be approved by the student's Faculty Advisor and notification given to the Office of Student Services.

### **3. Process**

Development of the Scholarly Project begins on entry into the DNP program. Student work in each course builds a foundation for the Scholarly Project proposal. The formal development,

implementation, and evaluation/dissemination of the Scholarly Project will be facilitated through three courses in the DNP curriculum:

- NUR 543 Scholarly Project I: Development of the project
- NUR 545 Scholarly Project II: Implementation of the project
- NUR 547 Scholarly Project III: Evaluation and dissemination of the project

Content relevant to the project will be included in these courses, as well as the application of material from other courses within the DNP curriculum. The typical process, described in the following steps, will be completion of;

- Steps 1 and 2 during the Scholarly Project I course (NUR 543),
- Step 3 during Scholarly Project II (NUR 545), and
- Steps 4 and 5 during Scholarly Project III (NUR 547).

### Step 1: Scholarly Project Proposal

The project proposal will include:

- Introduction to the project
- Background on the practice problem from the literature and in the selected clinical setting including the need for improvement.
- Problem statement (PICOT question) , description of the project, and how the project intervention addresses at least one challenge or problem that influences healthcare for a significant number of persons
- The evidence-based intervention(s)
- Evaluation plan with methodology and patient outcome measures included that are evidence-based
- A timeline, which includes all phases of the project and is reasonable and comprehensive
- The feasibility of the project including market/risk analysis
- Budget (if applicable) with funding sources
- Evidence of stakeholder support for the project

It is suggested that the student seek a consultation from the College statistician on the problem statement and methodology.

### Step 2: Scholarly Project Proposal Approval and IRB Application

The Scholarly Project Proposal must be presented to and approved by the committee members. It is the student's responsibility to set a Scholarly Project Proposal Approval Meeting and obtain approval of the proposal by all the committee members. At the meeting the student will present the Scholarly Project Proposal to the committee members. The student will revise the written Scholarly Project Proposal based on feedback received from the committee and return the revised proposal to the committee for final approval by a date agreed upon by the committee members and the student.

Upon written approval received from the committee, the DNP student may move forward with an IRB application. The student will develop an IRB application for the clinical site (if it has an IRB) or ISU. The chair of the Scholarly Project committee shall be listed as the Principal Investigator (PI) on the IRB application for ISU. After obtaining approval from the clinical site's IRB (if applicable), the student will submit the full application and notification of approval to the ISU IRB for review and development of the Interagency Articulation Agreement (IAA) or if directed submit ISU IRB documents. Written approval of the IRB application must be presented to the Scholarly Project committee upon completion of this step.

At this point, the student and committee members are to discuss and negotiate authorship of future publication of the project and its findings. The Authorship Agreement form is to be completed that this time.

### Step 3: Data Collection

Once written approval from the IRB(s) have been obtained, the DNP student may begin data collection. It is

suggested that the student consult with the College statistician regarding data management and analysis. During this time the DNP student initiates regular communication with the Committee chair and members. At least monthly updates are expected.

#### Step 4: Analysis/Synthesis of Findings and Summary of Findings

The DNP student is to:

- Analyze, and synthesize findings from the project
- Establish conclusions and recommendations based on the synthesis of evidence from the project
- Develop a scholarly document to present to the Scholarly Project Committee

#### Step 5: Dissemination of Findings

Upon completion of the Scholarly Project, the student is required to submit in writing, the formal report of the project. The written report is to be submitted to all members of the Scholarly Project Committee for final approval.

#### Dissemination

To meet DNP graduation requirements, dissemination of the Scholarly Project must include:

- A submitted poster presentation of the Scholarly Project at a peer-reviewed professional venue as part of the Scholarly Project II or III course.
- An on-campus presentation of the Scholarly Project to interested members of the College/University community as part of the Scholarly Project II or III courses.
- A podium presentation of the completed project to either the stakeholder organization or at a regional, state, or national professional conference at the completion of the Scholarly Project III course.
- A submitted manuscript of the completed project to a peer-reviewed professional journal at the completion of the Scholarly Project III course.

In all dissemination efforts, the student is to comply with the Authorship Agreement completed during Step 2 of the Scholarly Project process in terms of co-authorship. As such, dissemination efforts are to be approved by the Scholarly Project chair prior to submission.

