



GRADUATE PROGRAMS

**GRADUATE NURSING
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)
Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)**

Academic Year 2026-2027

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Mount Mercy University

Mission

Mount Mercy is a Catholic University which provides student-focused education in the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy and welcomes people of all beliefs to join our community in pursuit of baccalaureate and graduate education and compassionate service to those in need.

We strive for excellence in accomplishing our mission through our four interdependent goals.

Goals

Using reflective judgment

The ability to think clearly and carefully, argue coherently, and evaluate competing truth claims critically are fundamental to a college education. Reflective judgment requires a knowledge of basic fact, examination and evaluation of assumptions; adequate justification for drawing a conclusion; and understanding implications of drawing that conclusion. With these skills, individuals can solve problems creatively and integrate knowledge across disciplines.

Engaging in strategic communication

Strategic communication requires selecting from a range of options in order to accomplish a chosen goal in an ethical manner. These options include construction and interpretation of messages in the written, oral and aesthetic forms using appropriate technology.

Serving the common good

The common good is at the heart of Catholic social teaching. Because people are social by nature, every individual's good relates necessarily to the common good, the sum of social conditions that allows all people to reach their human potential more fully. It includes respect for and ethical interaction with every person and the natural environment and, in the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy, service for the well-being of all humanity and action in the cause of justice in the world.

Promoting purposeful living

A liberal education enables students to achieve a greater degree of freedom upon which to act purposefully. Since development of purpose entails planning for life based on a set of priorities, Mount Mercy University provides opportunities for spiritual growth, intellectual engagement, vocational clarity, social development, physical well-being, emotional maturity and responsible community leadership.

Values

As members of the Mount Mercy University community, grounded in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy and our Catholic identity, we are committed to:

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Lifelong learning and education of the whole person | 4. Justice |
| 2. Pursuit of truth and dignity | 5. Gratitude |
| 3. Commitment to students | 6. Hospitality |
| | 7. Service |

Martin-Herold College of Nursing & Health (MHCNH)

Vision

Educate and inspire nurses and health professionals to discover, serve, and lead.

Mission

The mission of the Martin-Herold College of Nursing and Health (MHCNH) is inspired by the Sisters of Mercy and their dedication to service in meeting human needs where they exist. The MHCNH faculty strive to deliver exceptional educational experiences that prepare nurses and health professionals with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be self-motivated, compassionate professionals, innovative, visionary leaders, and life-long learners in a dynamic society.

Philosophy

The faculty of the MHCNH recognize that the United States healthcare system is an ever-changing entity with multiple layers of care and numerous providers supported by a variety of regulators and payers. Despite a healthcare system that provides lifesaving care to millions of patients, many concerns with costs, quality and access persist. Knowing that this system is only as effective as those who operate within it, the MHCNH educates students through several delivery modes to be critical thinkers and decision makers, participative learners, informed providers to those in need and conscientious members of society. The faculty of the college believe that students are active learners who seek knowledge and guidance in the healthcare fields of their choice. The students' knowledge develops throughout the program and supports clinical judgment skills obtained through study, practice and demonstrations using simulation and clinical experiences. Clinical practice occurs in a variety of settings and is an essential component of all programs.

Healthy lives, as the object of all healthcare services, is the focus of the faculty and students of the MHCNH. Recognizing that health is a concept that includes physical, occupational, emotional, social, environmental, financial, intellectual or spiritual aspects, students are directed toward educational experiences that will prepare them to prevent as well as treat unhealthy states for individuals, families, communities and systems. Self-care and health are factors in each student's ability to assist others. The faculty emphasize that to be an effective provider of care one models appropriate health behaviors.

The heritage of the Sisters of Mercy is evident in the curriculum of the university and in each of the health care programs. Students respond when others are in need and recognize that service is a characteristic of a well-educated provider of healthcare.

Objectives

The graduate will:

1. Integrate knowledge derived from liberal arts, sciences, technology, and healthcare to promote evidence-based practice.
2. Exemplify values of the healthcare professionals. (Altruism, Autonomy, Human Dignity, Integrity, Social Justice)
3. Implement safe and effective client-centered services
4. Embrace the culture of professional healthcare providers.
5. Demonstrate personal and professional growth.

The MHCNH vision, mission, philosophy, and objectives were revised and approved April 18, 2019.

Graduate Nursing Programs

Vision (same as Martin-Herold College of Nursing & Health)

Educate and inspire nurses and health professionals to discover, serve, and lead.

Mission (same as Martin-Herold College of Nursing & Health)

The mission of the Martin-Herold College of Nursing and Health (MHCNH) is inspired by the Sisters of Mercy and their dedication to service in meeting human needs where they exist. The MHCNH faculty strive to deliver exceptional educational experiences that prepare nurses and health professionals with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be self-motivated, compassionate professionals, innovative, visionary leaders, and life-long learners in a dynamic society.

Philosophy

In support of the mission of Mount Mercy, the graduate programs in nursing promote reflective judgment, strategic communication, service for the common good and purposeful living. The profession of nursing, particularly as sponsored and practiced by the Sisters of Mercy, is considered by the faculty to be founded on the belief that all members of the community are biophysical, psychosocial, spiritual beings with dignity and value. The focus on health promotion and disease prevention addresses the needs of individuals and communities through evidence-based practice, leadership, policy development, and education of professional nurses. Attention to vulnerable populations is a central focus of the program in all aspects of the curricula.

Purpose

The MMU MHCNH Graduate Programs of Nursing (MSN & DNP) will continue to extend the mission of Mount Mercy through the preparation of nurses to serve where human needs exist. Throughout the educational process, nurses will acquire advanced knowledge and skills of nursing practice and processes. Nurses will be challenged to be visionary on the impact they have on healthcare systems and the lives of clients and communities. Nurses prepared at the graduate level will be the leaders, educators, and practitioners of the nursing profession and extend their practice to provide expertise in the care of all populations.

MHCNH Objectives (same as Martin-Herold College of Nursing & Health. NOTE: MSN & DNP Programs also have specific Program Objectives and Outcomes in respective sections of Handbook).

