

**University of North Alabama**



**ANDERSON**  
**College of NURSING *and***  
**HEALTH PROFESSIONS**  

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**University of NORTH ALABAMA**

**ANDERSON COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS**

**GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

**2019-2020**

**GRADUATE NURSING STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

### A. Introduction

The faculty of the University of North Alabama (UNA) Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions (ACONHP) congratulates you on your acceptance into the graduate nursing course of study. There are many planned worthwhile learning experiences to enable you to become an experienced professional nurse who can function at an advanced level in the health care society. This course of nursing study is entirely online.

The policies in this Graduate Student Handbook are supplemental to the University's Graduate Catalog. These ACONHP policies are to help you progress through the program. This handbook is provided as information only and should not be construed as a contract between you and the ACONHP or the University of North Alabama. The UNA and the ACONHP reserve the right to make changes in this handbook as deemed appropriate.

Both the graduate and the undergraduate programs of the ACONHP are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and approved by the Alabama Board of Nursing (ABN). Web sites are available for both organizations (<http://www.abn.state.al.us/>; <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation>).

### B. Accommodation Assistance for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the University offers reasonable accommodations to students with eligible documented learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act of 2008, a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities as compared to an average person in the population. It is the responsibility of the student to contact Disability Support Services to initiate the process to develop an accommodation plan. This accommodation plan will not be applied retroactively. Appropriate, reasonable accommodations will be made to allow each student to meet course requirements, but no fundamental or substantial alteration of academic standards will be made. Students needing assistance should contact Disability Support Services (256-765-4214).

### C. Title IX Discriminatory Harassment

The University of North Alabama has an expectation of mutual respect. Students, staff, administrators, and faculty are entitled to a working environment and educational environment free of discriminatory harassment. This includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, domestic and intimate partner violence, and stalking, gender-based discrimination, discrimination against pregnant and parenting students, and gender-based bullying and hazing.

**Faculty and staff are required by federal law to report any observations of harassment (including online harassment) as well as any notice given by students or colleagues of any of the behaviors noted above.** Retaliation against any person who reports discrimination or harassment is also prohibited. UNA's policies and regulations covering discrimination and harassment may be accessed at [www.una.edu/titleix](http://www.una.edu/titleix). If you have experienced or observed discrimination or harassment, confidential reporting resources can be found on the website or you may make a formal complaint by contacting the Title IX Coordinator at 256-765-4223.

#### D. Vision, Mission, Goals, and Outcomes

##### *Vision & Mission*

The ACONHP **vision** is to improve health in the community by effecting change in systems and policies, and to promote research and scholarly activities that advance nursing and health care knowledge. The ACONHP **mission** is to graduate nurses and other health professionals who are prepared to assume professional roles in diverse health care environments.

The MSN program has two overarching objectives. The fulfillment of these objectives will provide a positive impact on the well-being and health of the society:

1. education of nurses in advanced teaching methodologies to provide the tools necessary to facilitate the education of nursing students, health care clients, and health care colleagues;
2. preparation of nurses who will function at an advanced level in the health care environment with regards to politics and legislation, budgeting and economics, leadership and management, such that they may positively impact the management aspects of nursing and health care in society.

##### *Graduate Program Crosswalk*

##### *Program Competencies, Goals, and Student Outcomes: UNA/MSN Curriculum Map*

#### **University Core Competencies (UCC)**

- UCC 1. Information Literacy
- UCC 2. Critical Thinking
- UCC 3. Effective Communication
- UCC 4. Scientific Literacy
- UCC 5. Aesthetic Awareness
- UCC 6. Cross-cultural and Global Perspective
- UCC 7. Informed Citizenship

#### **MSN Essentials (E)**

- E 1. Background for Practice from Sciences and Humanities
- E 2. Organization and Systems Leadership
- E 3. Quality Improvement and Safety
- E 4. Translating and Integrating Scholarship into Practice
- E 5. Informatics and Healthcare Technologies
- E 6. Health Policy and Advocacy
- E 7. Interprofessional Collaboration or Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes
- E 8. Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving Health
- E 9. Master's-Level Nursing Practice

## Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions Program Goals (ACONHP)

- ACONHP 1. Provide high quality, innovative educational nursing and health related programs  
 ACONHP 2. To build and maintain a student-centered nursing and health related programs  
 ACONHP 3. Provide a culturally diverse environment for students, faculty, and staff  
 ACONHP 4. Develop partnerships with community agencies to expand healthcare to the community  
 ACONHP 5. Promote research and scholarly activities that advance nursing and health care knowledge

## Graduate Program Goals (GP)

- GP 1. Offer a high quality MSN program  
 GP 2. Graduate nurses and other health professionals who are prepared to practice in global healthcare environments  
 GP 3. Promote a culturally diverse learning environment designed to eliminate barriers to learning  
 GP 4. Develop and nurture a strong relationship with community health facilities and health professionals  
 GP 5. Foster scholarly activities, research, teaching, service, and practice that advance the knowledge base of nursing and other health care professions

## Graduate Student Outcomes (GSO)

1. Demonstrate knowledge, competencies, and skills in advanced nursing practice, teaching, and/or leadership. (UCC 1, 2, 3, 4, 6; E 1-9; ACONHP Goal 1, 2, 4, 5; GP 1, 2, 4, 5)
2. Serve as a leader and change agent in nursing and health care delivery systems to ensure quality care across the lifespan. (UCC 1,2,3,4,7; E 3, 7,8; ACONHP Goal 3,4,5; GP 3,4,5)
3. Utilize ethical decision-making, technology, and communication skills to provide culturally competent care. (UCC 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, E 2, 5, 6; ACONHP Goal 3, 5; GP 1, 2, 3, 5)
4. Effectively practice advanced nursing roles in collaborative relationships across diverse disciplines to improve patient and population health outcomes. (UCC 1, 2, 3, 4, 6; E 2,7,8, 9,10; ACONHP 1, 2, 3, 4; GP 1, 2, 3, 4)
5. Synthesize nursing knowledge through translation, integration, and application of evidence-based practice. (UCC 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7; E 1, 3, 4, 6, 9; ACONHP Goal 5; GP 2, 5)