## **B. Clinical/Practicum Hours**

Students in the DNP program have courses which require clinical/practicum hours. In order to complete one academic credit hour for a clinical/practicum course, a student must complete a minimum of 120 clinical/practicum hours. ie. 1 academic credit hour = 120 clinical/practicum hours. *The exception to this rule is if enrolling in NUR 560, 1 academic credit hour is equal up to 150 clinical/practicum hours.*

#### *NUR 560 Advanced Practice Experience*

*Students who have not yet acquired 640 faculty-supervised clinical hours to meet the prerequisite requirements of the post-master's DNP program will enroll in NUR 560 to build faculty-supervised clinical hours to fulfill the 640 hour requirement. One academic hour of NUR 560 is equal to up to 150 clinical hours. A student may enroll in up to 4 academic credit hours of NUR 560. It is possible to allow for clinical hours to continue into the next semester by obtaining an incomplete grade for the course if it is not possible to complete 150 clinical hours in one term.*

## **C. Advising**

Students in the DNP program are advised by the MCN Graduate Programs Academic Advisor as well as an assigned Faculty Advisor.

Upon admission to the program, students are directed to contact their Graduate Program Academic Advisor for an initial advising appointment. In this appointment the student and advisor will develop the plan of study, review instructions on how to register for courses, discuss the master's level statistics requirement, declaration of residency requirements, clinical hour requirements, and other necessary resources. After the initial advising meeting, students will receive an email every semester with

registration information to their ISU email account. Students will only be eligible to register for the upcoming semester if they are compliant with all health and safety requirements. The Post-licensure Admission and Compliance Clerk provides updates to the Academic Advisor each semester regarding those students who are eligible to register. If the student is not eligible to register due to incomplete health records, the student must submit any deficient items to update health records in order to become eligible to register.

If a student finds it necessary to alter the agreed upon plan of study, the student must contact the Graduate Programs Academic Advisor to develop a revised plan of study. Change to a plan of study will likely result in delayed graduation.

A Faculty Advisor for each DNP student is determined by the DNP Program Leader. A clinical and scholarship interest match between student and faculty is an important consideration in assignment of a Faculty Advisor. Once the match has been determined, the DNP Program Leader assists the initial link between student and Faculty Advisor. The Faculty Advisor will assist students with plans related to accruing clinical hours, scholarly projects, and advanced leadership interests.

## **D. Required Forms**

There are several forms that must be completed at different times during your program and submitted as directed on the form. You can locate these forms on the MCN DNP website under the Advising tab at: <http://nursing.illinoisstate.edu/dnp/advising/>

A DNP program student guide form is also available to help you track your requirements and accomplishments. This checklist is a general guide and DOES NOT include dates, deadlines, etc. Please use it as an organizational tool in addition to this handbook and the Scholarly Project and Clinical Residency Handbook.

## **E. Student Advisement Responsibilities**

The student bears substantial responsibility to assure that advisement occurs in a timely and appropriate manner. The student is responsible for:

1. Communicating regularly with his/her advisor regarding progress, plans, goals and any problems that might occur
2. Initiating contact with Faculty Advisor
3. Being aware of College of Nursing policies and requirements
4. Following the plan of study and goals as agreed upon with Graduate Programs Academic Advisor and Faculty Advisor
5. Participating in annual review with Faculty Advisor
6. Reporting any problems that might delay the completion of coursework, or scholarly project progress
7. Requesting and completing all appropriate documents consistent with the completion of the doctoral degree
8. Participating in the selection of committee members for the scholarly project

## **F. Annual Review**

The DNP student and Faculty Advisor will meet at least yearly each May to evaluate progress in the program. The meeting should focus on the student's professional development including;

- establishing goals for the academic year,
- reviewing progress toward the achievement of annual goals and begin planning for the next academic year,
- The student and Faculty Advisor will meet at least 2 times during each Scholarly Project course to evaluate progress and set goals for completion of the project.

## **G. Health and Safety Compliance Requirements**

All students entering the Nursing Program are expected to be compliant with all Health Requirements of the broader university and Mennonite College of Nursing. The university signs contracts with nursing clinical agencies that state that our students' background checks and drug screens are clear. We must

disclose this information with every clinical agency you enter as a part of your clinical/practicum/residency experiences. It is the facility's right to deny access if they choose.

These health and safety requirements include, but are not limited to the following: immunizations, blood titers, TB skin test, influenza vaccination, drug test, and criminal background checks. Given that some clinical sites will require students to provide verification that they have completed certain immunization requirements, students are responsible for providing a copy of the health record directly to the clinical agency requesting the information. Therefore, it is vital that students keep a copy of ALL immunization records in a secure file for easy access at all time when enrolled in nursing courses.

