

Western Michigan University
College of Health and Human Services

Bronson School of Nursing
MSN Degree Program
Graduate Student Handbook
2009 - 2011

School of Nursing
1903 W. Michigan Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49008

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For easy reference to other graduate information:

The Graduate College (www.wmich.edu/grad/)

Graduate Catalog (www.wmich.edu/catalog)

General Information

Administration, Faculty, and Staff

Director, WMU Bronson School of Nursing	Linda H. Zoeller, PhD, FNP, RN
Professor	Joyce E. Thompson, DrPH, CNM, FAAN, RN
Associate Professors	Mary Lagerwey, PhD, RN Juanita Manning-Walsh, PhD, RN *Mary Ann Stark, PhD, RN
Assistant Professors	Kelly D. Ackerson, PhD, RN Sharie Falan, PhD, RN Yvonne Ford, PhD, RN Ruth Zielinski, PhD, CNM, RN
Master Faculty Specialists	Mary Baukus, MS, MA, RN Eva Jerome, MS, RN Joni Jones, PhD, RN Sally Sutkowi, MSN, RN Sally Vliem, MS, CPNP, RN
Faculty Specialist II	Teri Davis, MSN, RN Alice DeYoung, MSN, RN Patricia Fuehr, MSN, FNP, RN Wendy Kershner, MSN, CPNP, RN Kathleen Marchiondo, MSN, RN, CMSRN Susan Nelson, MSN, NNP, RNC Corrine Overmeyer, MSN, RN Bonnie Rencher, MSN, RN Kimberly Searing, MSN, WHNP, RNC Mary Stahl, MSN, RN
MSN Program Coordinator	Joyce E. Thompson, DrPH, CNM, RN, FAAN
Undergraduate Student Advisor	Marsha Mahan
Office Coordinator	Nannette Morningstar
Office Associate	Kristie Sturmoski

*on sabbatical 2009-2010

**Western Michigan University
2009-2010 Calendar**

Fall Semester 2009

September 3, Thursday	BSON Student Assembly Day
September 4, Friday	Advising Day
September 7, Monday	Labor Day Recess
September 8, Tuesday	Classes Begin at 8 a.m.
November 3, Tuesday	Scholarship Reception
November 25, Wednesday	Thanksgiving Recess (Noon)
November 30, Monday	Classes Resume
December 14-18.....	Final Examination Week
December 18, Friday.....	Pinning Ceremony
December 19, Saturday.....	Semester Ends – Commencement
December 22, Tuesday	Fall Grades Due at Noon
December 25 – January 3.....	Winter Closure

Spring Semester 2010

January 4-8, Monday	Advising Days
January 11, Monday.....	Classes begin at 8 a.m.
January 18, Monday.....	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Recess, Convocation & Activities
February 26, Friday.....	Spirit Day – no classes
March 1, Monday.....	Spring Break
March 8, Monday.....	Classes Resume
April 13, Tuesday	Scholarly Event
April 26-30.....	Final Examination Week
April 30, Friday.....	Pinning Ceremony
May 1, Saturday.....	Semester Ends – Commencement
May 4, Tuesday.....	Spring Grades Due at Noon

Summer I Session 2010

May 10, Monday.....	Classes Begin at 8 a.m.
May 31, Monday.....	Memorial Day Recess
June 30, Wednesday.....	Session Ends
June 26, Saturday.....	Commencement
July 6, Tuesday.....	Summer I Grades Due at Noon

Summer II Session 2010

July 1, Thursday.....	Classes Begin at 8 a.m.
July 5, Monday.....	Independence Day Recess
August 20, Friday.....	Session Ends
August 24, Tuesday.....	Summer II Grades Due at Noon

The WMU Bronson School of Nursing

The WMU Bronson School of Nursing at Western Michigan University opened in 1994, the result of several years of planning and collaboration by University and community leaders. The school was founded based on the need for baccalaureate prepared nursing professionals as articulated by local and national nursing leaders. Similarly, based on community and regional needs for nurse leaders/managers and nurse educators, the first cohort in the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program began their studies in fall 2006.

The WMU Bronson School of Nursing, located within the College of Health and Human Services at Western Michigan University, offers a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.S.N.) degree. The first Master of Science in Nursing (M.S.N.) degrees were awarded in December 2008. The WMU Bronson School of Nursing offers a post-Master's Certificate in Teaching for graduates from the Interdisciplinary Teacher Education Program (ITEP).

The WMU Bronson School of Nursing undergraduate curriculum is designed to prepare nurse generalists who comprehend the discipline and the profession of nursing and who are competent to provide, coordinate, and evaluate patient care in the multiple social contexts in which health care is delivered. The graduate of the program will deliver nursing care to individuals, groups, and communities. Graduates of the master's program will take on advanced professional roles in leadership/management and nursing education.

The Western Michigan University Bronson School of Nursing seeks to prepare thoughtful, professional nurses who possess the skills, knowledge, and values necessary to deliver quality health care in this century. The faculty believe that the long-standing social contract between nursing and society conveys an understanding that community needs direct nursing services, that nurses develop partnerships with clients and other health care providers to promote holistic health care, and that caring is intrinsic to nursing. The curricula integrate knowledge from liberal arts, sciences, and the discipline of nursing. The programs emphasize the development of critical thinking, knowledge, skills and behaviors essential for the scope of clinical judgment and leadership that distinguishes the practice of a professional nurse. Concepts of patterning, holism, caring, service to vulnerable groups, and partnership are emphasized throughout the undergraduate and graduate programs.