## E. Graduate Administration, Faculty, and Staff Contact Information

Roles	Name	Office Number	Phone Number	E-mail Address
Administration	Dr. Vicki Pierce Dean, Associate Professor	210	256-765-4984	<a href="mailto:vgpierce@una.edu">vgpierce@una.edu</a>
	Dr. Tera Kirkman Associate Dean, Professor	236	256-765-4328	<a href="mailto:trkirkman@una.edu">trkirkman@una.edu</a>
	Dr. Kristy Oden Chair, Graduate Programs Associate Professor	312	256-765-4931	<a href="mailto:kooden@una.edu">kooden@una.edu</a>
Faculty	Dr. Lynn Aquadro Professor	313	256-765-4931	<a href="mailto:lcaquadro@una.edu">lcaquadro@una.edu</a>
	Dr. Helen Coronel Associate Professor	313	256-765-4931	<a href="mailto:hcoronel@una.edu">hcoronel@una.edu</a>
	Dr. Wendy Darby Professor	313	256-765-4931	<a href="mailto:wadarby@una.edu">wadarby@una.edu</a>
	Dr. Ellen Williams Associate Professor	313	256-765-4931	
	Dr. Laura Williams Associate Professor	313	256-765-4931	<a href="mailto:llwilliams1@una.edu">llwilliams1@una.edu</a>
Staff	Mrs. Lauren Shell Enrollment Specialist and Graduate Programs Academic Advisor	312	256-765-4931	<a href="mailto:sshell@una.edu">sshell@una.edu</a>
	Mrs. Cynthia Mashburn			

	Administrative Assistant, Graduate Programs	312	256-765-4936	<a href="mailto:cpmashburn@una.edu">cpmashburn@una.edu</a>
Additional Resources	UNA Operator		256-765-4100	University messages
	Toll free number		1-800-TALKUNA ext. 4936	
	Graduate Programs Department Fax Number		256-765-4701	

#### F. Degree and Program Plans

The Master of Science in Nursing degree has three tracks or options, Teaching-Learning Environments, Nursing Leadership in Organizational Environments, and Family Nurse Practitioner. The teaching/learning and leadership tracks requires 32 hours of credit for completion. The Family Nurse Practitioner track requires 41 hours of completion. The curriculum consists of 15 hours of core courses for all graduate students (see below).

Students may transfer a maximum of six hours from another university (See “Transfer Credits”).

The UNA ACONHP Master of Science in Nursing degree builds on the preparation of students at the BSN level with the following assumptions:

- students have experience in professional nursing practice
- students have background knowledge of nursing theory and research
- students understand and use the nursing process
- students have effective communication skills
- students are involved in professional activities
- students have leadership abilities
- students can use technology effectively

The concept of communication is expanded to include participation in the leadership/instructor/researcher role. The concept of functioning as a “professional “is expanded to functioning in management/leadership/executive roles. The concept of research is expanded from the knowledge level to the analysis and performance levels. The concept of collaboration with members of the health team is expanded to the role of collaboration with academic, legislative and economic officials, as well as leaders in other disciplines.

<b>MSN Track</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>
<b>1. Nursing in Teaching-Learning Environments</b>	
Core Courses: NU 502, NU 508, NU 509, NU 607, NU 614	15
Discipline Specific Courses: NU 605, NU 606, NU 616, NU 680, NU 681	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>2. Nursing Leadership in Organizational Environments</b>	
Core Courses: NU 502, NU 508, NU 509, NU 607, NU 614	15
Discipline Specific Courses: NU 608, NU 617, NU 618, NU 682, NU 683	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>3. Family Nurse Practitioner</b>	
Core Courses: NU 502, NU 508, NU 509, NU 607, NU 614	15
Discipline Specific Courses: NU 615, NU 640, NU 641, NU 642, NU 643, NU 644, NU 645	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>

<p><b>All courses are asynchronous online courses.</b></p> <p><b>There are two practicum courses in the teaching/learning and leadership tracks, consisting of 90 hours each for a total of 180 practicum hours.</b></p> <p><b>There are five practicum courses in the family nurse practitioner track consisting of 120 hours each for a total of 600 practicum hours.</b></p>
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## II. BEGINNING THE PROGRAM

Graduate students receive initial advisement from the Enrollment Specialist and Graduate Program Academic Advisor. After this initial advisement, MSN faculty members provide student advisement.

Once admitted to the MSN program students may enroll in non-practicum courses as scheduled. However, MSN students must meet the following requirements **before** enrolling in the *practicum courses* (NU680, NU681, NU682, NU683, NU641, NU642, NU643, NU644, NU645). All health and practice information must be received by the Graduate Programs Nursing Office **eight (8) weeks prior to enrolling in practicum courses**.

### A. Health Information

1. Results of a recent (within one year) physical exam. A physical examination must be completed by a physician or a nurse practitioner. THE COMPLETED **HEALTH FORM** may be found under the “forms” tab of the student’s *Immunitrax* account and must be uploaded to the account for approval. See the Supplies and Expenses section below for additional details.
2. \*Evidence of hepatitis immunization. All students are strongly encouraged to become vaccinated against the Hepatitis B virus. Dates of the Hepatitis B series and/or Hepatitis B titer must be provided on the health form. Students who do not wish to take the vaccine must sign a declination form, which may be obtained from the Administrative Assistant.
3. \*Evidence of other immunizations. Students must have proof of measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR), and varicella immunization or provide a signed declination form. Proof should either be a copy of the actual immunization date(s) or copy of titer results signed by authorized individuals. Some agencies also require flu vaccines for students and employees.
4. Tuberculosis skin test. Students must have a tuberculosis skin test each year. If a TB skin test is positive for the first time, the student will be referred to the local health department. UNA will follow the health department’s policy on the referral, diagnosis, and treatment of tuberculosis. Under no circumstances will a student with a positive TB skin test be allowed to attend clinical rotations until documentation is received from the health department.