In addition, some experiences may require additional criminal background checks and finger printing in order to participate at their clinical site. Faculty will advise when this is necessary. Note that these requirements are subject to change at any time period during the academic year as dictated by clinical placements. Compliance with all health requirements is expected. Those students not in compliance with these requirements by specified timeframes may NOT register for courses, participate in courses and/or clinical until deficiencies are completed.

## H. Changing Faculty Advisors

If a change in Faculty Advisor is necessary, the student and Faculty Advisor should first discuss this matter. A change in Faculty Advisor may be warranted if the student distinctly changes the focus of his/her scholarly project through the course of doctoral study. Students must complete a Change of Advisor form and secure signatures from both current and new advisors and the DNP Program Leader before submitting the forms to the Office of Student Services.

## I. RN Licensure

Applicants to and current students of the Mennonite College of Nursing DNP program are required to hold unencumbered licensure in every state in which the student is licensed and are required to provide evidence of current RN licensure in their state of employment. It is the applicant's/student's responsibility to ensure that the College has current licensure and certification information on file. Mennonite College of Nursing reserves the right to verify licensure status.

Should a change in licensure, such as license suspension or revocation, occur, it is the responsibility of the student to provide this information to the Director of Graduate Programs. Students without current licensure are prohibited from participating in any coursework. Failure to report licensure changes will result in disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from the academic program.

## J. Academic Progress

1. Progress Toward the Degree: Students are expected to adhere to their plan of study and to communicate with faculty, DNP Program Leader and Graduate Programs Academic Advisor when deviations from the plan of study are necessary. The college is committed to keeping students on time to degree, but modifications to the plan of study are likely to result in delayed degree completion.
2. B Policy: For students enrolled in graduate coursework at Mennonite College of Nursing, a grade of a "B" is considered "minimum passing" work. Any student receiving a "C" or below in a course must repeat the course. Students are allowed to retake a maximum of 3 hours of course work in each sequence in which they are enrolled. Students receiving a "C" or below in more than 3 hours will be dismissed from the program consistent with the graduate school policy. GPAs are monitored by the Graduate School. Students with cumulative GPAs of less than 3.0 are notified by the Graduate School.
3. Course Progress Reports: Course faculty are readily available to discuss student progress in courses. Students who, in the judgement of faculty, are at risk for academic jeopardy will receive a Course Progress Report from the course faculty. Indication of a performance deficiency may include but are not limited to:
  - a. Faculty determine that the student is in academic jeopardy
  - b. Receiving a failing score on any assignment
  - c. Demonstrating unsatisfactory clinical performance and/or a pattern of behavior not consistent with clinical expectations
  - d. Suspension from clinical for dangerous or unsafe behavior

The purposes of these reports are to

- a. Ensure effective communication between students and faculty
- b. Assist students to understand the nature of their academic situation
- c. Identify strategies for improving student performance

Students who receive a progress report are expected to meet with their instructor within one week of receiving the report. After meeting with the student, the instructor will provide a copy for the student and retain a copy for their own file. A copy will also be provided to the DNP Program Leader, Director of Graduate Programs and Graduate Program Academic Advisor (for placement in student's file).

## **K. Transfer of Course Work**

Upon recommendation of the College and with the approval of the Graduate School, a student may request transfer of a maximum of 40% graduate credit from another college or university that is accredited by the appropriate regional accrediting association for use in meeting the requirements of the DNP degree. Credits more than 5 years old at the time of first registration into a degree program are not transferable from other institutions. The work must not form part of a degree program elsewhere. Under special circumstances, the Graduate School may allow a student to present a larger number of credits if recommended by the College.

A student who plans to take work elsewhere should obtain prior approval from the College indicating that the course or courses are appropriate to the student's curriculum at Illinois State University. To be considered for transfer of credit, a course must be taught at the graduate level and the student must have received at least a grade of "B" in the course. In addition, a College evaluation of all courses presented is necessary prior to consideration by the Graduate School. If the College approves the transfer of credits, the student requesting credit is required to submit the official transcript for the course work to the College. Following receipt of the official transcript, the College will request by email to Registrar staff to have electronic record updated with transfer work and MCN course equivalents. These credits will be noted on the student's degree audit at time of graduation.

