



**MENNONITE COLLEGE
OF NURSING**
Illinois State University

2020-2021

**Master of Science in Nursing
Student Handbook**

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I. Introduction to the MCN Program

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 MCN began in 1919. For 100 years, the primary mission has been to prepare professional nurses by providing a quality education. This mission continues at Illinois State. MCN is located in Edwards Hall.

B. Mission, Vision, Values, Philosophy, and Program Objectives

1. Mission

MCN 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 serves as the legal basis for the practice of nursing in the State of Illinois.

MCN 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.

The faculty of MCN believes that the knowledge, attitudes, and skills required for professional nursing are best achieved when built upon a solid foundation of study in the humanities and sciences. The faculty values a liberal arts education, which fosters an understanding of society and provides a humanistic basis for the study of nursing. Baccalaureate nursing education prepares the graduate for the practice of professional nursing and provides the basis for graduate study in nursing. Masters-level nursing education prepares nursing leaders and advanced practitioners, advances nursing scholarship, and provides the foundation for doctoral study.

The College offers a graduate program leading to the Master of Science in Nursing degree. The College offers a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) sequence and a Nursing Leadership and Management (NLM) sequence, a post-master's Family Nurse Practitioner certificate, and a School Nurse Graduate Certificate. The College also offers two doctoral programs: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree program and the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree program.

5. Graduate Program Purposes and Outcomes Objectives

The Master of Science in Nursing degree program offered at MCN is designed to prepare nurses to function in selected advanced nursing practice roles. The program builds on the generalist base of a baccalaureate program which focuses on nursing practice with individuals, groups, and community systems.

1. Purposes

- Prepare nurses for advanced practice in health care;
- Prepare graduates to assume leadership roles within the health care system at the regional, state, and national levels;
- Prepare nurses who can identify researchable problems and promote the use of evidence-based practice; and
- Provide the foundation for doctoral study.

2. MSN Program Outcomes

Program outcomes are congruent with the MCN mission and vision and have been developed to reflect the professional nursing standards and guidelines presented in *The Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing* (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2011). The master's degree in nursing from Illinois State University MCN prepares nurses to improve health outcomes by:

1. Advocating for compassionate patient-centered care with a commitment to serve vulnerable populations
2. Leading and evaluating safe and effective change for improved quality in practice and health care systems
3. Advancing a culture of excellence through lifelong learning and scholarly inquiry in a complex health care system
4. Applying ethical and policy analyses to assess, intervene, and evaluate care delivery in and across healthcare systems
5. Fostering and leading collaborative interprofessional care teams to provide individual, family and population-based care
6. Navigating and integrating services across the healthcare system that promote ethical, cost-effective, and innovative change
7. Translating evidence into practice within an interprofessional healthcare system
8. Using communication and information technology to collaborate with healthcare consumers and providers across the healthcare system

6. Certification Examination Eligibility

Graduates of the FNP master's degree sequence and the post-master's FNP certificate option are eligible to take the national certification examination for Family Nurse Practitioners offered through the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) and the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP).

The School Nurse Graduate Certificate prepares school nurses to take the content exam for the Professional Educator License-Certified School Nurse (PEL-CSN).

7. MCN Administrative Organization and Support Staff

Name	Edwards Hall Room	Telephone	E-mail
Dean Judy Neubrandner	Dean's Suite 3 rd Floor	Susan Lynch 438-2174	slynch@ilstu.edu
Associate Dean for Academics Seon Yoon Chung	Dean's Suite 3 rd Floor	Lana Blakemore 438-2176	ljblake@ilstu.edu
Director of Graduate Programs Kim Astroth	219	438-2367	kmastro@ilstu.edu
Director of Undergraduate Programs Melissa Jarvill	220	438-7844	mmjarvi@ilstu.edu
Associate Dean for Academic Support Janeen Mollenhauer	112 K	438-2417	jrmolle@ilstu.edu
Director, Business & Finance Diane Folken	308	438-2247	dmfolke@ilstu.edu
Director, Events and Publications Amy Irving	321	438-7418	amirvin@ilstu.edu
Director, Marketing and Recruitment Emily McMahon	321	438-0763	eemcma1@ilstu.edu
Director, Technology Chris Morgan	102	438-2637	crmorga@ilstu.edu
Academic Advisor/Transcultural Coordinator Melissa Moody	112 J	438-7035	mkmood@ilstu.edu
Program Sequence Leaders FNP – Jessica Sullivan NLM – Sandi Scheidenhelm	111 M	438-2659	jmsulli7@ilstu.edu kmastro@ilstu.edu
Coordinator, Instructional Experience Carla Leber	221	438-1403	cjleber@ilstu.edu
Administrative Clerk- Post-licensure Admissions and Compliance, Barbara Oldenburg	112H	438-2252	baolden@ilstu.edu