If a student has a past history of a positive skin test for tuberculosis, he/she should report annually to the local health department for a symptom assessment and sputum culture or chest x-ray (CXR). A chest x-ray may be recommended for a student with a positive PPD, according to symptoms. Under no circumstances will a student with a positive TB skin test be allowed to attend clinical rotations.

5. Health Insurance. Students must have health insurance coverage. Any expenses incurred as a result of injury or illness occurring during clinical experiences will be the sole responsibility of the student.

6. Recent influenza vaccine.

**\*Please note that declining immunizations may result in a health care agency's refusal to allow one to complete practicum experiences at the agency.**

\*Flu shot refusal requires UNA students to wear a mask during all practicum experiences.

### *B. Practicum Information*

1. Evidence of an unencumbered license to practice in the state of intended practicum experience - Acceptance into the MSN Nursing program requires verification of a current RN license. The student must upload a copy of their current nursing license into the document management system. The ACONHP will then obtain verification of the student's licensure status from each student's State Board of Nursing. To register for a clinical practicum, the students **must be licensed** by the state in which clinical practicum is to be completed.

2. BLS/CPR certification for health care providers - All students must have current instruction or certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and show evidence of dates of coverage. A copy of the card must be uploaded into the document management system.

3. Professional Liability insurance- Each student must obtain professional liability insurance (\$1,000,000.00/\$6,000,000.00) for practice as an registered nurse **(RN) who is also a student**. Having professional liability insurance does not always mean one has liability coverage as a student. Make sure your professional liability insurance provides a rider for student coverage. If you do not have professional liability insurance, may purchase it at <http://www.nso.com/>.

4. Criminal Background Check and Urine Drug Screen-Upon acceptance into the MSN program, all students will be required to complete a criminal background check (CBC) and urine drug screen (UDS) through VerifyStudents. See the *Supplies and Expenses* section below for additional information.

5. OSHA and HIPAA education – MSN students must provide evidence of recent education on Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) standards.

### *C. Books*

Students must have access to required course materials. Each course syllabus will indicate the required materials. Books may be obtained from the UNA Bookstore (1-800-TALK-UNA, Ext. 4642, <http://www.bkstr.com/CategoryDisplay/10001-9604-151906-1> or the Off Campus Bookstore (256-764-7507). You may also purchase books from other vendors, such as Amazon.com and Barnes and Nobles.

### *D. Supplies and Expenses*

Students must have Microsoft Office on their computers. Only Microsoft Office documents (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, etc.) are acceptable for assignment submissions. It is advisable to purchase and install these before beginning the program. Student versions of Microsoft Office are usually available for a reduced price. UNA Students can install Office for free. Follow this

link: <http://www.una.edu/its/Office365Advantage/studentsFreeOffice.html>. Clinical supplies will vary according to the clinical practicum experience. MSN students are responsible for purchasing supplies needed for clinical practicum.

Additional Costs:

- MSN- students are responsible for the cost of a Urine Drug Screen and Criminal Background check through *VerifyStudents* upon admission to the program (\$88.00; one time fee)
- All MSN students will be required to purchase an *Immunitrax* account in order to upload and manage health documentation requirement (\$42.45; one time fee)
- All MSN students will also be required to purchase Typhon for use during clinical courses, the cost is \$60 for MSN-TL and Leadership track students and \$90 for FNP track students.

#### *E. Dress Code Policies*

The nursing student's appearance is very important because it communicates self-image and a personal attitude towards the nursing profession. It is essential that the values of neatness, cleanliness, and professionalism are evident. The student must abide by the dress code policies of the clinical practicum agency. The student is responsible for obtaining the agency's dress code policy. When deemed appropriate by the agency, a student may wear a white lab coat/jacket and professional street clothes. The student is to always wear a UNA ACONHP name pin during practicum experiences. Student badges are sent to students in practicum courses identifying the student as a UNA MSN student. The purchase of the lab coat/jacket and name pin is solely the responsibility of the student. The nursing student's appearance is very important because it communicates self-image and attitude toward the profession. Violation of the dress code may result in an automatic clinical unsatisfactory.

#### *F. Exposure to Blood-borne Pathogens*

All MSN students must abide by the clinical agency's policies for standard precautions when practicum experiences require patient contact. Students must wear personal protective equipment (gloves, masks, goggles, gowns) when exposed to body fluids. The MSN student is responsible for using the personal protective devices as needed. If an "incident of exposure" occurs, the MSN student should fill out the incident report form utilized by the facility and fax a copy to the UNA ACONHP graduate programs office or complete the UNA "Incident Report" form. For additional information or follow-up, refer to the professor of the course.

#### *G. Incidents/Accidents*

If the student is involved in an untoward incident (e.g. needle stick, medication error) or an accident while in the clinical agency, the student is to follow the agency's protocol and complete appropriate forms. Inform the professor of the course as soon as possible after the incident and fax a copy of the completed forms to the Graduate Programs Office. If the agency does not have forms available, complete a copy of the UNA Incident Report (See Appendix) and fax it to the Office within 24 hours of the incident.

### III. PROCEEDING THROUGH THE PROGRAM

To be enrolled in required practicum courses (NU 680, NU681, NU682, NU683, NU 641, NU 642, NU 643, NU 644, NU 645, NU680, NU681, NU682, NU683) students must complete pre-requisite courses (see UNA Graduate Catalog). Course sequence will be individualized for part

time MSN students. The following general information will provide the student with answers to questions arising during the journey to graduation.