The Mission

In harmony with Western Michigan University's and the College of Health and Human Services' mission statements, the Bronson School of Nursing is dedicated to meeting the holistic care needs of diverse individuals, groups, and communities at local, state, national, and global levels, through teaching, interdisciplinary collaboration, scholarly inquiry, and service with the community. The WMU Bronson School of Nursing is committed to educating professional nurses who provide competent, relationship-centered care, actively participate in the development and application of research, and assume leadership roles in evolving health care contexts (rev. 2006).

The Philosophy of the Bronson School of Nursing

Beliefs about Teaching and Learning

We believe that nursing students are adult learners, responsible for assessing their own learning needs, for seeking and using educational opportunities, and for preparing themselves to engage in a lifelong pursuit of learning and self-development.

We believe faculty are responsible for facilitating learning through creation of an environment that fosters thoughtful exchange of ideas, critical thinking, guided experience with new concepts and skills, and opportunities for self-development.

We believe that the development of the professional nurse requires general education in the sciences, arts, and humanities as well as content specific to the discipline of nursing.

Beliefs about the Practice of Nursing

We believe that the practice of nursing includes a broad range of activities, including direct patient care, research, administration, interdisciplinary collaboration, education, and setting the health policy agenda.

We believe that nursing practice is evidenced based (standards of practice) in order to provide the highest quality of care possible.

We believe nursing care is holistic, respecting the spiritual, cultural, physiological, and psychosocial dimensions of each client.

We believe that nursing services should add value to the lives of clients without unnecessary cost.

We believe nursing care is relationship-centered and values diversity.

Beliefs about the Profession of Nursing

We believe that nursing is grounded in the ethical codes of the profession.

We value the autonomy of nursing as a discipline, including setting standards of practice, codes of moral behavior, and guidelines for educational programs.

We believe that nursing has a social contract with the community that is responsive to the needs of the community and based on partnerships that work together to make the community healthier.

Beliefs about Graduate Education in Nursing

Faculty in the WMU Bronson School of Nursing believe that graduate education builds upon the foundation provided at the undergraduate level. Graduate education is characterized by increased depth and breadth of knowledge necessary for the practice of advanced professional nursing.

Faculty believe that advanced professional nursing involves the integration of knowledge of systems, roles, culture, ethics, health care policy, health care finance, research methods, and leadership to promote health and well-being of populations of interest. Faculty conceptualize advanced professional nursing as a role in which the nurse either designs/manages health care services or the educational processes that prepare future nurses within varying contexts and cultures

Faculty further believe that advanced professional nurses analyze and synthesize knowledge for expert decision-making, leadership, and the advancement of the profession of nursing. Additionally, the advanced professional nurse comprehends the historical, ethical, and theoretical foundations of the profession and the discipline of nursing.

Faculty believe that the graduate student must be exposed to faculty who will stimulate professional development and leadership qualities using a variety of teaching and learning strategies. We further believe that an emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration and relationship-centered interactions facilitates the development of the advanced professional nurse.

The WMU Nursing Faculty believe that the masters level of education for advanced professional nursing should result in the degree, Master of Science in Nursing (MSN). The MSN reflects nursing as a discipline with substantive content and knowledge.

Approved by Faculty Organization April 23, 2003; revised April 2004; revised October 2006; Graduate Beliefs revised October 2007.

Conceptual Framework

The WMU Bronson School of Nursing is rooted in relationship-based care, evidence-based practice, and holism. The curriculum is designed to prepare professional nurses who promote self-care, health and harmony throughout the lifespan, who reach out in response to the needs of the community and collaborate with other disciplines to enhance care (rev. 10/2007).

Program and Faculty Goals

The WMU Bronson School of Nursing accepts its responsibility to make higher education in nursing accessible to a diverse student body of both prospective and practicing nurses.

The faculty of the WMU Bronson School of Nursing accepts its responsibility to expand and disseminate nursing's body of knowledge through ongoing research, clinical practice and educational programs.

The faculty of the WMU Bronson School of Nursing accepts its responsibility to contribute to the development of nursing nationally and internationally. (rev. 10/2007)

State Board Approval & Accreditation Status

The Michigan Board of Nursing is the regulatory body that grants provisional and full approval of nursing education programs in the State of Michigan. Full approval of the WMU Bronson School of Nursing was granted in July, 2002 following provisional status prior to that time.

The Western Michigan University Bronson School of Nursing undergraduate program is accredited through 2017 by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 530, Washington, DC, 20036-1120. The CCNE is an autonomous accrediting agency. As a "specialized professional accrediting agency, CCNE ensures the quality and integrity of baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs" (CCNE document).

The Bronson School of Nursing applied for CCNE accreditation for the MSN program and received the full five-year approval in October 2008. Graduates who complete the nurse educator

area of study are eligible to sit for the National League for Nursing certification examination for nurse educators.

The WMU Bronson School of Nursing has also received endorsement from the American Holistic Nursing Certification Corporation which is the credentialing body for holistic nursing. This endorsement enables graduates of the undergraduate program to be exempt from prerequisites should they choose to sit for the National Certification Examination in Holistic Nursing.