The graduate will:

1. Integrate knowledge derived from liberal arts, sciences, technology, and healthcare to promote evidence-based practice.
2. Exemplify values of the healthcare professionals. (Altruism, Autonomy, Human Dignity, Integrity, Social Justice)
3. Implement safe and effective client-centered services
4. Embrace the culture of professional healthcare providers.
5. Demonstrate personal and professional growth.

MSN and DNP Program Approval and Accreditation

The master's degree program in nursing and Doctor of Nursing Practice program are approved by the Iowa Board of Nursing. The master's degree program in nursing and Doctor of Nursing Practice program

at Mount Mercy University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.ccnaccreditation.org>).

Students' Rights and Responsibilities

Students Have a Right to:	And a Responsibility to:
Be treated with respect and as a professional.	Treat others with respect and act professionally.
Equal treatment regardless of race, color, creed, age, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability.	Treat others equally without regard to race, color, creed, age, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability.
Access to their own records and confidential treatment of those records.	Respond to any University, Program, or faculty communication in a timely manner.
Have academic and advising information treated confidentially.	Actively participate in the advising process with their academic faculty advisor.
Share information regarding self, client(s), agencies, or situations to illustrate points in class in a manner that is general so confidentiality will be preserved.	Respect & maintain confidentiality of all conversations & information in class, with peers, & faculty.
Appropriate academic and career advising.	Actively participate in academic advising process with academic advisor and career advising with academic advisor and faculty.
Know and be informed of the policies for admission, progression, and graduation.	Know and abide by policies for admission, progression, and graduation as listed in the MMU Catalog and Graduate Nursing Programs Student Handbook .
Learn about policy changes prior to effective date.	Evaluate policy changes on an ongoing basis giving such information through proper channels. Respond to proposed policy changes through appropriate channels prior to the effective date.
Participate in the governing actions of the University and College of Nursing.	Know and use established communication channels. Provide student representation on committees, share information with peer students, and respond to representatives' inquiries.
Participate in curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation.	Provide student representation on committees as specified in the Graduate Committee bylaws.
Accurate information about course (classroom, lab, or clinical) requirements at the onset of enrollment and changes as soon as possible.	Read course (classroom, lab, or clinical) syllabi to prepare for and actively participate using thoughtful, in-depth experience or fact-based information in all classroom, clinical, and laboratory experiences.

MSN & DNP Student Representation on Graduate Nursing Committee

The Student Representative is the liaison between student cohorts and the Graduate Nursing Committee. A Student Representative will be identified (self-nomination or election by peers) in each cohort of students (MSN & DNP Programs) in the first course of the curricula. Student Representative contact information and meeting schedules are on Brightspace > Graduate Nursing Student Resources > Announcements. Student Representative contact information is removed from the Announcements once all students from the cohort have finished the program. Student Representatives seek feedback (positive and/or constructive critique) from peers and submit feedback to the Program Director or the Clinical and Recruitment Coordinator prior to monthly Graduate Nursing Committee meetings. Students can request their feedback be anonymous or identified by name of student. Student Representatives can attend the monthly Graduate Nursing Committee meeting (in person or via technology) or request a brief response from the Committee regarding the feedback the Student Representative submitted. If a Student Representative attends a Graduate Nursing Committee meeting, any student-sensitive information will be discussed after the Student Representative leaves the meeting. The Student Representative determines how to share relevant Graduate Nursing Committee information with their cohort. The Graduate Nursing Committee bylaws will be shared with the Student Representative upon request. A Student Representative can request to be removed from the role of Student Representative at any time by notifying the Director of the Graduate Nursing Programs in writing. See Appendix D for MSN & DNP Student Representation on Graduate Nursing Committee form.

Recognition for Graduate Nursing Students

Sigma Theta Tau International - Kappa Xi Chapter

Kappa Xi Chapter, Sigma Theta Tau International, is the nursing honor society. It is the second-largest nursing organization in the United States and among the largest and most prestigious in the world. The honor society was founded in 1922 by six nursing students at Indiana University. On April 30, 1988, the Kappa Xi Chapter was chartered at Mount Mercy University. Kappa Xi Chapter (Number 252) inducted 150 members from among outstanding alumni, students, and community nurse leaders. The chapter meets regularly throughout the year, presenting programs focusing on scholarship and research in nursing.

Each fall, graduate students (master's and doctorate) who meet the following criteria are invited to accept induction:

- Have completed ½ of the nursing curriculum
- Cumulative grade point average of at least 3.5 (computed according to University policies)
- Meet expectations of academic integrity

The annual induction ceremony for graduate students is held each December, at which time new members being inducted attend a formal induction ceremony. If a graduate student has been previously inducted into another Sigma Theta Tau Chapter, the student has the option to transfer Chapter membership to Kappa Xi or may opt to belong to more than one Chapter (<https://www.sigmanursing.org/why-sigma/sigma-membership/membership-faqs>). For further information regarding Kappa Xi and Sigma Theta Tau, inquire at the Graduate Nursing office.

Mount Mercy University Policies Graduate Nursing Programs

Graduate students should review and are responsible for following all Mount Mercy University Policies and information in the online College Catalog (<http://catalog.mtmercy.edu/>) This site also allows a student to access the Graduate College Catalog. NOTE: This Graduate Nursing Student Handbook includes only a selected number of policies.

Mandatory Requirements

All students are required to comply with submission of mandatory requirement documents as instructed in registration appointment and/or orientation. Students will submit their documents to Exxat (for all students starting August 2026; prior students finish with Medatrax) for review. Students will receive instructions via email from Exxat. Students must comply by deadline for submission or they may be delayed from beginning their clinical and/or practicum which may delay graduation.

Exam Policy

Exams and quizzes are among many methods for all students to facilitate the formative and summative evaluation of student learning and for FNP-DNP students to foster preparedness for the certification examination following graduation. Case studies, presentations, avatar-based simulation, and discussions encompass some of the variety of methods used to achieve the above goals.

The following guidelines reflect how examinations and quizzes are administered, results are disclosed, and students review their accomplishments.