#### *A. Academic Honesty*

All members of the university community are expected to be honorable and observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. Students are expected to behave in an ethical manner. Individuals who disregard the core values of truth and honesty bring disrespect to themselves and the University. A university community that allows academic dishonesty will suffer harm to the reputation of students, faculty, and graduates. It is in the best interest of the entire university community to sanction any individual who chooses not to accept the principles of academic honesty by committing acts such as cheating, plagiarism, or misrepresentation.

- Students enrolled in the University of North Alabama, Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions are expected at all times to uphold standards of integrity. Students are expected to perform honestly and to work in every way possible to avoid and eliminate academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes misrepresentation, cheating, and plagiarism, which are defined as follows:
- Misrepresentation is purposively altering or inventing information or data. Examples include, but are not limited to, forging a signature, fabricating information on a form, or falsifying the number of clinical practicum hours completed.
- Cheating is an attempt to deceive the instructor in the effort to evaluate fairly an academic exercise. Cheating includes copying another student's homework, class work, or required project (in whole or part) and/or presenting another's work as the student's own. Cheating also includes giving, receiving, offering and/or soliciting information on a quiz, test, or examination.
- Plagiarism is the copying of any published work or copying the theme or manuscript of another student; when one uses direct quotations or ideas of another without proper credit. When three or more consecutive words are borrowed, the borrowing should be recognized in accordance with APA guidelines.

When it is determined that a student is guilty of misrepresentation or cheating in the Graduate Program:

- The student will be dismissed from the program.
- Offenses are reported to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost for referral to the University Student Judicial System for disposition. (Please refer to the current University catalog, available online at [www.una.edu/catalog](http://www.una.edu/catalog), under General Regulations: Academic Honesty.

When it is determined that a student is guilty of plagiarism on a paper or didactic assignment in the Graduate Program, the following penalties will apply:

- The student will receive a penalty of a zero on the work in question.
- If the student commits a subsequent offense at any time during his/her enrollment in the Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions Online Program, a course failure will be given and the student may be subject to dismissal from the university.
- Offenses are reported to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost for referral to the University Student Judicial System for disposition. (Please refer to the

current University catalog, available online at [www.una.edu/catalog](http://www.una.edu/catalog), under General Regulations: Academic Honesty.

*Academic Honesty Agreement:*

**By entering this online course, you agree to abide by the conditions of the Academic Honesty Agreement as explained above in all online courses for the duration of your enrollment in the University Of North Alabama Anderson College Of Nursing and Health Professions Graduate Programs.**

**Additionally, you acknowledge that UNA's Graduate Program may submit any or all student work to Turnitin.com for originality checking. For more information, you can visit [http://turnitin.com/static/products.html#originality\\_checking](http://turnitin.com/static/products.html#originality_checking)**

*B. Student Copyright Notice*

“UNA courses may incorporate material contributed or licensed by individuals, companies, or organizations that may be protected by U.S. and foreign copyright laws. All persons reproducing, redistributing, or making commercial use of this information are expected to adhere to the terms and conditions asserted by the copyright holder. Transmission or reproduction of protected items beyond that allowed by fair use as defined in the copyright laws may require the written permission of the copyright owners. **Copyright use as outlined in the TEACH Act is not yet valid at the University of North Alabama.**”

*C. General Professional Behavior*

Professionalism is a quality the student should begin to develop from the first day in nursing. It is imperative that the MSN student dress professionally and project a professional demeanor in all settings. While in the clinical setting, students are expected to perform safely, adhere to established practices, be aware of their own limitations and to seek help when needed. Graduate students in the ACONHP MSN program are expected to conduct themselves according to the highest ethical and moral standards depicted by honesty, accountability, accepting responsibility for own actions and a displaying respect for human dignity.

The MSN student's written work for clinical experiences should reflect personal involvement and commitment to promotion of each individual's mental, social, physical and spiritual integrity. MSN students are expected to seek learning experiences and to show personal motivation to perform appropriately as opportunities become available. Following or during the clinical practicum experience, students are expected to complete and submit written work as directed by their preceptor and seek feedback. Students are expected to utilize preceptor feedback in completing subsequent assignments.

*D. Student Folders*

MSN students are advised to keep copies of all written work, documentation of required records, results of testing, and conferences with professors, e-mail messages and any other pertinent information related to course work in a folder. This folder is primarily for the use of the student and may offer clarification regarding the particulars of graduate study.

*E. Grading System*

The ACONHP follows the guidelines for grades as described in the Graduate Catalog. The letter grades are as follows: A-90-100%; B-80-89%; C-70-79%; D-60-69%; F-below 60%. Conditionally admitted students must earn a 3.0 grade point average after the first nine hours of study. All students must maintain a 3.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) to remain in good standing in the program. A student, whose GPA falls below 3.0, may be placed on academic probation or

eliminated from the program. The Graduate Catalog includes information on the disposition of such students. Students on academic probation are not eligible for graduation. A student making a grade of C or below on more than six semester hours of course work is automatically eliminated from the program. Grades of “incomplete” (I) are explained in the Graduate Catalog, under Grades and Retention.

#### *F. Retention in the Program*

1. Current records of health and practice information on file in the Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions Graduate Programs office (See section IIA and IIB).
2. Maintaining a B (3.0) average throughout the MSN nursing program.
3. Satisfactory clinical practicum performance - Students in the Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions who fail clinical practicum at any time during the semester, including the University’s withdrawal (“W”) period will receive a course failure (“F”).

#### *G. Readmission*

Any student who completely withdraws from the ACONHP MSN program must be readmitted according to the Graduate Catalog and readmission policy of the ACONHP. Students eligible to return to an MSN nursing course after a withdrawal or course failure in a required nursing course will be readmitted to the course on a “space available” basis.

Students who desire reinstatement to the graduation nursing program must write a letter of petition to the Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions. The letter is to be sent to the Chair of Graduate Programs and must include any extenuating circumstances that may have contributed to the failure to be successful in the previous attempt in the MSN program. The letter must also include a plan for successfully completing the program, including specific strategies to ensure success.