The WMU Bronson School of Nursing MSN Program

Purpose of the MSN Program

The purpose of the graduate program in nursing is to prepare nurses with advanced education in the discipline of nursing, in scholarship, and in a selected area of study. Two areas of study are particularly timely in our local context: 1) the preparation of nurse educators who are able to serve as faculty, practice preceptors, and teachers of other health professionals in a variety of settings; and 2) the preparation of nurse leaders/managers who function in complex health care systems that promote the health and well being of populations. Consideration of other areas of study to be offered in the future will address emerging community and professional needs.

MSN Program Outcomes

At the end of this program, the graduate will be able to:

1. Analyze the historical and conceptual patterns that have shaped current health and illness care contexts and systems;
2. Integrate advanced concepts of human behavior, cultural competencies, and ethical reasoning into the evolving role of nurse leadership for the 21st century;
3. Employ methods of inquiry that provide evidence for the practice of nursing and promote the role of the nurse in inquiry and evaluation;
4. Use an interdisciplinary approach to promote the health and well-being of selected populations within health care systems and communities;
5. Describe how organization and financing of health care services sculpt health care policies; and
6. Demonstrate competency in teaching or nurse leadership/management with selected populations.

Approved by Faculty Organization April 2004; Revised October 2007 by MSN Program Committee.

Overview of the Curriculum

The MSN program is designed to address advanced professional nursing for the 21st century. It consists of 8 core courses and 4 courses in an area of study (either nurse leader/manager or nurse educator) for a total of 12 courses or 36 graduate semester credits (See chart below). Based on a community needs assessment and discussion with advanced practice nurses in the region, the program of study is offered as two courses per semester fall and spring (See Sample Program of Study) for a total of 6 semesters (2-1/2 years). Three of the four courses in the nurse educator track are offered within the existing Interdisciplinary Teacher Education Program.

The following details related to courses are important to note.

- All area of study courses must be taken in sequence and cannot begin until a minimum of 4 core courses are completed.
- **NUR 6990: Research Project** is a capstone course and therefore cannot be taken until all core courses and area of study courses are completed, with the exception of the final practicum courses in area of study, with permission from the Program Coordinator.

A scholarly project is both an expected process and outcome of the graduate program in nursing. The student will work with a doctorally prepared faculty mentor allowing for individual guidance and support. The project process encourages the student to gain additional expertise and knowledge in their area of practice specialization and selected role within a scholarly framework. Guidelines for the master's project are available from faculty advisors.

The master's thesis is not required for completion of the MSN program. If a student should elect the thesis option, Policies and Procedures related to MSN theses of the WMU Graduate College must be followed (See Graduate Advising Handbook). In addition, the 6 credits of elective courses will be used to meet the 6 credits required for master's thesis supervision in addition to the NUR6990 course.

<p>MSN Core Courses (21 credits)</p>	<p>NUR 5300: Historical & Theoretical Foundations of Nursing & Health Care (3) NUR 5310: Advanced Professional Nursing (3) NUR 6310: Community-focused Care: An Interdisciplinary Approach (3) NUR 6400: Professional Inquiry: Qualitative & Quantitative Methods (3) NUR 6300: Ethics & Culture: Foundations for Leadership (3) NUR 6410: Methods for Measuring Quality in Health & Educational Systems (3) NUR 6320: Health Care Policy, Organization & Financing (3)</p>
<p>Area of Study (12 credits)</p>	<p>NUR 6500 or NUR 6600 NUR 6510 or NUR 6610 NUR 6520 or NUR 6620 NUR 6540 or NUR 6630</p>
<p>Research (3 credits)</p>	<p>NUR 6990: Research Project in Selected Area of Study</p>

Graduate Nursing Course Descriptions

Core Courses

NUR 5300 Theoretical & Historical Foundations of Nursing and Health Care [3 hrs.]

This course focuses on the theoretical and historical foundations of the American “health care system” (the hospital, self-care, and public health). Ideas, events and people are introduced and examined for their influence and significance in sculpting both the institutions and the social roles of health care providers. The interrelationships among nursing and social, political, economic, and intellectual contexts are considered. Theories, conceptual models, and ways of thinking about health, disease, the illness experience, nursing, and relationships within the health care system are examined. **Prerequisites:** Admission to MSN program or consent of instructor.

NUR 5310 Advanced Professional Nursing [3 hrs.]

This course focuses on forward-thinking approaches for the profession of nursing in the 21st century. New definitions of advanced professional nursing will be discussed and challenged. This course, building upon the foundations of professional nursing in the undergraduate program, addresses such areas as informed practice, the culture of nursing, current and future roles of nurses, the dynamics of professional development and professional practice strategies. It also continues with emphasis on holistic nursing, relationship-centered care, and community involvement. **Pre-requisite:** Admission to MSN Program or consent of instructor.

NUR 6300 Ethics & Culture: Foundations for Leadership [3 hrs.]

This course draws upon the disciplines of philosophy, ethics, and the social sciences in examining key concepts of professional practice that form the foundations for leadership. The key concepts include professional obligations, duties, and rights, and cultural competence. Building upon the ethical and cultural foundations of undergraduate education, this course leads to an increased understanding of the relationships among socio-cultural contexts, ethics, and the health/illness beliefs and practices of individuals, families, and communities from diverse backgrounds. Key aspects of relationship-centered care and the promotion of a holistic approach to meeting the health and illness needs of diverse individuals, groups, and communities provide a common basis for exploring what it means to be a culturally competent, ethical health care professional and leader in health systems or education. *Pre- or co-requisites:* Admission to MSN Program or consent of instructor.

