

**Waynesburg University  
Department of Nursing  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctor of Nursing Practice  
Student Program Guide**

**Fall 2011**



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April 1, 2012

Dear Nursing Colleague:

We are pleased to provide you with information about the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at Waynesburg University. This cutting edge curriculum prepares nurse executives for the highest level of leadership. Graduates of the DNP program will possess exquisitely developed skills necessary for the transformation of healthcare delivery to ensure excellence in patient care.

Our 36-credit post-masters doctoral program is offered in a cohort model, where groups start and complete the program together during a 3 year plan of study. Learning experiences focus on improving the quality of healthcare delivery, and will result in immediate practice changes. Through continuous enrollment, taking 12 credits per year, the DNP can be earned in three years, while balancing school with work and family responsibilities. Classes meet one Saturday/Sunday in the first month and one Saturday/Sunday in the third month of each semester at one of the following academic centers:

- Monroeville (eastern suburbs of Pittsburgh, near PA Turnpike)
- North Hills (northern suburbs of Pittsburgh, near the I-79/PA Turnpike interchange)
- Southpointe (off I-79 in Canonsburg, in southern suburbs, 20 minutes from the airport)

Our students and graduates tell us that our learning environment is supportive, stimulating, and comfortable, strongly grounded in adult learning principles and active learning strategies. Students are our first priority. We focus on exceeding your expectations and helping you to advance your career.

Please feel free to contact us for more information. We can be reached at 1-888-481-6029 or 412-824-3700. Our e-mail address is [kpstephe@waynesburg.edu](mailto:kpstephe@waynesburg.edu) or [kwhitema@waynesburg.edu](mailto:kwhitema@waynesburg.edu). We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Kimberly Stephens, DNP, RN



Kimberly Whiteman, DNP, RN  
Co-Directors of Accelerated Health Programs

4-2012

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **Program Administration Personnel at Southpointe Center**

Co-Director of DNP Program	Kimberly Stephens, DNP, RN (412-824-3700)
Co-Director of DNP Program	Kimberly Whiteman, DNP, RN (412-824-3700)
Director of MSN Program	Patricia Davies, DNP, RN (724-743-7611)
Nursing Secretary	Brittney Wylie (724-743-2258)
Dean, Graduate & Professional Studies	David Mariner, MBA (724-743-2265)
Chair, Department of Nursing	Nancy Mosser, EdD, RN (724) 852-3356

### **DNP Program Advisors**

If you have academic advising questions, call your advisor:

Kimberly Stephens, DNP, RN	(412) 824-3700	Monroeville Center
Kimberly Whiteman, DNP, RN	(412) 824-3700	Monroeville Center
Patricia Davies, DNP, RN	(724) 743-7611	Southpointe Center

### **Academic Center Locations and Office Hours**

<b><u>Southpointe Center</u></b>	M-TH	8:30 am – 6:30 pm
Tammy Dessify, Secretary		
<b><u>Summit Corporate Center</u></b>	F	8:30 am – 4:30 pm
1001 Corporate Dr., Suite 100		
Canonsburg, PA 15317		
(724) 743-4420 or (888) 481-6029	Fax: (724) 743-4425	
<b><u>North Hills Center</u></b>	M-Th	1:30 pm – 6:30 pm
Tricia Stuparitz, Secretary		
One Adams Place, Suite 100		
300 Seven Fields Blvd.		
Seven Fields, PA 16046		
(724) 772-1955	Fax: (724) 772-1959	
<b><u>Monroeville Center</u></b>	M-Th	10:30 am – 6:30 pm
Denise Kiebler, Secretary	F	8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Penn Center East		
300 Penn Center Blvd., Suite 120		
Pittsburgh, PA 15235		
(412) 824-3700	Fax: (412) 824-4053	

### **Important Main Campus Phone Numbers**

Book Store	724-852-BOOK
Business Office	724-852-3255
Financial Aid Office	724-852-3208
Registrar	724-852-3252/3375

## **MISSION/PHILOSOPHY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NURSING**

Consistent with the Waynesburg University Mission Statement, the Department of Nursing strives to inspire and challenge every nursing student to a life of leadership and purpose. The knowledge a student derives from general education and professional education provides the basis for personal and professional development. The mission/philosophy of the Waynesburg University Department of Nursing evolves from the faculty's belief about people, society, health, nursing, nursing education, and the belief that caring is central to nursing.

The selection of caring as the nursing program's central theme and conceptual base derives from the sense that a full understanding of, appreciation for, and a commitment to caring for people and their health across the life span is integral to the profession of nursing. Caring is a culturally developed, universal expression of interest and concern for self (self-care) and others (care-giving). Caring is essential for a healthy society and is necessary for the attainment of health and the care-giving goals of wellness, health promotion, illness and disease management, palliative and end-of-life care, clinical prevention, and population health. Care is required all along the health continuum and to support peaceful death. It is intrinsic to the establishment of therapeutic relationships between the nurse and the patient. Caring serves as the program's core for ethical and scientific study, scholarship for evidence-based practice, and education within the professional nursing program.

The Department of Nursing embraces the diversity of people as individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations. Psychobiological, socio-cultural, and spiritual patterns of people evolve across the life span. Society, the environment in which people exist, includes the totality of social relationships among human beings, encompasses human diversity and includes philosophical, historical, socio-cultural, legal, ethical, political, professional, technological, economical, and health policy factors. Health, education, religion, politics, economics and governments within individual societies are reflective of the greater global community.

Health is individually defined and includes psychobiological, socio-cultural, and spiritual health patterns. Functional health patterns are indicative of the maintenance of stability and well-being. Alterations within these patterns may be perceived as illness. Across the life span, the health continuum is characterized by interacting patterns of wellness and illness. It is believed that people are responsible and accountable for the decisions they make independently, interdependently or dependently about their health. In today's health care delivery system, the accomplishment of care-giving goals may take place in a variety of settings.

Nursing is a discipline based on the humanities and sciences and emerges as an academic and practice-oriented profession committed to caring. As a scientific discipline, nursing seeks to apply evidence to improve outcomes. As an ethical discipline, nursing seeks to identify frameworks in which to examine personal and professional values involving philosophical, moral and Christian concepts. As a practice oriented profession, nursing promotes the care-giving goals of wellness, health promotion, illness and disease management, palliative and end-of-life

care, clinical prevention and population health. In addition, nursing fosters the care-giving behaviors of critical thinking, communication, therapeutic nursing interventions, and information management. These care-giving behaviors are the primary mechanisms by which nurses help people achieve positive health outcomes.

Clinical reasoning and clinical judgment provide the basis for the care-giving decisions that promote patient safety and quality. Reflecting critical thinking, systematic inquiry, and analytical skills, clinical reasoning and clinical judgment direct nursing interventions for patient-centered care focusing on improving patient care outcomes. Functional health patterns provide the database for the assessment and diagnosis of actual or potential patient health problems. Integral to clinical reasoning and clinical judgment is the identification of ethical and scientific rationales for care-giving. The goals of care-giving for the nurse are to achieve positive health outcomes related to wellness, health promotion, illness and disease management, palliative and end-of-life care, clinical prevention, and population health.

As members of the nursing profession, leadership roles include provider, collaborator, designer, manager, and coordinator of care. As providers and collaborators of care, professional nurses implement evidence-based practice in partnerships with diverse patients. As designers, managers, and coordinators of care, professional nurses lead interprofessional teams in the delivery of care in a changing healthcare environment. Skills essential to these roles include communication, collaboration, negotiation, delegation, coordination, evaluation, and the ability to apply theoretical and evidence-based practice models. Members of the nursing profession are also involved in healthcare policies, including financial and regulatory policies. Professional nurses advocate for healthcare consumers and the profession of nursing.

The basis upon which professional nursing builds is a general education at the baccalaureate level. Education is a life-long process, and educational systems are established by society to promote learning and to meet its changing needs. General education complements professional nursing education. Professional nursing is best understood by viewing it in relationship to the arts, sciences, and humanities.

Nursing education at the baccalaureate level prepares graduates for entry level professional positions in a variety of healthcare settings. Nursing education at the master's level builds on knowledge acquired at the baccalaureate level. This education prepares the professional nurse to promote safe, high quality nursing care through higher level practice and leadership in both direct and indirect care roles including administration, education, informatics, and clinical research management. A Doctor of Nursing Practice degree prepares graduates for the highest level of nursing leadership and practice within organizations and systems, and for emphasizing scholarship through implementation science.

Teaching and learning are essential parts of the educational process. Learning is a continuous and goal-oriented process influenced by previous knowledge and experience, learner uniqueness, and ability. Learning is enhanced when it is sequential and integrated and structured toward progressive learning goals that are increasingly complex. Students are expected to be responsible, accountable, and active participants in their own learning.

Faculty members, when teaching, have the responsibility to foster a caring environment that promotes active learning, intellectual curiosity, and critical thinking. In addition, they provide for varied learning experiences, make provisions for the learner's uniqueness, monitor students' achievement of learning objectives, provide positive reinforcement, and encourage life-long learning. It is the faculty members' belief that students and faculty work together in achieving learning objectives.

As members of a profession, nurses demonstrate commitment to professional practice standards, to continued personal and professional growth, to professional organizations through membership and active participation, to service, and to nursing education. The professional nurse role emphasizes responsibility and accountability to self, to the patient, and to the profession.

(Revised and Approved by Nursing Faculty Organization 8/20/09, 4/28/11, and 9/11).

## **Program Overview**

Graduates of the Waynesburg University Doctor of Nursing Practice Program will be prepared as nurse executives in healthcare systems. Based on this preparation, graduates would be most likely to serve in positions titled VP of Patient Care Services, Chief Nursing Officer, Director of Education and Training, Director of Quality Initiatives, Service Line Director, Product Line Director, Clinical Operations Director, Director of Clinical Effectiveness, Director of Organizational Development, Director of Evidence-based Practice Initiatives, Chief Learning Officer, Chief Operating Officer, or Clinical Services Director.

Graduates of this DNP program will develop very sophisticated skills in the following areas:

- Leadership of teams and organizations
- Strategic planning and resource utilization
- Critical evaluation and application of current research and best practice protocols
- Team building and interprofessional collaboration
- Measurement and analysis of healthcare outcomes
- Development and management of quality improvement initiatives
- Quantitative data management
- Information management and utilization in decision-making

## **Student Learning Outcomes for the Doctor of Nursing Practice Program**

Demonstrate professional values and behaviors with individuals and aggregates to improve health outcomes through systems thinking and strategic planning.

Integrate nursing science with knowledge from psychobiological, socio-cultural, spiritual, analytical and organizational sciences as the basis for the highest level of organizational leadership.

Create organizational cultures and practice environments that foster collaborative relationships to promote safe, high quality, patient-centered care.

Use analytical, communication, and technological skills to link the best evidence for practice to organizational, fiscal, and policy-making issues.

Lead the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs, care systems, and quality improvement initiatives.

Translate evidence to implement clinical practice improvements at the systems level.

Create effective strategies for leading the resolution of health policy, legal, and ethical dilemmas inherent in healthcare delivery at the individual, organizational, or systems level.

## **Academic Advisement**

On admission, students are assigned an academic advisor who holds faculty rank at Waynesburg University. The academic advisor identifies a plan of progression through the program so that students will successfully complete all requirements for graduation. The academic advisor will also assist the student in setting goals for practicum experiences and for developing a meaningful capstone project in the third year of the program, and will serve as the capstone project committee chair. Students are expected to contact their academic advisor each term in order to register for courses.

## **Class Participation**

All doctoral courses include an assessment of student participation as part of the final grade. While faculty have individual differences in particular expectations (which will be defined in each course module), the following components are universally significant:

1. Make contributions to discussions that:
  - Are relevant to the issue being discussed.
  - Give evidence of preparation for class.
  - Show insight into the topic at hand.
2. Listen to other students as well as the faculty by:
  - Asking pertinent questions.
  - Commenting on others' contributions.
  - Refraining from monopolizing the discussion.

## **Preparation For The First Class Meeting**

The nature of doctoral study requires students to take a great deal of responsibility for their own learning. Doctoral students should expect to devote an average of 10-15 hours per week to study and completion of assignments. In a doctoral program, it is especially important to stay focused and on schedule with all assignments.

Since there is always preparation required for the first class meeting, which may include a graded assignment, students should review the module for the next course and obtain the textbooks and other resource material as soon as possible prior to the beginning of the next semester.

## **Modules**

A doctoral course module (syllabus and guidebook) is prepared to complement the textbook(s) for each course. The module contains information about the course objectives, seminar activities, and assignments for each class meeting.

Each faculty will prepare an individualized course module which will contain contact information, evaluation criteria, and other grading information. The module will be available via Blackboard at least 2 weeks prior to the beginning of the semester. Each Blackboard module

will become available to the student only if the student has been registered for that course, and can be viewed via the myConnect pathway into the Blackboard website. Login and password information will be provided individually to the student at orientation to the program.

## **Framework for the DNP Program Curriculum**

The Waynesburg University Doctor of Nursing Practice Program Curriculum is based on the AACN *Doctor of Nursing Practice Essentials*, (AACN, 2006), the AONE *Nurse Executive Competencies*, (AONE, 2004), and the ANA *Scope and Standards for Nurse Administrators* (ANA, 2009).

The AACN Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Essentials document addresses the foundational competencies that are core to all advanced nursing practice roles (AACN, 2006). The AONE Nurse Executive Competencies describe skills common to nurses in executive practice regardless of their educational level or titles in different organizations, and serve as a curriculum guideline for the educational preparation of nurses seeking expertise and knowledge in executive practice (AONE, 2005). The ANA *Scope and Standards for Nurse Administrators* distinguish the role of the nurse executive and describe the scope and standards of practice for the nurse executive role. These standards also serve to outline the curriculum for advanced practice nurses educated as nurse administrators. *Copies of these documents are available from the Director of Accelerated Health Programs or from your academic advisor.*

The following are the DNP Essentials, as defined by AACN (see [www.aacn.nche.org](http://www.aacn.nche.org) for the full DNP Essentials document), which must be met within coursework and practicum experiences in the Waynesburg University DNP Program:

### **Essential I** ***Scientific Underpinnings for Practice***

1. Integrate nursing science with knowledge from ethics, the biophysical, psychosocial, analytical, and organizational sciences as the basis for the highest level of nursing practice.
2. Use science-based theories and concepts to:
  - determine the nature and significance of health and health care delivery phenomena;
  - describe the actions and advanced strategies to enhance, alleviate, and ameliorate health and health care delivery phenomena as appropriate; and evaluate outcomes.
3. Develop and evaluate new practice approaches based on nursing theories and theories from other disciplines.

## **Essential II**

### ***Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Improvement & Systems Thinking***

1. Develop and evaluate care delivery approaches that meet current and future needs of patient populations based on scientific findings in nursing and other clinical sciences, as well as organizational, political, and economic sciences.
2. Ensure accountability for quality of health care and patient safety for populations with whom they work.
  - a. Use advanced communication skills/processes to lead quality improvement and patient safety initiatives in health care systems.
  - b. Employ principles of business, finance, economics, and health policy to develop and implement effective plans for practice-level and/or system-wide practice initiatives that will improve the quality of care delivery.
  - c. Develop and/or monitor budgets for practice initiatives.
  - d. Analyze the cost-effectiveness of practice initiatives accounting for risk and improvement of health care outcomes.
  - e. Demonstrate sensitivity to diverse organizational cultures and populations, including patients and providers.
3. Develop and/or evaluate effective strategies for managing the ethical dilemmas inherent in patient care, the health care organization, and research.

## **Essential III**

### ***Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-Based Practice***

1. Use analytic methods to critically appraise existing literature and other evidence to determine and implement the best evidence for practice.
2. Design and implement processes to evaluate outcomes of practice, practice patterns, and systems of care within a practice setting, health care organization, or community against national benchmarks to determine variances in practice outcomes and population trends.
3. Design, direct, and evaluate quality improvement methodologies to promote safe, timely, effective, efficient, equitable, and patient-centered care.
4. Apply relevant findings to develop practice guidelines and improve practice and the practice environment.

5. Use information technology and research methods appropriately to:
  - collect appropriate and accurate data to generate evidence for nursing practice
  - inform and guide the design of databases that generate meaningful evidence for nursing practice
  - analyze data from practice
  - design evidence-based interventions
  - predict and analyze outcomes
  - examine patterns of behavior and outcomes
  - identify gaps in evidence for practice
6. Function as a practice specialist/consultant in collaborative knowledge-generating research.
7. Disseminate findings from evidence-based practice and research to improve healthcare outcomes.