After the graduate faculty reviews requests for readmission, recommendations are made to the Chair of the Graduate Programs and the Dean of the ACONHP. Students will then receive notification regarding readmission decisions from the Office of the Dean of the ACONHP. Readmitted students must follow any recommendations or stipulations proposed by the dean and faculty as conditions for readmission.

#### *H. Clinical Practicum Experiences, Expectations, and Conduct*

##### *Graduate Program Practice Experiences*

Practice experiences are activities that you complete during courses in your program of study. Completion of the practice experiences ensures that you meet the program and course learning outcomes. For the graduate program, practice experiences include a combination of the following activities and experiences.

- **Digital Simulations (DS)** for the MSN program are practice experiences that involve participation in digital clinical experiences through Shadow Health. Digital clinical experiences are a mechanism for verifying early mastery of new levels of direct care practice associated with the MSN prepared nurse. See Table below for specific details related to DS.
- **Preceptor Practicum Experiences (PCE)** for the graduate program take place in a healthcare facility in NU641, NU642, NU643, NU644, NU 645, NU681, NU682 and NU683. In NU680, PCE in the teaching/learning track includes a practicum in an

education institution, such as a University or Community College. See Table below for specific details related to Practicum experiences.

<i>Minimum of 240 Practice Hours: Practicum Hours and Digital Simulation Experiences</i>		
<i>Course Number and Title</i>	<i>Preceptor Practicum Experience Hours</i>	<i>Digital Simulation (DS) Hours</i>
<b>NU508</b> Advanced Health Assessment (Shadow Health Digital Clinical Experience/Virtual Patient)		30
<b>NU614</b> Advanced Pharmacology (Shadow Health Digital Clinical Experiences/Virtual Patient)		10
<b>NU681 or NU682</b> Practicum I 10 hours EBP plus 80 hours Preceptor Practicum=90 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching/Learning Track Educator Role: Select a Preceptor with a MSN or higher degree in an academic setting (Community College or University)</li> <li>Nurse Leadership Track: Select a Preceptor who is a Masters prepared Mid-Level Manager (May be MSN or RN with MBA)</li> </ul>	90	
<b>NU680 or NU683</b> Practicum II 10 hours EBP plus 80 hours Preceptor Practicum=90 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching/Learning Track Direct Care Experience: Select a Preceptor who is a NP in a hospital and clinical setting (to prepare the nurse educator student for role as a direct care provider.)</li> <li>Nurse Leadership Track: Select a Preceptor who is a Masters prepared Upper-Level Manager (May be MSN or RN with MBA)</li> </ul>	90	
<b>Total Practice Experiences – 220 hours</b>	<b>180 PCE hours</b>	<b>40 DS hours</b>
<b>NU 641-NU645</b> Family Nurse Practitioner  120 hours minimum in each of the five practicum courses for a total of 600 minimum hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NU 641 – NU 643 clinical focus should be primary care across the lifespan</li> <li>NU 644 clinical focus should be women’s health</li> <li>NU 645 clinical focus should be pediatrics</li> </ul>		
<b>Total Practice Experiences=640 hours</b>	<b>600 PCE hours</b>	<b>40 DS hours</b>

#### *Rationale for Practice Experience Hours*

The MSN program includes 220 - 640 practice experience hours to “provide learning experiences that are based in a variety of settings” (AACN Essentials of Master’s Education in Nursing, 2011, p. 27). Practice experiences integrate didactic learning, promote innovative

thinking, and test new potential solutions to clinical practice or system issues” (p. 30). Practice experiences are integrated in the following courses:

Advanced Health Assessment (NU508), Advance Pharmacology (NU614), Evidence-based Practice and Practicum Courses (NU680, NU681, NU682, NU683), and Family Nurse Practitioner Courses (NU641, NU642, NU643, NU644, NU645).

#### *Graduate Student Responsibility for Securing Preceptor Experiences*

- Graduate students should participate in the identification of appropriate clinical sites and clinical preceptors as they are most familiar with their geographic location; keep in mind the individual course requirements
- It will be necessary for UNA to obtain an affiliation agreement with each PCE facility or setting. This process can take a considerable amount of time. Graduate students are urged to begin the selection for all practicum preceptors as soon as they are enrolled in the first graduate course.
- Written approval from the course instructor is required before you can start any preceptor practicum experiences.
- All preceptor clinical practicum experiences are graded as pass/fail. A passing grade for clinical practicum hours is required in order to pass the practicum course. If you are unable to complete practicum hours prior to the end of the term, you must notify the preceptor and course instructor to create a plan of action for completion of practicum hours.
- A practicum experience hour is defined as the time actually spent completing the practice experience assignment. Lunch breaks or travel time are not counted as clinical practice hours.
- You cannot work as a paid employee and receive credit for the same practicum experiences hours. That is, you cannot be paid for competing practicum experience hours when you are functioning in the capacity of a paid employee. If you are an employee at a practice experiences site or have any other formal relationship with the site, your role must be clearly defined in advance of the practice experience.
- Preceptor practicum experiences require you to create a third-party account to complete specific requirements through your account.

#### *Graduate Student Practicum Professional Conduct*

While in the clinical practicum setting, students are expected to respect facility policies and equipment and to avoid chewing gum and smoking, as well as eating or drinking in undesignated areas. Graduate students are expected to seek learning experiences. Following (or during) the clinical practicum experience, students are expected to complete and submit written work and to seek preceptor and faculty feedback. Students are expected to utilize feedback in completing subsequent assignments.

