

Student Handbook



Intercollegiate
Consortium for a
**Master of
Science
in Nursing**

*Southeastern
Louisiana University*

McNeese State University

*University of
Louisiana at Lafayette*

Nicholls State University

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ICMSN POLICY UNDERSTANDING AND HONOR STATEMENT

I, _____, have read and understand the policies and procedures contained in this student handbook. I fully understand that I am responsible for adhering to these policies as stated. I understand that I should contact the graduate coordinator for clarification of policies should I have questions.

As a member of the Intercollegiate Consortium of the Master of Science in Nursing (ICMSN) community, I pledge to hold myself and my peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

On all work submitted for credit by students enrolled in courses offered through the ICMSN, the following pledge will be implied by virtue of being enrolled:

On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in completing the assignments or examinations for course credit. Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values that the ICMSN upholds. An incident of cheating, falsification, fabrication, multiple submissions, plagiarism, or complicity will be handled according to the home institution's policy. Additionally, any individual who is aware of violations of the Honor Code is bound to take corrective action.

Date: _____

Print name: _____

Student Signature: _____



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*Southeastern
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Nicholls State University

This handbook is intended to provide students with information regarding the Intercollegiate Consortium for a Master of Science in Nursing Program's organizational structure, academic framework, and policies and guidelines. In addition, the student will find links to names and telephone numbers of administrative and faculty resources. Every effort has been made to make the handbook as "user-friendly" as possible. Students are encouraged to review the handbook carefully and, when necessary, seek clarification with their academic advisors.

The provisions of this Handbook do not constitute a contract or an offer to contract between McNeese State University, Nicholls State University, Southeastern Louisiana University or the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and the student. Each university reserves the right to make changes in the arrangements described herein without notice. All courses, programs, activities, costs and procedures described in this handbook are subject to change, cancellation or termination by the institutions or the Board of Trustees for University of Louisiana System, or the Board of Regents at any time.

Regardless of the institution in which a student enrolls, the rules and regulations of the institution at which the student is registered will prevail.

The affiliates of the Intercollegiate Consortium for a Master of Science in Nursing assure equal opportunity for all qualified persons without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, marital status, or veteran's status in the admission to, participation in, and treatment or employment in the program and activities which the Consortium includes.



Intercollegiate
Consortium for a
**Master of
Science
in Nursing**
Southeastern
Louisiana University
McNeese State University
University of
Louisiana at Lafayette

Dean
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Health Sciences**
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Dear Graduate Student:

Welcome to the Intercollegiate Consortium for a Master of Science in Nursing. The opportunities have never been better for nurses and nursing. The consortium institutions are committed to meeting the exciting challenges involved in offering innovative preparation for the increasingly expanding role of nursing in health care.

Collaboration and sharing are the foundations for this Master of Science in Nursing Program and are the guiding principles for its success. You, the graduate student, are our greatest asset and we are committed to helping you achieve your professional and academic goals in a caring, interactive learning environment.

Respectfully yours,

**Ann Carruth, Dean
Southeastern
Louisiana University**

**Peggy Wolfe, Dean
McNeese State
University**

**Gail Poirrier, Dean
University of
Louisiana at Lafayette**

**Sue Westbrook, Dean
Nicholls State
University**

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Administratively, the Council of the Intercollegiate Nursing Consortium (C.I.N.C) oversees the programs of the consortium institutions and assures that the policies of the consortium are reflective of the interests of the member institutions and responsive to the needs of the nursing profession. Additionally, C.I.N.C. is authorized to hear, adjudicate, and/or recommend action to the appropriate authority (ies) to resolve faculty, student, and institutional grievances pertaining to the administration of the affiliates of the Intercollegiate Nursing Consortium after established institutional appeals procedures have been followed. Membership on the C.I.N.C. consists of the chief academic officer, and the deans and graduate program coordinators from each participating institution. Department heads will serve as ex-officio members.

Each institution appoints a graduate program coordinator who is an approved member of the graduate faculty. The coordinator is an administrator and a teacher who acts as liaison among administration, faculty, and students. The three graduate coordinators make up the Coordinating Committee, which meets on a regularly scheduled and as needed basis. These graduate coordinators provide the day-to-day implementation of the curriculum and administrative oversight. Finally, all qualified graduate faculty from the three institutions meet annually and on an as-needed basis to address academic issues germane to implementation of the curriculum.

Student Representation

The views and opinions of graduate students are considered to be a valued and essential component in the determination of decisions regarding both administrative and curriculum issues within the ICMSN. Student representatives serve on each ICMSN committee. Any student interested in serving on one of these committees should contact his/her respective graduate coordinator.

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Student Participation/Bylaws</u>
Curriculum	One ICMSN student
Evaluation	One ICMSN student
Communication	One ICMSN student
Research	One ICMSN student

INTERCOLLEGIATE CONSORTIUM FOR A MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING

MISSION

The mission of the ICMSN is to enhance the health and well-being of people in Louisiana and beyond through the education and preparation of nurse practitioners and administrators.

CURRICULUM

The Master of Science in Nursing curriculum consists of 35-45 semester hours including 3 hours for the focused scholarly project or 6 hours for the thesis. The curriculum is flexible to allow for part-time and full-time study.

Students may choose from the following program concentrations: Nurse Executive, Family Nurse Practitioner, or Family Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner.

Curriculum plans and course descriptions can be viewed online by accessing the following:
[McNeese University Catalog- http://catalog.mcneese.edu](http://catalog.mcneese.edu)
[Nicholls State University](#)
[Southeastern Louisiana University Catalog](#)
[UL Lafayette Graduate Bulletin](#)

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Students choose a home institution within the consortium and apply to that university. The admission requirements and the criteria for admission to the graduate school at each institution may vary slightly. Each university maintains an on-line catalog which delineates the admission criteria. Students pursuing a MSN degree are admitted as regular or conditional (provisional) status.