There are situations in which a student may have completed a course that is equivalent to a DNP course in another program. Under these conditions, the course(s) may be considered as a substitute for the DNP program course. However, the student still must meet the total DNP program hours by completing additional coursework. The course currency requirement of not older than 5 years at time of first registration to MCN DNP program may be applied in this situation.

## **IV. Policies**

### **A. Policy on Progression**

This policy specifies the requirements for progression in the DNP program. Students are encouraged to work closely with their academic advisors to ensure steady progress through these requirements.

#### **1. Continuous Registration**

The ISU policy on continuous registration will be followed (see ISU Graduate catalog). Students must notify the College if circumstances prohibit continuing registration. If students anticipate that continuous registration is not possible, students are advised to talk with their advisors and the DNP Program Leader to ensure adherence to University policies.

#### **2. Time Limitations**

Students are required to complete the degree by the end of five (5) calendar years, starting from the initial registration date as a DNP student. To apply for extension of time to complete the program, the student must submit the ISU Request to Extend Time to Complete Graduate Masters/Doctoral Degree Program Form, <http://grad.illinoisstate.edu/academics/forms/>

## B. Blood Borne Pathogens Requirement

Students and faculty of Mennonite College of Nursing follow the Illinois State University Blood Borne Pathogens/Infectious Waste Exposure Control Plan prepared by the Environmental Health and Safety Office. This plan can be found at: <http://ehs.illinoisstate.edu/services/occupational/pathogen>

Students and faculty also follow standard precautions and recommendations set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and can be accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov>

### Procedure for reporting student exposure to blood/body fluids

Upon significant exposure to blood/bodily fluids during clinical experience or in the clinical nursing lab the following actions are implemented:

1. The student immediately reports the exposure to the instructor or lab staff
2. The clinical agency's protocol for exposure/injury is followed immediately. Should the incident occur in the lab, the lab personnel will dispose of the contaminated needle and communicate the event to the Simulation Lab Coordinator or Director.
3. Follow-up serologies and medical evaluation can be done at ISU Student Health Services according to "The Bloodborne Pathogen/Infectious Exposure Control Plan" at: [www.policy.illinoisstate.edu/health-safety/5-3-7.shtml](http://www.policy.illinoisstate.edu/health-safety/5-3-7.shtml)
4. The student and faculty complete an Incident Report available on the ISU Environment Health and Safety website at <http://www.ehs.ilstu.edu/downloads/Non-employee.pdf>. After downloading and completing the form, the original should be sent to the Environmental Health and Safety address on the form. A copy of the completed form should be delivered to the Mennonite College of Nursing Associate Dean's office by the student.
5. The student is solely responsible for all healthcare expenses (i.e. treatment, evaluation, etc.) that may be incurred as a result of injury exposure to blood/bodily fluids.

## C. Confidentiality

Confidentiality of patient information is expected. Only relevant information obtained from or about a patient may be disclosed to the health care personnel, faculty, and peers involved in the individual's care. Breach of confidentiality can lead to expulsion from the College of Nursing. Confidentiality, HIPAA and Social Media expectations will be reinforced in orientation and a quiz over this knowledge, along with a signature of understanding will be completed.

To understand the limits of appropriate use of social media, it is important to have an understanding of confidentiality and privacy in the health care context. Confidentiality and privacy are related, but distinct concepts. Any patient information learned by the nurse during the course of treatment must be safeguarded by that nurse. Such information may only be disclosed to other members of the health care team for health care purposes. Confidential information should be shared only with the patient's informed consent, when legally required or where failure to disclose the information could result in significant harm. Beyond these very limited exceptions the nurse's obligation to safeguard such confidential information is universal.

Federal law reinforces and further defines privacy through the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). HIPAA regulations are intended to protect patient privacy by defining individually identifiable information and establishing how this information may be used, by whom and under what circumstances. The definition of individually identifiable information includes any information that relates to the past, present or future physical or mental health of an individual, or provides enough information that leads someone to believe the information could be used to identify an individual.

Social and electronic media possess tremendous potential for strengthening personal relationships and providing valuable information to health care consumers. Nurses need to be aware of the potential ramifications of disclosing patient-related information via social media. Nurses should be mindful of employer policies, relevant state and federal laws, and professional standards regarding patient privacy and confidentiality and its application to social and electronic media. By being careful and conscientious,

nurses may enjoy the personal and professional benefits of social and electronic media without violating patient privacy and confidentiality.