#### **Essential IV**

#### ***Information Systems/Technology and Patient Care Technology for the Improvement and Transformation of Health Care***

1. Design, select, use, and evaluate programs that evaluate and monitor outcomes of care, care systems, and quality improvement including consumer use of health care information systems.
2. Analyze and communicate critical elements necessary to the selection, use and evaluation of health care information systems and patient care technology.
3. Demonstrate the conceptual ability and technical skills to develop and execute an evaluation plan involving data extraction from practice information systems and databases.
4. Provide leadership in the evaluation and resolution of ethical and legal issues within healthcare systems relating to the use of information, information technology, communication networks, and patient care technology.
5. Evaluate consumer health information sources for accuracy, timeliness, and appropriateness.

#### **Essential V**

#### ***Health Care Policy for Advocacy in Health Care***

1. Critically analyze health policy proposals, health policies, and related issues from the perspective of consumers, nursing, other health professions, and other stakeholders in policy and public forums.
2. Demonstrate leadership in the development and implementation of institutional,

local, state, federal, and/or international health policy.

3. Influence policy makers through active participation on committees, boards, or task forces at the institutional, local, state, regional, national, and/or international levels to improve health care delivery and outcomes.
4. Educate others, including policy makers at all levels, regarding nursing, health policy, and patient care outcomes.
5. Advocate for the nursing profession within the policy and healthcare communities.
6. Develop, evaluate, and provide leadership for health care policy that shapes health-care financing, regulation, and delivery.
7. Advocate for social justice, equity, and ethical policies within all healthcare arenas.

### **Essential VI**

#### ***Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient & Population Health Outcomes***

1. Employ effective communication and collaborative skills in the development and implementation of practice models, peer review, practice guidelines, health policy, standards of care, and/or other scholarly products.
2. Lead interprofessional teams in the analysis of complex practice and organizational issues.
3. Employ consultative and leadership skills with intraprofessional and interprofessional teams to create change in health care and complex healthcare delivery systems.

### **Essential VII**

#### ***Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving the Nation's Health***

1. Analyze epidemiological, biostatistical, environmental, and other appropriate scientific data related to individual, aggregate, and population health.
2. Synthesize concepts, including psychosocial dimensions and cultural diversity, related to clinical prevention and population health in developing, implementing, and evaluating interventions to address health promotion/disease prevention efforts, improve health status/access patterns, and/or address gaps in care of individuals, aggregates, or populations.
3. Evaluate care delivery models and/or strategies using concepts related to community environmental and occupational health, and cultural and socioeconomic dimensions of health.

**Essential VIII**  
**Advanced Nursing Practice**

Advanced nursing practice is broadly defined in the DNP Essentials document by AACN (2006) as: any form of nursing intervention that influences health care outcomes for individuals or populations, including the direct care of individual patients, management of care for individuals and populations, administration of nursing and health care organizations, and the development and implementation of health policy. (p. 4)

## DNP Degree Program Plan

<b>Degree Plan Fall 2011 start</b>	<b>Term I</b>	<b>Term II</b>	<b>Term III</b>
<b>Year 1 Courses</b> (12 credits total)	<b>NUR 606:</b> Healthcare Systems Leadership (3 credits)  <b><u>Term: Fall 2011</u></b>	<b>NUR 607:</b> Healthcare Outcomes (3 credits—100% online)  <b>NUR 608:</b> Interprofessional Collaboration and Team Facilitation (3 credits)  <b><u>Term: Spring 2012</u></b>	<b>NUR 605:</b> Evidence-Based Nursing Practice: Transforming the Practice Environment (3 credits)  <b>* Preliminary Exam</b>  <b><u>Term: Summer 2012</u></b>
<b>Year 2 Courses</b> (12 credits total)	<b>NUR 615:</b> Quantitative Methods for Nursing Leadership (3 credits)  <b><u>Term: Fall 2012</u></b>	<b>NUR 609:</b> Healthcare Quality Initiatives (3 credits—50% online)  <b>NUR 616:</b> Healthcare Information Management (3 credits—50% online)  <b><u>Term: Spring 2013</u></b>	<b>NUR 617:</b> Principles of Strategic Planning (3 credits)  <b><u>Term: Summer 2013</u></b>
<b>Year 3 Courses</b> (12 credits total)	<b>NUR 618:</b> Practicum I, Nurse Executive Role Practicum (2 credits, 84 practice hours)  <b>NUR 621:</b> Practicum II, Capstone Proposal (2 credits, 84 hours)  <b><u>Term: Fall 2013</u></b>	<b>NUR 622:</b> Practicum III, Capstone Implementation (4 credits, 166 practice hours)  <b><u>Term: Spring 2014</u></b>	<b>NUR 699:</b> Capstone Seminar and Practicum (4 credits and 166 hours, plus final defense of change project)  <b><u>Term: Summer 2014</u></b>

\* Refer to Preliminary Examination Policy

## **Overview of Each Year of the Curriculum**

The *first year* of the program is focused on the fundamental skills for leading change in a practice setting, in order to improve the outcomes that result from nursing practice and healthcare delivery in a variety of settings. Theory and skill development during the first year center around the following:

- Organizational assessment
- Systems leadership, change leadership, and action planning
- Critical appraisal of research and practice guidelines
- Techniques for transforming the practice environment
- Leadership skills for influencing health policy
- Techniques for measuring healthcare outcomes
- Collaboration and team leadership

The *second year* of the program builds on the learning that has occurred during the first year. Based on the development of broad skills for healthcare system leadership, implementation of evidence-based practice, and measurement of the impact of leadership actions on patient care outcomes, the DNP student begins to focus on in-depth, specific skills for leading change in the practice environment. Theory and skill development during the second year of the program center around the following:

- Quality improvement tools and processes
- Budget and financial management
- Information-driven decision making
- Assessment and utilization of healthcare information management systems and strategies
- Leadership of comprehensive strategic planning at the organizational level

The *third year* of the program provides the opportunity for *synthesis* and application of DNP knowledge and skills in conducting a system-level change initiative. Practicum skill development activities center on the following:

- Comprehensive healthcare system assessment
- Refinement of nurse executive competencies
- Initiation, measurement, and evaluation of the impact of system-level change (capstone project)

The practicum hours (NUR 618, 621, 622, and 699) in the third year provide the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the role of the nurse executive in leading organizational efforts to deliver the highest level of patient care quality.

The program culminates in the implementation and evaluation of the capstone project. The capstone project is developed following mastery of the knowledge and skills needed to conduct such a complex organizational change.

*The most important element in choosing capstone activities is the emphasis on the delivery of quality healthcare. For the capstone project, the student should ask, and be able to answer the questions, “How will this improve the quality of care for patients, families, groups, communities? What impact will this project have on health outcomes?” When the student uses*

*an educational approach, the connection needs to be made between the improved education of nurses and/or nursing students and the delivery of quality patient care resulting in improved outcomes. When the student chooses an organizational development approach, the connection needs to be made between the improved organizational structure and processes and the delivery of quality healthcare resulting in improved outcomes. When the student chooses a clinical care approach, the connection needs to be made between the best available evidence for effective interventions and improved patient outcomes.*

## **DNP Program Course Descriptions**

NUR 605 Evidence-based Nursing: Transforming the Practice Environment      3 credits

This course introduces the concepts associated with evidence-based nursing practice models. The steps in implementing evidence-based practice are explored in depth, including the following: selecting a clinical or knowledge question or problem, forming a team, retrieving the evidence from published literature, evaluating the strength of the evidence, critiquing research and practice guidelines, synthesizing the research, examining patient preferences, making evidence-based practice recommendations, deciding to change practice, implementing the practice change, evaluating the outcomes, and diffusing the innovation. Issues related to information management technology will be introduced. Strategies for creating a culture of evidence-based practice, both for individuals and systems, will be identified, and the barriers to evidence-based practice will also be identified. The concept of translation science and tools for applying evidence to practice will be emphasized. The goal of this course is to provide the student with the knowledge and skills necessary to assume a leadership role in transforming healthcare and educational environments.

NUR 606 Healthcare Systems Leadership      3 credits

The purpose of this course is to provide a comprehensive exploration of leadership theories and principles, as well as innovative leadership techniques. Units of content will focus on systems thinking, values and ethics, human resource utilization, legal issues, decision-making, organizational culture and climate, communication skills, succession planning, theories of change and change leadership, creation of learning communities, professional accountability, and leadership within professional nursing organizations. Qualities and behaviors associated with exemplary leadership will be identified. The goal of this course is to develop and refine the leadership skills of the student as he/she works to transform practice and educational environments in order to enhance the quality of nursing and healthcare delivery systems. The student will be encouraged to use his/her own work environment as a learning laboratory to assess and develop existing leadership structures.

NUR 607 Healthcare Outcomes

3 credits

This course examines concepts related to healthcare outcomes identification, measurement, management, and planning for improved outcomes. Goals for healthcare outcomes and the delivery of healthcare will be identified relative to health promotion, disease prevention, disease management, and the design of innovative healthcare delivery models. Units will focus on principles and concepts associated with epidemiology; healthcare evaluation design; methodologies for outcomes research; use of epidemiological, biostatistical, environmental, geographic, genetic, behavioral, and socioeconomic data to evaluate outcomes of healthcare delivery; processes in program evaluation; use of outcomes data to shape healthcare policy; measurement of cost-effectiveness; and the development of new practice guidelines based on outcomes research. The goal of this course is to provide the knowledge, skills, and tools needed for leadership in healthcare outcomes management and planning.

NUR 608 Interprofessional Collaboration and Team Facilitation

3 credits

This course focuses on the knowledge and skills necessary to provide exemplary leadership of groups and teams, with an emphasis on relationship building and team building. Units of content include effective communication with groups and teams, conflict management and resolution, group process and techniques for effectively leading meetings, the application of adult learning principles, emotional intelligence, characteristics of effective teams, roles and scope of practice of various healthcare professionals, and the creation of a professional practice culture. The student will complete various assessments to determine the effectiveness of practice environment communication, meetings, and groups/teams. Guided facilitation of meetings will be included as a learning experience. The goal of this course is to further enhance the student's leadership skill development in order to resolve complex clinical situations and improve practice environments so that best practice standards are operationalized.

NUR 609 Healthcare Quality Initiatives

3 credits

This course will focus on the role of the nurse executive in quality initiatives. Strategies for creating a culture of quality will be examined, including the application of Lean and Six Sigma principles and techniques. Concepts associated with quality management will be explored, including review of quality standards and benchmarks, systems thinking, and the collection of reliable data regarding quality. Units of content will also include the application of statistical methods for data analysis, the process of root cause analysis, the plan-do-check-act cycle, the nature and analysis of sentinel events, the prevention of errors, measuring customer satisfaction, and the process of continuous quality improvement within healthcare and educational institutions. The goal of the course is to provide the scientific knowledge base and practical tools necessary for leadership of healthcare quality initiatives, so that an organizational quality infrastructure can be built.

NUR 615 Quantitative Methods for Nurse Executives

3 credits

This course provides an overview of quantitative methods for applying data in the process of decision-making within a healthcare environment. Units of content include forecasting, the processes of decision-making based on data and decision trees, making choices for location and

physical layout design of healthcare services, the processes associated with reengineering and work redesign, the use of data in determining staffing and scheduling decisions, measurement of productivity, making resource allocation and inventory decisions, the use of data in quality initiatives, project management, and capacity planning. The goal of this course is to ensure that the nurse executive makes decisions based on data that has been reliably collected and analyzed, so that efficient and effective decisions can be made that allow the organization to be successful.

NUR 616 Healthcare Information Management and Technology

3 credits

This course provides the student with an opportunity to examine the value of health information management using computer technology. Units of content will explore methods for choosing information and technology systems to support the following aspects of healthcare leadership: information literacy for evidence-based practice, quality improvement and outcomes evaluation, management tasks, educational processes, clinical information systems, clinical decision support systems, electronic medical records, clinical pathways, clinical protocols and guidelines, personal digital assistants, and classification systems for documentation. Standards and principles for selecting and evaluating information systems will be discussed, along with ethical and legal issues. The student will gain practice in extracting data from information systems and data dashboards in order to make decisions, and will participate in evaluation of existing information management systems.

NUR 617 Principles of Strategic Planning

3 credits

This course focuses on the process of strategic planning as part of the executive leadership role. Units of content include: the development of a strategic vision, writing a mission and philosophy, SWOT and gap analyses, assessment of the external environment, organizational assessment, internal strengths and limitations, health economics and health finance, forecasting, soliciting consumer input into organizational goals, defining organizational goals, acquisition and allocation of resources, practice innovations and clinical program development, workflow design and redesign, program planning and evaluation, risk anticipation and risk management, marketing principles, and the measurement and analysis of performance. Strategic thinking is encouraged within each unit and each learning activity. The student will be encouraged to participate in and conduct strategic planning sessions in his/her own work environment and to evaluate existing strategic plans. The goal of this course is to ensure that the student is prepared to assume accountability for improving the health outcomes of individuals and aggregates.

NUR 618 Practicum I, Nurse Executive Role Practicum

2 credits

This course provides the student with the opportunity to analyze the role of the nurse executive, through 84 guided hours of practicum experience with a seasoned mentor at the system level in the work environment which best matches the student's initial career goals following completion of the DNP curriculum. Learning experiences will focus on the following: processes associated with budget and finance, strategies for managing and developing human resources, healthcare policy, legal and ethical issues, program and patient care delivery design and implementation, utilization of information systems, meeting facilitation at the organizational or system level, application of analytical skills in decision-making, communication and relationship-building,

interprofessional collaboration, succession planning, and strategic planning. During this practicum, the student will shadow one or more seasoned executives whose roles impact or influence the implementation of the nurse executive role. These executives may be nurses or members of other professional groups. A learning contract will be developed around the DNP student's learning goals for this experience. Asynchronous discussion will focus on identity development related to the nurse executive role. Students in the course will serve as consultative peers in exploration of issues and strategies for developing skills as a nurse executive.

NUR 621 Practicum II, Capstone Proposal

2 credits

During the capstone proposal phase of the capstone project, the student will design a change project that will have system level impact, resulting in significant organizational change and immediate improvement in the quality of healthcare and nursing practice. This change project, aimed at clinical translation of research findings with direct application to practice or system-level organizational development, will be presented to the student's capstone project committee for review and approval prior to implementation. Asynchronous discussion will focus on capstone proposal development issues and strategies. Students in the course will serve as consultative peers in exploration of issues and strategies for developing skills as a nurse executive.

NUR 622 Practicum III, Capstone Implementation

4 credits

This course provides the opportunity for application of knowledge and skills gained in the theory courses of the DNP curriculum. During the 166 practicum hours associated with this course, the student will implement practice changes in his/her work setting, based on the capstone proposal developed and approved during NUR 621. The practicum activities are focused on providing leadership in changing the practice environment in order to improve the outcomes of patient care. Mentorship will be provided by an expert within the practice setting chosen by the student. Using essential DNP competencies and nurse executive competencies learned in the theory courses, the student will be expected to conduct a project that makes an impact on patient care outcomes. Asynchronous discussion is included in this course, to provide the student with the opportunity to participate in a learning community of colleagues and scholars who will serve as consultants on the projects. Issues related to implementation of the change project will be explored, with a focus on application of healthcare system leadership skills in the process of transforming the practice environment toward a more effective, evidence-based model of care delivery. The ultimate goal of the project is to refine skills needed to improve healthcare outcomes.

NUR 699 Capstone Project

4 credits

This capstone course provides the student with the opportunity to synthesize previous learning in the implementation and evaluation of a system level change designed to immediately improve healthcare outcomes. During the 166 hours associated with this course, the student will conduct a change project based on principles of science and evidence-based practice, healthcare quality, and systems leadership. Successful completion of this final practicum will require the student to present the results of the change project to his/her capstone project committee for their review

and approval of the cumulative scholarly work. It is expected that this project will demonstrate the measurement and evaluation of outcomes resulting from the organizational change. Discussions with the capstone committee will focus on the sophisticated leadership skills required of the nurse executive, including the highest level of analytic thinking and problem-solving skill.

## **Master's Course Content** **Required Prior to DNP Program Graduation**

### **Theoretical Foundations**

3 credits

This course explores the relationship of theory to knowledge acquisition. Theories from a broad range of disciplines including nursing and other sciences, liberal arts, and business will be explored for their relevance to healthcare. Students will have the opportunity to apply theory and critical thinking skills to practice, administration, and education. Theory as a framework for evidence-based practice will also be examined.

### **Politics & Health Policy**

3 credits

This course examines the impact of economics and politics on healthcare policy in the U.S. It emphasizes the economic issues that affect healthcare delivery, finance, research, and education. Students will learn how the elements of national health policy are represented on the national agenda and about the economic laws of supply and demand. Healthcare production, as an economic and political function, is also studied. Leadership responsibilities in a variety of healthcare organizations and academic institutions are examined with respect to healthcare policy.