For information regarding admissions to McNeese University:
[McNeese University Catalog- http://www.mcneese.edu/graduate](http://www.mcneese.edu/graduate)

For information regarding admissions to Nicholls State University
[Nicholls State University](#)

For information regarding admissions to Southeastern Louisiana University:
[Southeastern Louisiana University Catalog](#)
[SLU Graduate Nursing](#)

For information regarding admissions to University of Louisiana at Lafayette:
[UL Lafayette Graduate Bulletin](#)
[UL-Lafayette Graduate Nursing](#)

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

Students follow the admission procedures at their designated home institution. The Graduate Program Coordinator reviews submitted materials to determine admission status and make recommendations to the Graduate School for admission to the program. Students work closely with the Graduate Program Coordinator to ensure that all criteria for admission are addressed.

CONDITIONAL ADMISSION

An applicant who does not meet one or more of the admissions requirements may be considered for conditional admission. Conditionally admitted students who fail to meet the specific conditions of admissions may be asked to discontinue graduate study.

NON-DEGREE SEEKING STATUS

Registration of non-degree students in individual courses is subject to the prerequisites and requirements of the respective home institutions. Students are advised to consult their home institution's catalog to determine the ability to apply course work toward a degree plan. All students enrolled in an ICMSN course must also enroll in the online orientation course the semester they are registered.

RN TO MSN DEGREE OPTION

ULL and SLU have RN-MSN programs and those students will be advised regarding requirements/progression at each participating institution.

ADVISING AND REGISTRATION PROCESS

Before registration, you must first be advised regarding your course needs. Each member institution will communicate with students regarding the advising process. Additionally, in order to ensure that you are populated into the courses taught across the consortium, you are asked to enroll in an online course management system. To complete the enrollment process, you will provide up to date contact and demographic information and indicate courses you wish to take at www.nursingconsortium.org by clicking the tab Online Enrollment Form. This information is used to make sure you are able to access courses through the Learning Management Systems (i.e. Blackboard, Moodle). If you do not submit this electronic form during the advising process, your placement in the course cannot be guaranteed.

Once advised, continuing students may register and pay fees via phone, Internet or on-site at each of the ICMSN institutions. Students will register and pay fees at their home institution for all courses toward the MSN degree.

Note: Students are advised to carefully review this process and consult with their academic advisor as needed.

GETTING STARTED EACH SEMESTER

Intercollegiate Consortium for a Master's of Science in Nursing Accessing Courses at the 3 Participating Universities

Students must determine what university is teaching the course(s) for which they are registered and go to that university's website to access the course(s). Universities may have differing start and end dates, so students should be aware of these dates to be ready to join the course(s).

Southeastern Louisiana University

1. Web address: www.selu.edu
2. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on *Blackboard (Bb)*
3. Use your emailed username and password to Login
4. SLU has a wonderful tutorial for using Bb that new students should read
5. There is help available on the Login page as well if you are having problems
6. If you have tried everything and cannot access your course(s), please call SLU's administrative assistant, Virginia Johnson at 985-549-5045.

McNeese State University

1. For McNeese students **only** the web address: www.mcneese.edu - www.mcneese.edu/current-students
 - a. Access the *portal* with your username and password issued by the registrar's office
 - b. If you are unable to access the portal, you must contact the registrar's office for assistance
 - c. Click on MOODLE icon to access your course(s)
2. For SLU and ULL students **only** the web address: <http://blackboard.mcneese.edu/> -
 - a. Students from other universities may not access our student portal
 - b. Use your emailed username and password to Login
 - c. Your username usually begins with oth-
 - d. Your password is usually your birth date in the following format YYYYMMDD
 - e. If you have tried everything and cannot access your course(s), please call MSU's administrative assistant, Stephenie Lavoie at 337-475-5753.

University of Louisiana Lafayette

1. Web address: www.louisiana.edu
2. Click on *Current Students*
3. Scroll down to *Communication*
4. Find and click on *Moodle*
5. Use your emailed username and password to Login

6. If you have tried everything and cannot access your course(s), please call ULL's administrative assistant, Deanette Simoneaux, at 337-482-5601.

Nicholls State University

1. Web address: www.nicholls.edu
2. Click on *Moodle*
3. Use your emailed username and password to *Login*
4. If you have tried everything and cannot access your course(s), please call Nicholl's administrative assistant, Lauren Plaisance at 985 448-4695.

STUDENT SERVICES

Each campus offers comprehensive student services. Each university provides services for:

Student disabilities
Student Health Services
Financial Aid
Counseling
Testing
Bookstore
Libraries

Information about these services is listed and available through the following links:

McNeese University: [Student Services](#)
Southeastern Louisiana University: [Student Affairs](#)
University of Louisiana at Lafayette: [Student Affairs](#)
Nicholls State University: [Student Services](#)

ACADEMIC CALENDARS

Students will follow the university catalog and academic calendar of their home institution. Policies, curriculum information, and course descriptions may be obtained in the catalog. Important dates such drop dates, graduation application, and thesis submissions are published in the catalog. Each school also provides electronic access to the university catalog and academic calendar. Links:

McNeese University: [Catalog](#) [McNeese Academic Calendar](#)
Southeastern Louisiana University: [Catalog](#) [SLU Academic Calendar](#)
University of Louisiana at Lafayette: [Graduate Bulletin](#) [UL-L Academic Calendars](#)
Nicholls State University: [Catalog](#) [Nicholls Academic Calendar](#)

PROGRESSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Degree Plan

Students must work with their respective graduate coordinator to establish a degree plan as soon as graduate school admission is granted. Any changes in the degree plan must be approved by the graduate coordinator. The Degree Plan must be submitted to the Graduate School within the specified time period as outlined by the home institution.

Students must complete the degree requirements within the time frame specified by the university in which they are enrolled.

Degree Candidacy

Official candidacy for the MSN degree is determined by the Graduate School at each institution.