#### **D. Clinical Name Badges**

Graduate students are expected to wear proper identification when participating in clinical practicum experiences. A Mennonite College of Nursing photo identification nametag can be obtained through the Redbird Card office located on the second floor of the Bone Student Center.

#### **E. Dress Code**

As professional nurses and nursing students of MCN you are required to wear work place professional attire. Adherence to the dress code policy at the location of your clinical/practicum experience is expected. Body adornment should be minimally visible. If you have questions about appropriate attire please address this with the DNP Program Leader.

#### **F. Class Attendance**

Students are expected to fully participate in program courses and course requirements. Frequent or prolonged lack of participation in courses may necessitate that the student withdraw from the course(s). All matters pertaining to student health and illness are to be referred to the course instructor and the Faculty Advisor, if appropriate. A student wishing to drop a course must discuss the matter with the instructor and the Academic Advisor.

#### **G. Change of Address**

All students need to notify the MCN academic advisement office regarding any changes in address or telephone numbers to ensure students receive proper mailings. Students must also update their information through the MyIllinoisState Portal, Home Tab, under My Profile.

#### **H. Matriculation from the MCN Nursing Systems Administration MSN**

Students who have graduated from the MCN Nursing Systems Administration Master of Science in Nursing program and enter the MCN Doctor of Nursing Practice program will have completed five courses in the NSA program that are also required courses in the DNP program. The overlapping courses may be counted to meet the DNP course content requirements, but the hours may not be counted. Course currency requirement applies to this policy, which states courses considered to meet DNP program requirements must be completed within 5 years of entry into the DNP program. University policy states that hours completed to meet the degree requirements of one program may not be used to meet degree requirements of another program. Therefore, in this situation, additional credit hours must be completed to meet the minimum hours required in the DNP program. These hours should be elective credits (completed at the graduate level) that will enhance the student's scholarly work. The student should work with their faculty advisor to identify coursework that will fulfill their program requirements.

#### **I. Conditional Admission**

When a student is conditionally admitted to the DNP program because at the time of application and admission, official licensure/certification documentation had not been received, the student has a 6 month grace period from the time of enrollment to submit the official documentation to MCN Office of Student Services.

#### **J. Mennonite College of Nursing Student Grievance Policy**

Mennonite College of Nursing endorses the Student Grievance Process of Illinois State University as outlined in the following website:

<http://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/conflict/conduct/process/>

As outlined in this policy, "A grievance is defined as a complaint arising out of any alleged unauthorized or unjustified act or decision by a member of the University community which in any way adversely affects the status, rights, or privileges of any student. Typically, grievances are a response to an action that has been taken against a student by a faculty or staff member that is without justification or basic fairness. Most often, grievances arise based on a student's belief that a grade awarded in a class was unfair and not in accordance with the work performed. In other cases, students might be deprived of their status, rights, or privileges based on an arbitrary and/or capricious action."

If a student is not sure whether or not the action in question can be challenged through the grievance process, please contact Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution at (309) 438-8621.

## **Informal Process**

1. If a student has a grievance or complaint, the student should attempt an informal resolution with the faculty or staff member in question.
2. If this proves unsuccessful, the student should seek informal resolution with the Director of Graduate Programs.

## **Formal Process**

If an informal resolution is not successful, the student may proceed to initiating a formal complaint/grievance.

1. To initiate the formal process, the student must file a written formal complaint within 30 working days of the alleged grievance. The written complaint must:
  - a. Be Word processed
  - b. Be signed and dated
  - c. Include student current address and phone number
  - d. Be concise and specific, with names and dates wherever relevant and possible
  - e. Clearly state the act or decision being challenged
  - f. Clearly state why the act or decision is unauthorized or unjust
  - g. Briefly describe your attempts to reach an agreement through informal discussions with the instructor and/or course coordinators.

Failure to include all required information will result in a delay of the grievance process. Written complaints will not be reviewed until all information is provided.

2. The Director of Graduate Programs will review the formal complaint and meet with the student and/or faculty/staff member within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint.
3. The Director of Graduate Programs will attempt to facilitate resolution of the grievance at the College level. Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (SCCR) is available to provide a 3rd party mediator for internal grievance meetings. When this service is requested, the student should contact SCCR a minimum of 3 days prior to the meeting scheduled with the Director of Graduate Programs to arrange for a mediator to be present.
4. If a resolution is not achieved within the College, a grievance request may be filed by the student with the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution Office or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access as appropriate. Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution is responsible for coordinating the formal student grievance process at the university level. This process exists to provide students an opportunity to request that the University review actions or decisions of University faculty and staff members. The Student Grievance Committee is responsible for reviewing student complaints and investigating cases it deems necessary of investigation.