1. MSN quizzes and exams are online. All quizzes have an option to show the students which, if any, items they answered incorrectly.
2. FNP-DNP 'predictor testing' is a timed online exam provided thrice during the program. This may be done on campus or at home.
3. FNP-DNP physical assessment exams are completed in person in the Graduate Center simulation lab.
4. As with all assignments, make-up of missed exams or quizzes is at the discretion of the faculty.
5. In addition to the nursing examination policy, the Mount Mercy University Academic Integrity Policy states:
Misrepresenting illness or personal crisis or otherwise intentionally misleading instructors as an excuse for missed or late academic work, thus intentionally missing an exam is an example of academic misconduct. Testing at scheduled times is expected and can be adjusted only for clearly legitimate personal or family illness/emergency.

Late Assignments

With the exception of discussion boards, all assignments may be subjected to a 10% per day reduction if submitted late. Discussion Board posts are generally given no credit if submitted late. The specific policy for each course is clearly described in the course syllabus.

Assignment Minimum Standards

Papers should be written using the course assignment directions in the syllabus, rubric(s), and the latest edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)* if applicable. Use of these writing resources is expected.

1. If a minimum of 80% is not achieved on an assignment, with the exception of the Discussion Board, the instructor may request that the paper be rewritten. This is up the discretion of the instructor only and is not per student request.
2. The paper must be rewritten to meet all the specifications of the course assignment. *If the rewritten work does not meet all the specifications of the course assignment, the student will earn the grade of the initial submission.*
3. No more than 80% can be earned on any paper requiring resubmission and only one submission will be accepted.
4. Papers achieving 80% or more may not be rewritten.
5. Papers achieving < 80% due to a late assignment deduction may not be rewritten.
6. Papers must be submitted by due date. Extensions will be given only in extreme circumstances. 10% of the total points per day may be deducted for papers submitted late without a proper extension. These points cannot be earned if the paper is rewritten. If this deduction causes the overall score to fall below 80%, the paper may not be rewritten.
7. Mount Mercy students are responsible for authenticating any assignment submitted to faculty. Mount Mercy University faculty may employ various means of ascertaining authenticity – such as Internet searches, requiring students to explain their work and/or process orally, or using “Copyleaks” feature in Brightspace, which also checks for AI-produced work. Students are required to be familiar with Copyleaks Similarity Report. If asked, you must be able to produce proof that the assignment you submit is your work. Therefore, we recommend engaging in a verifiable working process on assignments. Keep copies of all drafts of your work, save copies of research materials, keep logs or journals of your work on assignments and papers, and learn to save drafts or versions of assignments under individual file names to demonstrate changes from one document to another. The inability to authenticate your work, should faculty request it, is sufficient grounds for failing the assignment.
8. Academic dishonesty, such as unauthorized collusion, plagiarism and cheating, will not be tolerated. Student papers will not be re-graded (be sure to clarify any questions before you hand in your papers).
9. It is highly recommended that students make a copy of all formal papers for their own files.

Attendance

Attendance requirements in graduate courses are established by programs and individual instructors. Attendance policies are stated in each course syllabus. Official attendance will be taken on the first day of class for classes in the block schedule for purposes of validating class rosters and meeting Federal regulations. Students enrolled in MSN online courses will complete an APA Quiz in the course by the end of the first Tuesday (11:59pm CST) or earlier as designated by instructor, which will serve as attendance.

Extra Credit/Bonus Points

Extra credit/bonus points can only raise a grade one level (e.g. B- to B). Extra credit/bonus points are added to the course grade after a student has achieved overall course grade of 80% or higher. Extra credit points may not be used to raise a failing grade (C+) to a passing grade (B-).

Activities Outside of Classroom

If students are expected to attend an off-campus activity/conference and elect not to attend they will be required to submit an alternative assignment with similar objectives as designed and determined by the instructor.

Add/Drop Policy

The block calendar add/drop dates are located in the Block Academic Calendar. See Tuition and Fees.

Policy on BSN or RN-BSN Students Taking MSN Courses (MMU+)

- Undergraduate nursing (BSN and RN-BSN) students who have a 3.5 GPA or above, and room in their schedule to do so, may take up to 9 credits of graduate study in the MSN Program as an undergraduate. These courses are referred to as MMU+ courses.
- A BSN student may take up to 12 credits of MMU+ courses *if they are transitioning directly into the MSN program*.
- All students wishing to take MMU+ credits must have the approval of their advisor and the Director of Graduate Nursing Programs. Course selection is based on the discretion and approval of the Director of Graduate Nursing Programs.
- MMU+ credits may be applied to the MSN degree at Mount Mercy so long as the MSN program is started within five years of the last course completed.

Policy on Master-Level Students Taking Doctoral-Level Courses

- MSN students enrolled in a master's level program may earn up to 9 credit hours of doctoral course work. Credits earned under this policy may be applied to a doctoral program with the approval of the Director of Graduate Nursing Programs.

Admission, Progression & Graduation Policies & Procedures Graduate Nursing Programs

Mount Mercy University Martin-Herold College of Nursing & Health aims to develop highly qualified nursing professionals at the graduate level. The graduate nursing programs recognize the heritage of the Sisters of Mercy in meeting the needs of others and therefore are dedicated to preparing graduates to lead the nursing profession while meeting the challenges of an ever-changing, complex healthcare system. Students embrace the culture of the nursing profession while engaging in experiences that promote personal and professional development. Graduate students engage in the analysis and synthesis of research, policy, systems, and practice using critical inquiry, allowing them to implement appropriate evidence-based nursing interventions. Whether employed in the community or an acute care setting, nurses will acquire the knowledge and skills related to health promotion, disease prevention, population-based nursing practice, education, management, and leadership to lead, teach, advocate, and practice at an advanced level with individuals, families, and communities.

Admission

Applicants desiring admission to the Graduate Nursing Programs must meet the graduate admissions criteria as well as Graduate Nursing Programs criteria as listed in the College Catalog. Applicants should apply through the Graduate Admissions Office

(<https://www.mtmercy.edu/graduate/admissions/index>). Final admission decisions rest with the Director of Graduate Nursing Programs and the Graduate Nursing Committee members. In all cases, admission requirements can be waived at the discretion of the Program Director.

Admission - International Students

Mount Mercy welcomes international students to its campus, recognizing that they enrich the educational experience for all students by contributing to the intellectual, social, and cultural diversity of the Mount Mercy community. Additional items are required for admission for international students can be found in the College Catalog.