Student Handbook

A copy of the ICMSN handbook is made available to all students on the ICMSN web site and on the web page of each program. Each student is expected to carefully read the policies and submit the signed honor statement contained in the front matter of the handbook prior to beginning classes. Honor statements should be submitted to the graduate nursing office at the home institution.

Grades and GPA

Graduate students must have a final graduation grade point average consistent with policies of the home institution (see catalog) in order to receive the Master of Science in Nursing degree.

Grades of C or below may not be applied as degree credit. A course in which the student has obtained a grade of C must be repeated according to the policy of the home institution. Grades of D or F in any course will result in dismissal from the graduate program.

For courses with a clinical component, unsatisfactory final evaluations by a preceptor or faculty member will result in an "F" in the course.

The ICMSN grading scale is as follows:

ICMSN Grading Scale:

92.5-100 A

84.5-92.4 B

76.5-84.4 C

69.5-76.4 D

0 - 69.4 F

Enrollment Limitation

ICMSN programs reserve the right to limit the number of students enrolled in a course in order to make the most effective use of educational resources available. In the event that enrollment in any course is limited, students will be admitted by their academic ranking based upon the cumulative GPA in graduate nursing courses.

Transfer credit

Credits from other universities may be transferred under certain circumstances. Students must seek approval to transfer credit toward the MSN. Please refer to the home institution university catalog for the graduate school policy for transfer credit prior to beginning course work toward a MSN. Students wishing to take courses toward a MSN from a non-consortium university once admitted to the graduate school, must be granted permission to do so from the Nursing Graduate Coordinator PRIOR to enrolling in the course(s).

Change of program concentration

Students wishing to change the concentration within the MSN program must notify both the graduate coordinator and the graduate school at their respective universities. A revised degree plan must be constructed and approved by the graduate coordinator, and filed with the graduate school.

Licensure

The student must maintain an unencumbered Louisiana RN license at all times while enrolled in the MSN program. Changes in licensure status must be reported immediately to the graduate coordinator. Failure to report encumbrances and disciplinary proceedings against the RN license will result in immediate dismissal from the university.

The Louisiana State Board of Nursing has adopted revised statutes, effective January 1996, that apply to Licensure and grounds for disciplinary action.

LOUISIANA REVISED STATUTE (LRS) 37:921, grounds for disciplinary proceedings reads as follows:

“ The board may deny, revoke, suspend, probate, limit, or restrict any license to practice as a registered nurse or an advanced practice registered nurse, impose fines, and assess costs, or otherwise discipline a licensee upon proof that the individual:

- (1) Is guilty of selling or attempting to sell, falsely obtaining, or furnishing any nursing diploma or license to practice as a registered nurse.**
- (2) Is convicted of a crime or offense which reflects the inability of the nurse to practice nursing with due regard for the health and safety of clients or patients or enters a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to a criminal charge regardless of final disposition of the criminal proceeding, including, but not limited to, expungement or nonadjudication.**
- (3) Is unfit or incompetent by reason of negligence, habit, or other cause.**

- (4) **Has demonstrated actual or potential inability to practice nursing with reasonable skill and safety to individuals because of use of alcohol or drugs; or has demonstrated inability to practice nursing with reasonable skill and safety to individuals because of illness or as a result of any mental or physical condition.**
- (5) **Is guilty of aiding or abetting anyone in the violation of any provisions of this Part.**
- (6) **Is mentally incompetent.**
- (7) **Has had a license to practice nursing or to practice as another health care provider denied, revoked, suspended, or otherwise restricted.**
- (8) **Is guilty of moral turpitude.**
- (9) **Violated any provisions of this Part.**

Nametags

Nametags shall be worn any time a student is engaged in ICMSN lab or practicum experiences. The name tag should contain the following:

Name, credentials (RN, BS; RN, MSN)

Member Institution (McNeese State University, Nicholls State University, Southeastern Louisiana University, or University of Louisiana at Lafayette.)

Designate the Concentration and status as student (Family Nurse Practitioner student, Nursing Education student, Nurse Executive student, Family Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner student).

Health and CPR

Students must maintain BCLS certification. Students entering clinical/practicum courses must meet health and immunization requirements. Required health assessment forms are available from respective graduate nursing offices. As a graduate nursing student, it is your ethical responsibility to know your HIV status. If you believe you are at risk for HIV exposure or HIV antibody development, then it is your professional obligation to be tested via your individual physician and follow his/her orders for care/treatment. If the student does not meet the health requirements, a written physician's release is required to return to clinical and/or laboratory experience.

Student Health Requirements: Refer to your home institution requirements

*Students will provide evidence that the listed health requirements have been met.

1. A history and physical examination documenting absence of health problems which would possibly interfere with the student's ability to meet course objective and/or which would possibly jeopardize the safety and/or health of patients.

2. A negative PPD. If PPD is positive, a negative chest x-ray is required prior to entry into a clinical course. Thereafter, a physician's statement confirming that the student shows no signs or symptoms of TB and stating that the chemotherapy for TB is not indicated will be required at the time of renewal of clinical health requirements. (If a known conversion of PPD from negative to positive occurs over a one year period, treatment is recommended along with written validation of such treatment from a physician or written validation from a physician stating a non-infectious status that requires no treatment.) Annual testing required.
3. A negative VDRL or RPR.
4. A positive Rubella titer showing proof of immunity against German Measles (Rubella) Note: Once proof of immunity is verified by the titer results, this test does not have to be repeated.
5. Documentation of 2 MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) immunizations. (See MMR info for clinical students below).