II. Academic Policies and Procedures

A. ISU Code of Conduct Values

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 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.

B. 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, or completed a test or assignment using unauthorized materials/assistance. A student's placement of his/her name on any academic exercise shall be considered an 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>

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. A signature of understanding will be completed at that time.

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. RN Licensure for the MSN Program

Applicants to and current students of the MCN graduate 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 Illinois if participating in the Family Nurse Practitioner sequence. Students participating in the Nursing Leadership and Management sequence must provide evidence of unencumbered RN licensure in their current state of employment. It is the applicant's/student's responsibility to ensure that the College has current licensure information on file. MCN 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.

E. Change of Address

All students need to notify the MCN Office of Student Services regarding any changes in address or telephone numbers to ensure students receive proper mailings. Students must also update their information through the MyIllinoisState Portal, Profile Tab, under Contact/Address Information.

F. Technology Requirements

Students can find the most current computer requirements on the MCN web page under the Student Life tab and Technology Requirements.

<https://nursing.illinoisstate.edu/studentlife/resources/technology-requirements/index.php>

G. Clinical Name Badges

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

H. Dress Code

As professional nurses and nursing students of MCN you are required to wear work place appropriate professional attire. A white lab coat is required at all FNP clinical placement sites with attached clinical MCN Student ID badge. Students must wear work appropriate closed toe shoes at all clinical placements. Body adornment should be minimally visible. If you have questions about appropriate attire, please address this with the appropriate Sequence Leader.

I. Class Attendance

Students are expected to be present at all scheduled discussions and class sessions. Frequent or prolonged absences from scheduled classes and/or co-requisite clinical course experiences may necessitate that the student drop the courses. All matters pertaining to student health and illness are to be referred to the course instructor. The course instructor should follow up informing the Sequence Leader and Director of Graduate Programs, if appropriate. A student wishing to drop a course must discuss the matter with the instructor and the Graduate Programs Academic Advisor. There are very important time sensitive dates for withdrawing from a course. Please see the Academic Calendar for the appropriate term. <http://registrar.illinoisstate.edu/calendar/>

J. Academic Progress

1. Progress Toward the Degree: Students are expected to adhere to their plan of study and to communicate with course instructors, Graduate Programs Academic Advisor, Sequence Leader and/or Director of Graduate Programs, 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 MCN, 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. Students who have been dismissed from a graduate sequence at MCN are not eligible for readmission to that sequence. 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 instructors are readily available to discuss student progress in courses. Students who, in the judgement of course instructors, are at risk for academic jeopardy will receive a Course Progress Report from the course instructor. Indication of a performance deficiency may include but are not limited to:
 - a. Instructors 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 instructors
- 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 Sequence Leader, Director of Graduate Programs and Graduate Programs 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 twelve semester hours of graduate credit from another college or university that is accredited by the appropriate regional accrediting association for use in meeting the requirements of the master’s degree. Credits more than six years old at the time of first registration into a degree program are not transferable from other institutions. Transfer credit may not be used in meeting the minimum number of 400-level credit hours required for the master’s degree. 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. Correspondence courses are not accepted toward a master’s degree. 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.

L. Independent Study Hours

Independent Study courses in the graduate program must be taken at the 400 level. Credit hour to work load requirements for Independent Study, NUR 400, are defined as one academic credit hour is equal to a minimum of 45 hours of work. For example, enrolling in 3 credit hours of NUR 400, would require the student spend a minimum of 135 hours of work to complete the academic hour requirements.