## **K. Final Course Grade Challenge Policy**

A student may challenge a final course grade if the student has a reasonable belief the grade was assigned in an arbitrary or capricious manner and is unable to resolve his or her concerns with the faculty member who assigned the grade. The full policy can be found at <http://policy.illinoisstate.edu/academic/4-1-20.shtml>

## **L. Readmission Policy**

Graduate students who wish to return to Mennonite College of Nursing after a lapse in registration of three semesters or more must apply for readmission at the Office of Admissions, <http://welcome2isu.IllinoisState.edu/uPortal>.

Additional admission materials may be required by the College of Nursing after review of the student's previous admission materials. Those students with less than a three semester lapse may register for non-clinical classes without completing a readmission application. Registration for clinical courses is considered on an individual basis and must be approved by the Director of Graduate Programs.

Students who are not in good standing and who have not maintained continuous enrollment (excluding summer terms), who wish to return to the university are required to apply for readmission as students on academic probation. Students who have been dismissed from a graduate program at Mennonite College of Nursing are not eligible for readmission to that program. Readmission to a different program will require that the applicant meet the Academic Progress policy and will require a complete application to the newly selected program, including a new essay outlining educational and professional career goals relevant to the newly selected program.

### **M. Pregnancy**

The United States Office for Civil Rights has provided additional guidance regarding pregnant students. Pregnancy is defined as pregnancy, childbirth, or medical/common conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth. As a result of this newly enacted guidance, students requesting an accommodation due to pregnancy may contact the Office of Student Access and Accommodation Services at 309/438-5853.

### **N. ISU Code of Conduct Values**

To be a student at Illinois State University, we expect you to recognize the strength of personal differences, while respecting institutional values. You are encouraged to think and act for yourself, as that is the purpose of higher education. However, we expect you to understand that the University has non-negotiable values in which it believes strongly. These values include:

- Character
- Conscience
- Civility
- Citizenship
- An Appreciation of Diversity
- Individual and Social Responsibility

These values are the hallmark of the University, and will be protected diligently. Each person has the right and ability to make decisions about his or her own conduct. Just as importantly, each person has the responsibility to accept the consequences of those decisions. When individual behavior conflicts with the values of the University, the individual must choose whether to adapt his or her behavior to meet the needs of the community or to leave the University. This decision, among others, assists each person to determine who he or she is with respect to the rest of society.

You may access the Code of Student Conduct at:

<http://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/conflict/conduct/code/>

### **O. Academic Integrity**

Illinois State University values academic integrity very highly. Students are expected to be honest in all academic work. Illinois State University considers it to be a serious issue if a student has not submitted solely his/her own work, not given credit thoroughly to sources, completed a test or assignment using unauthorized materials/assistance, or has falsified any clinical documentation. A student's placement of his/her name on any academic exercise shall be considered as assurance that the work is the result of the student's own thought and study.

Illinois State University recognizes that it must create an environment where each student will be free to pursue her or his academic interests without interference from others. This includes upholding the integrity of the academic process, as well as, providing a community free of disruptions. The following restrictions are designed to foster a healthy and peaceful learning community. Their violation will result in disciplinary action.

For more information: <http://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/conflict/conduct/code/academic.php>

## P. Research Integrity Policy

Students are expected to maintain ethical integrity in all scholarly endeavors. Misconduct or fraud in scholarly endeavors may be grounds for disciplinary action. Research or scientific misconduct includes but is not limited to the following: **Fabrication of Research Data; Plagiarism; or Falsification in Reporting.**

Further information on the expectations regarding integrity in research is located at <http://www.policy.ilstu.edu/conduct/1-1-8.shtml> and <http://research.illinoisstate.edu/ethics/>

## V. Technology Requirements

Students can find the most current computer requirements on the MCN web page under the “Student Life” tab, under the heading of “Technology.” <http://nursing.illinoisstate.edu/studentlife/>

### A. Computer Requirements

To successfully complete the DNP program in the College of Nursing, students are expected to have frequent and convenient access to computer and Internet resources. The doctoral courses are online with limited on-campus intensive sessions.