**Information for Clinical Students
MMR Vaccine**

1. *Students must show proof (documentation) of mumps vaccination.*
2. *Students who were born **during or after** 1957 who do NOT have other evidence (documentation) of immunity should receive routine vaccination with **2 doses** of a live mumps vaccine.*
3. *Students who were born **before** 1957 who do NOT have other evidence (documentation) of immunity should receive **1 dose** of mumps vaccine.*
6. Proof of 3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccination and a documented response to vaccination of at least 10 mIU/mL or a negative hepatitis surface antigen test done annually. Note: if the Hepatitis B Surface Antigen is positive, the student must be cleared by a physician to enroll in a clinical course. (See hepatitis info for clinical students below)

**Information for Clinical Students
Hepatitis B Vaccinations**

The following information was derived from the October 2006 issue of Needle Tips and the Hepatitis B Coalition News newsletter. The newsletter is published by the Immunization Action Coalition for individuals and organizations concerned about vaccine-preventable diseases. Dr. William Atkinson, medical epidemiologist, Dr. Andrew Kroger, medical officer, Dr. Eric Mast, chief, Prevention Branch Viral Hepatitis, and Linda Moyer, RN, epidemiologist and chief, Education and Training Team – Viral Hepatitis, all with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), provided the information below.

1. *Current recommendations for health care workers call for proof of Hepatitis B vaccination (3 doses) and a documented response to vaccination of at least 10 mIU/ml.*

2. *If a student received the 3 vaccination doses and did not obtain a documented response to vaccination of at least 10 mIU/ml:*
 - A. *repeat 3 dose series and test for anti-HBs (antibody) 1-2 months after last dose of vaccine*
 - B. *if documented response after the second series of vaccinations of at least 10 mIU/ml no further testing is required.*
 - C. *if student is still negative after the second vaccine series, the student is considered a non-responder to Hepatitis B vaccination. At this time, the test for HBsAg (antigen testing) is required to determine if chronic Hepatitis B infection is present: if the HBsAg test is positive the student must seek medical management; counseling related to the disease is recommended; student **must** be cleared by a physician to enroll in clinical course if the HbsAg test is negative the student is considered susceptible to Hepatitis B infection; the student is responsible for procuring information regarding precautions to prevent Hepatitis B infection and the need to obtain hepatitis B immune globulin (HBIG) prophylaxis for any known or likely exposure to HbsAg-positive blood.*
3. *Once the Hepatitis B vaccination series is completed and a documented response of at least 10 mIU/ml is achieved, no further periodic testing or boosters are required. It is thought that protection by the vaccine from chronic Hep B infection lasts for as long as 23 years.*
4. *Students who are non-responders to the vaccine after 2 series will be required to undergo and report the results of the HBsAg (antigen) testing annually while enrolled in clinical courses.*
7. *If no history of chicken pox, varicella antibody testing is required. If antibody testing is negative, varicella vaccine strongly recommended.*
8. *Documentation of a onetime dose of Tdap must be provided to begin clinical/practicum courses (unless Td within 2 years in which case a Tdap will be required at the end of the 2 year period).*
9. *List of prescription maintenance drugs – A written physician’s release to return to any clinical and/or laboratory experience and /or laboratory experience.*
10. *All clinical students must provide proof of hospitalization insurance annually.*
11. *CPR certification for Health Care Providers (Adult, Child & Infant) Certification must NOT expire during the semester.*
12. *All clinical students must provide annual proof of OSHA orientation or update to include fire prevention, safety, safety/disaster, and HIPAA.*
13. *All clinical students must provide proof of a current and unencumbered Louisiana RN License.*

All requirements must be renewed on an annual basis. The physical exam form must be filled out by a licensed physician or nurse practitioner and copies of the results and required laboratory tests must accompany the form. The form can be obtained from the graduate nursing office. Refer to the graduate nursing office at the home institution for forms and other relevant information concerning scheduling of health testing.

This evidence (laboratory results, etc.) must be provided by August 1 for Fall semesters and January 5 for Spring semesters of clinical/practicum nursing courses. The graduate secretary will monitor students' evidence of meeting these health requirements.

Students who fail to provide required evidence of health requirements will not be allowed to remain enrolled in any clinical nursing course. Failure to renew health requirements that **expire during the semester** will prevent the student's participation in clinical activities.

Accidental Exposure

During the course of caring for any patient, if the student/faculty is exposed to blood or other potentially infectious materials in such a manner as may transmit infection; this must be reported immediately to the instructor and Graduate Coordinator. The faculty will notify the supervisor of the health care facility where the incident occurred. Agency policies will then be followed including the completion of any incident report, testing and follow-up. If a student/faculty is exposed to blood or other potentially infectious materials in the provision of care in a clinical facility agency/location, it is the responsibility of that student/faculty to obtain follow-up exposure care. The cost of any emergency medical care or treatment shall be the responsibility of the individual receiving the care or treatment.

In the event that a student/faculty administers care to a client who later in their hospitalization, tests positive for communicable disease, it will be the student's/faculty's responsibility to undergo testing and follow-up as may be recommended by clinical agency.

Students/Faculty who have Tested Positive for a Communicable Disease

It shall be the legal and ethical obligation of any student/faculty who has tested positive or contracted any communicable disease to report this fact immediately to the Graduate Coordinator. The student/faculty with a communicable disease will be relieved of clinical responsibilities that involve direct patient contact as long as he/she has the disease as warranted by specific conditions. The student/faculty is also obligated to the welfare of fellow student/faculty to institute behaviors to prevent spread of any communicable diseases.

The department/ICMSN assumes no liability for faculty/students with compromised immune systems acquiring other communicable diseases while assigned to specific units and/or patients in clinical learning experience.

Criminal Background Checks

Students choosing to do clinical/practicum experiences in agencies which require criminal background checks must comply with agency requirements. The cost and responsibility for these background checks is the responsibility of the student. Information on acquiring

background checks, when necessary, is available from respective graduate nursing offices. In order to meet the conditions of university contracts with clinical agencies, students may be asked to submit documentation of a criminal background check. Specific procedures for submitting documentation may be obtained from the home institution.

Requirements For Web-Based Courses

All ICMSN courses are offered as distance learning courses delivered via the Internet and online Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Moodle or Blackboard. Regardless of the LMS utilized for course delivery, students are advised that the following are minimum requirements for accessing web-based courses:

“Microsoft Internet Explorer 8 users MUST run in *Compatibility Mode* in order to properly view UL Lafayette’s Moodle LMS.”