### **Advanced Health Promotion**

3 credits

This course is designed to provide an overview of health promotion concepts across the lifespan. Specifically, the course focuses on content related to concepts of health, cultural influences on health promotion/disease prevention, and epidemiology, and their relationship to vulnerable and high-risk population across the lifespan. The course emphasizes application of health promotion concepts in the context of individuals, families, and communities.

### **Financial Management in Healthcare**

3 credits

This course provides students with knowledge and skills necessary to make sense of financial information used to manage traditional and non-traditional healthcare organizations. The course presents healthcare financing on a broad base by introducing students to such topics as: financial planning, financial reporting, cost accounting and analysis, and rate setting. The course is appropriate for students with non-financial backgrounds, providing them with fundamental concepts and skills that are applicable in any healthcare organization.

This course focuses on the value of scientific evidence and nursing research in providing high quality health care and improving nursing practice. Units of content focus on the need for evidence-based practice, conducting and writing literature reviews, the research process, the application of appropriate statistical methods, ethical issues, communication of research findings, critical analysis of nursing and related healthcare research, and use of organizational leadership techniques to promote evidence-based practice. The goal of this course is to prepare nurse educators and nurse administrators who are proficient at research utilization, including evaluation of published research, identification of problems within the educational or clinical setting that require further study, and dissemination and application of research to change practice and improve outcomes.

### **DNP Program Practicum Guidelines**

Four Systems Leadership Practicum courses are included in the Doctor of Nursing Practice Program curriculum.

These courses include:

NUR 618	Practicum I, Nurse Executive Role Practicum
NUR 621	Practicum II, Capstone Proposal
NUR 622	Practicum III, Capstone Implementation
NUR 699	Capstone Project

The number of practicum hours totals 500 hours within the doctoral level of the program. The student may use a clinical practice setting, including his/her own work environment, as a learning laboratory to complete the practicum requirements for each of these doctoral courses, if that setting promotes the kinds of activities essential to the practicum course objectives. If the student wishes to obtain a different setting for the practicum, assistance regarding placement for the practicum should be requested from the academic advisor.

Guidelines for the practicum experiences will be provided in each course module. However, in general these guidelines will be developed to enhance achievement of the course goals. Refer to the course descriptions for a description of these goals.

In the 84 hours of practicum experience in NUR 618, the student will observe and refine leadership and nurse executive skills to transform practice environments toward evidence-based practice in order to enhance the quality of outcomes of nursing and healthcare delivery systems.

In the 84 hours of practicum experience in NUR 621, the student will propose a capstone project designed to achieve positive healthcare outcomes, improve an organizational capacity to deliver quality healthcare, or enhance health policy initiatives, and will obtain capstone committee approval to proceed with IRB approval and project implementation.

In the 166 hours of practicum experience in NUR 622, the student will work with system leaders to implement the approved project that will have system impact resulting in organizational change and immediate improvement in the quality of healthcare and nursing.

In the 166 hours of NUR 699, the Capstone Project, the student will conduct and evaluate a change project based on principles of implementation science and evidence-based practice, healthcare quality, and collaborative systems leadership. Successful completion of this final project will require the student to present the results of the change project to his/her capstone project committee for their review and approval of the cumulative scholarly work. It is expected that this project will demonstrate the measurement and evaluation of outcomes resulting from the organizational change.

### **Approval Process for Practicum Experiences**

The student is responsible to arrange for a practicum experience within his or her work environment or another relevant practice setting; this arrangement should be discussed first with the academic advisor. A preceptor/mentor from the practice setting should be identified; this mentor must have a graduate degree in a relevant healthcare discipline. While the practice site mentor may provide feedback to the course facilitator regarding the DNP student's performance, it is the academic advisor, as course facilitator, who awards the grade for the practicum. Once the student confirms a mentor and the practicum setting's agreement for the practicum experience, the student needs to notify the academic advisor so that the agency agreement with Waynesburg University can be formalized in writing. *The student should also provide the academic advisor with a copy of the practicum site mentor's current resume or curriculum vita.* It is the student's responsibility to meet any agency requirements related to the practicum experience. Those requirements may include documentation of recent physical examination and statement by a healthcare provider regarding fitness for the learning experience, child abuse clearances and criminal background check, immunizations, evidence of recent satisfactory TB testing, or other individual health requirements of the agency. If health or other types of requirements must be met, evidence of compliance must be provided to the academic advisor prior to the beginning of the practicum experience. No student will be permitted to begin practicum hours until agency requirements have been met. Liability insurance will be provided to the student by the university.

### **Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval**

Since practicum agency IRB policies and procedures may vary, the student must obtain a copy of the policies and procedures for review at the beginning of the capstone proposal development process. It is the responsibility of the DNP student to obtain IRB policies and procedures from the agency site in which the student will be implementing capstone activities. See Policy #312 regarding the IRB approval requirement at Waynesburg University.

Information regarding the Waynesburg University Institutional Review Board is provided here for the student's convenience. Complete documents are available from the DNP Program academic advisor.

Directions for preparing a protocol for review are located in the DNP Program Guidebook and in the Blackboard Consortium shell for practicum and capstones.

- A. The Waynesburg University Institutional Review Board has the authority and responsibility to approve and monitor for compliance with sound ethical principles and applicable regulations all activities involving human subjects conducted by college faculty, staff, or students. In particular, the IRB has the authority to:
1. approve or disapprove a protocol or to require modifications to a protocol (including the consent form) as a condition for approval;
  2. oversee the conduct of a study and require progress reports;
  3. suspend or terminate a study, or impose restrictions or require modifications to a study as a condition for continuation.

The IRB does not have the authority to grant retroactive approval once human subjects have already been involved. An investigator whose protocol has been disapproved, modified, restricted, suspended, or terminated by the IRB may request the Committee to reconsider the protocol.

- B. For Waynesburg University, IRB procedures include (but are not limited to) the following:
1. Individuals wishing to conduct activities or research projects that involve human subjects must inform the Chair of the IRB, in writing, who will inform the IRB, which will take up the matter at the regular monthly meeting.
  2. Research projects must receive approval from the IRB before investigators can involve human subjects in the study. Failure to comply with this requirement is a direct violation of University policy and may result in discipline up to and including dismissal from the University.
  3. Investigators must receive approval prior to making any changes to a protocol (which includes adding investigators, consent forms, assent forms or procedures).
  4. Investigators must comply promptly with all IRB requests for information concerning a protocol (e.g. monitoring report).
  5. Investigators must notify the IRB of any adverse reactions, unforeseen events, termination of human subject involvement, and completion of study.

## **Guidelines for NUR 699 Capstone Project**

Since the NUR Capstone Practicum Project is considered the final evidence of successful synthesis of the principles of science and evidence-based practice, healthcare quality, and systems leadership, a process has been established to promote the student's success in this endeavor.

*This process should begin prior to the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> term of the program, with registration for NUR 621. Steps in this process are as follows:*

The student will participate in the establishment of the Capstone Project Committee. Membership on this committee should include a minimum of 3 people and a maximum of 5, such as:

- The DNP student's academic advisor (Chair of the Committee)
- An appropriately credentialed representative, who is a practice expert in the area of the student's change project, from the student's practicum site.
- A full time or part time member of the graduate program faculty in nursing at Waynesburg University
- A statistician (optional)
- A full time graduate faculty member at Waynesburg University, from a discipline other than nursing (optional)

The student should submit, in writing, a rationale for the choice of each committee member. Send this rationale in written form to the academic advisor and to the Director of Accelerated Health Programs, along with a copy of the practicum site representative's current resume or curriculum vita. The committee must be approved.

Once the committee has been approved by the Director of Accelerated Health Programs, the student, with the approval of the capstone committee chair (the student's academic advisor), may initiate a change in committee membership. The committee chair and the Director of Accelerated Health Programs must agree to the committee member change. A new committee membership form should be submitted and retained in the student's file.

Prior to the student formalizing the change project plan in writing, the student should meet and informally discuss the anticipated plan with the academic advisor and the mentor in the practicum site.

Simultaneously, the student and the advisor should review the IRB regulations of the university and the practicum site. *IRB approval is necessary because any data that will be collected as part of the project will be disseminated beyond the agency at some future point (such as in a presentation or publication); thus, IRB approval must be obtained prior to the student initiating the project.*

The next step is to write the capstone project synopsis for review by the by the Capstone Project Chair and the Director of Accelerated Health Programs. The synopsis should include:

- A brief discussion of the significance/rationale for the project
- Highlights of relevant literature and evidence supporting practice change
- Description of the project.
  - Goals, expected outcomes
  - Methods
  - Metrics
  - Timeline
  - Resources needed (human, materials, financial, etc.)

Once the synopsis has been approved, the student writes a detailed capstone proposal, which fully explains all of the above items. The proposal also needs to include:

- Written agreement from the site where the project will be completed
- Contact information for both the student and the agency mentor.

Submit your proposal to your advisor for review. Make the changes suggested by your advisor.

Once your advisor gives approval to the proposal, schedule a 2-hour meeting of your committee. Notify your advisor and the Director of Accelerated Health Programs of the date, time, and location of your committee meeting.

Send a copy of the proposal to each committee member at least 3 weeks prior to the scheduled overview and capstone proposal approval meeting. The committee members will submit questions regarding the student's program of study and project work that will be raised by the committee at the capstone project proposal meeting, at least 1 week prior to the meeting.

Prepare a 20-30 minute presentation that explains key elements of your project: significance, evidence from literature, goals, expected outcomes, methods, metrics, resources, timeline. Consider the committee's questions, and be prepared to provide comprehensive answers.

Request necessary a-v equipment and classroom at the academic center where you and your committee will meet (at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting).

Make handouts for committee members based on your presentation and proposal.

At the scheduled meeting, make your presentation. This will be followed by a question/answer session regarding your proposal. Be prepared to explain in depth any section of your proposal. The student should be prepared to display evidence of knowledge synthesis from previous courses in the DNP curriculum that provide the basis for undertaking this system transformation project.

The committee must unanimously approve the capstone project proposal in order to grant the student permission to proceed. The committee has the right to recommend changes in the project and/or remediation in knowledge and skills prior to approving the capstone proposal.

After the student has incorporated any additions or a revision to the capstone proposal, based on the committee's input, and has resubmitted the revised document to the committee for final review and approval, the committee will notify the student in writing of approval to begin the project. *Ideally, this written approval should be obtained prior to the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> term in the program, so that the student has at least two full semesters to implement the change project and analyze the outcomes.*

Following committee approval, obtain IRB approval from the project site **and** from Waynesburg University. This may require full review, exempt or expedited review, depending on the nature of your project and its involvement with human subject data. All students are required to submit a request for review to Waynesburg University's IRB, regardless of the project site directive.

Once IRB approval has been obtained, the project may be implemented.

Although the academic advisor should be the primary contact for the student, any of the committee members can be requested by the student or the advisor to provide guidance or direction to the student during project implementation.

The student should meet with the academic advisor regularly, either in person or by telephone contact. It is suggested the student summarize project activities and implementation questions at least once a month and communicate the status of the project to the advisor.

### **Final Defense of Change Project**

Successful completion of this final practicum will require the student to present the outcomes of the change project to his/her Capstone Project Committee for their review and approval of the cumulative scholarly work. It is expected that this project will demonstrate the collection and evaluation of feedback about the project and outcomes resulting from the organizational change. The final report of the change project will be retained in the student's academic file. The student is encouraged to retain a personal copy of this work as a part of a professional portfolio.

When the project has been completed, the student adds to the original proposal, in writing, a detailed summary of the implementation and evaluation of the project. A draft should be submitted to the academic advisor as early as possible, but no later than 1 month prior to the end of the final semester.

At the same time that the report draft has been submitted to the advisor, the student should identify times that the advisor is available for the final defense meeting.

Following review and approval by the advisor, the project report is also sent to the project site mentor and the other members of the committee for their review, at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled final defense meeting.

Using the advisor's available times, the student schedules the meeting with the full committee. A room reservation and audio-visual equipment reservation should be made at a Waynesburg University center for the date and time of the capstone defense. The advisor is responsible for notifying the Director of Accelerated Health Programs regarding scheduled defense meetings. The Director will publish the defense schedule so that the meeting is open to all interested parties.

During the final defense meeting, the student presents an overview of the project and the results. The student is also prepared to answer questions by the committee that reflects the student's comprehensive knowledge, gained from the DNP curriculum and participation in the capstone project, of the DNP role.

Based on the committee's review and recommendations of the project report and the student's answers to questions asked during the final defense meeting, any member of the committee can request that the student revise any portion of the report that does not meet with committee approval.

At the conclusion of the defense meeting, the capstone project committee chair (the student's academic advisor) will notify the student of the decision and recommendations of the committee. The committee must unanimously agree to approve the final project report and the student's demonstration of DNP role competencies.

If the decision of the committee is not unanimous to approve the final defense of the project, the student must continue to work on the project and the report and any remediation the committee requires. When the student has addressed the concerns of the committee, and has received approval from the academic advisor to return to the committee for a follow-up meeting, a meeting may be scheduled. If the student believes she/he has been treated unfairly, the case may be referred to the Director of Accelerated Health Programs, the Chair of the Department of Nursing, and the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies, in that order.

A record of the decision is kept in the student's file (Record of Defense and Committee Signature Form). This form includes the date of the final defense, the title of the project, and signatures of all members of the capstone project committee.

Upon completion of all recommended changes to the project report and any supporting evidence in the student's portfolio of achievement during the DNP program, the student is responsible for submitting to the office of the Director of Accelerated Health Programs:

- A final copy of the project report
- A final copy of the student's portfolio of achievement during the DNP program (on CD or flash drive)
- A final copy of the project report to be catalogued and housed in the Eberly Library
- A final summary of the project, to be housed in the DNP Project repository at Sigma Theta Tau (optional)

A grade of Pass/Fail is awarded at the conclusion of the final defense, reflecting the cumulative work done on the capstone project. The grading rubric is:

### **Passing Paper**

**Clarity of Purpose:** The report clearly defines the purpose of the capstone project. The activities relate to the DNP Essentials.

**Organization:** The report is organized in a way that fully supports the purpose of the final synthesis project. The sequence of ideas is logical and effective. Support materials are provided that illuminate the details of the project and its results.

**Rationale:** The student provides the best available evidence for the significance of the project and the rationale/theoretical models for the approaches taken to accomplish system level change or transformation. No important pieces of information or parts of the rationale are omitted. It is clear that the student is well-informed, has searched effectively and comprehensively for appropriate evidence, and has thought about how the evidence may be used purposefully in guiding the change project. Evidence presented is relevant to the points being made.

**Use of sources:** The student has used credible and relevant sources to support the ideas presented in the report.

**Evidence of Critical Thinking:** The student demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate an issue or problem and relate that problem to evidence from current, scientific literature. The project results in an improved nursing practice environment.

**Outcomes:** The project report clearly delineates the tools used to obtain feedback regarding outcomes achieved through the capstone project and the reliability and validity of those feedback mechanisms. If data has been collected, data management techniques are appropriate. Analysis of the data reflects doctoral level analytic ability.

**Actions taken and recommendations for future action:** The project report identifies and evaluates leadership actions taken, appropriate for a nurse executive, and specifies future actions to be taken to sustain the change in the practice setting.

**Use of Standard Written English:** The student has followed standard forms of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax with no errors on each page. The report is easy to read.

**Presentation of the final project report and supporting portfolio materials:** The submissions look neat and professional in appearance. The student has followed APA guidelines for formatting and reference citations.

### **Unacceptable Paper (must be revised and resubmitted to the committee)**

A student will be required to make revisions prior to submitting the project report to the capstone project committee in preparation for the final defense meeting if:

- The purpose of the project has not been clearly defined.
- The level or nature of the project activity does not reflect doctoral work, the DNP Essentials, and reasonable effort to address system level change.
- The evidence provided to support the project is weak or inappropriate.
- The analysis conducted on the project results is weak or inappropriate.
- There is insufficient evidence that the project has made an impact on the quality of patient care and/or healthcare outcomes.

- There is insufficient evidence that the student has responded adequately and appropriately to system/organizational barriers and resistance to change that occurred at the project site during the project implementation.
- The student has not demonstrated reasonable writing skills.
- The student has been unresponsive to the capstone committee's guidance and direction.
- The student has neglected major sources of information or component parts of the project.