NURS 6310 Community Focused Care: An Interdisciplinary Approach [3 hrs.]

Relationship Centered Care and a holistic understanding of the nature of human beings, how they respond to health and illness, and the key role that health professionals play in promoting health and well-being of individuals, groups and populations are emphasized in this core science course. The increasing complexity of illness care for an aging population with several chronic conditions call for new ways of addressing client needs. Content includes interdisciplinary perspectives on health and illness, basic principles of epidemiology, community-based assessment and evaluation, issues of equity, and levels of prevention. *Prerequisites:* Admission to MSN Program or consent of instructor.

NURS 6320 Health Care Policy, Organization & Financing [3 hrs.]

This course provides an overview for understanding health care policy, organization, and financing of health care within a systems analysis framework. Current literature and research related to health care policy development and the health care delivery systems are examined. Specific attention is paid to the role of nursing leadership in policy development and in changing the health care delivery and health care education systems. *Prerequisites:* Admission to MSN Program or consent of instructor.

NURS 6400 Professional Inquiry: Qualitative & Quantitative Methods [3 hrs.]

This course focuses on qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry, and their appropriate analyses with associated computer packages. The course builds upon the foundations of research critique and evidence for informed practice studied at the baccalaureate level. The outcome of the course is the development of a proposal that may be applied to a research practicum project or thesis. *Prerequisites:* Admission to MSN Program or consent of instructor.

NUR 6410 Methods for Measuring Quality in Health and Educational Systems [3 hrs.]

This course analyzes problems raised by the various levels of quality found in health care systems, educational institutions, and other organizations. It includes knowledge about the major theories for the measurement of quality, with actual case examples using such measures. Additionally, the course will examine managerial and clinical rating systems used to determine program and service quality levels, and how the subsequent consideration of outcomes should be targeted for specific improvements. Students are expected to participate

in the development of actual quality measures and explain prospective use of such measures in a defined health or educational system. **Prerequisites:** Admission to MSN Program or consent of instructor.

NURS 6990 Research Project in Selected Area of Study [3hrs.]

This course focuses on the application of the research process to the development and conduct of the research proposal developed in NUR 6400. This course includes advisement and supervision of the student's investigation into the scholarship of teaching, the scholarship of nurse leadership, or research with a selected population. The student may work in a faculty member's program of research or with their own problem in designing, collecting and/or evaluating data. The outcome of the practicum will be a scholarly paper. **Prerequisites:** Admission to MSN Program and NUR 6400 and 6410.

Nurse Leader/Manager Courses

NUR 6500 Health Care Information Systems & Technology [3 hrs.]

This course provides nurse leaders with working knowledge of technical, user and environmental factors that are important to consider in the selection and use of clinical information systems that support nursing care and decision making processes. It builds on the foundations of informatics taken at the baccalaureate level. Students will gain an understanding of technology, data, human processing, and standards related to clinical information systems, and how these elements are used to make evidence-based decisions in health care systems and services. **Prerequisites:** Admission to MSN Program or consent of instructor.

NUR 6510 Leadership in Organizations and Systems [3 hrs.]

This course is designed to explore ways to demonstrate effectiveness of health care interventions and maintain quality of care. Health care professionals are now expected to make decisions based on evidence of effectiveness at individual, unit, and system levels. This course focuses on higher order interdisciplinary critical thinking, strategic planning, and leadership for transformational change within health/illness care organizations and systems. Content includes team-building, the changing requirements of health/illness care within the USA, the changing workforce needs, and informed decision-making processes. Emphasis is placed on the leadership role that nurses can play in creating healthcare systems that are safe, effective, and accessible to all. **Prerequisites:** Admission to MSN Program or consent of instructor.

NUR 6520 Health Care Financing & Reimbursement [3 hrs.]

This course provides an in-depth analysis of current methods for financing and payment for services rendered across sites of service. This course explores both traditional and non-traditional financing mechanisms, the role of state and national governments, professional associations, and insurance companies in setting limits of coverage, and current payment methods, including billing codes. Foci include managing nursing resources including personnel, supply and capital budgets, and the role of the nurse leader/manager in using this information to plan for quality service delivery. **Prerequisites:** Admission to MSN Program or consent of instructor.

NUR 6530 Nurse Leadership/Management Practicum [3 hrs.]

This course is designed to provide a mentored nursing leadership practicum that offers the opportunity to apply leadership content and refine leadership abilities in a setting and practice area mutually agreed by the student and course faculty. The practicum experiences will occur at the organizational or system level. Requirements include a written contract with specified outcomes developed by the student, and agreed to by the preceptor/agency, and course faculty. One outcome of the practicum will be the completion of and formal report on an agency or system – specific project demonstrating nursing leadership. Periodic seminars are included.

Prerequisites: Admission to MSN Program and NUR 6500, 6510, and 6520.

Nurse Educator Courses

NUR 6600 Curriculum and Teaching of Theory in Health Disciplines [3 hrs.]