Minimum hardware requirements

PCs – Pentium III, 850 MHz machine running MS Windows 2000 or Windows XP or higher

Macs – 32-bit, 10.2 or 10.3 OS or higher 20 GB HD

Recommended: CD/CDRW/DVD drive, USB ports, 1024X768, 256 color monitor, speakers or headphones, and microphone for audio recording.

Minimum Internet connection requirements

- DSL or cable modems are highly recommended.
- Dial-up connections may work, but often present problems, particularly when students are taking online exams.

Web Browsers

Web Browsers

- Internet Explorer 8.0 or higher is the recommended web browser for the LMS used by ICMSN School.
- Mozilla Firefox 3.5 or higher and Apple Safari 4.0 or higher are also compatible web browsers.
- If dial-up access is being used through providers such as AOL, Compuserve, MSN, AT&T, etc. problems may arise because of customized interfaces used by these services. It is strongly recommended that once the ISP is contacted, minimize it and launch Internet Explorer to access the appropriate LMS.
- Cookies must be enabled. Security should be set to “medium.”
- Java and JavaScript must be enabled. Java 6 Update 13 must be enabled.

Software

Students are expected to submit written work as a MS Word doc/docx file or in a WordPerfect .rtf file.

NOTE: ASSIGNMENTS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED WHEN CREATED IN MS WORKS. DO NOT SUBMIT WORK CREATED IN WORDPERFECT WITHOUT FIRST CONVERTING TO RFT FILE.

Necessary software includes latest versions of MS Word and MS PowerPoint. Students may be required to download other free software such as Acrobat Reader or Quicktime Player to support course activities in some courses.

Other

- Pop-up blockers should be disabled if possible when working in either LMS.
- You may want to add Blackboard/Moodle as a “Trusted Site.”
- A functional e-mail account is to be maintained at all times by the student. If changes in the e-mail address should occur, the student is responsible for ensuring that the address is changed in the LMS systems.

Orientation to the On-line Environment

In the first semester of enrollment, all students are required to enroll and complete the online orientation modules for Blackboard (at SELU) and Moodle (at ULL). The Orientation modules address eLearning issues and provide hands-on practice with computer skills needed to successfully navigate on-line course activities. The courses are not for college credit. Rather, 3.6 CE hours are given for participation in the SELU course. Students are required to complete the modules by the posted deadlines. In the event students do not participate and complete these required modules, access to graduate nursing courses may be restricted.

Learning in an online environment

Students are expected to have appropriate equipment and software to complete course assignments. While it is understood that mechanical problems occur, these are not acceptable reasons for failure to complete assignments and exams on time. Students should have back-up computer access. All campuses have accessible computer labs, as do public libraries in many communities. Students are advised to investigate back-up resources in case of emergency.

All assignments are to be submitted via the LMS if the course is offered via Blackboard or Moodle. ***Submission of course work by e-mail should be avoided.***

The affiliates of the ICMSN provide a host of online or remote access services to students, including but not limited to online admission, registration, financial aid, fee payment, e-mail, student help desk, and the student portal (Blackboard or Moodle).

The ability of a student to succeed in distance education classes depends on his or her ability to understand the course structure and technology, as well as the ability to navigate various learning management systems (Blackboard or Moodle). Prior to enrollment in online courses, students are informed of prerequisite technology skills required to succeed in the online environment. Prospective students have the opportunity to be counseled on their ability to succeed in online courses.

Specialized services offered for distance learners include:

- On-line Interlibrary Loan Request forms
- E-mail reference assistance
- Access to account information concerning the library

Although faculty members and students communicate largely through learning management systems and e-mail, on-line learning environments do not preclude students from accessing or communicating with faculty on a one-to-one basis. When needed, students are encouraged to phone faculty or schedule physical meetings to discuss technological issues and course concerns and seek advice with faculty. In turn, faculty members will make every effort to respond to student communication in a timely manner.

When communicating by email, please follow these guidelines

- Always include a subject line.
- Remain professional in the emotion conveyed during correspondence: avoid “flaming.”
- Respect the privacy of class mates and faculty by not forwarding e-mail without prior permission.
- Keep faculty members and home institutions informed of correct e-mail address as needed.

When communicating by discussion forums

- Be respectful of others’ ideas
- Read all comments before entering your remarks
- Be positive and give constructive comments in group discussions
- Respond in complete sentences that reflect thoughtful input

Confidentiality Policy

Confidentiality respects patient privacy issues. A major responsibility of all health care providers is that they keep all patient/client/recipient of care information confidential. All data that are collected are considered to be confidential information.

It is the policy of the ICMSN that all information concerning patients/clients/recipients of care is confidential and may not be disclosed in any way, by any means, by students or faculty without appropriate authorization.

Students have the ultimate responsibility for their own actions and may be liable for their own negligence if they violate patient/client/recipient of care confidentiality. Violation of the policy related to confidentiality will lead to the dismissal of the student.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 Policy (6/03)

The ICMSN adheres to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Specifically, written consent from parents and “eligible” students must be obtained when disclosure of personally identifiable information is required from students’ educational records. The consent

must specify the records to be disclosed, the purpose of the disclosure, and must identify the party to whom disclosure is made.

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 Policy (6/03)

The ICMSN adheres to the provisions of the HIPAA Act of 1996 which was designed to ensure the privacy and security of protected individually identifiable information. Students and faculty must comply with HIPAA-related policies of the ICMSN and of the clinical agencies with which the ICMSN is affiliated to safeguard patient/client/recipient of must complete mandatory HIPAA-related training sessions as deemed necessary by the ICMSN and/or clinical agencies with which the ICMSN is affiliated.

Nursing students have the ultimate responsibility for their own actions and may be liable for their own negligence if they violate patient/client/recipient of care protected individually identifiable information. Violation of the ICMSN policy related to HIPAA compliance will lead to the dismissal of the student.