M. Clinical/Practicum Hours

All MSN sequences have courses in the plan of study that require clinical/practicum hours. To complete the equivalent of one academic credit hour, a student must complete a minimum of 60 clinical/practicum hours. *ie. 1 academic credit hour = 60 clinical/practicum hours*

N. Clinical Course Sequencing

1. Family Nurse Practitioner Sequence

Five of the courses in the Family Nurse Practitioner sequence are considered “clinical” courses. These are:

- NUR431 Diagnostic Reasoning for Advanced Practice Nursing
- NUR471 Family Nurse Practitioner I
- NUR473 Family Nurse Practitioner II
- NUR475 Family Nurse Practitioner III
- NUR477 Family Nurse Practitioner IV

These courses are to be taken in this sequential order and in consecutive academic terms. Thus, the student will take 431 in fall semester, 471 in spring semester, 473 in summer session, 475 in fall semester, and 477 in the spring semester. Family Nurse Practitioner IV (NUR477) is the synthesis course in which the student applies what has been learned in all the other clinical courses.

Students are expected to enroll in and complete the clinical sequence in consecutive academic terms. When a student, due to health or personal reasons, does not enroll in 471 in the spring semester after completing 431 in the fall semester, the student will be required to demonstrate proficiency in history-taking, physical examination, and documentation skills prior to being allowed to begin the 471 course in a subsequent term. This proficiency will be coordinated by the FNP Sequence Leader in consultation with the 431 course instructor. Inability to demonstrate such proficiency will result in development of a plan for acquisition of such skills prior to approval to enroll in the requested clinical course. Lack of sequential course completion among any of the other clinical courses will be reviewed by the FNP Sequence Leader and appropriate plans for meeting course objectives developed in consultation with course instructor.

2. Nursing Leadership and Management Sequence

Two of the courses in the Nursing Leadership and Management sequence are considered “clinical” courses. These are:

- NUR 425 Organizational Experience
- NUR 483 Executive Nursing Administration of Health Systems

Students will enroll in NUR 425 for a total of 5 credit hours over the course of their program. NUR 425 is variable credit and students may enroll beginning first year in the program with the final credit hour completed concurrently with NUR 565. NUR 483 will be completed in the fall term and final semester of the program. 1 credit hour is equal to 60 clinical/practice hours.

O. Preceptor Information

Clinical experiences begin at various times depending on the program sequence and plan of study.

Students must complete 480 practicum experience hours as part of the NLM curriculum. Students identify their own preceptors and sites for completion of these practicum experiences. Both preceptor and site must be approved by MCN and the site must have an affiliated agreement in place before the student can begin practicum experience. Often if a new facility is being used as a practicum site, affiliated agreements can take several months to secure. We strongly encourage students to begin thinking about who they might want to utilize as a preceptor as well as the site for each semester in the program and begin taking the steps necessary to secure that preceptor and submit necessary paperwork to allow for an affiliated agreement to be set up.

Preceptors for the FNP Sequence are pre-arranged for students who live in the central Illinois region. MCN will not pre-arrange preceptors for students in the St. Louis or Chicago area. If you live in the St. Louis or Chicago area or if you choose to select your own preceptor, you must discuss this early with the FNP Sequence Leader. As mentioned, securing a preceptor and affiliated agreement can take several weeks. Please note that many sites are now requiring requests be submitted to a preceptorship coordinator.

General minimum qualifications for preceptors are as follows: master's degree, two or more years of work experience in the area they would serve as preceptor, and licensed and certified as required for their specialty. Preceptors may not be the student's direct supervisor. A current resume or CV must be obtained and submitted with the Preceptor Agreement Form.

You will use the "Preceptor Agreement Form" to notify the College of your plans for preceptorships in the clinical course sequence. Please make additional copies as needed. Note that this is a planning form which is used in the development of a contract between the preceptor and MCN at Illinois State University. This form is NOT the contract. Only when the signed contract has been returned by the preceptor and you have received clearance from the Instructional Experience Coordinator can you participate in clinical experiences with that preceptor.