Graduate student nurses are expected to practice self-protecting behaviors. These include using gloves when in contact with patients, avoiding recapping contaminated needles or otherwise contacting body fluids of patients. Students are also expected to protect patients from

exposure to the student's own body fluids. (See Needlestick/Body Fluids Exposure Protocol - Appendix A)

*1. Professional Practicum Expectations.* An Unsatisfactory practicum grade, course failure, and possible dismissal from the ACONHP will result when a critical incident or major violation of any professional nursing behavior is exhibited. A major violation is defined as the attempt to commit, the commission of, or intentional assistance in the commission of any of the following:

- Furnishing false information to the instructor, graduate department or clinical practicum facility with intent to deceive.
- Forgery, alteration, or misuse of patient or clinical facility/organization documents or records.
- Any conduct or unsafe behavior that threatens the safety of a patient. This would include failure to disclose information regarding omission of care or error in patient of care.
- Theft from a clinical facility or organization. This would include medications and medical supplies.
- Possession or use of dangerous drugs and narcotics except as legally prescribed.
- Coming to a clinical facility under the influence of mind altering substances.
- Failure to maintain confidentiality of privileged information.
- Sexual harassment – Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that tends to create a hostile or offensive learning environment.

Violation of the professional, legal and ethical code of conduct for registered nurses, violation of UNA ACONHP policies, or violation of the UNA Code of Student Conduct at <https://www.una.edu/student-conduct/> constitutes cause for removal from the clinical practicum site, failure of the course and/or Administrative Dismissal of the student from the program. In such cases, the student's transcripts will reflect the University's grade system as outlined in the university catalog.

MSN students are expected to complete course and clinical practicum experiences according to course deadlines. Although MSN students are licensed practitioners, they are expected to obtain clinical help or supervision from their clinical practicum preceptors and instructors as needed.

Attendance is expected for all planned clinical practicum experiences. If illness, or impaired mobility occurs, or tardiness is anticipated, the student should notify the preceptor and the assigned clinical practicum agency before the start of clinical practicum experiences. Many clinical facilities do not allow individuals with contagious diseases, colds, fever, draining wounds, or gastrointestinal disturbances to be near clients. If these conditions occur, the student should contact the preceptor for directions and notify the course instructor. ***MSN teaching/learning and leadership students are required to complete 180 hours of clinical practicum to receive credit for the practicum courses. Eighty (80) hours are accumulated during each of the two practicum experiences and ten (10) hours are earned in the practicum courses while working on an evidence-based practice project. Family nurse practitioner track students are required to complete a minimum of 500 clinical hours to receive credit for all practicum courses.***

Tardiness is considered unprofessional behavior. Clinical tardiness may be considered an unexcused absence and an unsatisfactory grade may be earned.

*2. Drug & Alcohol Testing* - The University of North Alabama Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions is committed to maintaining a drug and alcohol-free academic environment and clinical work setting by maintaining a ZERO TOLERANCE policy for substance abuse. The ACONHP reserves the right to require random alcohol and drug screening of any nursing student. Random screening will be at the expense of the student. All drug/alcohol testing results will be confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties unless disclosure is required by law or the student has consented in writing to release of the information.

The presence or use of drugs or alcohol, lawful or otherwise, which interferes with the judgment or motor coordination of MSN nursing students, poses an unacceptable risk for others, the University, and affiliating clinical agencies. Under no circumstances should MSN nursing students participate in courses or clinical practicum activities while they are impaired. When a student's academic or clinical practicum performance is impaired or there is \*reasonable suspicion the College of Nursing reserves the right to require the student to submit to drug/alcohol testing at the expense of the student. Drug testing will be done in accordance with the policies of the clinical facility to which the student is assigned. Detected drug abuse will be grounds for dismissal from the ACONHP. Following dismissal, students have the right to appeal the dismissal decision and apply for readmission

A licensed MSN student who refuses to submit to drug/alcohol testing based on \*reasonable suspicion or a licensed nursing student who has positive drug test results will be reported to the appropriate board of nursing and will be dismissed from the ACONHP. If licensure status changes, full reinstatement of licensure will be required for an unrestricted return to the ACONHP MSN program.

**\*Reasonable suspicion** means there is reasonable evidence for concluding that a student is impaired. This evidence might include but is not limited to: the odor of alcohol or drugs, impaired behavior such as slurred speech, decreased motor coordination, and difficulty maintaining balance, or marked changes in personality or clinical practicum performance.

*3. Confidentiality and Social Media*- Students may be required by clinical agencies and the ACONHP to sign confidentiality and affidavit forms. Any information obtained regarding others' personal information must be maintained in the strictest of confidence. Discussion of others' personal information should be limited to necessary interactions and not continued during lunch or outside of the agency. Failure to maintain confidentiality is subject to a clinical practicum unsatisfactory grade and course failure. For the purposes of submitting written work, the student should not use clients' names.

While social networks and the internet can be valuable resources for disseminating information, online content and behavior have the potential to have serious negative consequences if media tools, such as blogs, wikis, podcasts, virtual worlds, and social networking are not used responsibly. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social networks are public domains. Use of these and other electronic media are never to be used to discuss patient or class information. These media are NOT the type of forum to share and state your personal views of the course, instructors, other class members, patients or your evaluation of performance. This information is private and all efforts to protect this privacy are YOUR responsibility. DO NOT share or provide any personal information with any patient who may be able to locate you outside of clinical time.

Inappropriate use of social media is considered unprofessional and unacceptable in the ACONHP. Violations will warrant disciplinary action and could result in course failure and/or dismissal from the nursing program.

Review American Nurses Association's Tips for Nurses Using Social Media at <http://www.nursingworld.org/FunctionalMenuCategories/AboutANA/Social-Media/Social-Networking-Principles-Toolkit/Social-Media-Poster.aspx>.

### *I. Medical Release Requirement*

To ensure a safe practice and educational environment, a medical release form must be completed by the healthcare provider and submitted to the Dean's office for the following medical situations:

- Any change in health status, including new prescriptions for potentially mood or behavior altering effects
- Post hospitalization
- Post injury
- Prolonged illness
- Pregnancy complications
- Postpartum

This is not intended to be a comprehensive list of conditions requiring a medical release. Please consult the Chair of Graduate Programs if you have questions or concerns.