Student Responsibility for Loan Repayment

Nursing students and graduates have a legal and ethical responsibility to repay student loans. In accordance with Louisiana Revised Statute 38:2951, the Louisiana State Board of Nursing withholds the Licensor renewal applications of registered nurses who were deemed by the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOFSA) to be in default of student loan (LSBN, The Examiner, pg. 2, Vol. 10, No. 3, Fall 2002).

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The affiliates of the ICMSN are committed to principles of truth and academic honesty. Every ICMSN student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs at each university. All faculty members of the ICMSN share in the responsibility for maintaining and supporting these principles. When a student enrolls in courses offered by the ICMSN, the student assumes an obligation to pursue academic endeavors in a manner consistent with the standards of academic integrity. To maintain academic integrity, the ICMSN has adopted a “zero tolerance” policy regarding acts of academic dishonesty.

Students who engage in acts of academic dishonesty are subject to the disciplinary procedures of the university in which they are enrolled. Sanctions may range from “0” on the assignment in question to an F in the course to dismissal from the university.

Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication in the process of completing academic work for thesis, course work and clinical/practicum experiences.

Cheating

Cheating is the intentional activity to gain unfair advantage over other students in a course. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to: communicating improperly with others during exams or the preparation of assignments for classes; copying from books, notes, or other sources during a test when this has been prohibited; copying from another student’s

work; procuring or using copies of current examinations; communicating exam content to other students; and allowing another person to take an exam, write a paper, or complete a course assignment.

Falsification/Fabrication

Falsification and fabrication involve intentional and unauthorized alteration of information, forging, or inventing false information for use in the course of an academic activity. Examples include altering the record of data or experimental procedures or results in thesis or scholarly reports, falsely citing sources of information; altering academic records; counterfeiting or inventing a record of internship or clinical practicum experiences.

Multiple Submission

Multiple submission or “self-plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, submitting the same paper or oral report or parts of the same paper or oral report for credit in two separate courses. This also applies to courses which are being repeated. Making minor revisions in a paper or report for which credit has already been received and submitting it again as a new piece of work is also considered self-plagiarism.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is knowingly representing the work of another as one’s own without proper acknowledgment of the source. The only exceptions to the requirement that sources be acknowledged occur when the information, ideas, etc., are common knowledge. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, submitting as your own work material obtained from a commercial writing service; quoting directly or paraphrasing closely from a source without giving proper credit; using figures, graphs, charts, or other such material without identifying the sources.

Complicity in Academic Dishonesty

A student is guilty of complicity in academic dishonesty if he or she helps or attempts to help another or others to commit an act of academic dishonesty. Complicity includes, but is not limited to, knowingly allowing another to copy from one’s paper during an examination or test; distributing test questions before the time scheduled for the test; collaborating on academic projects when students are expected to work independently; taking a test for another student; or signing a false name on a piece of academic work.

Reference: Andrews, P. and Ericsson, P. (2006). Academic integrity agreement form. Washington State University. Accessed:http://www.wsu.edu/~ericsson/acad_honesty.html.

STUDENT APPEALS

Students have the right to appeal disciplinary actions or grades according to policies of the institution in which they are enrolled.

Grade Appeals

Students who feel they have been treated unfairly or capriciously in the awarding of a final course grade should follow the grade appeal policy of the enrolled institution:

[Grade appeal policy McNeese](#)

[Grade Appeal policy for Nicholls](#)

[Guidelines for grade appeal SLU](#)

[Guidelines for grade appeal UL-Lafayette](#)

Disciplinary Appeals

[McNeese Academic Integrity and Disciplinary Policy](#)

[Nicholls – Code of Student Conduct](#)

[SLU Code of Student Conduct, Discipline, and Appeal Procedure](#)

[UL-Lafayette Code of Student Conduct and Appeal Procedures](#)

ICMSN Formal Complaint Procedure

This procedure applies to complaints regarding course and program related issues. For situations related to grade appeals, sexual harassment, ADA issues, or EEOC issues, the student should follow the appropriate university policy.

1. Within 5 working days of the situation of concern, the student must submit a signed, written description of the complaint to the person of concern (administrator, faculty, or staff) with a copy to the nursing graduate program coordinator and department head, at the institution where the problem occurred, with a copy to the Dean at each respective institution.
2. Within 5 working days from the time the complaint is given to the person of concern, the student should communicate and /or meet with the person involved and attempt to resolve the complaint.
3. If the complaint is unresolved, within 5 working days the student may meet with the nursing graduate program coordinator at the respective institution.
4. If the complaint remains unresolved, within 5 working days the student may meet with the department head and/or dean at the respective institution.
5. The dean notifies the student and appropriate individuals involved of the final decision.

Documentation of the Formal Complaint Procedure

1. The student must submit concerns in writing to the person(s) of concern.
2. An official record is maintained in the office at the respective institution of each communication and/or meeting between the student and person(s) involved with the complaint.

3. The student may discontinue the process at any point by submitting a written request to withdraw the complaint to the person of concern with a copy to the Dean at each respective institution.

NP/CNS PRECEPTED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

General Procedure for Setting up NP/CNS Clinical/Practicum Experiences

Each semester of clinical/practicum experience, you will work with a faculty member to plan clinical preceptor experiences. The following steps need to be taken in collaboration with the faculty member assigned to the clinical/practicum course.