This course is designed to provide experienced health professionals, currently holding (or planning to hold) faculty positions, with the theoretical foundations of how adults learn, how to design curricula in a health professional discipline, what and how to teach in the theoretical domain, and how to evaluate whether learning has occurred. The primary focus of the course is promoting excellence in classroom teaching with adults. Content includes values clarification, personal learning styles, critical thinking and communication strategies. Micro-teaching with peer assessment is included. A designated mentor teacher, nominated by the student and approved by the Course Director, works in partnership with the student and WMU faculty. **Prerequisites:** Admission to MSN Program or consent of instructor.

NUR 6610 Clinical Teaching and Evaluation in Health Disciplines [3 hrs.]

This course is designed to provide experienced health professionals, currently holding (or planning to hold) faculty positions, with the theoretical and practical aspects of teaching and evaluation of adult learner performance in practice settings. The focus of the course is on clinical teaching and evaluation, preceptor preparation, and issues related to establishing and maintaining clinical sites for student learning. The theories and principles of teaching and learning related to adults explored in NUR 6600 provide the theoretical foundations, with application to the practice setting. A designated mentor teacher works in partnership with the learner and WMU faculty. **Prerequisites:** NUR 6600 or consent of instructor.

NUR 6620 The Scholarship of Teaching in a Clinical Discipline [3 hrs.]

This course builds upon the knowledge and experience gained in NUR 6600 and NUR 6610, as well as the knowledge and skills of the experienced clinician. The primary focus of the course is on the scholarship of teaching – evidenced based curricular designs, teaching methods, clinical competencies, and evaluation methods. Content also addresses what it means to be a scholarly teacher in both classroom and clinical settings. Academic responsibilities of faculty members, ethical and legal issues in teaching, and the impact of professional trends, health care policies, and rapidly changing health and illness care environments on the education of tomorrow's health professionals are explored.

Prerequisites: NUR 6610 or consent of instructor.

NURS 6630 Practicum in Teaching [3 hrs.]

This course is a mentored teaching practicum in the content area and site selected by the graduate student with agreement of the course faculty. The practicum offers the learner an opportunity to develop, implement, and evaluate a teaching/course plan based on the principles of teaching and learning and curriculum development acquired in the pre-requisite courses. Requirements include development of a contract with the student's mentor-teacher, measurable learning outcomes, a lesson plan, use of a variety of teaching methods and audio-visual aids, and both peer and student evaluation of effectiveness. Evaluation of learning includes development of a paper-pencil test following a test blueprint and use of a clinical tool as appropriate. Periodic seminars are included. **Prerequisites:** Admission to MSN Program and NUR 6600, 6610, and 6620.

MSN Sample Plan for Study
2009 - 2011

Semester I – Fall		Semester II - Spring	
NUR 5300: Historical & Theoretical Foundations of Nursing & Health Care	3	NUR 6310: Community-Focused Care: An Interdisciplinary Approach	3
NUR 5310: Advanced Professional Nursing	3	NUR 6400: Professional Inquiry: Qualitative & Quantitative Methods	3
Semester III – Fall		Semester IV - Spring	
NUR 6300: Ethics & Culture: Foundations for Leadership	3	NUR 6410: Methods for Measuring Quality in Health & Educational Systems	3
NUR 6320: Health Care Policy, Organization, & Financing	3	NUR 6510 (Nurse Managers) or NUR 6610 (Nurse Educators)	3
NUR 6500 (Nurse Managers) or NUR 6600 (Nurse Educators)	3		
Semester V – Summer 1		Semester VI – Fall	
NUR 6520 (Nurse Managers) or NUR 6620 (Nurse Educators)	3	NUR 6530 (nurse managers – practicum) or NUR 6530 (nurse educators –Practicum)	3
		NUR 6990: Research Project in Selected Area of Study	3
		TOTAL CREDITS = 36	

MSN Student Policies

Please note: All policies and procedures set forth by the WMU Graduate College and the most current Graduate Catalog (College: www.wmich.edu/grad/) must be known and followed by students enrolled in the BSON master's program. Following are an expansion of these policies, including specific details relating to graduate nursing students.

Advising

A doctorally prepared faculty member will be assigned to each of the incoming graduate students at the time of acceptance into the program. The MSN advisor will maintain contact with the assigned mentees throughout the graduate program, offering academic information and referrals to other resources as needed. Academic advising is a partnership, shared by the advisor, the student, and the MSN Coordinator. It is wise for students to keep a portfolio that contains their individual program of study, clinical area of choice, and selected area of study requirements. The assigned advisor periodically reviews the file/portfolio, and guides the student regarding sequence and program requirements.

The MSN advisor will not necessarily be the MSN Project Advisor, but will work with the student to coordinate the graduate course requirements and faculty support throughout the program.

Selection of area of study

The graduate student must declare the specific area of study upon admission to the MSN program. The choice of areas are 1) nurse leader/manager and 2) nurse educator. This selection will be noted in the student's record and requires that the 4-course sequence in that area of study be completed prior to graduation. The student may, however, choose to elect additional courses in the alternate area of study provided sufficient rationale is given. The student may decide to take more than the required 12 courses prior to graduation. The total number of transfer credits from another university may not exceed 6 graduate credits and will be determined by the lead faculty of the course being transferred in collaboration with the MSN Coordinator.

Registration status

The graduate student is expected to remain continuously enrolled in the MSN program as courses are offered until the 12 courses or 36 graduate credits are successfully completed. Most courses will be taken during fall and spring semesters. The total time allowed for completion of the master's program in nursing is 6 years in keeping with WMU Graduate Advising Handbook policy. Leave of absences and withdrawal from the program are possible options to be discussed with individual students and the MSN Program Committee. As of academic year 2006-2007, a fulltime graduate course load is 6 credits in fall and spring semesters.