Admission - Post-Graduate Emphasis

The Mount Mercy University post-master emphasis assists post-graduate nurses (MMU alumni or non-MMU alumni) seeking to enhance their expertise and gain competency in an area of nursing not previously studied. The post-master emphasis programs also strengthen the capability of master or doctoral-prepared nurses who are planning or already involved in, a role expansion or change.

Progression

Students are expected to progressively demonstrate improvement in their personal and professional development while enrolled in the Graduate Nursing Program. Students play a collaborative, active role in the progression through Graduate Nursing Programs.

Employment

Given the rigorous nature of graduate education, students may find it difficult to maintain full-time employment. If the student decides to maintain employment during graduate education, it is expected that employment will not interfere with or impede any portion of the student's academic responsibilities. This includes but is not limited to, attendance at mandatory meetings, classes, clinical lab experiences, completion of assignments, and clinical experiences. Students in the FNP-DNP program will not be able to maintain a Monday-through-Friday schedule during their 2nd year as clinical requirements can often exceed 32 hours a week.

Repeating Courses

A student receiving a "C+", "C" or "C-" may repeat a graduate course once. For the MSN & DNP programs, a maximum of one course may be repeated. Both the original course and the repeated course remain on the transcript. The cumulative grade point average will include only the second grade.

Continuous Enrollment

NOTE: To complete the MSN and DNP program, students must be enrolled in summer courses.

Withdrawal Policy

Students who choose to withdraw from a course are to follow the Mount Mercy University Withdrawal Policy as described at <http://catalog.mtmercy.edu/academicpolicyinformation/>.

Statute of Limitations

MSN students enrolled in a graduate program must complete all degree requirements no later than six years after the date of first enrollment in the program. A student may petition the Associate Provost for an extension for a limited period if such extension is sought before the six-year limit expires.

DNP students are required to complete a project to graduate. Students are continuously enrolled in NU890: DNP Clinical Practice Project until the project is completed or until the end of the program. If additional time is needed to complete the DNP project, students may enroll in NU893: DNP Clinical

Practice Project Continuation each semester (1ch per semester for Fall, Spring, and Summer) until the Project is completed. A student has three years after the regular program end to complete the DNP project.

Grading Policies

Graduate courses are graded as follows:

Letter Grade	GPA Points	Percent
A	4.0	93-100
A-	3.67	90-92.99
B+	3.33	87-89.99
B	3.00	83-86.99
B-*	2.67	80-82.99
C+	2.33	78-79.99
C	2.00	75-77.99
C-	1.67	70-74.99

- F Failure: no credit earned. A student earning an “F” grade may not repeat the Course for which the “F” was received without the approval of the Program Director.
- I Incomplete: a temporary grade given only when extenuating circumstances prevent completion of all course work on time.
- IP Incomplete in Process: a temporary grade given when a practicum and/or thesis work has not been completed on time. NOTE: An IP grade must be complete within six months of the close of the term in which it was given.”
- P Pass: a mark used to show satisfactory performance.
- W Withdraw: A non-punitive grade which will be entered on the permanent record if a student withdraws from a class within the published withdrawal period.
- NA Non-attendance

The cumulative grade point average is calculated by dividing cumulative grade points by cumulative hours graded.

NOTE:

- All NU courses must be passed with a “B- “or higher to receive credit.
- Courses with a lower grade must be repeated.
- For the MSN & DNP programs a maximum of one course may be repeated.

Graduation

Graduation Requirements

To be eligible to graduate, a student must meet the following requirements:

1. Minimum GPA of 3.0
2. Completion of all coursework with no incompletes
3. Meet all program-specific requirements
4. Application for graduation

The student is, in every case, responsible for ensuring that he or she properly applies for graduation and meets the graduation requirements.

Awarding of Post-Master's Additional Emphasis

Students must complete all courses required for the emphasis they are seeking with a B- or above. Post-graduate emphasis programs may be completed in less than 7 months but must be completed within 6 years. Time to completion may vary by student, depending on individual progress and credits transferred. All post-master's emphases prepare the student for certification exams through external certifying bodies.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition

See the College Catalog for current tuition rates and graduate student fees. Graduate students are allowed deferred billing which states tuition is due the day the class starts. If you are reimbursed by your employer, and you have a completed Deferred Payment Plan Enrollment Form on file in the Student Financial Services Office, tuition is due 45 days from the end of each block.

Delinquent Accounts

All students, except those on employer reimbursement, are required to have their entire account paid in full by the last day of class. Any balance remaining after this date will be considered delinquent. Students who are reimbursed by their employers are required to have their entire account paid in full within 45 days of receiving their grade report for each class or their account will be considered delinquent. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Student Financial Services Office that s/he is eligible for employer reimbursement as well as notify them of any changes in reimbursement status. Students with delinquent accounts may be subject to the following actions until the balance is paid in full:

1. All current and future registrations will be cancelled
2. All financial aid for future terms will be cancelled
3. Official transcripts will not be made available
4. Accounts will be turned over to a collection agency unless arrangements have been made for the timely payment of the delinquent amount due.

Additional Fees

See the College Catalog for any additional fees charged by the University. Additional MSN and/or DNP program specific fees are listed in the respective sections of the Handbook.

Professionalism

Academic Integrity

Mount Mercy values integrity and honesty in all aspects of academics and campus life. As part of the academic mission, the institution has Academic Integrity Definitions and Procedures (in College Catalog) for which all students are responsible. The Mount Mercy community encourages all students to carefully consider these definitions, to adhere to these standards, and to ask for guidance if in doubt. This policy applies to all students enrolled in online or on campus courses. Disciplinary procedures will be modified as appropriate if a student is taking courses from a distance and unable to participate in person.

Graduate Student Grievance Procedure

The College Catalog describes a specific procedure for graduate student grievances. These procedures apply to all graduate students enrolled in online or on-campus courses. Disciplinary procedures will be modified as appropriate if a student is taking courses from a distance and unable to participate in person. As noted, the student is expected to initiate the discussion with the faculty member first. If unable to resolve this, please reach out to your advisor, who, for all Graduate Nursing Students, is the Program Director.