Note: A grade of NC (for No Credit) may be awarded at the end of each semester of the capstone project practicum sequence if the student is making progress but was unable to finish the project/course requirements by the end of the semester. There is no penalty for a NC grade, and it can remain on the transcript indefinitely, but no credit has been earned and the student is unable to graduate until the capstone project requirements have been met successfully. When the capstone project process has been successfully completed, within each of the 3 practicum courses, the facilitator will change the NC grade to a grade of P (for Pass). All capstone project requirements must be completed successfully within the 7-year statute of limitations.

## **Graduation Notification**

Students who anticipate graduating at the end of a semester will receive a "Graduation Notification" letter and graduation application from the Registrar. This form should be reviewed, signed and returned to the Director of Accelerated Health Programs.

## **Grades and Transcripts**

Final grades are due in the Office of the Registrar by noon on Monday following a completed semester. The Registrar's office will mail grade reports to the student. Official grades are released only by the Registrar's office and are not furnished by program staff.

Students should allow at least ten days following a completed session for their grades to arrive. Grades will not be released over the telephone or by fax. If students do not receive grades within a reasonable time frame, they may call the Registrar's office at 724-852-3252/3375. Transcripts are available from the Registrar's office by mail or in person. Telephone requests are not accepted. Official transcripts are provided at the student's written request.

## **Communication between Program Administration and Students**

Information regarding the DNP program, including academic policies, course information and related documents, opportunities for publication or presentations at conferences, available scholarships, and any proposed or actual changes to policies or course sequencing, will be communicated to students in several ways. Letters may be mailed to each student's home address. Updates to policies and information in the DNP Student Program Guide will be announced via a posted announcement at each academic center, and in Blackboard via the announcements page. The updated student program guide will be posted on the Waynesburg

University website, and will also be posted in the DNP Community Blackboard shell which will remain open and accessible for the duration of the student's enrollment in the DNP program. Various documents that are needed for course and practicum completion will also be posted in the DNP Community Blackboard shell. At least annually, focus groups will be held with each cohort of DNP students, to discuss the effectiveness of the program, to listen to student ideas for changes and enhancements to the program, and to discuss changes in policies or other elements of the DNP program. Students will be notified in advance regarding the date and time of these focus groups.

## **Expectations for Doctoral Level Work**

Doctoral study generally does not involve extensive lecture as a teaching strategy. Doctoral course facilitators will guide discussions, provide opportunities for skill practice, create a meaningful learning climate that supports open and honest discussion, present learning activities that require students to use critical thinking and reflection skills, identify resources and appropriate readings to assist the student in gaining depth in the content related to the course, and determine the student's mastery of the course objectives via evaluation of course assignments. Doctoral students will take an active participant role in their own learning, and will contribute to the learning of peers through the implementation of a learning community approach to doctoral study. A learning community implies that all members share ownership of the climate, the cohesion, the activities, the inquiry, the process, and the outcomes of that community's efforts to achieve continual learning.

Acceptable doctoral level work is evidenced by a high degree of analysis, synthesis, and application of information. You will be expected to read extensively and think critically about what you've read. The nature of your reading will include theoretical models; practical tools for use in the nurse executive role; current research findings; and evidence for best practice in nursing, healthcare administration, and educational leadership. You will be expected to reflect, summarize, and apply your reading as you complete course assignments, and you will be expected to implement and evaluate practice activities that are focused on transforming the practice environment to improve the quality of healthcare delivery.

*Doctoral students will be expected to write papers that are capable of being submitted to journals for consideration of publication. In addition, students will be expected to submit abstracts to relevant conferences for presentations related to content in the DNP curriculum. Papers written, presentations made, and projects completed become the basis for the professional portfolio, which is begun in the first semester of the program, maintained throughout the program, and submitted at the conclusion of the program to demonstrate mastery of all student learning outcomes and DNP competencies.*

When an A or A- grade is given, the student has achieved an excellent level of mastery of the knowledge and skills contained in the course content. Grades of B+ and B reflect doctoral work that is acceptable. A grade of B- is not acceptable and will hinder program progression. The Doctor of Nursing Practice Program faculty are committed to maintaining integrity related to grades, and course faculty are encouraged to award a grade that best reflects the quality of the student's work. There is no expectation that all students will receive "A" grades in all courses.

## **Student Feedback**

Program quality feedback from doctoral students is valued by the DNP Program faculty. Students have the opportunity at the end of each course to evaluate the course, the facilitator, and any facilities used for project work, and to provide any other additional relevant comments. Students will be asked to evaluate practicum sites, and representatives of the practicum sites will be asked to provide feedback about the quality of the DNP student. At least once a year, either through a survey or a focus group discussion, students will be invited to provide evaluative feedback about the quality of the sequence of courses that year and the ability to synthesize knowledge from those courses. Graduates will be surveyed at the time of graduation. Alumni and employers will also receive evaluation surveys, to provide an opportunity for additional feedback to the Director of Accelerated Health Program. Students are encouraged to contact the Director of Accelerated Health Programs at any time to discuss strengths and concerns related to the program.

## **Registration**

Students must complete a Biographical/Advising (BAR) Registration form and return it to the academic advisor for final review. Signature by an academic advisor is necessary before registration. Students may register for courses in person, by phone, by e-mail, or by fax.

## **Closed Classes**

DNP students who may wish to take a Master's level course at Waynesburg University are advised to register for courses during the official registration dates to secure a seat in the class. At the Master's level of courses offered, all effort is made to limit the class size to no more than 15 students. Students who wish to enroll in closed courses due to maximum enrollment will be placed on a waiting list. If additional students can be added to the class, the staff will notify the students.

*Individual faculty members are not able to override a closed class and should not be contacted for this reason. Under no circumstances is a student permitted to attend a class for which he/she is not registered, even with audit status.*

## **Financial Aid**

Doctoral students who register for a minimum of 5 hours per semester may be eligible for student loans through the federal Stafford Loan program. Graduate and Professional Program students enrolled in a minimum of 9 semester hours are considered full-time for financial aid purposes and eligibility. Occasionally, grants are received from federal or state sources and may have credit requirements attached to eligibility. Information about these grants can be obtained via the student's academic advisor and via announcements posted on each academic center's bulletin board and in the Community Blackboard shell, or by contacting the Director of

Accelerated Health Programs. Additional financial aid information may be available from the Financial Aid Office at (724) 852-3208.

## **Payment Options**

Tuition payment is due by the end of the first week of the semester. This is very likely to occur before you attend the first live class. The university will provide a divided payment plan for DNP students. Contact the Business Office to make such arrangements if desired.

*If tuition payment is not paid by the end of the first week of the semester, or other arrangements are not made, a late payment fee will be assessed.*

If tuition and late payment fee are not paid by the end of the second week of the semester:

- The student will be dropped from the current session's roster and all future classes for which registrations were previously submitted.
- The student will not be able to continue to attend classes.
- The student will not receive a grade for the course.
- The student will be charged a reinstatement fee to re-register for the class.

## **Cash/Credit Payments**

Visa/MasterCard/Discover, check, or cash are accepted forms of payment. Payments are accepted by mail, by phone to the Business Office, or online. A divided payment plan may be negotiated with the Business Office.

*The mailing address for payments is:*

*Waynesburg University  
Business Office  
51 W. College St.  
Waynesburg, PA 15370*

Official transcripts will be placed on hold until the tuition account is paid in full. Questions about tuition bills should be directed to the Waynesburg University Business Office at (724) 852-3255.

## **Tuition Refund Policy**

When a student drops a course before the first class, there is a 100 percent tuition refund.

Partial tuition may be refunded when a student withdraws from a course, depending on the student's withdrawal date. For information about university policies regarding the prorated calculation of tuition refund, see the university catalog.

## **Purchase of Books and Course Materials**

Books and materials for all Graduate and Professional Studies Program courses can be ordered and purchased online.

### **Instructions for ordering textbooks online:**

1. Go to <http://www.waynesburg.edu>
2. On the roll bar that runs horizontally across the screen, click on either Graduate Programs or Academic Programs.
3. Find the University Bookstore link and click on it.
4. Click on the link for Textbooks and Course Materials.
5. Select the semester.
6. Select your department (NUR), course number (example: 606), and section 1 (all sections have the same books listed).
7. Add the books you wish to purchase to your shopping cart and follow the directions to check out. The books listed on the university bookstore website should match the books listed in your course module (posted in Blackboard).
8. If you are uncomfortable entering your credit card # on the bookstore's secure website, call (724) 852-BOOK to place your order with a bookstore clerk.

Books can be ordered two weeks prior to the start of the session.

Select UPS Ground as the Shipping Method. You will be charged a small shipping fee to have the books mailed to your home address, and you should have them within approximately 48 hours from your order date.

USED BOOKS go quickly and are shipped on a first come first serve request basis. Checking "USED" on the online order form does not guarantee a USED Book will be shipped.

The bookstore also offers textbook rental. Further information can be obtained from the bookstore.

## **Book Refunds**

Students who wish to return a book(s) due to a drop or withdrawal from a course(s) may do so and receive a 100 percent refund from the bookstore when students:

1. Return new book(s) by the end of the first week of classes and
2. Return new book(s) in the original condition (without any highlighting or writing inside of book(s)).

Students who wish to return book(s) after the first week of classes are required to return them as USED BOOKS during a book buy-back day. Prices are determined by the bookstore.

Students who have any questions concerning books/prices and buy-backs, are encouraged to call the bookstore @ (724) 852-BOOK.

## **Holidays/Inclement Weather Days**

In general, DNP classes are not scheduled for a holiday weekend. Students should check these dates when they register for classes. Information about alternate sections and class dates will be available with the academic advisor.

*When a class is cancelled due to inclement weather conditions, a make-up class or an alternate learning activity will be scheduled and students will be notified. Class is rarely cancelled due to inclement weather.*

Information regarding inclement weather conditions or other emergency conditions that affect class cancellations, school delays and/or closing is posted in the appropriate Blackboard shell and on the university website. Please check your Blackboard shell and the university website for announcements regarding cancellations, rescheduled classes and/or alternative assignments. In addition, every attempt is made to email the students enrolled in any course that has a class cancelled. Please check your Waynesburg student email location for these messages.

## **Library and Electronic Resources**

The Eberly Library on the main campus of Waynesburg University houses nearly 100,000 volumes and more than 500 journals. Computer services are available to students as well. The card catalog can be accessed from home or the computer lab in the doctoral program site via the Internet. In addition, literature searches can be conducted from remote sites such as home, work, or the classroom using EBSCO Host, an Internet-based subscription service to professional journals provided to Waynesburg University students.

One way to access the library card catalog from a Waynesburg University computer lab is to go to the college home page at [www.waynesburg.edu](http://www.waynesburg.edu). From there, click on Graduate Programs, then Eberly Library in the Graduate Resources box. On this page of content related to the Eberly Library and its resources, you can click on links for various library services and resources. From the link to Finding Articles, for example, click on the link to EBSCO Host.

You can also use the link to Eberly Library from the myConnect portal (click on the university links tab and you'll be taken to a screen in myConnect with quicklaunch icons for the library resources. You will be provided a myConnect login and password at orientation, and you will see a demonstration of how to access Eberly Library resources from the university and from remote settings such as home. You will also be added to a free Blackboard shell created by our reference librarian to support your learning needs, and that Bb shell has links to the library resources.

There are currently more than 58 nursing journals held in hard copy format in the Eberly Library. However, for most students, use of national databases to obtain the most current information is a much more productive strategy. To access the databases of more than 2750 full text journals,

you need to connect with EBSCO Host or Ovid. You can do this directly from <http://search.epnet.com/login.asp> or from the pathway on the [www.waynesburg.edu](http://www.waynesburg.edu) site described above. **If you are accessing the databases from your home computer, you will need a user ID and a password, once you enter academic resources from the university home page. You will be provided with those at the orientation session.**

Once you've clicked on EBSCO Host or OVID, you are transported to its first screen where you can indicate which databases of journals you'd like to search. Generally, for most nursing projects or papers, you'll want to use at least some of the following databases: Medline, Health Source: Nursing, CINAHL, Pre-CINAHL, Health Business, and the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (for evidence-based practice). Place a checkmark beside each of the databases you want to search, and at the bottom of that first page, click on continue.

In the next screen, you explain what you are searching for. Put key words in the Find fields at the top of the page, and limit the results if you want, to full text only. You can search in a particular journal, in a particular time frame, in English only, or create other limits to your search. If you click on the tab at the top marked Advanced Search, you'll get search tips to help refine your search further. Once you've defined your key words, click on search, and the computer will show you how many articles it has retrieved for you. You can print full text journal articles using the pdf format, so you get page numbers as you are printing. If you have questions, contact the reference librarian at [rblake@waynesburg.edu](mailto:rblake@waynesburg.edu) or call 724-852-3254.

## **Resources for Writing Skills**

Many of your learning activities will include the skill of effective writing. Writing assignments in the doctoral program may need to be formulated in several stages. You will begin with a period of thinking and reflecting on the assignment, your previous learning, the course objectives, and the assigned reading. Before you actually begin writing, you will want to complete an outline of the key points you want to make. The goal of your first draft is just to get your creative and scholarly thoughts on paper. The goal of the second draft is to analyze your words according to the criteria your facilitator has provided for grading your assignment. You will find yourself revising your draft in order to make the document more logical and to better fit the criteria for the assignment. The goal of the third draft is to correct all grammatical and typographical errors. Graduate level writing can rarely be accomplished by a one time approach.

If you find that you have difficulty with your writing assignments, you may choose to consult these resources:

American Psychological Association (2009). *Concise rules of APA style*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Grudzina, D. & Kolba, B. (2008). *Writing an A+ research paper: A roadmap for beginning and experienced writers*. Clayton, DE: Prestwick House, Inc.

Hacker, D. (2008). *Rules for writers*. Sixth Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Hacker, D. (2007). *A writer's reference*. Sixth Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Hacker, D. (2008). *A pocket style manual*. Fifth Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Page, M. & Cohen, J. (2000). *Yale Daily News guide to writing college papers: From draft to presentation*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Perrin, R. (2009). *Pocket guide to APA style, Third Edition*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Helpful websites:

[www.dianahacker.com](http://www.dianahacker.com)

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>

<http://eslus.com/lessons/grammar>

<http://www.apa.org>

It is expected that you will follow basic principles of spelling, punctuation, and grammar in everything that you write and submit. Many course facilitators will deduct points for repeated errors in this area. It will benefit you to review those basic principles and pay close attention as you write your final drafts. It is expected, as well, that with most written assignments submitted during your graduate courses, you will follow basic rules of APA style and format. The concise guide or the pocket guide listed above will help you meet this requirement. Your course facilitator will identify for you how many points toward your grade are subtracted if you do not follow the APA style rules. Check your course module for more information on this issue.

Your academic advisor will help you to obtain tutoring or individual lessons. Each academic center has a writing tutor available to students for individual appointments. Please contact your DNP course facilitator or DNP academic advisor to identify your needs. A tutor will be provided at no cost to you. The purpose of the writing tutor is to help you learn how to write more effectively. The writing tutor will not write, proofread, or edit for you. If you need these services, you may want to hire someone at your own expense.

## **Nursing Faculty Organization**

### **BYLAWS of the NURSING FACULTY ORGANIZATION**

#### **ARTICLE I**

##### **NFO (Nursing Faculty Organization)**

The Department of Nursing has an organization known as the Nursing Faculty Organization (NFO) of Waynesburg University (hereafter referred to in this document as NFO). The Nursing Faculty Organization (NFO) in the Department of Nursing is governed by the bylaws established for the nursing programs at Waynesburg University. The NFO is the policy and decision-making body that establishes committees, approves

their membership, purposes and functions, and call or dissolves Ad Hoc committees when necessary. The standing committees of the NFO include:

Admission and Progression  
Curriculum

Policies and By-Laws  
Systematic Evaluation Plan

The GAPS Advisory Nursing Committee to the NFO, composed of all full time faculty who teach in the RN to BSN and graduate programs in nursing, as well as the Director and Assistant Director of Accelerated Health Programs, meets regularly during each semester to discuss issues related to the development and implementation of the RN to BSN curriculum, the MSN curriculum, and the DNP curriculum. This subcommittee of the NFO serves to foster communication and participation in shared governance for the nursing programs that are part of the Graduate and Professional Studies at Waynesburg University, since these programs represent three separate programs and are based at three different locations. Concerns and/or recommendations that are generated by this group are directed to the appropriate NFO committee or are reported in the regular NFO meeting as standard agenda item program reports from RN to BSN, MSN, and/or DNP programs. Recommendations for change that have been approved by the NFO are forwarded to the Graduate and Professional Studies Committee for approval prior to implementation. This subcommittee is authorized to hold discussion and to make recommendations, but has no voting authority.

NFO meetings are scheduled with both faculty and student schedules in mind. Representation of students on standing committees is strongly encouraged and highly valued by the faculty and staff of the Department of Nursing.