Academic Progression & Probationary Status

- A. Graduate students are required to follow the prescribed sequence of courses where specified. Students must take each prerequisite and co-requisite for each course as described in the program of study. Students must complete designated requirements for each course in the nursing program before progressing to the next nursing course. Any exceptions must follow the change of program procedure and be pre-approved by the MSN faculty. Student records will be validated for fulfillment of required courses.
- B. To progress through the Master's curriculum, the student must achieve a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or better in each semester. An individual course grade of "B" or better is required for all nursing courses.
- C. If a graduate student fails to receive a grade of "B" or better in a course that causes their cumulative GPA to fall below a 3.0 in a given semester, they will be placed on probation for one semester during which the cumulative GPA of "B" must be attained.
- D. Should a student fail to regain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better, s/he will be considered for dismissal from the program.

Grading System

The following grading schema will be used in the WMU Bronson School of Nursing:

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Honor Points</u>
95-100	A	4.0
90-94	BA	3.5
85-89	B	3.0
80-84	CB	2.5
75-79	C	2.0
Below 75	Failing grade for graduate study	0.0

Change in Program of Study

The following students must submit a Change of Program Request.

1. A student who:
 - a. needs to alter the prescribed sequence or timeline in the required courses.
 - b. fails to complete a co-requisite course.
 - c. withdraws from a nursing course in good standing.

Those students must:

- a. write to the MSN Program Committee explaining their request and rationale for program alteration.
- b. receive written approval from the MSN Program Coordinator or designee.
- c. complete procedure prior to implementing the change in program.

2. If a student has been inactive in the graduate nursing program in excess of two years, the MSN Program Committee will evaluate the student's request to re-enter the program.
3. Students will be granted re-entry to the MSN Program on a space and course available basis.

Graduation

An application for graduation must be filed according to the guidelines and deadlines printed in the current Western Michigan University Schedule of Classes. Candidates must also apply for graduation in the WMU Bronson School of Nursing. To be eligible for graduation with a Master of Science in Nursing degree, the student must have completed the required 36 credit hours of coursework with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0.

Misconduct

- A. Graduate student conduct must meet the standards set forth by the WMU student code, the WMU Graduate Catalog, the ANA Code of Ethics (2001), and the most recent WMU School of Nursing MSN Handbook.
- B. Proscribed conduct rules and regulations regarding the following behaviors are delineated in the student code: alcohol use, credit card misuse, dishonesty, disruptive behavior, drug possession, failure to comply, failure to provide identification, fire equipment misuse, hazing, identification misuse, obscene communication, physical or verbal abuse, sexual misconduct, telecommunication misuse, theft, unauthorized entry, key possession, unauthorized posting, violation of the law, violation of university policies and weapon possession or use. Initiation of charges against any nursing student regarding misconduct in these behaviors will follow the Office of Student Conduct protocol.
- C. Proscribed policies and procedures regarding academic honesty and conduct are delineated in the WMU Graduate Catalog (www.wmich.edu/catalog) under "Students Rights and Responsibilities." Violations of academic honesty include but are not limited to: cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. In addition, the process of charging a student with a violation as well as the steps of due process are delineated in the catalog. Graduate nursing students are subject to these policies and procedures.
- D. Graduate nursing students who violate professional standards may be charged by a faculty member. These behaviors may include breach of patient confidentiality, chronic tardiness to nursing practice sites, unprofessional behavior, or other violations of the American Nurses Association' *Code of Ethics (2001)*. The process includes:
 1. Any faculty member may file written charges against a graduate nursing student for unprofessional conduct. Charges will be presented in writing and directed to the MSN Program Committee Chair. Any charge should be submitted as soon as possible after the event takes place, preferably within five University business days.

2. Within five working days, the faculty member will meet with the graduate student, the course coordinator, and the Chair of the MSN Program Committee to attempt negotiation and resolution.
3. If resolution is not reached, the MSN Program Committee Chair will refer the matter to the MSN Program Committee for decision/resolution. A written recommendation will be made regarding the matter to the graduate student and the faculty member.
4. If the recommendation/resolution is still not satisfactory to the graduate student and faculty member, a copy of the written recommendation and the initial charges will be presented to the Director. Within ten working days of receipt of the report, the Director will meet with the graduate student and the faculty member who filed charges. A recommendation will be made regarding the matter to the faculty.
5. Faculty will make the final recommendation and the Director will notify the student.

Appeals

- A. A graduate student who wants to appeal a final course grade that has been recorded by the Registrar on the student's academic record or wants to appeal a decision to dismiss the student from the academic program must follow the process delineated in the WMU Graduate Catalog.
- B. A student who would like to appeal a sanction given through the Office of Student Conduct, must follow the process delineated in the WMU Student Code.
- C. A student who believes that a WMU Bronson School of Nursing incident, policy, or decision has not been administered fairly may appeal the decision in the following manner.
 1. Within five working days of the date of the incident/policy/decision in question, the student must submit a written report to the faculty member involved in the incident.
 2. Within five additional working days, the faculty member and MSN coordinator will meet with the student to attempt to negotiate a resolution.
 3. If the problem is not resolved, the MSN Program Committee Chair will be notified by the student in writing of the incident/policy in question. The Chair will meet with the faculty member and the student involved in the incident and present the data/information to the MSN Program Committee.
 4. The MSN Program Committee will make a recommendation in writing to the Director and notify the student of the recommendation.
 5. If the problem is still not resolved satisfactorily, the student must notify the Director in writing within five days of receiving the MSN Committee decision. The Director collects information from the parties involved. The Director informs the student of the final decision.