Digital Etiquette

Mobile Devices: Mobile devices connect individuals with family, friends, work settings, and the community. The classroom should be a place apart, however briefly, from the outside world. You will learn more if you can concentrate on the course while you are in class. Students should turn off cell phones and/or other mobile devices before entering the classroom. If your phone rings, please silent the call and turn phone to vibrate or silent. If you need to take a phone call, please leave the room before starting your phone conversation. If you have a personal situation that requires you to check or respond to messages on your cell phone, please inform faculty in advance.

Laptops: Laptops or mobile devices are not required for the Graduate Nursing Programs although you may want to bring a laptop or mobile device if faculty ask you to work collaboratively or use the internet for course activities. If a faculty member poses a question and does not have the answer or expect students to answer, that is not permission to look up the answer on your laptop or mobile device. You may use a laptop to take notes during class. However, laptops also present temptations in class that many students find irresistible. You should not use a laptop during class for any reason other than immediate class activities – for example do not check email and do not submit or complete assignments. Laptops being used for non-class activities not only distracts you (meaning you will be less able to meaningfully participate in the class), they also distract anyone around or behind you. If you often seem distracted by what's on your laptop screen, faculty will ask you to put your laptop away.

Computer and Internet

You are responsible for ensuring that you have a reliable up-to-date computer, updated virus protection, and Internet connection to access the course materials and complete course activities. You need to make alternate arrangements in case of unexpected computer and Internet problems. Students should take the initiative to learn and become progressively more proficient on computer software used for course assignments.

Communication and Netiquette

Effective written communication is an important part of learning. In a face-to-face classroom, body language, verbal responses, and questions help the facilitator and participants communicate. In an electronic environment, misunderstanding can easily occur when participants do not follow the basic rules of netiquette. Therefore, please use the following guidelines when communicating.

- Do not use all capital letters in online communication, as doing so indicates you are yelling. Limited use of capitalized words is acceptable when you need to emphasize a point.
- Use appropriate and descriptive subject line in discussion forum posts and email communication (change the subject line if needed before responding to an email).
- Think before you speak...or write! You can disagree with another person, but do so in a respectful manner and if applicable, backed with APA citation.
- Derogatory comments, ranting, and vulgar language are unacceptable in any communication.

- Please keep in mind that something considered offensive may be unintentional. If you are concerned about something that appears unacceptable, please inform faculty immediately.

Academic Integrity or Professionalism Concerns

If there are concerns about academic integrity and clinical or classroom professionalism, the faculty will initiate communication with the student about concerns and notify the advisor. If concerns continue, the advisor will reach out to the student to see what can be done to ameliorate the concerns. If concerns continue, the advisor may complete a more formal Coaching Form, an agreement between the advisor and the student, or a Document of Concern (DOC) form (Appendix C). A DOC is a written notification of concern completed by faculty. Academic integrity issues will also be documented using the appropriate University form, which will be attached to the DOC form. The faculty member will establish a meeting within one week of the issue for the student, faculty member, and Director of Graduate Nursing Programs. If the Director of the Graduate Nursing Programs is not available; a second faculty member should be invited to the meetings. The meeting will allow faculty and students to share concerns supported by objective data. Consequences to the student will depend upon the seriousness of the issue and in accordance with all University and MHCNH policies. Actions taken by the faculty may include, but are not limited to, written warning, remediation, repetition of learning experiences, failure of clinical, failure of course, dismissal from the program, and/or dismissal from the university. The Director of Graduate Nursing Programs will monitor trends of individual student behavior for repeated concerns across courses and semesters. Ongoing concerns with student behavior may result in disciplinary action or dismissal from the program. All communication, including the DOC will be filed in the student's advising file.

Clinical Course Concerns

If a student is deemed inappropriate, unprepared or unsafe, they may be dismissed from the clinical site.

Institutional Support & Student Resources

Academic Center for Excellence

The Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) assists students with academic skills. ACE services are personalized and flexible. ACE provides walk-in assistance during office hours and also offers one-on-one and small group guidance with regularly scheduled appointments. ACE is open to all students, free of charge. ACE is located on main campus. Phone (319) 363-1323 ext. 1208.

Busse Library

Students can access numerous books, hard-copy and online journal resources, and cataloged health-care-related resources, including WorldCat, the library catalog, and Google Books. Once you find a book in WorldCat or Google Books, you can search for it in the Busse Library Catalog. If you don't find the title in the catalog at Mount Mercy, you can order it through Interlibrary Loan. DVD videos and video cameras are available for checkout. Phone (319) 368-6465 library@mtmercy.edu.

Campus Store and Textbooks

The University Campus Store is located on the main campus. Supplies, greeting cards, clothing, and personal items are available. As of Block 1, 2026 ALL (new and existing) MSN students are enrolled in the Slingshot system, the Mount Mercy textbook vendor. This means that any material opted as **required by the MSN program** for the class you are enrolled in, materials will be shipped automatically.

You'll have 2 options:

1. Slingshot (have your required books automatically shipped to you)
 2. Opt out of Slingshot (you will need to purchase your own textbooks)
- See MSN or DNP Textbook Information document provided by the Graduate Clinical and Recruitment Coordinator for details.

Computer Labs

There is a computer lab at the Graduate Center and other computer labs on the main campus. Assistance is available at the Help Desk Phone (319) 363-1323 ext. 4357.

Copy Center

Multiple copy printing is available in the Copy Center. Color copying, 3-hole punching, binding, and large poster production services are available. Phone (319) 363-1323 ext. 1883 copyshop@mtmercy.edu.

Counseling Services

Confidential counseling services are also available at the Olson Marriage & Family Therapy Clinic in the CRST Graduate Center. Phone (319) 368-6493. Students can also use the Counseling Center, located in the University Center, Student Life suite, 2nd floor. (319) 363-1323 ext. 1257.

Student Health Services

Health Services at Mount Mercy supports the physical and psychological needs of students on campus. A registered nurse is available to students to help with specific health needs and to assist in maintaining and improving your overall well-being. Phone (319) 363-1323 ext. 1283.

Email

Mount Mercy email (xsmith####@mtmercy.edu) is the required form of electronic communication, rather than personal email accounts. Students receive their e-mail addresses and instructions related to their email account at registration. Assistance is available at the Help Desk Phone (319) 363-1323 ext. 4357.