The process to be followed is:

1. Discuss your proposed preceptor and clinical site choices with the Sequence Leader or Course Instructor. The FNP Sequence Leader will be able to provide contact information for coordinators of preceptor sites, if required. The NLM Sequence Leader may be able to assist students in the same fashion depending on location.
2. A separate "Preceptor Agreement Form" is to be used to identify the preceptor for each of your clinical courses. NLM students may utilize the same preceptor for more than one term and if doing so may indicate those term dates on a single form.
3. Obtain the signature of the preceptor indicating his/her willingness to serve as your preceptor.
4. Obtain the name and approval signature of the preceptor's supervisor, if applicable.
5. Obtain the information from the preceptor or the office manager about the practice site, including the address, agency contact person to receive communications, phone numbers, and VERY IMPORTANTLY, the name of the person who is authorized to sign a contract for this preceptorship placement.
6. Obtain the correct name of the affiliating agency for the preceptorship.
7. Double check that all the information is complete, legible, and has correct spelling.
8. Email completed form to: Carla Leber, cjleber@ilstu.edu
Attention: Instructional Experience Coordinator
9. The Instructional Experience Coordinator will forward the Preceptor Agreement Form and the preceptor's CV to the appropriate Sequence Leader for review and approval.
10. Once the Instructional Experience Coordinator has received feedback from the Sequence Leader that the preceptor is acceptable, the Instructional Experience Coordinator will do a license check on the preceptor and verify a contract is in place for the clinical site. The Instructional Experience Coordinator will send an email to the student, the preceptor, and the Sequence Leader.
11. STUDENTS MAY NOT ATTEND CLINICAL UNTIL THE ABOVE EMAIL HAS BEEN RECEIVED.
12. Should you choose a clinical site with which the University does not have a contract, you need to be aware that obtaining the contract requires processing through the College, the University, and the clinical facility. YOU MAY NOT PARTICIPATE IN ANY CLINICAL EXPERIENCE WITH THE PRECEPTOR UNTIL THE SIGNED CONTRACT IS RETURNED.

The following are the absolute deadlines for submission of the forms.

Note: You may need more than one preceptor during a course to obtain the experiences required in the course. For example, for FNP II, you may need one site for OB experiences and another for GYN experiences, or you may be able to see both types of clients within a women's health practice. If you need assistance in locating a preceptor site, please feel free to contact your course instructors or the Sequence Leader. See deadlines associated with all clinical courses below:

Course	Semester	Preceptor Planning Forms	Type of Preceptorship Needed
FNP Sequence			
NUR 471	Spring	October 15	Family practice sites which include a significant pediatric population; pediatric practices (primary emphasis of course is pediatrics with some beginning adult content)
NUR 473	Summer	March 15	OB/GYN sites
NUR 475	Fall	May 15	Family practice or internal medicine primary care sites, geriatric specialty sites (emphasis of course is adult/geriatric)
NUR 477	Spring	October 15	Family practice or internal medicine primary care sites (encompassing clients across the lifespan)
NLM Sequence			
NUR 425	Offered in Spring, Summer and Fall semesters of the NLM Sequence	Spring - October 15 Summer – March 15 Fall – May 15	Human resources, finances, and leadership knowledge from previous course is put into practice
NUR 483	Fall	May 15	Capstone seminar and 3 academic credit hour practicum experience related to role responsibilities of the nurse executive

P. Continuing Enrollment Policy

When a student does not progress through the FNP graduate program sequence according to the plan of study creating a lapse in clinical practice, the student must register for ongoing clinical practicum until the graduate degree is awarded. The practicum should consist of experiences appropriate for the sequence with a minimum of 120 clinical hours per academic session. This practicum will be handled as an Independent Study with the Sequence Leader. A contract specifying the clinical site, nature of supervision, number of clinical hours, and scheduling is developed between the Sequence Leader and the student and signed by both parties.

Q. Thesis Assistance

A thesis is not a requirement for our MSN program sequences. However, graduate students choosing to complete a thesis may obtain assistance online at the following link:

- <https://grad.illinoisstate.edu/students/thesis-dissertation/>
- Required Forms for Thesis
- Continuous Enrollment Requirements
- Writing Format
- Research
- Copyright & Permissions

Information and advice to assist in successful completion of master's thesis work is also available by contacting: dissert@ilstu.edu or call 309-438-4593 to speak to an assistant.
Illinois State University Graduate School
Campus Box 4040, 309 Hovey Hall
Normal, IL 61790-4040

R. Procedure for changing sequences within the MSN program

Students are admitted to the MSN program in a specific sequence (FNP, NLM). Once admitted, if a student decides they would prefer to pursue a different sequence in the MSN program, that student must go through a reapplication process. This would entail applying to the ISU Office of Admissions and applying to their sequence of choice for the next term the College is admitting. There is no guarantee that acceptance to one sequence would mean acceptance to the other.