Liability Insurance

Graduate students are not covered by WMU's group liability insurance policy. Graduate students must carry their own nurse liability policy.

Valid Nursing License

Graduate students in the nursing program must maintain an active Michigan nursing license in order to provide clinical care in Michigan health facilities. Evidence of a valid nursing license must be on file in the office of the BSON. International students will be required to show evidence of current nursing licensure in their home country and verification of credentials to be admitted to the MSN program.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 1990, was promulgated by the United States Congress to prohibit discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Disability is defined in the Act as a person with a) physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individuals; b) a record of such impairment; or c) being regarded as having such an impairment. A "qualified individual with a disability" is one, with or without reasonable accommodation or modification, meets the essential eligibility requirements for participation in the program

Any student with a documented disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact Ms. Beth denHartigh at 387-2116 and/or at beth.denhartigh@wmich.edu at the beginning of the semester. A disability determination must be made by this office before any accommodations are provided by the instructor.

Religious Observances Policy (MOA-07/02)

The University is a diverse, multicultural enterprise and, as a community, we jointly embrace both individual responsibility and dignified respect for our differences. It is our general policy to permit students to fulfill obligations set aside by their faith.

It is our intent that students who must be absent from scheduled classes to fulfill religious obligations or observe practices associated with their faith not be disadvantaged. However, it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with his/her instructors in advance. It is in the student's best interests to approach each instructor expeditiously and with sufficient notice that the rights and responsibilities of the instructor are not disrupted. Instructors should make it known to classes early in the term what they consider reasonable notice for anticipated absences. Without specifying a fixed notification time, we acknowledge in this policy joint responsibility: instructors will inform students of their requirements and students will make every effort to cause no disruption in the instructors' plans and duties.

Instructors should assume that a claim of religious observance has veracity, especially when advance notice is provided by the student. Students likewise must recognize that it is their responsibility to meet all their course obligations. Instructors are not obligated to provide materials to students unless these materials would have normally been distributed to the entire class. For example, if an instructor does not normally post notes, a student cannot expect notes to be provided for lectures missed.

If instructors choose to incorporate adjustments into the syllabus intended to cover student absences, it should be explicit that these apply to absences for religious observances, as well as all other contingencies.

Graduate Nursing Students' Rights and Responsibilities

Student Policies

Students' rights are published in the WMU Graduate Catalog. Students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the policies and recommendations set forth in the current edition of the Western Michigan University Graduate Catalog regarding the following matters:

1. Academic honesty
2. Conduct in research
3. Academic conduct violation: consequences and appeal
4. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
5. Sexual harassment and sexism
6. Discrimination: complaints and grievance
7. Academic grade appeals
8. President's statement on racial and ethnic harmony

In addition, the Student Code of Western Michigan University further elaborates and sets boundaries on behaviors related to the health, safety or property of others. The Student Code also describes due process and judicial hearing procedures governing other illicit student behaviors such as: illegal drug use, unauthorized entry, assault, disorderly conduct, etc.

Grades and Transcripts

The student's transcript is a copy of the complete academic record. The University mails grade reports directly to the students. Transcripts may be obtained, by written request, from the registrar. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (1974) bill gave parents and students over 18 years of age access to the student's school records. Enrolled students have the right to access their academic files with advance notice to their programs. The system of grades and honor points, policies on incomplete grades, and grade changes are described in the WMU catalog and this Graduate Student Handbook.

Health Requirements

If a graduate nursing student enters a health facility, s/he must adhere to the requirements of that

facility. A list of such requirements can be found in the WMU Bronson School of Nursing Undergraduate Student Handbook.

Policy on Criminal Background Check

Pursuant to Section 20173 of the Michigan Public Health Code and the requirements of clinical/field placement partners, a criminal background check is required for all applicants to the College of Health and Human Services programs as a part of the process for placement in clinical practice sites. The criminal background check is conducted in order to verify that the individual has had no criminal convictions. These would include:

- any felony, or an attempt or conspiracy to commit a felony within 15 years immediately preceding the date of clinical privileges;
- a misdemeanor that involved abuse, neglect, assault, battery or criminal sexual conduct against anyone or fraud against a vulnerable adult or a state or federal crime that is substantially similar to such a misdemeanor, within the 10 years immediately preceding the date of clinical privileges.

If a graduate student will be working in a clinical facility as part of their requirements for the MSN degree, that student needs to present evidence of a recent Criminal Background Check (can be verification from current employer). If the student has not recently submitted to a Criminal Background Check and it is needed for placement during the practicum experiences, the graduate student will be required to follow the BSON process for completion of said check.

After a student has been admitted to the graduate nursing program he/she is required to immediately inform the Director of the WMU Bronson School of Nursing if he or she is subsequently arrested for or convicted of any of the criminal offenses covered by the Michigan Public Health Code Section 20173.

Any student who has been convicted of a crime as indicated above or who is subsequently convicted of criminal offenses covered by Michigan Public Health Code 20173 will not be placed into the clinical/field placement of any course which requires such clinical/field placement, and will be removed from any such clinical/field placement if already placed. A degree will not be granted to any student who does not successfully complete all required clinical/field placements.