Emergencies

Fire alarms, extinguishers and fire escape route maps are in each building. Blue security phones are available in several campus locations. All hazardous conditions should be reported to Safety and Security Office. Escorts after regular hours are available upon request. Phone (319) 363-1323 ext. 1234.

Good Book

The Good Book contains many policies and procedures concerning the Mount Mercy University community. Parking, academic integrity, substance abuse, harassment, and others in the Good Book can be found <http://catalog.mtmercy.edu/thegoodbook/>.

Brightspace

Brightspace is the MMU learning management system for courses and where you can download each course syllabus and communicate with faculty and other students. Phone (319) 363-1323 ext. 1246 brightspace@mtmercy.edu.

MyMountMercy

MyMountMercy is the online connection to administrative processes such as registration, change of address, information regarding course grades, billing, and financial aid.

Parking

All on-campus students are required to display a parking permit. After the first full week of each semester, students will be subject to parking tickets with varying fines for parking without the proper permit or for improper use of marked areas (such as handicapped, 30-minute limit, etc.). Parking permits may be obtained from the University Center Desk. If you use an alternate vehicle, you may obtain an additional parking sticker for a \$2.00 fee or complete a temporary permit application available from the University Center information desk. See the Good Book for parking specifics.

Weather and Closure Policies

The University does not expect students or personnel to put themselves at undue risk. Please travel with caution on roadways. The determination to close the University will be made based on the severity of the weather, area road conditions, and campus conditions. Mount Mercy provides cancellation alerts as soon as possible to students. Be sure that your correct contact information is in MyMountMercy profile to receive these automatic alerts.

Other methods of determining if classes at MMU have been cancelled include:

- The Mount Mercy weather hotline: 319-363-1323, ext. 1532
- The Mount Mercy homepage, which will contain weather updates
- Mount Mercy student, faculty and staff e-mail accounts
- Other resources that will be notified of a closing include:
 - Television: KCRG TV9, KGAN NEWS2 and KWWL 7
 - Radio: KZIA 102.9, KHAK 98.1, KDAT 104.5, KRNA 94.1, KCCK 88.3, WMT 96.5, WMT AM 600, KMRY 1450, KNWS 101.9, and KWOE 89.1

Education Agreements

Education Agreements are established and approved by Mount Mercy University for all agency/clinical sites before a student can start clinicals in the MSN or DNP program. MSN Practicum and DNP Clinical Practice Project sites may also require an agreement.

- The Graduate Nursing Clinical and Recruitment Coordinator will initiate the request for the Education Agreement if one is not in existence.
- If the agency/clinical site proposes changes to the *Education Agreement*, Mount Mercy University Graduate Nursing Clinical and Recruitment Coordinator forwards to the Dean of Martin-Herold College of Nursing and Health for review. It may be also forwarded to the Mount Mercy University administration or legal representative for additional review.
- The Education Agreement must be signed by:
 - Mount Mercy University, Martin-Herold College of Nursing and Health, Dean
 - Administrative authority from agency/clinical site

- Student will be informed of and must meet all requirements identified in the Education Agreement before starting clinical, MSN Practicum or DNP Project experience.
- Education Agreements will be reviewed annually.

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING (MSN) PROGRAM

The MSN Program builds upon baccalaureate nursing education to develop nurse leaders and change agents. Students engage in vibrant, dynamic classroom presentations, discussions, and activities. In addition, students are challenged to think and demonstrate beyond the nursing generalist level. The MSN curriculum is based on AACN: The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education (AACN, 2021) and national competencies that align with each area of emphasis.

MSN applications are accepted throughout the year and reviewed routinely by the graduate nursing leadership team. Applications are valid for one year from the date of application submission. Students who are admitted can begin in January or August each year. Students select an area of emphasis on the MSN application and can opt to change areas of emphasis if needed by meeting with their advisor. All students take MSN core courses and then proceed

MSN Program Student Learning Outcomes

1. Use scientific evidence and theories to innovate, initiate change, and manage practices to lead health promotion and disease prevention for populations.
2. Demonstrate cultural awareness and sensitivity with populations.
3. Utilize evidence-based research to support roles areas of emphasis.
4. Analyze current policy, research, and evidence-based practices to improve quality, safety, and delivery of health care.
5. Incorporate professional organizational experiences and opportunities in teaching/learning.
6. Create health care practices and education that incorporate health care core competencies.
7. Collaborate with stakeholders to integrate area of emphasis competencies.

MSN Areas of Emphasis & Associated Competencies

1. Nurse Administration – Nurse Executive Competencies American Organization for Nursing Leadership (2022)
2. Nurse Education – Nurse Educator Core Competencies. National League for Nursing (2022)
3. Health Advocacy - Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals - Tier 2. Public Health Foundation (2021)

MSN Plans of Study

Students can begin in January or August each year. Students can enroll in any plan of study by emphasis area (<http://catalog.mtmercy.edu/graduateprograms/curriculum/msn/#degree requirementstext>) as a

full-time graduate student or part-time graduate student. The part-time plan of study is individualized by Director of Graduate Nursing Programs to meet the needs of the student. All courses, except NU660 Professional Practicum, are taken over a 5-week block. NU660 Professional Practicum is completed over three blocks (equal to 15 weeks). Block start and end dates and course offerings can be accessed at: <http://catalog.mtmercy.edu/graduateprograms/blockacademiccalendar/>.

MSN Courses

MSN course descriptions (core, emphasis, and electives) can be accessed at: <http://catalog.mtmercy.edu/graduateprograms/curriculum/msn/#courseinventory>

Post-Master Emphasis

A post-master emphasis assists post-graduate nurses seeking to enhance their expertise and gain competency in an area of nursing not previously studied. The post-master emphasis programs also strengthen the capability of master or doctoral prepared nurses who are planning on, or are already involved in, a role expansion or change. Graduate students currently enrolled in the MMU MSN program who seek to expand their areas of expertise beyond their first emphasis may also obtain an additional emphasis.

Additional MSN Student Expenses

Criminal Background Check (for all students starting August 2026; prior students finish with Medatrax) Approximately \$60

Exxat (for all students starting August 2026; prior students finish with Medatrax) \$250 for the entire program (fee added to NU504 course)

Professional Liability Insurance Cost per student based on provider student selects

Health Insurance Cost per student based on provider student selects

Other costs may be incurred based on course activities and/or student and/or faculty determination.