## ARTICLE II

### **Purposes**

Section 1: The purpose of the NFO shall be:

- 1.1 To develop, evaluate, and modify the curriculum of the Department of Nursing.
- 1.2 To provide, maintain, and evaluate the resources, both physical and instructional, of the Department of Nursing.
- 1.3 To develop, implement, evaluate, and revise all policies of the Department of Nursing.
- 1.4 To provide means for on-going evaluation of all departmental activities and recommend changes as needed.
- 1.5 To provide means for continued professional growth in practice, research, and education.

## ARTICLE III

### Membership

Section 1: All full-time nursing faculty will have the privilege of participation in the parliamentary sense; that is, the right to submit motions, to speak in debate, and to vote. In addition, those who hold full time administrative appointments as well as faculty rank, shall also be entitled to all privileges of membership.

Section 2:

2.1 The part-time members will be known as those persons of the NFO who have the right to attend meetings, to submit motions, to speak in debate, but not to vote.

2.2 Three full-time students: one from each level (sophomore, junior, and senior) of the BSN program, as well as one from the RN-BSN program, MSN program, and DNP program will be selected to attend the NFO meetings as observer-participants. Each level will select representatives for standing committees. The Department Chair will then appoint students to specific standing or Ad Hoc committees. A student may serve for one year only on any one NFO committee.

2.3 In the event that accelerated program representatives may not attend daytime meetings due to work commitments, the Director of Accelerated Health Programs will hold meetings with RN-BSN, MSN, and DNP students at each academic center once a year to foster communication between NFO and the students. Issues related to admission, progression, curriculum, and evaluation will be addressed.

Section 3: A quorum shall consist of a majority of those who have suffrage.

## ARTICLE IV

### Officers

Section 1: The officers of the NFO will be:

1.1 Department Chairperson, serves as the Chairperson of the NFO

1.2 Recorder, as designated by Department Chairperson

## ARTICLE V

### Responsibilities of Officers

- Section 1: The duties of the NFO Chairperson are to lead the meetings as well as ensure accomplishment of the purposes of the NFO (Article II).
- Section 2: The duties of the Recorder shall be as follows:
- 2.1 Record all minutes of NFO meetings.
  - 2.2 Distribute a copy of minutes to all members at least three days prior to the meeting at which time minutes are to be considered for approval.
  - 2.3 Place a copy of the approved minutes in a permanent file.

## ARTICLE VI

### Meetings

- Section 1: The Chairperson will schedule a minimum of two regular meetings of the NFO during the academic year. Other meetings shall be called as necessary.

## ARTICLE VII

### Committees

- Section 1:
- 1.1 The NFO shall function with input from standing committees and such Ad Hoc committees as have been established.
  - 1.2 The chairpersons and members of the NFO committees shall be appointed by the Department Chairperson and approved by NFO members during the fall semester of each academic year. The Department Chairperson serves as an ex-officio member of the three standing committees.

Section 2: NFO Standing Committees

2.1 Admission and Progression Committee

2.1a Purpose:

- 1) To study and evaluate the admission, progression, and attrition

rates of nursing students; make recommendations for appropriate standards and procedures for admission and progression of students.

- 2) To officially admit and /or progress students in the BSN program in accordance with established policies.

2.1b Membership: The Admission and Progression Committee shall be comprised of two full-time faculty members, one who serves as the Chairperson. Three full-time nursing students (see Article III, 2.2) shall serve as observer-participants.

2.1c Functions:

- 1) Develop, recommend, review, and update standards and policies for the admission and progression of students.
- 2) Review and act upon all matters concerning student progression that are referred to the committee.
- 3) Admit, determine progression and non-progression, and recommend dismissal from the BSN program.

2.1d The Director of Accelerated Health Programs will provide the NFO with reports regarding admission and progression numbers and policy implementation decisions made by the Graduate and Professional Studies Committee. Issues related to progression and dismissal of students within the RN-BSN, MSN, MSN/MBA, and DNP programs will be addressed by the Graduate and Professional Studies Committee.

## 2.2 Curriculum Committee

2.2a Purpose: The committee shall be responsible to the NFO with respect to nursing curriculum development at all levels.

2.2b Membership: The Curriculum Committee shall include faculty representation from all levels of the nursing curriculum and the Director of Accelerated Health Programs. Specialty areas of faculty representation shall be consistent with the State Board of Nursing requirements. A committee Chairperson shall be selected from among the NFO in a manner consistent with Article VII, Section 1.2. Three full-time students (see Article III, 2.2) shall serve as observer-participants.

2.2c Functions:

- 1) Examine and evaluate curriculum data and make appropriate recommendations.
- 2) Present curriculum proposals to NFO for approval.

### 2.3 Policy and Bylaws Committee

2.3a Purpose: The purpose of the Policies and Bylaws Committee shall be to:

- 1) Develop and evaluate Department of Nursing policies.
- 2) Provide a mechanism for regular review of Nursing Department Bylaws, using guidelines adopted by Waynesburg University for amending Bylaws. In accordance with the University amendments to bylaws: “The NFO faculty may enact new bylaws and repeal or amend existing bylaws by majority vote, provided written notice of the proposed changes shall have been submitted to all members of the NFO ten days prior to the meeting.”

2.3b Membership: The Policies and Bylaws Committee shall be comprised of two full-time faculty members, one who serves as Chairperson, as well as the Director of Accelerated Health Programs. In addition, three full-time students (see Article III, 2.2) shall serve as observer-participants.

2.3c Functions:

- 1) Develop, review, and make recommendations regarding Nursing Department policies.
- 2) Review and revise NFO Bylaws in accordance with Waynesburg University Handbook guidelines.
- 3) Meet annually to review current CDC guidelines and recommend policy and curriculum changes as needed.
- 4) Maintain confidential records of student and faculty incidents.
- 5) Review formal written complaint policy and procedures to foster ongoing program improvement.
- 6) Review documents and publications on an annual basis to determine accuracy.
- 7) Review and update the Policy Board annually and as needed.

8) Submit revisions for the Student Program Guides to the Department Chairperson, on an annual basis.

2.3d The Director of Accelerated Health Programs will provide the NFO with reports regarding policy development, changes, and implementation decisions for the RN-BSN, MSN, MSN/MBA, and DNP programs prior to review and approval by the Graduate and Professional Studies Committee. Program Guides will be updated at least annually by the Director of Accelerated Health Programs.

#### 2.4 SEP (Systematic Evaluation Plan) Committee

2.4a Purpose: The purpose of the Systematic Evaluation Plan Committee is to evaluate all program components used for the Development, maintenance, and revision of the nursing program at all levels.

2.4b Membership: The Systematic Evaluation Plan Committee shall be comprised of two full-time faculty members, one who serves as chairperson, and the Director of Accelerated Health Programs. In addition, three full-time students (see Article III, 2.2) shall serve as observer-participants.

2.4c Functions:

- 1) Develop and maintain a written plan for the systematic evaluation of all program outcomes at all levels including attrition and graduation rates, employment rates, program satisfaction, service, NCLEX pass rates, and evidence of scholarship and certification.
- 2) Provide definitions for each of the outcomes.
- 3) Provide rationale for the methods and processes used to evaluate the program outcomes.
- 4) Provide analysis of the effectiveness of the methods and processes used to provide data for the outcomes.
- 5) Provide discussion and documentation of how the outcomes are used in the development, maintenance, and revision of the program.
- 6) Provide for the effective implementation of the Systematic Evaluation Plan.

## 2.5 Community Advisory Panel

2.5a Purpose: The purpose of the Community Advisory Panel shall be to advise the Department of Nursing about the nursing needs of each community of interest to act as a liaison between the Department of Nursing and the larger community

### 2.5b Membership:

- 1) Each Community Advisory Panel consists of full-time nursing faculty, the Director of Accelerated Health Programs, representatives of community organizations, educational institutions, health care agencies, and current students and program alumni.
- 2) Nursing students shall be invited as observer-participants.
- 3) The Department Chair or the Director of Accelerated Health Programs shall server as chairperson and preside over the annual program meeting.
- 4) Community members of the Advisory Panels shall serve without compensation.

### 2.5c Functions:

- 1) Discuss current trends in healthcare and the impact on nursing education.
- 2) Address perceived needs and expectations of the communities of interest.
- 3) Involve the communities of interest in meeting certain needs of the Department of Nursing.
- 4) Provide feedback about the quality of the programs.

## ARTICLE VIII

*Parliamentary Authority Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern all faculty, except in such cases as are stipulated by the Faculty Constitution, Bylaws, and/or special rules which may be adopted by the University faculty.

## ARTICLE IX

### Amendments

The faculty may enact new bylaws and repeal or amend bylaws by majority votes, provided written notice of the proposed changes shall have been submitted to all members of the faculty ten days prior to the meeting at which action is to be taken.

Refer to the Waynesburg University Department of Nursing Program Guide for the bylaws of SNAP (Student Nurses Association of Pennsylvania), and Sigma Theta Tau, Nu Sigma Chapter.

Fall, 1985  
NFO Approved 5/12/86  
Revised 4/26/95  
NFO Approved 5/5/95  
Updated 11/01  
NFO Approved 10/02/03  
Revised 2/06  
Revised 2/21/07  
NFO Approved 4/19/07  
Revised 3/1/11  
NFO Approved

### **Sigma Theta Tau International,** **NU SIGMA Chapter**

Sigma Theta Tau International is the honor society for nurses. The Nu Sigma Chapter at Waynesburg University was established on April 7, 1994.

The purposes of the Society are to:

1. Recognize superior achievement
2. Recognize the development of leadership qualities.
3. Foster high professional standards.
4. Encourage creative work.
5. Strengthen commitment to the ideals and purposes of the profession.

Students enrolled in the Doctor of Nursing Practice Program, who are not already members of Sigma Theta Tau, may be invited for membership based on the criteria established in the Bylaws of Sigma Theta Tau International. Please contact the Director of Accelerated Health Programs for more information on meetings and/or membership.

**Waynesburg University**  
**Institutional Review Board**  
**Protocol for IRB Review**

Preparing a Protocol for Review

*An IRB Protocol consists of the following elements:*

- A. Protocol Statement (Application for Review Form)*
- B. Abstract*
- C. Consent and assent forms*
- D. Discussion*
- E. Attachments*

All of these elements are described and explained below. The format and content of a protocol are the same for all reviews.

You must submit the elements in the order given below.

You must word process pages on one side, number all pages consecutively; the first page following the “Protocol Statement” will be page 3. Include a disk of your submission.

**IRB Protocol Statement**

1. Title of study. Provide the complete title.
2. Investigators. List all investigators, principle investigator first, and for each provide signature, affiliation, address, and telephone number. If the principal investigator is a student, the appropriate faculty advisor must be listed as an investigator.
3. Estimated period of human subject involvement. Provide an estimated starting date (subject to prior Committee approval) and an estimated ending date for human subject involvement.
4. Reason for conducting research. Usual reasons are “professional” or to fulfill requirements for “class assignment.” Specify any other reason.
5. Investigators at institutions other than Waynesburg University—list institutional affiliation, name, title, e-mail or phone, and role in study.
6. Persons other than the investigators who will have contact with subjects—list name, title and degree(s).
7. Persons other than the investigators who will obtain informed consent from subjects.—list name, title and degree(s).
8. Persons other than the investigators who will have contact with data—list name, title and degree(s).
9. Location for interaction with subjects. Provide the name of the institution, the address, and a brief description of the facility.

10. Special populations. Indicate with a checkmark which of the following populations will be included in the research. The inclusion of subjects from any of these populations raises added concerns about research risks and the informed consent process because such subjects are likely to be vulnerable to injury, coercion or undue influence. Should you wish or change your protocol at a later date to include any of these populations, you must submit an amendment and receive approval from the Committee.

- a. Students or trainees
- b. University Staff
- c. University Faculty
- d. Non-Waynesburg University subjects
- e. Pregnant subjects
- f. Patients
- g. Children under 18
- h. Intellectually or emotionally impaired subjects
- i. Elderly subjects (over 65)
- j. Prisoners, parolees, incarcerated subjects
- k. Illiterate subjects
- l. Subjects whose primary language is not English
- m. Employees
- n. Associates of investigators (See VI).
- o. Employees or subordinates of investigators

#### 11. Items of special concern

The following items raise special concerns about safety, privacy, confidentiality, or other regulatory matters. Indicate with a checkmark if any are involved.

- a. Use of existing data collected from data banks, archives, medical records.
- b. Generation of data to be stored in data banks, archives, medical records.
- c. Filming, videotaping, or voice recording of subjects
- d. Questionnaires
- e. Deception of subjects

#### 12. Method of obtaining informed consent

Written informed consent ordinarily must be obtained from all research subjects. (See “Written Informed Consent and the Consent Form.”) Investigators requesting any departure from the standard written consent process must mark “requesting waiver or alteration of consent process” and provide an explanation.

### 13. Source of funding support (if applicable)

Provide full name of agency, foundation or other source of financial support.

### 14. Signatures

The IRB will not review protocols without all appropriate signatures. By signing, department chairs acknowledge approval of the study on the basis of scientific merit and compliance with applicable professional standards; dean and other administrators signify their approval of the use of resources and faculty and student effort on the study.

- a. Department Chair. The department chair of the investigator and any other affected departments must sign. (Two spaces are provided; additional signatures should appear in the space labeled “other.”)
- b. Administration. If resources of the University are to be used (e.g., staff, supplies, equipment), the appropriate administrator must sign; additional signatures should appear in the space labeled “other.”
- c. Other. This space is available for additional signatures as specified above.

### **B. Abstract**

The abstract is a brief summary, written in language which can be understood by the non-specialist, of the purpose and procedures.

### **C. Consent and Assent Forms**

See Chapter V for definitions. Provide a copy of all consent and assent forms and any cover letters that may be sent to subjects or to their parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Include also an explanation of any requested waiver or alteration of the informed consent or assent process.

### **D. Discussion**

Provide complete information concerning each of the following items, numbered as indicated. If any item does not apply to the proposed activity, type NA (Not Applicable) by that item.

1. “Purposes and Procedures”

State the objectives or specific aims of the project. Provide a complete but concise description of the procedures, including the nature and location of the contact with subjects.

2. “Subjects”

State the proposed number of subjects. Describe and explain the criteria and methods for recruiting, selecting, and excluding subjects.

### **E. Attachments**

1. Provide a copy of each survey or other test instrument.

2. Provide other appropriate attachments

3. “Risks and Discomforts”

Describe and explain any risks or discomforts to subjects.

4. Intervention

Describe and explain any intervention that may be legally required or ethically appropriate. Intervention may be necessary in response to adverse reactions during or following experimental procedures used or in response to a physical or psychological reaction (e.g., abnormally elevated heart rate or blood pressure; allergic reactions; extreme fear, anger or anxiety). Intervention may not require action by the investigator beyond an appropriate referral.

#### 5. Confidentiality

Explain how and to what extent confidentiality will be maintained for records that identify subjects. Describe how audio-and videotapes will be stored during the study and how they will be disposed of at the end of the study.

#### 6. Principal Investigator

Discuss the principal investigator's qualifications to conduct the proposed research; include a short summary of degrees earned, recent related research, and relevant publication titles. Do not submit your entire vita.

#### 7. Other Investigators

Describe the role and qualifications of all investigators listed in items 2 and 6 of the "Protocol Statement." Please submit only information on earned degrees, recent related research and relevant publication titles, not entire vitae.

## **Options for Certification**

DNP students and graduates are encouraged to complete certification in a relevant content area based on individual career goals and areas of study. Those DNP graduates who are certified as nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists, and/or clinical nurse specialists are strongly encouraged to maintain that certification as evidence of clinical knowledge and skill.

In addition to any clinical certification that may be relevant for the DNP graduate, based on education at the master's level prior to enrolling in the Waynesburg University DNP program, there are additional options for certification that relate to the emphasis in this program on nurse executive skill sets.

Nursing Administration and Nursing Administration, Advanced Certification Examinations, are available through the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

- Eligibility requires a RN license, a BSN or higher in nursing, work experience in an administrative position for a minimum of 24 months full time in the past 5 years
- Application and information is available at <http://www.nursecredentialing.org>

Executive Nursing Practice and Nurse Manager and Leader Certifications are available through the American Organization of Nurse Executives Credentialing Center.

- Eligibility for the executive exam requires a RN license, a Master's degree or higher, and 2 years of experience in an executive nursing role.

- Eligibility for the nurse manager and leader exam requires a RN license, a BSN or higher degree plus 2 years of experience in a nurse manager role, or a bachelor's degree not in nursing plus 3 years of experience in a nurse manager role
- Application and information is available at <http://www.aone.org>

There is a certification examination for Manager of Quality/Organizational Excellence available from the American Society for Quality.