Financial Assistance and Scholarship

All scholarship applications are available April 1 and are due by June 1st each year.

A. The Bronson Health Foundation Scholarship (pending)

The Bronson Health Foundation Scholarship shall be awarded to one graduate student.

Preference shall be given to a nurse who is working at Bronson Methodist Hospital with a minimum grade point average of 3.0. A minimum of one award shall be provided annually with an award amount of not less than \$500 nor greater than \$2000 and shall be divided equally among the recipients. The scholarship is renewable for up to three academic years. Recipients must maintain satisfactory academic progress.

B. The Bronson Methodist Hospital School of Nursing Alumni Scholarship

The Alumni Association of the Bronson Methodist Hospital School of Nursing Scholarship shall be awarded to an alumnus who has been admitted to the undergraduate or graduate nursing program at WMU. The student must maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 and can be either full or part time. The Scholarship is renewable for up to four academic years with demonstrated satisfactory academic progress. Disbursement shall be determined by available funds with a minimum of one award provided annually.

C. The Perg Scholarship

The Theodore and Hazel Perg Scholarship is awarded to eligible Western Michigan University Bronson School of Nursing undergraduate and graduate students who have graduated from Southwest Michigan high schools in Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, or Van Buren counties. The scholarship, initiated by Theodore Perg in memory of his wife Hazel, is intended to benefit the nursing profession and ultimately humanity by providing financial assistance to students who would not otherwise be able to pursue ...their education in nursing. The scholarship is designed to support the cost of tuition, books, and other educational expenses. The scholarship is renewable each year as long as the recipient is enrolled in the Western Michigan University Bronson School of Nursing. While the scholarship is based in part upon need, recipients are not required to meet the same guidelines established by the federal government.

D. The Sherman Uncommon Leader Scholarship

The Sherman Uncommon Leader Scholarship shall be available for graduate students pursuing a career in nursing management or hospital leadership. Qualified candidates must have a commitment to improvement of current nursing practices, with a particular interest in changing organizational problems that impact adversely on clinical and human outcomes. Particularly sought are candidates whose strength of character has adopted Florence Nightingale's tough and high-minded view of their profession. The recipients shall have, and maintain, a 3.0 minimum grade point average. The scholarship fund has been established by V. Clayton and Stephanie Sherman. The scholarship amount and disbursement shall be determined by fund accruals.

D. Other Scholarships

The Michigan Department of Community Health, Office of the Chief Nurse Executive, is administering a Nurse Scholarship Program that targets graduate students enrolled in a nurse educator program [Authority: P.A. 369 of 1978, as amended]. The graduate student must

meet of the following requirements to be considered for this scholarship:

- Is a resident of Michigan and U.S. citizen
- Holds an unencumbered license to practice nursing in Michigan
- Has intention to practice within the State of Michigan in an underserved area with an underserved population or in a health professional shortage area (all of Michigan)
- Is not receiving a full scholarship from another source

Other opportunities for scholarship assistance may occur during the year. When these opportunities arise, graduate students will be informed so they may take advantage of such opportunities.

Sigma Theta Tau International, Upsilon Epsilon Chapter

The mission of the Upsilon Epsilon Chapter of the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) is to provide leadership and scholarship in practice, education and research to enhance the health of all people. STTI supports the learning and professional development of our members who strive to improve nursing care worldwide. This chapter was chartered in March 2007.

The Upsilon Epsilon Chapter of STTI is comprised of WMU Bronson School of Nursing graduates, senior level undergraduate and graduate students, members of STTI at other institutions, and community nurse leaders who have met set criteria for membership. Society membership is a rewarding connection with nurses at the local, regional, national and international levels who share the need to make a difference.

Typically, as an Honor Society, one can become a member in one of two ways:

A. Academic

- Current graduate student meeting the following criteria: GPA 3.5 or above and completion of at least one-quarter of required graduate curriculum.
- Alum meeting the same criteria as current students

B. Professional

- Community members who have demonstrated achievement in the areas of nursing education, practice, research, administration or publication. Requirements also include current RN licensure and completion of a baccalaureate degree or higher in nursing or another field.
- Current STTI member: Can be a member of multiple chapters or honor societies.

The tradition of honor societies is that individuals who qualify and who demonstrate leadership potential are recommended by current society members for an invitation to join.

Career Services

Assistance with career questions and job search preparation is offered free of charge by the Office of **Career & Student Employment Services**. Take full advantage of opportunities for work and skill-building experiences by registering without charge as early as possible for Bronco JOBS Plus (<http://JOBS.dosa.wmich.edu>). This web-based service offers access to part-time jobs, summer jobs, internships, co-op positions and full-time employment openings (including on-campus interviewing, job vacancy postings, and resume referral). Other services include career fairs, resume critiquing, individual advising sessions, and workshops on resume writing, job search strategies, and interviewing. A career resource library, workshops, employer visits, and advising by appointment take place in the main office on the first floor of Ellsworth Hall (269 387-2745).

Western Michigan University Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy and commitment of Western Michigan University not to discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, color, national origin, height, weight, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, handicap or Veteran status in its educational programs, activities, admissions, or employment practices in accordance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, Executive Order 11246 as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and all other pertinent State and Federal regulations.