MSN Graduation Summative Performance

All MSN students will have a final MSN evaluation using the “MSN Graduation Summative Performance” form in **Appendix A**. The student and Director of Graduate Nursing Programs will sign the “MSN Graduation Summative Performance” form prior to graduation.

DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE (DNP) PROGRAM

The DNP Program builds upon master's nursing education to develop advanced practice nurses that function as nurse practitioners, leaders, and change agents. Students engage in vibrant, dynamic classroom presentations, discussions, and activities. In addition, students are challenged to think and demonstrate beyond the graduate nursing level. The DNP curriculum is based on The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education (AACN, 2021) and Nurse Practitioner Core Competencies Content (NONPF, 2022).

DNP applications are accepted throughout the year and reviewed by DNP Committee members as received. DNP applications are valid for one year from the date of application submission. All DNP applicants are interviewed by DNP Committee members.

DNP Program Student Learning Outcomes

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Innovate approaches in advanced nursing practice and leadership using scientific evidence and theoretical concepts from nursing and other scientific disciplines. | 5. Influence the development and implementation of equitable and ethical health care policy that improves health outcomes and advocates for the nursing profession within health care policy communities. |
| 2. Lead culturally-proficient, population-focused, continuous quality improvement initiatives in health care services influenced by systems thinking. | 6. Employ consultative and leadership skills with intraprofessional and interprofessional teams to create change needed to improve the quality and delivery of health care for individuals and populations. |
| 3. Critically translate best evidence from nursing and across scientific disciplines to inform quality improvement strategies aimed at safe, effective, and reliable patient-centered care. | 7. Propose and evaluate interventions and care delivery models to influence improvement of individual and population health with health promotion/disease prevention based on epidemiology, ethical, cultural, and environmental considerations. |
| 4. Evaluate and communicate health care system performance outcomes resulting from the adoption of information systems and patient care technology. | 8. Role model an independent advanced nursing practice using refined clinical judgment, systems thinking, and accountability in delivering and evaluating evidence based, health promotion/disease prevention health care to individuals, aggregates, and diverse populations. |

DNP & FNP Program Lead

The Director of Graduate Nursing Programs serves as the DNP Program Lead, and in collaboration with stakeholders, is accountable for three main interrelated responsibilities: curriculum content & accuracy, faculty, and community. Additionally, the FNP Program Lead is responsible for curriculum related to

PNP-specific content. The PNP Program Lead is the expert on PNP content and coordinates and collaborating with faculty to maintain team efforts that support evidence-based and current PNP didactic and clinical content.

DNP Plans of Study

DNP Students (currently not NP – completing PNP-DNP or currently certified NP (in any specialty) start in August each year. DNP Plans of Study are located at <http://catalog.mtmercy.edu/graduateprograms/curriculum/dnp/>. Courses with the exception of *NU890 Innovation & Change for Future: DNP Clinical Practice Project*, are taken over 5-week blocks. *NU890* may be completed over several blocks based on student progress on DNP Clinical Practice Project. Block start and end dates and course offerings can be accessed at: <http://catalog.mtmercy.edu/graduateprograms/blockacademiccalendar/>.

DNP Courses

DNP course descriptions (core, emphasis, and electives) can be accessed at: <http://catalog.mtmercy.edu/graduateprograms/curriculum/dnp/#courseinventory>

Barkley Readiness Exam

PNP-DNP students will have a series of 3 tests throughout the 2nd year of the program to assess their areas of need prior to their certification exam. Students will receive information from DNP faculty or Program Director regarding dates and login instructions. Testing will be done outside of class and students have midnight-midnight to complete. Please allow 2.5 hours for this test. Students must complete in one sitting.

Fitzgerald Family NP Certification Review

Once students have completed their DNP presentations and manuscripts, DNP faculty or Program Director will provide login information for this certification review. This review is highly encouraged to be done as part of the preparation process for boards.

DNP Project Handbook

All DNP students are required to complete a scholarly DNP Clinical Practice Project. The DNP Project Handbook is available in Brightspace for details, process, and evaluation.

Additional DNP Student Expenses

Criminal Background Check (for all students starting August 2026; prior students finish with Medatrax) Approximately \$60

Exxat (for all students starting August 2026; prior students finish with Medatrax) \$250 for the entire program (fee paid through DNP yearly fees)

Professional Liability Insurance Cost per student based on provider student selects

Health Insurance

Cost per student based on provider student selects

Fees

Fees will be assessed in years 1 & 2 for FNP-DNP and year 1 only for DNP students. The fees help cover additional required expenses.

Other costs may be incurred based on course activities and/or student and/or faculty determination

DNP Graduation Summative Performance

All DNP students will have final DNP evaluation using the summative “DNP Graduation Summative Performance” form in **Appendix B**. The student and Director of Graduate Nursing Programs will review and sign the “DNP Graduation Summative Performance” form prior to graduation.

Appendix A: MSN Graduation Summative Performance

Mount Mercy University

MSN GRADUATION SUMMATIVE PERFORMANCE

Name:	Student ID:
Preferred Email after Graduation:	
Program Completion Date: Feb 202__ June 202__ August 202__ December 202__	Preceptor Name: Agency: Agency Address:
Area of Emphasis:	
Practicum Project (should be exact same title as final Practicum Poster):	
Anticipated Place of Employment after Graduation Organization: Unit/Dept: Job Title:	

Student Signature_____
Printed Name_____
Date

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 provides that the student has the option to (1) review this reference, or (2) maintain its confidentiality by relinquishing the option to review. Check one of the options below.