- Eligibility for this exam includes a master's or doctorate and 5 years of work experience in one or more areas of the Certified Manager of Quality/Organizational Development Body of Knowledge (leadership, strategic plan development, management elements and methods, quality management tools, and customer focused organizations).
- Information is available at <http://www.asq.org/certification>

International Certification in Health Care Quality and Management is available through the American Board of Quality Assurance and Utilization Review Physicians, Inc.

- Eligibility for this examination is determined through a review of relevant work experience related to the body of knowledge tested by the exam.
- Information is available at <http://www.abqaurp.org/certification>

The American Health Information Management Association offers a certification Exam for Health Data Analysts.

- Eligibility for this exam includes a baccalaureate degree or higher and a minimum of 5 years of healthcare data experience
- Information is available at <http://www.ahima.org/certification>

Policies that apply to  
Doctor of Nursing Practice  
Students

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number: 301**

**Policy Title: Admission Requirements**

**Policy:**

Baccalaureate in Nursing Degree

Evidence of current registered nurse licensure

Master of Science in Nursing or graduate degree in another discipline

Applicants with a graduate degree in a discipline other than nursing will be individually evaluated, and additional courses at the master's level will be required to meet the AACN Essentials of a Master's Education as well as essential competencies for a DNP program graduate

Professional nurses with a doctoral degree other than a DNP who are interested in systems leadership are encouraged to apply

GPA of 3.0 or higher

Official transcripts of all academic credits earned from other regionally accredited institutions

2 letters of recommendation

Resume or curriculum vita

Narrative statement of applicant's goals for change leadership

Portfolio (not more than 25 pages) reflecting evidence of professional career achievement/scholarship

Personal Interview (scheduled if all other criteria have been met)

Advanced Practice Nurses (Nurse Practitioners, Clinical Nurse Specialists, Nurse Anesthetists and Nurse Midwives) must present evidence of completion of graduate courses containing content labeled Pathophysiology, Pharmacology, and Advanced Physical Assessment and completion of national certification or 500 hours of clinical practice during MSN Advanced Practice Nursing program.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number: 302**

**Policy Title: Admission of International Students**

**Policy:**

International students seeking admission into the Waynesburg University Doctor of Nursing Practice Program must first have successfully completed the NCLEX-RN (National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses) and obtained licensure as a registered nurse in the state of Pennsylvania. To be eligible to take the NCLEX in Pennsylvania, a candidate must have passing scores on the CGFNS (Commission on Foreign Nursing Schools) examination.

The Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet Based Test (TOEFL iBT) is an exam designed to measure English language proficiency among non-native English speakers in academic settings. The Department of Nursing at Waynesburg University has adopted designated TOEFL iBT scores as a component of the admission requirements for non-native English speakers who apply to the baccalaureate nursing program. The TOEFL iBT must be taken within two years prior to being considered for admission to the Department of Nursing. The following results are required for each area of the TOEFL iBT as an admission requirement:

Total Score	Reading Score	Listening Score	Speaking Score	Writing Score
84	17	17	26	24

Applicants to the DNP program who have completed a nursing degree in the United States and have successfully passed the NCLEX examination in this country may have the TOEFL iBT requirement waived based on a personal interview where English language proficiency is demonstrated.

Once the above requirements are met, the Director of Accelerated Health Programs will then review each student's educational background and work experience to determine the student's eligibility for admission status. Pending completion of all other admission requirements, international students who demonstrate that they have the preparation necessary to successfully complete the program will be given full admission consideration.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number: 303**

**Policy Title: Transfer of Credit**

**Policy:**

Transfer of credits into the DNP Program, as an exception to enrolling in a required DNP course, is individually considered. A DNP program applicant or an enrolled student, who has completed doctoral coursework in another DNP or PhD Nursing Program, may request consideration of transfer credit for a course that duplicates a required course in the DNP Program.

Students must submit official transcripts from the college or university previously attended to the Director of Accelerated Health Programs, who will evaluate previously earned graded doctoral program credits to determine transferability into the Waynesburg University Doctor of Nursing Practice Program. A course syllabus from the completed course may be requested by the Director so that content comparability with the Waynesburg University DNP courses can be determined before making a decision about transferability of credits. Final approval of transfer credits will be granted by the Registrar. Generally, up to six equivalent graded doctoral credits will be approved for transfer credit.

Official transcripts that accurately document actual credits earned are the only forms of transcript documentation accepted by Waynesburg University. Official transcripts are originals from the granting institution, have the institution's official seal, and are marked "Official." The Registrar will make an individual decision about the acceptability of electronic transcripts.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number: 304**

**Policy Title: Graduation Requirements for the DNP**

**Policy:**

Credits earned in a previous master's program may be used to meet foundational course content requirements for the Waynesburg University Doctor of Nursing Practice Program. These course requirements include:

- Theoretical Foundations for Nursing Practice
- Politics & Health Policy
- Advanced Health Promotion
- Financial Management in Healthcare
- Introduction to Evidence-Based Nursing Practice (or similar research course)

In some instances, students may meet the content requirements through their documentation of professional work experiences (via portfolio). Waynesburg University MSN course descriptions for these courses can be found in the Waynesburg University catalog or through the Director of Accelerated Health Programs. When the student has not completed a foundational graduate level course in any of these content areas, a course may be taken at Waynesburg University or elsewhere to meet this graduation requirement.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number:** 305

**Policy Title:** Academic Progression

**Policy:**

All doctoral students are required to have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher to be eligible to receive a Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree from Waynesburg University.

To remain in good academic standing, all courses, including any master's level courses taken during the doctoral program, must be completed with a grade of B or higher.

A cumulative GPA must be at 3.0 in order to progress in the program. A student who receives a failing grade in any doctoral course must repeat the course prior to program progression. The student is not permitted to enroll in additional DNP courses until a B grade or higher is obtained in the repeated course. A course may be repeated only once. Only one required course in the doctoral program may be repeated.

**See also Policy # 308 regarding Dismissal.**

**See also Policy # 316 regarding the DNP Grading Scale.**

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number:** 306

**Policy Title:** Incomplete Grades (I)

**Policy:**

It is expected that all course work in the DNP theory courses will be completed within the semester in which the student is enrolled. When a student experiences extenuating circumstances beyond his/her control and cannot complete the required coursework, the student may request to receive an incomplete "I" for the course. Students may be requested to supply documentation regarding reasons for Incomplete (I) grade requests.

Any doctoral student who receives an incomplete grade for a theory course will have an additional 8 weeks to complete the course. Once the coursework has been completed, the faculty will change the student's letter grade of "I" to the appropriate letter grade. If, due to continuing extenuating circumstances, the course requirements cannot be completed in that time frame, the student may request an extension in writing to the Director of Accelerated Health Programs.

A grade of Incomplete may be given for a practicum course if the project work in the practicum requires additional time beyond the end of the course. In this instance, the student must have the approval of the academic advisor and the Director of Accelerated Health Programs for additional time to complete the project work.

All I grades must be removed before the statute of limitations (seven years from enrollment in the first course) expires. Any I grade that has not been cleared by the end of seven years will be converted to an F.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number:** 307

**Policy Title:** Academic Warning

**Policy:**

Academic performance in the Doctor of Nursing Practice Program is reviewed by the Director of Accelerated Health Programs at the end of each semester. If the student receives a failing grade, a letter of warning will be sent to refer the student to the academic progression policy and standards. The student will be advised to meet with his/her academic advisor as soon as possible to determine when the course can/will be repeated. The student will be removed from the current cohort and will be required to join the next available cohort. The status of academic warning may be retained until the course can reasonably be repeated the next time the course is offered. If the course is not repeated, or if the student is unable to complete the course on the second attempt with a grade of B or higher, the student will be dismissed from the doctoral program. If the course is successfully repeated, the student will be returned to satisfactory academic status.

**See also Policy # 316 regarding the DNP Grading Scale.**

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number:** 308

**Policy Title:** Dismissal and Reinstatement

**Policy:**

A doctoral student will be dismissed from the program if either of the following occurs:

- The student is unable to satisfactorily repeat the one allowable course with a grade of B or better.
- The student receives more than one failing grade during the course of the program.

**See policies # 305 and 316 for more information on academic progression and the DNP grading scale.**

A student who has been admitted and enrolled in the doctoral program, and then withdraws, must apply for reinstatement in writing to the Director of Accelerated Health Programs.

Restatement in the program will be subject to seat availability in a new cohort, and good academic standing at the time of withdrawal from the program. Reinstatement in a new cohort requires the student to complete the course sequence and curriculum requirements for the new cohort.

At the time of reinstatement, the student must be able to show that the health requirements of the practicum site can be met. If the student has previously withdrawn for medical reasons, evidence of the student's ability to meet the agency health requirements will be required. This medical clearance must be provided prior to the student being reinstated into the program and/or being registered for DNP courses.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number:** 309

**Policy Title:** Clinical Residency to Meet Supervised Practicum Hours

**Policy:**

The curriculum is based on the DNP Essentials developed by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN, 2006) which outline competencies expected of DNP graduates and designate a minimum of 1,000 hours of supervised post-baccalaureate clinical practice. Students who have had supervised practice requirements as part of a clinical MSN program (such as a CNS or an NP program) will have already accumulated a portion of these required hours prior to entering the DNP program, and will not be required to complete additional residency hours.

Clinical residency, for those students who need additional hours beyond the 500 hours contained in the DNP curriculum, is designed to provide an opportunity for doctoral students enrolled in the program to fulfill some of the practice experience requirements specified in the DNP curriculum. These hours can be accumulated over the life of the program but the practice requirement must be fulfilled prior to the awarding of the DNP degree. Completing the residency hours may require residency course registration for several semesters throughout the DNP Program. As described in the AACN document, clinical residency practice experiences will be designed to help students achieve specific learning objectives related to the DNP essentials and specialty competencies.

Registration in NUR 668: Clinical Residency, and completion of all requirements associated with that course, is necessary to be awarded supervised practicum hours that cannot be accomplished through the required doctoral level practicum courses.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number:** 310

**Policy Title:** Preliminary Examination

**Policy:**

A preliminary examination will be administered to DNP students following completion of the third semester of program enrollment. The purpose of this preliminary examination is to evaluate the student's ability to critically appraise existing literature and other evidence to determine and implement the best evidence for practice related to a particular clinical question or problem, and to convey a synthesis of leadership theories and principles, including innovative collaborative leadership techniques which would best support the implementation of a practice change related to the clinical question or problem, resulting in improved patient care outcomes. The written examination is also an opportunity to assess the student's writing skills for the ability to convey a clear and concise plan for a successful systems change. A grading rubric will be mailed to each student prior to completing the preliminary examination. The student should view the preliminary examination as a diagnostic tool to identify gaps in mastery of the meaning of leadership skill in accomplishing a systems change to improve outcomes.

If the student's performance on the preliminary examination is less than satisfactory, the student and the academic advisor will meet to mutually develop a remedial plan for the student in relation to either writing skills or achieving a better grasp of the course concepts encountered in NUR 605, NUR 606, NUR 607, and NUR 608. This remedial plan may include individualized writing tutoring or individualized learning activities designed to help the student to master the concepts associated with first year courses.

Failure to complete the remedial plan successfully and pass the preliminary examination on the second attempt will result in the student being unable to progress in the second year of the DNP curriculum. The student will be dismissed from the program.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number:** 311

**Policy Title:** Affiliation Agreement for DNP Practicum Experience

**Policy:**

Once the student designates a mentor and practicum site, an affiliation agreement will be negotiated by the Director of Accelerated Health Programs and the appropriate individual(s) within the agency for signature. Included in the language of this agreement will be an understanding that the student will be permitted to use the agency as the site for practicum courses in the doctoral program. The student is responsible to notify the Director of Accelerated Health Programs immediately if any circumstances alter this understanding. Any issues or problems occurring between the student and the agency must be reported to the practicum course facilitator, and will be handled by the Director of Accelerated Health Programs if the practicum course facilitator is unable to resolve the problem with the student and the agency personnel.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number:** 312

**Policy Title:** Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval

**Policy:**

It is the responsibility of the DNP student to seek the guidance of the DNP Program academic advisor regarding the Institutional Review Board procedures for both Waynesburg University and the practicum agency (if an IRB exists at the agency). The DNP student's capstone project work requires review and approval in order to present and/or publish the results of the project; therefore, the student must obtain written approval from both the university and the agency committees (if available) before beginning any data collection activities involving human subjects. At a minimum, even if the agency does not have an IRB or does not require IRB approval, Waynesburg University IRB approval must be obtained.

**Waynesburg University**  
**Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number:** 313

**Policy Title:** Admission to Candidacy

**Policy:**

A student is officially admitted to candidacy for the DNP degree by satisfying the capstone committee during the capstone proposal meeting that he/she has sufficient knowledge and skills and by obtaining permission to proceed with implementation of the capstone proposal. Doctoral candidates must complete the remaining degree requirements within the seven-year statute of limitations. In the event the student fails to complete the doctorate within the seven year time frame from first enrollment, an extension of time can be obtained only by meeting requirements specified by the student's committee. The Director of Accelerated Health Programs is responsible for oversight of implementation of the remedial plan and recommendations made by the committee.

After Admission to Candidacy, students are required to register for at least one credit each semester as a condition of continued candidacy. Students who fail to maintain continuous enrollment until all degree requirements have been met may be dropped from candidacy.

**See also Policy # 315 regarding Statute of Limitations.**

**Waynesburg University**  
**Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number:** 314

**Policy Title:** DNP Degree Requirements

**Policy:**

Thirty-six credits at the doctoral level, including satisfactory completion of the practicum requirement, are required for the awarding of the Doctor of Nursing Degree. A minimum of thirty doctoral credits must be completed at Waynesburg University. Attainment of an overall 3.0 grade point average at program completion is required. All degree requirements for the Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree must be completed within seven years of registration in the first required course.

All written work throughout the program and all evidence of practicum accomplishments must be retained as components of the professional portfolio. This portfolio will serve to demonstrate the student's ability to meet program outcomes. This portfolio will be submitted on a CD or a flash drive.

Completion of 36 credits is by itself not sufficient to authorize that the degree of Doctor of Nursing Practice be granted by the University. All program progression requirements, including preliminary examination, capstone project requirements, portfolio development, and any additional required Master's level credits and/or residency hours must be successfully completed prior to application for the Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree.

**Waynesburg University**  
**Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number:** 315

**Policy Title:** Statute of Limitations

**Policy:**

Since the DNP courses are offered to a cohort of students for three consecutive semesters each year for three calendar years, it is anticipated that admitted students will begin the program with a cohort, continuously progress, and graduate at the end of three years of coursework.

The offer of admission is good for one year. Students are expected to begin the program within one year following notification of admission. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Director of Accelerated Health Programs. If the student does not enroll in the program within the year following admission, the student must reapply since application materials from incomplete applications or from students who fail to register within one year of admission are destroyed.

If a doctoral student is unable to continuously progress, approval must be obtained from the Director of Accelerated Programs to be enrolled for a period longer than the continuous three years of study. In this instance, a semester by semester approval for an extension of time for completion is required, but should not exceed four calendar years beyond the semester in which the student should have initially graduated. Any request for an extension of time beyond the additional calendar years will require approval of the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies upon recommendation of the Director of Accelerated Health Programs. If more than seven years elapse since the student first enrolled in the DNP program, the student's knowledge base and skills from each course in the curriculum will be re-validated prior to being recommended for graduation. Additional courses may be required and in some circumstances, courses may need to be retaken to achieve a current level of knowledge in a content area.

Inactive status will occur if no registration is recorded within one year following the last term of enrollment. Students wishing to reactivate their status in the doctoral program must reapply and repeat the full admission process.

**Waynesburg University**  
**Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Doctoral Program Policies**

**Policy Number:** 316

**Policy Title:** DNP Program Grading Scale

**Policy:**

Letter grades are given for required DNP courses, with the exception of the capstone project. The capstone project will be graded as Pass/Fail (NUR 621, 622, and 699). A grade of Pass reflects successful completion of course requirements at 84% or higher and is required to be eligible for graduation and conferral of degree.

The grading scale in doctoral courses is as follows:

A	93 % and above
A-	90 – 92 %
B+	87 – 89 %
B	84 – 86 %
F	83% and below

A percentage grade below 84% (B-) is unacceptable academic performance at the doctoral level, results in an F grade, and requires that the course be repeated.