1. Select an area of clinical practice based on educational, and/or personal goals. Clinical practice experience should be congruent with program concentration and course content. Note: Choosing clinical/practicum experiences are a very important consideration to help you prepare for successful certification. You and your faculty member should work closely in making these decisions. Please note that while you may choose a preceptor in an agency in which you are currently employed, your clinical/practicum hours are to be completed separate from your job responsibilities and during time for which you are not being compensated. In other words, you are not to accrue clinical hours toward your degree while being compensated as an employee for the same time committed to clinical experiences.
2. Discuss your choice (s) of a preceptor with the faculty member assigned to the course. Discuss with the preceptor (s) their willingness to serve as a preceptor, their understanding of the advanced practice nursing role, and the types of clinical experiences offered by that agency/organization. All preceptors must be approved by course faculty and reviewed by the graduate coordinator prior to beginning the clinical/practicum experience.
3. Contact the Secretary in the Graduate Nursing Office to determine if the University has an agency letter of agreement or contract with the agency/organization. This is different than the letter of agreement with the preceptor and is instituted at the University level. If a current agency letter of agreement or contract is not on file, the approval process will be initiated. While the University attempts to keep contracts up to date with frequently used agencies, there is the possibility that an up to date contract is not in place. This contract with the agency/organization may take several weeks to secure, so it is advisable to begin this process early.
4. Plan a meeting with preceptor (s). Discuss your goals and mutually discuss the types of experiences that can be offered/obtained with the preceptors(s). Obtain a copy of the preceptor vita/resume or a completed professional profile. A current vita/resume of the preceptor must be on file in the graduate office before the clinical experience can begin. Arrange an orientation with the agency. Discuss a schedule for clinical hours that is mutually agreed upon.
5. Submit a student/preceptor letter of agreement to your faculty member for review, revision and approval. Once approved the clinical schedule must be posted and regularly updated in Typhon.

6. Take the approved letter of agreement to the preceptor (s) for preceptor and agency signatures.
7. Students may not begin any clinical practicum experiences until the following are completed and on file in the Graduate Nursing Office:
 - a. A completed, current agency contract
 - b. A current preceptor vita or resume (within 2 years)
 - c. A signed letter of agreement between student, faculty and preceptor
 - d. Current documentation of student health, OSHA, and HIPAA compliance

Student, Preceptor, and Faculty Responsibilities

Student Responsibilities

1. Communicate with the assigned faculty member before or during the first week of classes where and with whom you wish to use as preceptor (s) during the semester.
2. Work with the faculty member to develop learning objectives for clinical practicum experiences.
3. Communicate regularly with preceptor and faculty member regarding progress toward meeting learning objectives. The student assumes responsibility for establishing and maintaining a valid, functional e-mail address for the purposes of communication.
4. Assume responsibility for clinical/practicum experiences and any needed documentation (hard copy and/or electronic).

Preceptor Responsibilities

1. Orient the APN student to the role/practice setting.
2. Communicate with student expectations during clinical/practicum experiences
3. Mutually agree on schedule.
4. Communicate with faculty member regarding clinical/practicum experiences and evaluation.

Faculty Responsibilities

1. Assist in checking and ensuring letters of agreement and/or contracts with agencies/organizations are up-to-date.
2. Facilitate the routing and approval of the clinical/agency contract.
3. Provide guidance and supervision for the APN student.
4. Conference with APN students at the beginning, mid-term and end of the semester or as needed.
5. Ensure appropriateness of the clinical experience through communication with the student, preceptor, and/or through site visits.
6. Orient and provide feedback to students with needed documentation (hard copy and/or electronic).
7. Evaluate student performance with input from preceptor and assign a course grade.

TYPHON POLICY

1. Students will be required to subscribe and purchase the Typhon NPST – Nurse Practitioner Student Tracking System. The student will be required to maintain the subscription for the period they are enrolled in practicum courses within the Nurse Practitioner concentrations.
2. The subscription is a one-time fee and is valid as long as the student is enrolled in the Graduate Program.
3. Students who prefer to use the PDA service will incur an additional charge and they will have access to either service. This is optional.
4. At the beginning of each semester, new students are required to complete Typhon online tutorial prior to precepted clinical experiences.

Focus Scholarly Project or Thesis

Graduate nursing students are required to pursue a thesis or focused scholarly project. A student chooses which option with guidance and input from faculty members/advisor in the program.

FOCUSED SCHOLARLY PROJECT

The focused scholarly project is supervised by a graduate faculty member. The focused scholarly project creatively employs scientific inquiry to systematically advance the practice, teaching, or research of nursing. Emphasis is on a focused project that has tangible application to the practice setting. The project is to be completed in a one semester, three credit hour course.

THESIS REQUIREMENTS

Guidelines for Graduate Thesis Preparation

The student preparing a master's thesis should be thoroughly familiar with the guidelines and procedures established by the Consortium faculty and should adhere to the following procedures and formats with exactitude.

A student is eligible to begin thesis preparation once granted regular admission to the graduate nursing program and after satisfactory completion of the core research course. The thesis should demonstrate the student's capacity for research, ability to organize and interpret data, and facility in reporting in a scholarly style.

Selection of Major Professor and Thesis Advisory Committee

The student is expected to select an appropriate graduate nursing faculty member to serve as the major professor and chairperson of the thesis advisory committee. The remaining

members of the thesis advisory committee should be selected by the student in consultation with the major professor. Members should be selected who possess expertise and interests supportive of the student's research topic. All committee members are subject to the approval of the Graduate Coordinator from the student's primary institution and the Dean of the Graduate School.

The thesis advisory committee shall consist of the major professor/chairperson and a minimum of two other members. At least two members must have graduate nursing faculty status, one of whom must be from the university granting the major. The major professor/chairperson must have the terminal degree and be a member of the ICMSN faculty. The major professor will chair all thesis advisory committee meetings and will assure that committee meetings are scheduled to approve the thesis topic and monitor the student's progress.