Doctoral students may be required to either purchase or have access to specialized software, such as SPSS for data management classes, RefWorks or Endnote for compiling annotative bibliographies, Zoom for virtual communication, and e-portfolio tool as instructed. Illinois State University students can take advantage of special hardware and software pricing as well as installation support at the TechZone on campus. See the TechZone website at: <http://techzone.illinoisstate.edu/>.

Upon entry to the DNP program, it is expected that students will have prerequisite computer skills in word processing, email, attachments, PowerPoint, Excel, uploading and downloading documents, and internet use. If you are lacking any of these skills, it is important that you obtain these skills through courses or free online tutorials that are available on the web. The College of Nursing also requires students have an ISU email account (name@ilstu.edu) in your name as long as you are a student in the program.

### B. Resource Requirements for ReggieNet Use

Distance Education is incorporated in the DNP program to create the opportunity for students to participate in classes by using the technology from their home or office. MCN uses ReggieNet. ReggieNet allows students and instructors the ability to share data, presentations, and anything else that is brought to class.

Students who use ReggieNet software will need the following resources at the site where they plan to access the application:

- A reliable broadband internet connection
  - The technology does not function with dial-up or wireless connections
- Java plug-in (available from java.com)
- Recommendations
  - Avoid wireless access points for internet access as the reliability of the connection will be decreased
  - Adjust firewall settings to minimal protective settings
  - Recognize that workplaces often restrict internet traffic which may affect your ability to access ReggieNet. Consider working closely with technical personnel at your workplace to determine the feasibility of using this system there.

## VI. Financial Assistance

### A. Process for Seeking Assistance

Upon admission to the MCN doctoral program, students will receive specific information about financial assistance opportunities, how to apply, and/or how to get additional information/assistance.

Students should talk with their Faculty Advisor to develop a plan for seeking financial assistance. MCN will also forward information about new opportunities directly to students.

The student should inform the Office of Student Services and Faculty Advisor of any financial awards received. The student must provide a copy of the award notice to the Office of Student Services. This copy will be placed in the student's file.

The MCN website link "Financing Your Education" provides detailed information about funding opportunities.

## **B. Examples of Funding Opportunities for DNP Students**

### **Research and Teaching Assistantships:**

Student provides teaching or research assistance to the College in return for tuition waiver and stipend. Availability of assistantships varies based on faculty needs. Students should discuss assistantships with a faculty advisor early, in order to identify opportunities and ensure adequate time to apply.

- ISU guidelines [http://www.hr.ilstu.edu/downloads/GA\\_Handbook.pdf](http://www.hr.ilstu.edu/downloads/GA_Handbook.pdf)
- Assistantships are competitive appointments made by the college
- Assistantships include tuition waiver and monthly stipend
- A tuition waiver does NOT include waiving fees
- Assistantships may be full-time (20 hours/week) or part-time (10 hours/week) appointments
- Appointments are for a fixed period of time, up to one year and may be renewed based on availability of both funding and scheduling

In addition to the assistantships described above, ISU has a process to arrange a graduate practicum or assistantship by contracting with external agencies or sponsors. This arrangement allows the student to complete a mutually beneficial research or teaching project for an external agency as part of a graduate assistantship. In this arrangement, the student receives a stipend from the agency and tuition waiver from ISU. This arrangement must be developed with input from the faculty advisor and processed through the ISU Research and Sponsored program office. More information is available in the "Online Graduate Assistant Applicant Guide" at <http://hr.illinoisstate.edu/student/graduate/> and at <http://research.illinoisstate.edu/>.

### **Scholarships:**

Money awarded that does not need to be paid back. Some scholarships have special stipulations; specific opportunities, along with search assistance, are included below.

### **Private Sources:**

Mennonite College of Nursing offers many private sources of financial assistance. Students who wish to be considered for MCN scholarships must complete the application form found at: <http://nursing.illinoisstate.edu/studentlife/scholarships.php>. Please note that all students are required to file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Renewal Application if financial need is a criterion.

### **Illinois State University Scholarships:**

ISU offers scholarship opportunities to graduate students. Information about the scholarships and application requirements can be found at <http://financialaid.illinoisstate.edu/>.

### **Fellowships:**

Awards given to assist students with graduate level academic requirements or with completion of special projects or research such as dissertations.