**NUR 668: Clinical Residency is also graded Pass/Fail. See policy #309 for additional details about when the residency may be required to meet supervised practicum hours.**

**Waynesburg University**  
**Graduate and Professional Studies**

**DNP Program**

**Policy Number:** 317

**Policy Title:** Change of Registration

**Policy:**

A student who wishes to make changes in his/her schedule after registration is required to notify the academic advisor or program director. The drop/add period extends through the end of the first week of the semester. Any student who stops attending a course without directing the advisor or program director to complete the drop process will receive a failure (F) in the course.

After the drop/add deadline, a student may withdraw from a course through the tenth week of a regular semester. A signed withdrawal form must be filed in the Registrar's Office. The grade of W will be recorded on the permanent record.

Withdrawal from a course after the tenth week of a regular semester will result in the assignment of a grade of WP (Withdraw Passing) or WF (Withdraw Failing). However, in the event of an illness or other severe hardship beyond the student's control, the student should submit, no later than the last day of classes, a written petition for permission to withdraw to the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies. If permission is granted, a grade of W will be recorded.

There is a financial penalty associated with course withdrawal, both from the tuition payment standpoint and the impact of being registered for fewer credits on financial aid status. Any student who is considering course withdrawal should immediately consult the Financial Aid Office and/or the Business Office and discuss the financial implications before contacting the faculty advisor or program director for assistance in processing the course withdrawal form and to discuss options for program completion.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Graduate and Professional Studies Policies**

**Policy Number: 401**

**Policy Title: Grading Scale for courses within Graduate and Professional Studies (see Policy # 316 for Grading Scale for doctoral courses)**

**Policy:**

A	93 % and above
A-	90 – 92 %
B+	87 – 89 %
B	84 – 86 %
B-	81 – 83 %
C+	78 – 80 %
C	75 – 77 %
F	74% and below

Below 75% is unacceptable academic performance, results in a grade of F, and requires that the course be repeated if the student wishes to earn academic credits for the course. A required course that has been failed must be repeated at Waynesburg University; an elective that has been failed does not need to be repeated, but the F grade will remain on the student's transcript and be factored into the cumulative GPA. When a course is repeated, while the F remains on the transcript, that course is not included in the calculation of the cumulative GPA.

When a course is graded as Pass/Fail, a mastery of 84% or greater must be achieved to earn a grade of Pass.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Graduate and Professional Studies Policies**

**Policy Number: 402**

**Policy Title: Student Conduct**

**Policy:**

As noted in the University Catalog, the University admits students with the expectation that they will comply with its rules and regulations and conduct themselves in the proper manner. Rules are considered necessary for the promotion of the highest welfare of the University community and the advancement of its academic purposes. A student is held responsible for any breach of respectable conduct, whether or not expressly stated in University publications (p. 49).

The University administration reserves the right to exclude from the campus any student whose actions jeopardize the safety of the University community. A student may also be excluded from the University for not complying with the authority of those responsible for the order of the University (pp. 50-51). The University has a responsibility for maintaining academic integrity to protect the quality of education, research, and co-curricular activities on our campus and to protect those who depend on our integrity (p. 56).

Waynesburg University supports freedom of expression and inquiry between facilitators and students. However, inappropriate disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.

**Classroom Disruption: behavior a reasonable person would view as substantially or repeatedly interfering with the facilitator's ability to teach the class or the ability of other students to benefit from the instructional program. A disruptive student is one who disturbs the teaching and learning process in the classroom.**

**It is the responsibility of the student to conform to conduct conducive to learning by being prepared, prompt, attentive, courteous, and respectful in the classroom and by conforming to policies and learning activities set forth by the teacher to maintain academic integrity. A student must be able and willing to examine and change behaviors when they interfere with productive individual or group relationships.**

**Facilitators have the responsibility and the authority to maintain a productive educational environment. Civility, understanding, and mutual respect among all persons are intrinsic to such an environment. Students' side conversations, disruptive use of cell phones or pagers, use of profanity or threatening language, routinely coming to class late or leaving early, inappropriate interruptions, hostile and intimidating comments, and personal insults will not be tolerated.**

If a student's behavior is negatively affecting the learning environment in the classroom, the facilitator will:

1. confront the disrespectful behavior. This may be done as a word of caution to the whole class or the facilitator may direct the student to meet after class to discuss the behavior.
2. ask the disruptive student to leave the classroom if the behavior is not changed immediately, and call security or the local police if necessary to escort the student from the classroom.
3. communicate the facts of the situation to the program director so that the student can be formally counseled.
4. leave the classroom if there is repeated hostility that does not cease and the facilitator fears personal injury or extensive, intolerable verbal abuse.

*Consequences of repeated disruptive behavior by a student will include removal from the classroom, removal from the course, and if indicated by the severity of the disruption or disrespectful behavior, dismissal from the program.*

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Graduate and Professional Studies Policies**

**Policy Number: 403**

**Policy Title: Academic Integrity Policy**

**Policy:**

The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of teachers and scholars. The University has a responsibility for maintaining academic integrity to protect the quality of education, research, and other activities and to protect those who depend on our integrity.

It is expected that both faculty and students will honor the principles of academic integrity. Instructors will exercise care in the planning and supervision of academic work, so that honest effort will be positively encouraged. It is the responsibility of the student to refrain from academic dishonesty, and from conduct which aids others in academic dishonesty. This responsibility means that all academic work will be done by the student to whom it has been assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind.

Therefore:

- No student shall knowingly, without proper authorization, procure or provide, or accept any materials which contain questions or answers to any examination or assignment to be given at a subsequent date;
- No one shall, without proper authorization, complete, in part or in total, any examination or assignment for another person;
- No student shall, without proper authorization, knowingly allow any examination or assignment to be completed for him by another person;
- No student shall plagiarize or copy the work of another person and submit it as his own.

Plagiarism is defined as taking and presenting as one's own a material portion of the ideas or words of another or to present as one's own an idea or words derived from an existing source without full and proper credit to the source of the ideas, words, or work. As defined, plagiarism includes, but is not limited to: copying words, sentences, and paragraphs directly from the work of another (including another student) without proper credit; copying illustrations, figures, photographs, drawings, models, or other visual and nonverbal material (including recordings) of another without proper credit; presenting work prepared by another in final or draft form as one's own without citing the source, such as the use of purchased research papers; taking and presenting another's ideas as one's own (including cutting and pasting information directly from internet websites). (See the Waynesburg University catalog for more details).

Violations of academic integrity will be reviewed by the course facilitator, the program director, and/or the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies. Penalties for violations will be determined by the course instructor in collaboration with the program director and may range from a score of zero on an assignment to dismissal from the program, depending on the severity and frequency of violations.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Graduate and Professional Studies Policies**

**Policy Number: 404**

**Policy Title: Grade Appeal**

**Policy:**

Occasionally, a dispute over a grade or final grade may arise. The basis of a grade appeal is the student's charge that the grade was awarded through prejudice and caprice. The burden of proof rests with the student. In these cases the following procedure is in effect:

1. Upon receipt of his/her grade report, the student must contact the faculty member regarding the grade dispute.
2. This process must begin within 3 weeks of formal posting of the grade by the Registrar.
3. If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved during this faculty-student conversation, the student must submit a written letter of explanation of the situation to the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies.
4. If the situation is still not satisfactorily resolved, the matter will be referred to the Graduate and Professional Studies Committee and the Provost for resolution.
5. Both parties, the student and the facilitator, will be notified in writing of the outcome of the appeal.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Graduate and Professional Studies Policies**

**Policy Number:** 405

**Policy Title:** **Withdrawing from a Course**

**Policy:**

After the Drop/Add deadline has passed, a student desiring to leave a course must withdraw from that course. When a student withdraws from a course during weeks two through five, the grade of "W" will be recorded on the permanent record.

When a student withdraws from a course during weeks six and seven, the grade of "WP" for Withdraw while passing or "WF" for Withdraw while Failing will be recorded on the permanent record.

To initiate a course withdrawal, a written request must be submitted to the Program Director; the request must specify the reason for the withdrawal. A copy of the request must also be submitted to the course facilitator.

Withdrawal from a course during week eight of a particular session is not permitted.

However, in the event of an illness or other severe hardship beyond the student's control that occurs during week eight, the student may submit, no later than the last day of classes, a written *Petition for Permission to Withdraw* to the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies. A copy of the request must be submitted to the Program Director and the course facilitator.

It is the student's responsibility to complete the proper paperwork to officially withdraw from a class. Students who fail to attend classes and who do not properly withdraw from the course will receive a letter grade of (F) for failing.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Graduate and Professional Studies Policies**

**Policy Number:** 406

**Policy Title:** Incomplete (I) Grade

**Policy:**

It is expected that all course work be completed within the time frame allotted for the course. When a student experiences extenuating circumstances beyond his/her control and cannot complete the required coursework, the student may request to receive an incomplete "I" for the course. Students may be requested to supply documentation regarding reasons for Incomplete (I) grade requests.

Any master's student who receives an incomplete for a course will have up to an additional eight weeks to complete the course as specified on the Incomplete form. Once the coursework has been completed, the faculty will change the student's letter grade of "I" to the appropriate letter grade. In most circumstances, if the student does not complete the required coursework by the end of the next eight-week session, he/she will receive a letter grade of "F" for failing unless an extension is approved by the faculty and notification provided to the Registrar.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Graduate and Professional Studies Policies**

**Policy Number:** 407

**Policy Title:** Dropping a Course

**Policy:**

Graduate students who wish to drop a course in which they are currently enrolled may do so by completing a DROP/ADD form or by providing an electronic directive to the appropriate academic advisor or program director.

Course registration is not automatically cancelled if the student does not pay the invoice or attend class. The Drop/Add form must be completed to cancel the registration. **See also policy # 405.**

**Drop/Add Deadline:** A course may be dropped during the week(s) of official registration, before classes begin, and up until the end of the first week of the course. A dropped course will not be assigned a grade, nor will it appear on the student's permanent academic record.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Department of Nursing Policies**

**Policy Number: 501**

**Policy Title: Assistance with Disabilities**

**Policy:**

As recommended by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, students admitted to nursing programs are expected to meet certain functional abilities in order to be successful in a nursing education program as well as in professional nursing. Students should meet the following performance standards, with or without reasonable accommodation:

1. Ability to see, hear, and touch, smell, and distinguish colors (e.g. the student should have the ability to auscultate sounds, hear emergency signals, visualize and read monitors and other pieces of equipment in a healthcare or educational environment, assess health needs).
2. Oral and writing ability with accuracy, clarity, and efficiency.
3. Manual dexterity, gross and fine movements (e.g. the ability to move around the practice environment and complete the tasks assigned there).
4. Ability to learn, think critically, analyze, assess, solve problems and reach a sound judgment.
5. Emotional stability (e.g. the ability to accept responsibility and accountability; interpersonal skills sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups).
6. Stamina to sit in class for four hours one evening per week, stamina to carry out continued assignments to complete course requirements.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is the civil rights guarantee for persons with disabilities in the United States. It provides protection from discrimination for individuals on the basis of disability. The ADA extends civil rights protections for people with disabilities to employment in the public and private sectors, transportation, public accommodations, services provided by state and local government, and telecommunication relay services.

A student who believes there are circumstances that may require reasonable accommodations or services, as determined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, should contact the Waynesburg University Office of Human Resources (724-852-3400) as early as possible at the start of each course. Following review of documentation regarding the disability, the Office of Human Resources will identify reasonable accommodations the course facilitator needs to provide. No accommodations are required from the university by law unless the student initiates this process in each course, and no accommodations will be required that are unreasonable. In any case, the student is still required to satisfactorily meet the course objectives at the same level all other students are held to.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Department of Nursing Policies**

**Policy Number: 502**

**Policy Title: Formal Written Complaints**

**Policy:**

The Department of Nursing adheres to university policy regarding grievances for students. When students express an opposition to a stated policy, desire to initiate development of a new policy, or wish to file a formal written complaint, they are encouraged to pursue appropriate channels. There are routine, systematic ways to provide input and feedback through course evaluations, committee participation, and informal conversations with faculty. However, if a student decides to submit a formal complaint, there is a process to follow. Formal complaints are to be labeled as such and submitted in hard copy format. No email or electronic submission will be accepted.

When students experience problems specifically related to academic progress within a course in the curriculum, the first step is to discuss the issue rationally with the course facilitator. If that step does not result in reasonable resolution of the problem, the student may discuss the issue or concern with his/her academic advisor. If that step does not reasonably resolve the issue, the student can continue the discussion with the Director of Accelerated Health Programs, the Chair of the Department of Nursing, the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies, and the Provost, in that order. University representatives at upper levels of administration will not discuss issues with students until other levels of discussion and dispute resolution have been exhausted.

There are three general problem areas related to student grievances that may develop:

1. general program policy concerns or student-to-student concerns;
2. nursing admission, progression, retention, and graduation concerns;
3. academic matters related to specific courses or student-faculty concerns.

Regardless of the problem area, the graduate program in nursing will first attempt to resolve the problem or conflict.

A general program policy concern is referred to the appropriate standing committee of the Nursing Faculty Organization. The student or students initiating discussion of the concerns should communicate in writing with the Director of Accelerated Health Programs about the concern. The Director will take the formal written complaint to the appropriate committee. If the committee cannot resolve the concern, the problem is referred to the Department Chair or the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies. (See the grade appeal policy for direction on how to request a review of a complaint about a grade.)

A problem related to nursing admission, progression, retention, and graduation is referred to the Director of Accelerated Health Programs and the Graduate and Professional Studies Committee. Grade appeals are referred directly to the Graduate and Professional Studies Committee for review and a decision. (See Program Guide section on grade appeals for specific procedures).

With a student-faculty problem, the student must present the concern in writing to the faculty member within ten calendar days of the occurrence of the problem. There will be ten calendar days in which a written response must be provided to the student. If unresolved, the problem can be referred, by either the student or the faculty, to the Director of Accelerated Health Programs, unless that person is the involved faculty member. If unresolved at that level, the formal written complaint may be referred to the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies, and/or the Chair of the Department of Nursing.

A written record of student complaints and grievances is kept in the office of the Director of Accelerated Health Programs. A review of formal written complaints is conducted by the Policy and Bylaws Committee of the Nursing Faculty Organization on an annual basis.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**Graduate and Professional Studies Policies**

**Policy Number: 503**

**Policy Title: Attendance**

**Policy:**

The Department of Nursing Programs within the Graduate and Professional Studies Division are committed to a style of learning that is facilitative and participatory. Meaningful interaction among students and between students and faculty is the heart of the program. The following are adult learning principles upon which the graduate program in nursing is built:

- Learning is an experience that occurs inside the learner and is activated by the learner.
- Learning is the discovery of the personal meaning and relevance of ideas.
- Learning is a behavioral change and is a consequence of experience.
- Learning is a cooperative and collaborative experience.
- Learning is an evolutionary experience.
- One of the richest resources for learning is the learner himself through participation in an active community of learners.
- Learning is facilitated in an environment which encourages the learners to be active participants, which promotes respect and openness to discovery and critical thinking, and which supports intellectual discussion and debate.

Our commitment to this educational model shapes the graduate attendance policy. Attendance at all class meetings is strongly recommended. Should an emergency situation arise which requires an absence from all or even part of a class, students must contact the faculty immediately. Leaving a message with another individual or with the staff or on an answering machine does not fulfill this obligation.

Due to the participatory nature of classes, absence may have a negative effect on grades. Additionally, the faculty is encouraged to base a portion of the student's grade on class attendance/participation. The student is strongly encouraged to read the course module carefully to determine the course facilitator's policy on the impact of absence on the student's grade.

Understanding that circumstances can and do arise when a student's absence from class is unavoidable, course facilitators may provide alternate assignments that substitute for the learning that would take place in the classroom to meet the course objectives. *It is the student's responsibility to seek out the course facilitator and request an alternate assignment, to be completed instead of being in class.* Facilitators are not obligated to provide an alternate assignment. Some learning objectives cannot be met unless the student is an active participant in classroom discussion and learning activities.

No alternate assignments are offered when the student has missed more than one class night in a course. If a student misses more than one class night in any course, class participation points for missed classes are forfeited, even if alternate assignments have been previously submitted, unless severe extenuating circumstances exist and have been brought to the attention of the course facilitator as well as program administration prior to the student's absence. Registration for a course should not be requested if the student anticipates missing more than one class for a particular course.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**University Policies**

**Policy Number:** 601

**Policy Title:** Student Anti-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment

**Policy:**

It is the policy of Waynesburg University to make decisions in admission, employment, and administration of its programs or activities without regard to race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin, age (over 40) or disability.