### *J. Advisement*

When a student is accepted into the ACONHP MSN program, the student is initially advised by the Enrollment Specialists and Graduate Programs Academic Advisor and then assigned an advisor who is a member of the MSN faculty. Students are expected to consult the UNA Graduate Catalog for information. Questions concerning the MSN program not addressed in the catalog or in course outlines should be directed to the assigned advisor.

### *K. Sigma Theta Tau*

Graduate students may be eligible for membership in the UNA chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International.

- have completed  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the nursing curriculum;
- have at least a GPA of 3.5 (based on a 4.0 grading scale); or an equivalent of this measure of academic achievement when GPA is not available.
- meet the expectation of academic integrity.

### *L. Student Representation on ACONHP and UNA Committees*

Students are encouraged to participate in the committees of the ACONHP. Students may volunteer to represent their peers on several MSN Graduate Programs Committees (contact your professors for a list of committees allowing student representatives). MSN students are also eligible for membership on UNA committees including the Graduate Council Committee. Notify your professor if interested in becoming a member of these committees.

### *M. Faculty Evaluation*

MSN students will have opportunity to evaluate each MSN course and their professors. These evaluations are used to collect information that will benefit faculty as they continue to improve courses and the MSN program. Therefore, students should provide fair, honest and constructive comments. All evaluative comments will be tabulated and made available to the professor, department chair and the dean after final grades have been submitted. Evaluations are administered online

## IV. DISCIPLINARY/GRIEVANCE POLICIES

Disciplinary policies and processes of the ACONHP will be identical to those found in the UNA Graduate Catalog regarding general student behavior and as designated in specific MSN course syllabi.

University grievance procedures are found in the University Student Handbook and are available through the Office of Student Conduct and on the website at <http://www.una.edu/student-conduct/grievance-procedures.html>. The University grievance procedure is intended to ensure that each student has available to her/him clear instruction on how to bring complaints to the attention of faculty members and administrators. Since most grievances are resolved at the level where the problem arose, the student is urged to initiate resolution at that level.

As set forth in the University Student Handbook and the Office of Student Conduct, the student shall proceed through the following channels until such time as the grievance is resolved, or the student chooses to terminate the process:

1. The faculty member immediately involved
2. MSN Program Director
3. The Department Chair
4. The Dean of the Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions
5. University Ombudsman
6. Formal Grievance Committee Hearing

## V. GRADUATION PREPARATION

The UNA Graduate Catalog describes the minimum hours of study required to be taken at UNA, the number of courses at the 600-level required, the application for graduation procedure and commencement routines. Students who have questions about graduation can contact their assigned advisor, current MSN professors or the Coordinator for Graduate Programs Nursing Enrollment.

**At least two full semesters** before anticipated graduation, students must formally apply for graduation through the Registrar's Office (Graduation applications are available from the University Registrar's Office or at the following website <http://www.una.edu/registrar/graduation.html>). A summary sheet will be filled out by the University Registrar's Office to assure that course requirements have been met for graduation. Information regarding the graduation ceremony, diplomas, caps and gowns, etc. will be available on the UNA web site or questions can be directed to the University Registrar's Office.

*A. Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions Pin*

MSN students interested in obtaining the ACONHP Nursing pin should contact the Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions Graduate Programs office.

*B. Employment References*

References for potential employers should be sought on an individual basis.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA ANDERSON COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH  
PROFESSIONS  
STUDENT NEEDLESTICK/BODY FLUID EXPOSURE PROTOCOL

The following steps should be followed in the event of a needlestick/body fluid exposure by students. Post exposure from blood and body fluids, the student will:

1. **Immediately** wash the exposed area.
2. **Immediately** report the incident to the UNA practicum instructor.
3. Complete incident reports at facility (if available) and UNA (see Dean's secretary).
4. After completion of items 1-3, the student must choose one of the following three options:

Option I - Sign consent to decline HIV/HAA Serology testing.

Option II - Report to personal physician and/or Health Department/local emergency room for HIV Serology testing (at student's expense).

Option III - 1) Report to UNA University Health Services for HIV/HAA Serology testing.  
2) Antibody titers will be drawn at 3, 6, & 12 month intervals (at student's expense).

Revised 2-17-04 Reviewed 11-4-2008, 3/10/2009, 11/2009, 3/2010, 11/2011, 3/2012, 12/2013, 4/2015, 7/2016, 7/2017, 8/1/2018, 8/15/2019

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA ANDERSON COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH  
PROFESSIONS

TUBERCULOSIS EXPOSURE PROTOCOL

If students are exposed to patients who subsequently are shown to have tuberculosis, the following procedure is recommended:

- 1.) Complete appropriate incident reports (UNA and clinical practicum facility).
- 2.) Exposed students who have never had a positive tuberculin skin test will be given the PPD skin test **immediately** and then again in **10-12 weeks following the exposure**.
- 3.) If a PPD skin test is **positive**, the student will be referred to the Health Department for further evaluation and treatment. A chest x-ray (at the student's expense) is required to rule out pulmonary tuberculosis. If the student is symptomatic, a sputum culture is also required. Chest X rays are only performed at the Health Department once a month and sputum cultures can take up to 8 weeks for results; therefore, students are advised to obtain the PPD well in advance of the beginning of the semester.
- 4.) A student, who has had a positive PPD in the past and is subsequently exposed to tuberculosis during a practicum experience, will be referred to the Health Department.
- 5.) All students with positive PPD skin tests/Tuberculosis exposure must submit a medical release from the Health Department before returning to practicum experiences.

Revised 10/2009

Reviewed 4-2005, 10-2008, 3-2009, 11/2009, 3/2010, 3/2011, 11/2011, 3/2012, 12/2013, 2/2014, 4/2015, 7/2016, 7/2017, 8/1/2018, 8/15/2019

University of North Alabama  
Incident Report

**DIRECTIONS:** This form is to be completed in ink by supervisors or cost center heads for accidents or incidents involving injury or potential injury to students or visitors on campus or during University-related activities. Complete this form as soon as practical after an incident or accident and deliver copies (no later than 24 hours following) to the Vice President for Student Affairs (UNA Box 5023) **and** the Vice President for Business & Financial Affairs (UNA Box 5003).