S. Readmission to the Graduate Program

Graduate students who wish to return to MCN after a lapse in registration of three or more semesters (including summer term) should apply for readmission at the Office of Admissions, <http://admissions.illinoisstate.edu/apply/>.

Additional admission materials may be required by MCN 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. Availability of openings in clinical courses is not guaranteed.

Students who are not in good standing and who have not maintained continuous enrollment, 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 sequence at MCN are not eligible for readmission to that sequence. Readmission to a different sequence will require that the applicant meet the Academic Progress Policy and complete an application to the newly selected sequence, including a new 2-3 page essay outlining educational and professional career goals relevant to the newly selected sequence.

T. Advising

Students in the MSN program are advised by the Graduate Programs Academic Advisor. Upon admission to MCN, students will be contacted by the Academic Advisor to review the plan of study and plan for registration. Every semester enrolled in the MSN program, students will receive an email with registration information to their ISU email account. Students will only be eligible to register for the upcoming semester if they are compliant with essential health and safety requirements. The Health and Safety Compliance Officer provides updates to the Academic Advisor each semester. Those students compliant with health and safety will receive permits to enroll in courses for that upcoming term. Students will be notified through their ISU email account that they are cleared to enroll in courses for the upcoming term. 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 Academic Advisor to develop a revised plan of study. Change to a plan of study most often will result in delayed graduation.

U. Statement of Unsafe Practice and Attainment of Course Objectives in Clinical Courses

A student may fail a clinical course based on unsafe nursing care, regardless of grades on course requirements or assignments. Unsafe nursing care shall be defined as any practice or behavior that deliberately or inadvertently endangers clients, families, institutional staff, instructors, or other students including but not limited to the following:

- Failure to maintain confidentiality and/or ethical standards of nursing practice.
- Failure to carry out nursing procedures in a safe manner.
- Engaging in activities for which the student is not prepared.

- Lying or deliberately giving inaccurate information.
- Engaging in client care while a physical, mental, or emotional condition is a threat to others (e.g., communicable disease, intoxication, or emotional disorder).

V. Student Grievance Policy

MCN 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 the 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 in a substantive way. 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...”

What a student at MCN must do to file a grievance:

1. Informal Process

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

2. Formal Process

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

- 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:
 - Be prepared in Word
 - Be signed and dated
 - Include student’s current address and phone number
 - Be concise and specific, with names and dates wherever relevant and possible
 - Clearly state the act or decision being challenged
 - Clearly state why the act or decision is unauthorized or unjust
 - 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.

- 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.
- The Director of Graduate Programs will attempt to facilitate resolution of the grievance at the College level.
- If a resolution is not achieved within the College, a grievance request may be filed by the student with the University Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access as appropriate.
- Information about the grievance process can be obtained through the Illinois State University Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution website at: <http://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/conflict/conduct/>

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.

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

W. 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 course instructor who assigned the grade. The full policy can be found at <http://policy.illinoisstate.edu/academic/4-1-20.shtml>

X. 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 MCN. 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 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, and a drug test. 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 clinical experiences may require additional criminal background checks and finger printing to participate at their clinical site. Faculty will advise when this is necessary. Note that these requirements are subject to change at any time 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 or participate in courses and/or clinical until deficiencies are completed.

Y. Blood Borne Pathogens Requirement

Students and faculty of MCN 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: <https://ehs.illinoisstate.edu/safety/occupational/blood/>

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
4. The student and faculty complete an Incident Report available on the ISU Environment Health and Safety website at <https://riskmanagement.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/Non-employeeAccidentReport2.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 MCN 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.

Z. 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.

III. College Support and Organizations

A. MCN Orientation

The MCN Orientation is scheduled for Friday August 14, 2020. MCN Orientation includes a program overview, information about advising, academic policies and procedures, health and safety compliance requirements, ISU’s ReggieNet training, library orientation, and the opportunity to meet your program faculty and peers. You will be 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

MCN 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. 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 an interlibrary loan. Requested articles are delivered to the requestor in PDF format using email.