____ I waive my right to review this reference

____ I do not waive my right to review this

Student Signature _____

Date _____

STUDENT COMPLETES ABOVE.**PROGRAM DIRECTOR COMPLETES BELOW:****PERFORMANCE RATING** (Circle the number indicating the level of performance)

1 = Competent - satisfactory performance, safe, meets expectations

2 = Exceptional - exceeds expectations

This graduate:

1	2	Use scientific evidence and theories to innovate, initiate change, and manage practices to lead health promotion and disease prevention for populations.
1	2	Demonstrate cultural awareness and sensitivity with populations.
1	2	Utilize evidence-based research to support roles areas of emphasis.
1	2	Analyze current policy, research, and evidence-based practices to improve quality, safety, and delivery of health care.
1	2	Incorporate professional organizational experiences and opportunities in teaching/learning.
1	2	Create health care practices and education that incorporate health care core competencies.
1	2	Collaborate with stakeholders to integrate area of emphasis competencies.
1	2	<u>ADDITIONALLY, HEALTH-ADVOCACY- graduate nursing students:</u> Provides improvement, collaborative, data-informed, evidence-based, patient-centered, safe, highest-quality population health.
1	2	<u>ADDITIONALLY, NURSING ADMINISTRATION- graduate nursing students:</u> Provides improvement, collaborative, data-informed, evidence-based, patient-centered, safe, highest-quality population health.
1	2	<u>ADDITIONALLY, NURSING EDUCATION - graduate nursing students:</u> Provides improvement, collaborative, data-informed, evidence-based, patient-centered, safe, highest-quality population health.

Comments:

Approved: _____
Director of Graduate Nursing Programs

Date: _____

Appendix B: DNP Graduation Summative Performance

Mount Mercy University

DNP GRADUATION SUMMATIVE PERFORMANCE

Name:	Student ID:
Preferred Email after Graduation:	
Program Completion Date: Feb 20 ____ Aug 20 ____ May 20 ____ Dec 20 ____ June 20 ____	Curriculum completed: ____ DNP-FNP ____ DNP
DNP Project Title:	
DNP Chair:	
Point of Contact at Agency:	
Agency:	
Agency Address:	
Anticipated place of Employment after graduation: Organization: Unit/Department:	

 Student Signature

Printed Name

Date

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 provides that the student has the option to (1) review this reference, or (2) maintain its confidentiality by relinquishing the option to review. Check one of the options below.

____ I waive my right to review this reference

____ I do not waive my right to review this

Student Signature _____

Date _____

STUDENT COMPLETES ABOVE.**PROGRAM DIRECTOR COMPLETES BELOW:**

Performance Rating: A student's performance regarding program outcomes is determined through a compilation of course evaluations and clinical evaluations by mentor and faculty, journals, and DNP project. All program outcomes must be met at the acceptable level for the student to graduate.

Student Learning Outcomes

Exceptional Acceptable

1. Innovate approaches in advanced nursing practice and leadership using scientific evidence and theoretical concepts from nursing and other scientific disciplines.
2. Lead culturally-proficient, population-focused, continuous quality improvement initiatives in health care services influenced by systems thinking.
3. Critically translate best evidence from nursing and across scientific disciplines to inform quality improvement strategies aimed at safe, effective, and reliable patient-centered care.
4. Evaluate and communicate health care system performance outcomes resulting from the adoption of information systems and patient care technology.
5. Influence the development and implementation of equitable and ethical health care policy that improves health outcomes and advocates for the nursing profession within health care policy communities.
6. Employ consultative and leadership skills with intraprofessional and interprofessional teams to create change needed to improve the quality and delivery of health care for individuals and populations.
7. Propose and evaluate interventions and care delivery models to influence improvement of individual and population health with health promotion/disease prevention based on epidemiology, ethical, cultural, and environmental considerations.
8. Role model an independent advanced nursing practice using refined clinical judgment, systems thinking, and accountability in delivering and

evaluating evidence based, health promotion/disease prevention health care to individuals, aggregates, and diverse populations.

Comments:

Approved: _____
Director of Graduate Nursing Programs

Date: _____

Appendix C: Document of Concern

Mount Mercy University
Martin-Herold College of Nursing & Health
Graduate Nursing Programs

DOCUMENT OF CONCERN (DOC)

Student Name: _____

Graduate Program: ☐ MSN
☐ DNP

Action: **Conference held with student** regarding
☐ Professionalism issue
☐ Academic integrity issue (see attached University form)
☐ Academic progression issue

Date of Conference: _____

Signature of Student: _____

Signature of Faculty: _____

EXPLANATION OF FACULTY CONCERN RELATED TO STUDENT PERFORMANCE	STUDENT'S PLAN OF ACTION

Copies to: ☐ Student
☐ Director of Graduate Nursing Program

Appendix D: MSN & DNP Student Representation on Graduate Nursing Committee

Graduate Nursing Student input and feedback is welcome and encouraged as a part of student governance in the MMU Graduate Nursing Programs. Each cohort of graduate students (MSN and DNP) will be asked for a volunteer or to identify one student within the cohort to act as the cohort Student Representative. The Student Representative can solicit input or feedback from students at any time (by email, text, or phone). **Student Representatives are encouraged to join the Graduate Committee meeting monthly September through June** to provide any input or feedback they wish. Input or feedback can also be shared via email prior to the monthly meeting, preferably on the 1st of the month, to MSN-DNPGradAdmAssistant@mtmercy.edu or MSN-DNPGradProgramDirector@mtmercy.edu. Responses from the committee will be provided upon request or discretion of the committee.

Contact information for each cohort DNP and MSN Student Representative is on Brightspace > Graduate Nursing Student Resources – Graduate Nursing Student Group > Announcements. If a Student Representative attends a Graduate Committee meeting, any student-sensitive information will be discussed after the Student Representative leaves the meeting. The Student Representative determines the method to share relevant Graduate Committee information with their cohort.

The Graduate Committee bylaws will be shared with the Student Representative upon request. A Student Representative can request to be removed from the role of Student Representative at any time by notifying the Director of the Graduate Nursing Program in writing.

The Student Representative agrees to

- Represent their respective cohort of graduate nursing students
- Provide leadership and guidance to peers when input received and feedback given
- submit student representative report with constructive feedback by 8:00am on the third Monday of each month (September-June) for inclusion on appropriate program committee agenda
- Be respectful and confidential of faculty discussions which may include, and not limited to, program changes and future planning
- Any communication about the meeting shared with peers after a program meeting will be via email and include the Director of Graduate Nursing Programs

(MSN-DNPGradDirector@mtmercy.edu) and Clinical and Recruitment Coordinator (MSN-DNPGradAdmAssistant@mtmercy.edu)