- A. The University also endeavors to maintain learning and working environment that is free from unlawful harassment. To help ensure an environment free from unlawful harassment, students are responsible for reporting incidents of harassment. Waynesburg is committed to maintaining a human atmosphere where basic human rights and its purposes as a Christian and academic community are upheld. The University condemns unlawful harassment and will not tolerate behavior or practices which would be regarded as unlawful harassment.
- B. The filing of a complaint, other than a deliberate false accusation, will not reflect upon an individual's educational status. Any attempt at retaliation against an individual for bringing a complaint is prohibited.
- C. Standards of academic freedom and free expression within the context of the mission and goals of the University will provide the background for consideration of any violations of this policy. Particular care will be taken to evaluate the use of expressive behavior for intent and context.
- D. Discussed below are examples of the type of conduct that is prohibited as well as the complaint procedure to remedy any problems that may arise.

**Unlawful discrimination is prohibited**

Decisions based on race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin, age (over 40) or disability in admission, employment, and administration of the University's programs or activities is prohibited. It is unlawful to base decisions regarding athletic programs, educational policies, and scholarship and loan programs on race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin, age (over 40) or disability.

**Unlawful harassment is prohibited**

Harassment based on race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin, age (over 40) or disability is prohibited by the University and by law.

Unlawful harassment includes derogatory remarks, slurs or actions motivated by a student's race,

color, sex, national or ethnic origin, age (over 40) or disability which create a hostile, intimidating, or abusive educational environment. It also includes the display of racist, sexist, or age related objects or pictures.

**Unlawful harassment of any employee or student of the University in any form is prohibited.**

**Unlawful sexual harassment is prohibited**

Sexual harassment includes, among other things, unsolicited and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, offensive touching, gestures, and other inappropriate verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's education, or when;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that individual, or when;
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

In addition, sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to the following:

- verbal harassment or abuse
- pressure for sexual activity
- unwelcome remarks to a person or group with sexual or demeaning implications
- unwelcome touching
- suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, employment, etc.
- the use or display of visual, written or other graphic reproduction in a manner that makes the setting hostile or intimidating or demeaning to community members of a particular sex.

*Any questions about the University's Procedures for cases of Harassment can be directed to the Student Services Office on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Stover Campus Center.*

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**University Policies**

**Policy Number:** 602

**Policy Title:** University Affirmative Action Policy

**Policy:**

Waynesburg University admits students of any race, color, sex, and national or ethnic origin. Waynesburg University does not discriminate on the basis of gender in the educational programs or activities which it operates, and is compliant with Title IX of the Higher Education Act of 1972. In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Waynesburg University does not discriminate on the basis of handicap in admission or access to its programs or activities.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**University Policies**

**Policy Number:** 603

**Policy Title:** Family Education Rights and Privacy Act

**Policy:**

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Buckley Amendment) requires universities such as Waynesburg to protect the privacy of students with regard to educational records maintained by the University, and to provide students with access to records directly related to them. Parents of dependent students may have access to the student's educational records. The University may also disclose educational records to University officials with legitimate educational interest, other universities to which a student is transferring, appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student, appropriate officials in cases of health/safety emergencies and to comply with judicial or legal authorities. Additionally, the University will normally permit release of directory information unless the student has requested that information not be released.

Educational records may consist of the following:

- application for admission
- acceptance letter
- entrance exam reports
- advanced placement records
- transcripts, notification of academic probation and/or suspension
- credit by examination forms
- name change authorizations
- pass/fail requests
- registration forms
- transfer credit evaluations
- withdrawal and/or non-returning student forms
- enrollment verifications
- application for graduation
- student requests for nondisclosure of directory information
- waivers for rights of access
- disciplinary records
- other documents as needed

These educational records may be maintained in different offices. Students have the right

to inspect and review their educational records. Students who believe that their education records contain information that is inaccurate or misleading should discuss their problems informally with the person in charge of the records involved. If the problems cannot be resolved, students have the right to request a formal hearing on the matter and/or place a statement with the record setting forth his/her view about the contested information. A request form is available and should be completed in the Student Services Office by the individual student, or the appropriate representative of an inquiring agency from outside of the University, that is seeking access to information in the student's records. For further information about procedures for access and review of educational records, please contact the Student Services Office.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**University Policies**

**Policy Number:** 604

**Policy Title:** Drug and Alcohol Free School and Campus  
(Synopsis)

**Policy:**

Waynesburg University is committed to creating and fostering an academic and social environment in which its members grow in knowledge and responsibility. The presence and/or use of controlled substances are contrary to its mission and purpose. As a result, the University will respond to any known instances of alcohol and/or drug abuse in existing evidence and exhibited behavior. Knowing that the use of alcohol and other drugs negatively impacts academic achievement, health, and behavior, Waynesburg University has implemented an alcohol and other drug education program which targets all segments of the educational community.

The University reserves the right to require assessment counseling for any individual who demonstrates the effects of alcohol or other drug use in their social interaction or academic accomplishment. The purpose of this assessment is to intervene in the lives of persons whose behavior while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs is harmful or disruptive to themselves or others. Individuals who exhibit inappropriate or disruptive behavior as the result of the use of alcohol or other drugs, or who violate University regulations regarding the possession, use, or distribution of alcohol or other drugs, or who are charged with or convicted of alcohol or drug violations of civil or criminal law on campus, will be disciplined and required to participate in an assistance program. *Furthermore, the University reserves the right to discipline individuals whose actions affect the interests of the University, even if such actions should occur off-campus.* University sanctions will be applied on a case-by-case basis, but may progressively include the assessment of fines, probation, suspension, dismissal, or expulsion. As it is difficult to accurately determine degrees of culpability, all students present in a room or area at the time of the alcohol/drug violation will generally be held responsible for such violation. Students are advised in advance to avoid such situations, which may put them at risk of disciplinary action. Legal sanctions may include fines, probation, imprisonment, or a combination thereof, in accordance with local, state, or federal law.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**University Policies**

**Policy Number:** 605

**Policy Title:** Smoke-Free Environment  
(Synopsis)

**Policy:**

The smoking of tobacco (or other similar products), rubbing snuff, or chewing tobacco is not permitted in any University residence hall, house, academic building, or administrative building. This also applies to all common areas, including lounges, laundry rooms, rest rooms, etc. In addition, any University-owned building subsequently used for instructional or academic purposes shall be tobacco-free, including any off-campus facility used for these purposes. The use of tobacco products is also prohibited in any motor vehicle owned, leased, or otherwise operated for University business. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action. Guests and visitors will be expected to comply with this policy. Students are responsible for the actions of their guests.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**University Policies**

**Policy Number:** 606

**Policy Title:** Sexual Assault

**Policy:**

Waynesburg University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that discourages sexual assault. Sexual assault is sexual intercourse or other sexual act committed against another without their consent.

***What to do if you are sexually assaulted:***

- A. If you believe that you are still in danger, you should call Security at extension 303 or 724-852-3303, or the Waynesburg police at 911 or 724-627-8113. Students in Graduate and Professional Studies programs in locations other than the main campus should contact building security or the nearest police department by calling 911.
- B. Seek medical attention as soon as possible. You can call the campus Health Services at 724-852-3332 during regular business hours or go to the Emergency Room at the nearest hospital. Be sure to tell the examining physician or nurse that you were sexually assaulted. The Sexual Harassment and Assault brochure, “A Guide for Waynesburg University Students” provides additional information and can be obtained from the Counseling Center, Health Services and Student Services Office.

***Making a Complaint of Sexual Assault***

- A. Sexual assault is a crime. If you have been sexually assaulted, the University strongly recommends that you make a report to the police who, where warranted, will pursue criminal charges. However, the decision to make a report to the police must be made by the victim. Except where the University believes there is a threat of imminent harm to the University community, the University will not make a report of an alleged sexual assault to the police without the victim’s consent.
- B. Sexual assault also violates the University’s rules and regulations governing student conduct. The University has instituted this policy to protect the University community, and the rights of both the alleged victim and the accused, and to maintain the confidentiality of the identity of those involved to the extent possible.
  - 1. How to report sexual assault to the University:

A student who chooses to make a complaint through the University's internal disciplinary proceedings must make a report to one of the University's designated Sexual Assault Officers. These Officers are listed below.

2. What happens once a complaint is made?

The University Sexual Assault Officer will investigate the allegation. This will require interviews with the victim and the alleged assailant. In some circumstances, interviews with other persons who have knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident may also be conducted. Whenever possible, the Sexual Assault Officer will not reveal the identity of the victim during the investigative process. In any event, the Sexual Assault Officer will not reveal the identity of the victim without the victim's consent.

***What to do if you are accused of sexual assault:***

- A. Take the allegation seriously
- B. You may wish to consult an attorney, especially if a criminal complaint has or may be filed with the local police
- C. You should be aware of your right not to incriminate yourself and carefully consider the possible ramifications of any statements you choose to make.
- D. If you have been falsely accused, and are aware of information or evidence that you believe will establish the falsity of the accusations against you (for example, where you were off-campus or with other people at the time of the alleged incident), make sure you bring this information to the attention of the investigating Sexual Assault Officer as soon as possible. Make sure that you provide the investigating Sexual Assault Officer with the names of all persons who may have information relevant to the accusations against you.

***Sexual Harassment/Assault Officers:***

- Mrs. Patricia Bristor, Associate Dean, Student Services, 724-852-3315
- Dr. Robert Graham, Provost, 724-852-3456
- Mr. Tom Helmick, Director of Human Resources, 724-852-3210

*A description of the University's Disciplinary Procedures for cases of Sexual Assault is available at the Student Services Office on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Stover Campus Center.*

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**University Policies**

**Policy Number:**               **607**

**Policy Title:**                 **AIDS Policy**

**Policy:**

As advised by the American University Health Association, Waynesburg University maintains a policy of dealing with individual cases of AIDS as they arise. The University's greatest concern is to insure a safe, healthy, and productive environment for all its students, faculty, and staff. Educational programming for the whole campus is a part of the services of the Student Health Service and the Student Services Office.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**University Policies**

**Policy Number:**                   **608**

**Policy Title:**                   **University Network Policy: Responsible Use of  
Technology**

**Policy:**

As a community of people committed to the values and perspectives of the Christian tradition, we recognize the potential benefit, as well as danger, in the use of technology. Consequently, we make careful use of the products of science and technology in order that we might responsibly fulfill our callings as students, faculty and staff. We are stewards of technology and therefore, acknowledge our accountability to one another, to the mission of the institution and to God. To clarify what is meant by responsible use, we provide guidelines in relation to the following areas of concern: Respect for equitable access to resources, respect for another's opinions, values and feelings, respect for property, and respect for one another's privacy.

All computing resources and facilities at Waynesburg University are provided as a privilege to Waynesburg University students, faculty and staff. All users of these resources are responsible for exercising this privilege in an effective, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. The policies and procedures assume a commitment to support ethical behavior in every aspect of the academic community within the University. *These policies and procedures are not exhaustive, but rather provide the essential framework for acceptable use of the computer and communication resources of Waynesburg University.* Inevitably, the responsibility for utilizing common sense and upholding common standards of decency and fairness must be employed by the users for the benefit of others within the University community.

Accessing the Waynesburg University Network at ANY security level constitutes an agreement by the user to abide by ALL Rules & Policies as well as updated rules, policies, and responsibilities that may come into effect in the future. The user waives all claims against Waynesburg University, legal or otherwise, which may be incurred through the use and/or registration for use of the Network.

Violations of the policies and procedures for the Waynesburg University Network may result in the loss of computer use privileges and disciplinary review. Violations of some of the listed policies may be illegal and may be subject to prosecution by state and federal authorities. Any noted violations of policies will be referred to the supervisory Vice President. A full description

of Acceptable Use Policies and Procedures is posted for students to access via the following link:  
<http://www.waynesburg.edu/technology>.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**University Policies**

**Policy Number:** 609

**Policy Title:** Grievance and Appeals

**Policy:**

Waynesburg University is committed to its mission of Christian higher education. In pursuit of those goals, we seek to maintain an environment where students are treated fairly and with justice based upon this mission expressed through institutional policies and procedures. As a result, procedures have been established to provide for student appeals concerning possible unfair treatment, unjust enforcement of policies or denied his/her rights as a student of the University. These procedures are listed below as well as some of them also listed in the University Catalog.

Occasionally, disputes and conflicts may arise between members of the Waynesburg University community over particular policies, procedures or actions both within the academic and non-academic areas of the institution. Many times, the dispute may be resolved at the personal level between the student and the faculty/staff member. The student should request an appointment to meet with the particular faculty/staff member to present his/her complaint to the person concerned. In some cases, this meeting should occur with a department chairperson on behalf of the department or one of its committees. This presentation should be offered in a civil manner and with respect for the position of the University employee. If the dispute is not resolved, the student may initiate a formal grievance in accordance with the procedures listed below for either designated issues or for general academic and non-academic matters.

**Grievance Procedures**

The purpose of the formal grievance is not to express personal disagreement with a particular policy, but an appeal based upon unfair treatment. In order to initiate a formal grievance, the student must submit a written statement of the grievance outlining the alleged unfair treatment, a description of the basis for the appeal, any attempts to resolve the problem informally, and any suggested resolutions to the problem.

With particular policies, existing grievance and appeal procedures are listed with the policy (Student Code of Conduct, Sexual Harassment/Assault, etc.). In these cases, these procedures should be followed by the student desiring to initiate an appeal in accordance with this Handbook or the University Catalog.

With regard to other general University policies and procedures, this written grievance should be submitted to the appropriate vice president or Dean supervising the particular area (In the case of students enrolled in the **Graduate and Professional Studies programs**, this written complaint should be submitted to the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies). If the student is unsure to whom the grievance should be submitted, consultation is available from the Senior Vice President for Educational Services.

In the case of complaints concerning implementation of general policies and procedures, the grievance should be submitted within ten business days from the alleged unfair treatment. The respective Dean (or designee) may request additional information, secure relevant documents, interview involved parties or any other actions s/he deems necessary in order to investigate the issue and render a decision.

After receipt of the written grievance, the appropriate Dean will render a decision within ten business days. This decision will be transmitted to the student in writing through delivery to the student's on-campus mailbox (undergraduate) or to the permanent address (Graduate and Professional Studies). The decision rendered by the Dean is final.

In order to assist students concerning potential areas of grievances, the following policies specify the initial contact person for consultation in the process. This contact information is intended to be helpful, but is not a substitute for the individual student understanding and fulfilling procedures outlined in University Catalog or Student Handbook.

### **Academic**

Academic Integrity Policy -

Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies/GAPS Committee

Academic Suspension –

Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies/GAPS Committee

Departmental Major Admission / Academic Progression / Retention –

Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies/GAPS Committee

Grade Appeals –

Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies/GAPS Committee

### **Non-Academic**

Anti-Discrimination / Harassment Policy / Title IX -

Associate Dean for Student Services

Americans with Disability Act –

Director of Human Resources

AIDS policy –

Sr. Vice President for Educational Services

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act -

Registrar

Student Conduct / Disciplinary Sanctions-

Sr. Vice President for Educational Services

**See also Policy # 404 regarding the Grade Appeal process within Graduate and Professional Studies.**

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**University Policies**

**Policy Number:** 610

**Policy Title:** University Catalog

**Policy:**

An electronic copy of the University Catalog is available. Students can access the University Catalog from the myConnect home page via the University Links tab. The official catalog is maintained in the Registrar's Office.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**University Policies**

**Policy Number:**               **611**

**Policy Title:**               **Graduation Ceremonies and Diploma Distribution**

**Policy:**

Waynesburg University holds Commencement ceremonies once each year in May. Graduates are invited to participate in the May ceremonies. Students who have completed all degree requirements, and those who are within two courses or 8 credits of degree completion, are eligible to walk at Commencement.

Diplomas are distributed three times per year. Students who graduate during the spring sessions receive their diploma during the actual graduation ceremonies. Students who graduate during the summer and fall sessions are mailed their diplomas before the actual graduation ceremony; those students are still strongly encouraged to participate in the May commencement activities the following year. Diplomas are also mailed to students who graduate in the spring but do not attend commencement; diplomas are sent via certified mail. All balances due to the University must be paid before the diploma is issued.

**Waynesburg University  
Graduate and Professional Studies**

**University Policies**

**Policy Number:** 612

**Policy Title:** Americans with Disabilities Act

**Policy:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is the civil rights guarantee for persons with disabilities in the United States. It provides protection from discrimination for individuals on the basis of disability. The ADA extends civil rights protections for people with disabilities to employment in the public and private sectors, transportation, public accommodations, services provided by state and local government, and telecommunication relay services.

Waynesburg College intends to comply with Title III requirements. A student desiring specific information about these requirements or about the grievance procedure should contact Thomas Helmick, Director of Human Resources and Disabilities Services, at 724-852-3210 or ext. 210.