- Fellowships can be funded by the federal government or state government/agencies, foundations, professional organizations and other organizations.
- Each student must work closely with their faculty advisor to identify and apply for a fellowship(s).
- The student must identify a faculty sponsor to apply for fellowships.
- Examples of various types of fellowships will be distributed to faculty advisors and students.

## VII. Evaluations

### A. Faculty/Course Evaluations

Toward the end of each semester, students will be asked to complete online faculty and course evaluation forms. If two or more instructors are teaching a class, an evaluation form will be completed for each. These evaluations are held until after semester grades are submitted to appropriate University personnel. Once the semester grades have been submitted, faculty are given the evaluation data for review. Constructive feedback is used to improving learning in classroom and clinical experience.

### B. Submitting Request for Letter of Recommendation

There is a formal process for requesting a letter of recommendation from a faculty or staff member. In order to ensure that faculty/staff are following FERPA guidelines, it is necessary for you to sign a FERPA waiver when requesting any verbal or written recommendation (even after you graduate). Please use the designated form for steps to take so that faculty/staff members have informed information with which to provide your letter of reference. Please use this process when seeking out faculty/staff for a recommendation.

## VIII. College Support

### A. MCN Orientation

The Mennonite College of Nursing Orientation is scheduled prior to the start of the DNP program. Orientation includes a program overview, information about advising, academic policies and procedures, health and safety compliance requirements, ISU's ReggieNet training, library orientation, scholarly writing guidance and the opportunity to meet your program peers. Students are instructed to go to the Redbird Card Office to obtain your ISU ID card as well as your ISU clinical badge. Both should be obtained while you are on campus for orientation. Attendance at this orientation is required.

### B. Library Orientation

Mennonite College of Nursing is served by Milner Library which is located on the Illinois State University Campus. The library has an excellent collection of health sciences resources including books, media, and journals. Most journals are available electronically from its homepage at [www.library.illinoisstate.edu](http://www.library.illinoisstate.edu). MCN is served by a library liaison who is available for instruction sessions, reference question and consultations.

The library provides access to over 300 databases including CINAHL, PubMed, Joanna Briggs, Cochrane, Dissertations and Theses, Health and Psychosocial Instruments, National Guideline Clearinghouse and PsycINFO. Articles and books not available at Milner can be obtained by requesting and interlibrary loan. Requested articles are delivered to the requestor in PDF format using email.

As part of the scheduled Orientation, students are required to attend a library orientation. They will be given an opportunity to meet the nursing librarian and become familiar with the titles and location of selected sources that will support their studies at Mennonite College of Nursing.

## IX. Graduation and Commencement

Graduation requirements for the DNP degree include:

- Successful completion of all coursework included on the approved plan of study within the five year time limit
- Completion of 1000 post-baccalaureate faculty-supervised clinical hours
- Completion of the Scholarly Project
- Approval of the completed Scholarly Project by the Scholarly Project Committee
- Dissemination of the Scholarly Project, including:
  - A submitted poster presentation of the Scholarly Project at a professional conference as part of the Scholarly Project I or II course

- An on-campus presentation of the Scholarly Project to the Scholarly Project Committee and interested members of the College/University community at the DNP Intensive Days
- A podium presentation of the completed project to either the stakeholder organization or at a regional, state, or national professional conference
- A submitted manuscript of the completed project to a peer reviewed professional journal at the completion of the Scholarly Project III course

Graduation and Commencement information at Illinois State University can be found on <http://grad.illinoisstate.edu/academics/graduation/>

This website will answer your graduation and commencement ceremony questions. It is important to be aware of all graduation and commencement ceremony dates and deadlines pertinent to the term you plan to graduate. Student must apply for graduation very early in the term during which they are scheduled to graduate. Students must also indicate when completing the application for graduation their intentions for participation in the commencement ceremony.

### **A. Graduation Awards**

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Excellence Award is designed to reward excellence and outstanding achievement. Up to two recipients will receive the DNP excellence award each year. Eligible students include those who graduate with their DNP degree during the current calendar year (January 1-December 31). The award is presented in December at the end of the semester.

The recipient of the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Excellence Award will be selected based on the following criteria.

Demonstration of:

1. Excellence in nursing practice
2. Completion of high quality scholarly project
3. Leadership
4. A commitment to the nursing profession

An invitation will be emailed to students who are in their final year of the program and are slated to graduate that year with a deadline to submit the application. The applications are reviewed by Graduate Faculty and votes are placed to determine the award recipient.