Students should follow thesis preparation guidelines and policies in place at the university of enrollment. Please see the following links for specific guidelines:

[McNeese State University Thesis Preparation Guidelines- http://www.mcneese.edu/graduate](http://www.mcneese.edu/graduate)
[\]Nicholls State University Thesis Policy and Guidelines](#)
[Southeastern Louisiana University Thesis Preparation Guidelines](#)
[UL-Lafayette Guidelines for Preparation of Thesis and Dissertations](#)

**INTERCOLLEGIATE CONSORTIUM FOR A
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STEPS TO COMPLETE THE THESIS

Step 1 Select a topic

- Select a topic significant for nursing research
- Prepare a problem statement and 1-2 page outline of intended study

Step 2 Select a Thesis Advisory Committee

- Choose a major professor and obtain consent to chair the Thesis Advisory Committee
- Select committee members in consultation with major professor
- Meet individually with members and obtain consent to serve on committee

Step 3 Get approval of topic

- Distribute problem statement and outline of study to members
- Arrange meeting of committee to discuss and approve topic and plan of study

Step 4 Write a proposal

- Meet with major professor to determine procedure for writing the proposal
- Write proposal in consultation with committee members
- Revise proposal as necessary
- Collect instruments and obtain permission for use

Step 5 Get approval of proposal

- Following major professor's consent, distribute copies of proposal to members
- Arrange meeting of committee at least 1 week later
- Proposal defense: Give short synopsis of proposal. You will be asked to respond to questions/concerns of committee. You will be asked to leave the room while they determine if you can progress or make revisions.
- Form A (Registration of Thesis Topic) completed and sent to major professor

Step 6 Get approval of review boards

- Prepare and submit application to university research review board (IRB)
- Following written approval of university review board, obtain written approval of any internal or agency review board(s) where study will be conducted.
- All written permission must be obtained prior to data collection

Step 7 Conduct research

- Collect data as designed in Chapter III
- Written approval by committee and review boards is mandatory for all thesis design changes.

Step 8 Write thesis

- Analyze data
- Write Chapters IV and V in consultation with committee members; submit to individual members for comments
- Revise chapters IV and V until acceptable to all
- Confer with major professor regarding manuscript format

Step 9 Schedule the thesis defense

- Consult the university catalogue for deadline dates regarding thesis defense
- When you and the major professor consider the thesis acceptable, schedule the oral examination meeting
- Form B (Request for Oral Examination) completed and sent to Dean by major professor at least 2 weeks prior to the defense
- Distribute copies of thesis to members at least 1 week prior to the defense

Step 10 Defend the thesis

- Thesis defense: Give short synopsis of study with emphasis on Chapters IV and V.
- Respond to questions/concerns of committee members.
- The student leaves the room while the committee determines if the thesis is acceptable.

Step 11 Committee acceptance of thesis

- Committee will determine if thesis is accepted with or without revisions
- Form C (Certificate of Approval) completed during defense and sent to Dean by major professor
- If revisions required, major professor will write them on Form C (Certificate of Approval); meet with major professor following defense to incorporate revisions into thesis: major professor must note on Form C when revisions have been accepted.

Step 12 Submission and disposition of thesis

- The student must have completed and defended thesis not later than 4 weeks prior to graduation
- Original and 2 copies of thesis with Form C (signed) submitted to Graduate School according to published deadlines in academic calendar. Binding fee must accompany thesis
- Original thesis is catalogued in main library; copies are for major professor and student

C E L E B R A T E !

GRADUATE NURSING PROGRAM OFFICES

McNeese State University - Lake Charles

Location Hardtner Hall, Suite 301
Telephone (337) 475-5753 (Administrative Assistant) and (337) 475-5831
(Co-Coordinator) and (337) 475-5840 (Co-Coordinator)
Address McNeese State University
Graduate Nursing Program
PO Box 90415
Lake Charles, LA 70609

Nicholls State University

Location Betsy Cheramie Ayo Hall, Room 247
Telephone 985 448-4184 (Coordinator)
Address: Nicholls State University
Graduate Nursing Program
P.O. Box 2143
Thibodaux, LA 70310

Southeastern Louisiana University - Hammond and Baton Rouge

Hammond Kinesiology and Health Studies Building, Room 1010
Telephone (985) 549-5045 (Secretary and Coordinator)
Address Southeastern Louisiana University
Graduate Nursing Program
SLU 10448
Hammond, LA 70402

Baton Rouge

Location Baton Rouge Center – Room 201
Phone (225) 765-2324 (Secretary)
Address Baton Rouge Center 4849 Essen Lane
Baton Rouge, LA 70809

University of Louisiana - Lafayette

Location V.L. Wharton Hall (VLW), Room 307
Telephone (337) 482-5601 (Secretary) and (337) 482-5639 (Coordinator)
Address University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Graduate Nursing Program
PO Box 43810
Lafayette, LA 70504

BOOKSTORES

McNeese State University - Lake Charles

Location Center of Campus
Hours **During the Fall and Spring:**
7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday - Friday
During the Summer:
7:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., Monday - Friday
Telephone (337) 475-5494

Nicholls State University - Thibodeaux

Location Student Union Building
Hours 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday – Thursday
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Friday
Closed Saturday and Sunday
Telephone (985) 448-4540

Southeastern Louisiana University - Hammond

Location War Memorial Student Union Annex
Hours 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday - Thursday.
7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Friday.
Extended hours of operation are:
First two weeks of class (Fall & Spring):
First week: 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Monday through Thursday)
Second week: 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (Monday through Thursday)
Telephone (985) 549-5393

The University of Louisiana - Lafayette

Location Student Union Building (adjacent to Wharton Hall)
Hours 7:00 a.m. to 4:20 p.m., Monday - Thursday.
7:00am to 12:20pm, Friday
Telephone (337) 482-2665, textbooks, (337) 482-6927

ACADEMIC LIBRARIES RESOURCE SHARING

A significant resource available to nursing students in the consortium is the Louisiana Academic Libraries Information Network Consortium (LALINC). As of October 1992, academic institutions governed by the Louisiana State Board of Regents agreed to permit reciprocal borrowing privileges by various levels of users such as undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and professional staff of participating institutions.

In order to receive reciprocal borrowing privileges, a student must present a valid ID card with a LALINC sticker affixed to the ID. These stickers are issued by their home library and must be obtained prior to borrowing materials at other institutions. Borrowing privileges are valid for

one semester. At the beginning of each semester, students will be required to obtain a new LALINC sticker from their home library.

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