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**GENERAL INFORMATION:      STUDENT/VISITOR**

Injured person is: (check one)    Student    Visitor

Visitor

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID Number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Name of  
parent/guardian/spouse \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

UNA Box \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Classification \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Local Address \_\_\_\_\_

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**INCIDENT INFORMATION:**

Date of Incident or Accident \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ a.m. or p.m.

Location of Incident or Accident \_\_\_\_\_

Name and phone number of witnesses to the incident or accident:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

Describe what happened: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Nature of any injury (cut, puncture, burns, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Location of injury (body part, left or right) \_\_\_\_\_

Did the victim go to the UNA Health Center?    YES    NO

Did the victim go to a physician/medical facility?    YES    NO

Name of treating physician \_\_\_\_\_

Name of medical facility \_\_\_\_\_

Treatment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Was the victim admitted to the hospital?  YES  NO

If yes, date of admission \_\_\_\_\_

.....

*Signature of Supervisor/Cost Center Head reporting incident or accident*

*Date*

*Form Revised October 2007, Reviewed 4/2009, 11/2009, 3/2010, 11/2011, 3/2012, 12/2013, 4/2015, 7/2016, 7/2017, 8/2018, 8/2019*

## Appendix D

WEAPONS ON CAMPUS POLICY<sup>1</sup>

Possession of firearms or other dangerous weapons is prohibited while on university-owned or controlled property. This includes all parking lots, grounds, and facilities. These weapons include but are not limited to:

1. Fixed blade knives on the person or in a vehicle or any folding knife with an overall length greater than eleven inches.
2. Shotgun, rifle, or other shoulder gun.
3. Pistol or revolver.
4. Air gun or spring compression gun.
5. Bow and arrow.
6. Crossbows.
7. Slingshots or other throwing weapons.
8. Spears.
9. Swords.
10. Brass knuckles.
11. Fireworks or explosive devices.
12. Tasers or stun guns.

This prohibition applies to all members of the university community, visitors, and guests and applies whether or not a person in possession of such weapon has a permit to carry or possess the weapon. This policy does not apply to:

1. Law Enforcement Officers of the Federal Government, state, or of any county, city, or town when in the discharge of their official duties.
2. Civil officers of the United States in the discharge of their official duties.
3. Private police or security personnel when hired by, or under contract with, the University.
4. Law Enforcement Officers attending school as students. Their weapons must be concealed unless wearing a uniform.
5. Campus food service knives.
6. The President's Residence.

Visitors and guests may temporarily store weapons at the Department of Public Safety for no more than 48 hours. The Department of Public Safety and the University are not responsible for lost or damaged items.

Exceptions to this policy may be granted for certain instructional purposes, displays, ceremonies, drills, reenactments, and performances and must be authorized by the Director of Public Safety or his designee.

For students, unauthorized possession of weapons shall constitute grounds for summary suspension. For faculty and staff, unauthorized possession of a weapon shall constitute a violation of board policy.

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<sup>1</sup> Approved by Executive Council on August 6, 2007. Reviewed 12/2013, 4/2015, 7/2016, 7/2017, 8/2018, 8/2019

## Appendix E

## University of North Alabama Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions

Influenza Vaccination: Consent Form

UNA Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions recommends that students receive the influenza vaccination to protect the patients and themselves from the virus. A copy of this form is to be submitted to the College of Nursing after the dose is documented. Additionally, a copy is to be kept in the student's portfolio.

I have had the opportunity to read, ask questions and understand benefits and risks of the flu immunization. I agree to receive the dose required for the optimum immune response. However, as with all medical treatment, I understand there is no guarantee of immunization or the absence of adverse side effects from the vaccine.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of person to receive Flu vaccine (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student L Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of person receiving vaccine

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Flu Vaccination Record			
	DATE	GIVEN BY	LOT #
Primary dose			

Influenza Vaccination: Declination Form

I understand that, due to the nursing occupational exposure, I may be at increased risk of acquiring the flu virus. I have been given the opportunity to be vaccinated with the flu vaccine. I acknowledge that influenza vaccination is recommended by the CDC for all healthcare providers to prevent infection from the virus and transmission of influenza and its complications, including death, to patients, coworkers, family, and the community. I recognize that this disease kills thousands of people in the US each year and that I can shed the virus for 24 hours before influenza symptoms appear. I also understand that I cannot get influenza from the influenza vaccine and that the strains of virus that cause influenza infection change almost every year requiring yearly vaccinations. I understand that by declining this vaccine, I continue to be at risk of acquiring the flu and transmitting it to others. After reviewing this information, I choose to decline the vaccination. I may change my mind and accept the vaccination later, if vaccine is available. I have read and fully understand all the information on this declination form. I decline vaccination for the following reason(s). Please check all that apply:

- I believe I will get influenza if I get the vaccine.  
 My philosophical or religious beliefs prohibit vaccination.  
 I have an allergy or medical contraindication to receiving the vaccine.  
 us. \_\_\_\_\_

- I do not like needles.  
 I do not wish to say why I decline.  
 Other reason – please tell

Medical Reasons:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Allergic to Eggs/egg products  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Transplant recipient

\_\_\_\_\_ Immunosuppressive therapy

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of person declining Flu vaccine (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Student L Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

[http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/aids/Documents/programs/hai/Documents/1112InfluenzaDeclination\\_forwebsite.docx](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/aids/Documents/programs/hai/Documents/1112InfluenzaDeclination_forwebsite.docx) - 30KB - 9/5/2012 (Some of the information copied in the development of this form has been copied from this site and the ECM Hospital form).

Adopted: September 2013  
Reviewed: 3/2014, 10/2014, 3/2015, 7/28/15, 7/2016, 7/2017, 8/2018, 8/2019