As part of the scheduled Fall 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 MCN.

C. Sigma

The mission of the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International Honors Society of Nursing (Sigma), is advancing world health and celebrating nursing excellence in scholarship, leadership, and service. Xi Pi Chapter of Sigma is located at MCN. Graduate students will be invited to join our chapter during their academic program following these criteria established by Sigma:

- Graduate students are required to have completed a quarter of the nursing program and have a GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale and meet the expectation for academic integrity.
- Students in graduate programs, who are registered nurses, legally recognized to practice in their country and have a minimum of a baccalaureate degree or the equivalent in any field, shall be eligible to be considered as a Nurse Leader at any point in the program.

- Graduates of master's program may be considered under the master's student criteria up to one year following graduation providing they have a minimum 3.5 GPA; this last criterion applies only to those students who were unaware of their eligibility and did not apply while a student.

Graduate students are eligible to apply for research scholarships from the Xi Pi Chapter. All things considered equal, Xi Pi will give members preference when awarding any scholarship monies.

IV. 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 improve learning in classroom and clinical experiences.

B. Submitting Request for Letter of Recommendation

There is a formal process for requesting a letter of recommendation from a faculty or staff member. 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). Guidelines are available for students to ensure that faculty/staff members have information with which to provide your letter of reference. Guidelines can be located at the Advising Tab of your MCN program page. Please use this process when seeking out faculty/staff for a recommendation.

V. Graduation, Commencement, and MSN Outstanding Achievement Award

Graduation and Commencement information at Illinois State University can be found on <http://www.graduationservices.ilstu.edu/>

This website includes frequently asked questions about graduation and the commencement ceremony. It is important to be aware of all dates and deadlines associated with graduation and commencement ceremonies. Student must apply for graduation very early in the term in which they are scheduled to graduate. Students must also indicate when completing the application for graduation their intentions for participation in the commencement ceremony.

Students graduating are eligible to apply for the Graduate Outstanding Achievement Award. The recipient of this award is selected by faculty who teach in the MSN program and serve on the Graduate Program Curriculum Committee. The award recipient is selected based on specified criteria.

A. Graduate Outstanding Achievement Award: Family Nurse Practitioner Sequence

The recipient of this award is selected by full time graduate faculty serving on the MCN Graduate Program Curriculum Committee. The award recipient is selected based on evidence of meeting the following criteria:

- 1) academic excellence and outstanding project work,
- 2) excellence in nursing practice,
- 3) effective leadership,
- 4) ability to collaborate in a caring manner with clients and team members to improve health outcomes, and
- 5) effective communication skills at a level appropriate for teaching-learning, public speaking and professional writing.

One student from the FNP sequence will be presented the Graduate Outstanding Achievement Award: FNP sequence at the commencement ceremony in May each year.

Students should submit an application for this award by providing the following:

1. Application letter addressed to the MCN Graduate Programs Academic Advisor
2. Resume or Curriculum Vitae
3. Current cumulative GPA
4. One letter of recommendation from a faculty member in their sequence
5. A three-page double spaced paper that speaks to each of the five criteria listed above
6. Artifacts that exhibit the five criteria listed above

B. Graduate Outstanding Achievement Award: Nursing Leadership and Management

The recipient of this award is selected by the full-time graduate faculty of MCN. The award recipient is selected based on evidence of meeting the following criteria:

- 1) academic excellence and outstanding project work,
- 2) excellence in nursing practice,
- 3) effective leadership,
- 4) ability to collaborate in a caring manner with clients and team members to improve health outcomes, and
- 5) effective communication skills at a level appropriate for teaching-learning, public speaking and professional writing.

One student from the NLM sequence will be presented the Graduate Outstanding Achievement Award: NLM sequence at the commencement ceremony in December each year.

Students should submit an application for this award by providing the following:

1. Application letter addressed to the MCN Graduate Programs Academic Advisor
2. Resume or Curriculum Vitae
3. Current cumulative GPA
4. One letter of recommendation from a faculty member in their sequence
5. A three-page double spaced paper that speaks to each of the five criteria listed above
6. Artifacts that exhibit the five criteria listed above