

**Boston College
William F. Connell
Graduate School of Nursing**

Graduate Student Handbook

2005-2006



Boston College
William F. Connell Graduate School of Nursing
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Graduate Nurses Association (GNA) 617-552-8806
617-552-0233

University

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Financial Aid (Graduate) 617-552-3320
Graduate Student Center (Murray) 617-552-1854
Help Center (computer problems) 617-552-HELP
Library - O'Neill Library 617-552-4455
Wanda Anderson, Nursing Reference Librarian 617-552-4457
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Web Pages

BC InfoEagle <http://www.bc.edu/>
SON www.bc.edu/nursing
Registrar- course listings <http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/courses/> or through
Agora. <https://agora.bc.edu/login/menu>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. GENERAL INFORMATION APPLICABLE TO ALL GRADUATE PROGRAMS.....	6-23
A. INTRODUCTION.....	6-9
1. History of the School of Nursing.....	6
2. History of Graduate Programs in Nursing.....	6
3. Boston College School of Nursing Mission Statement.....	7
4. Boston College School of Nursing Philosophy.....	7
5. Organizational Structure of School of Nursing.....	8
6. Teacher of Record.....	8
7. Faculty.....	8
8. Communications.....	9
B. RESOURCES.....	9-16
1. Financial Aid.....	9
<i>Academic Awards.....</i>	<i>9-10</i>
<i>Teaching Assistantships (TA)</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Research Assistantships (RA)</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Traineeships.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Procedures for Financial Aid Recipients.....</i>	<i>10-11</i>
<i>Other Sources of Financial Aid.....</i>	<i>11</i>
2. University Resources.....	11-16
<i>The Libraries.....</i>	<i>11-12</i>
<i>Graduate Student Center.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Student Lounges.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Academic Development Center O’Neill Library.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Responsible conduct of research programs.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Beth Israel/Longwood Hospitals Research Grand Rounds (Ph.D.).....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Dana Farber Cancer Institute Research Seminars (Ph.D.).....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Online Writing Lab (OWL).....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>AHANA Student Programs.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Career Center.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Chaplains.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>University Counseling Services (UCS)</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Student Development.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Services for Students with Disabilities.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Graduate Student Association.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Graduate Nurses Association (GNA).....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Health Services.....</i>	<i>16</i>
C. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.....	16-23
1. Immunization/Health Requirements.....	16
2. CORI Checks.....	17
3. Academic Policies.....	17-23
<i>Class Attendance.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Guidelines for courteous cell phone use.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Exams and Quizzes.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Lost work.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Grading.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Incomplete and Deferred Grades.....</i>	<i>19</i>

<i>Late Papers/Research Projects</i>	19
<i>Academic Evaluation disputes</i>	19
<i>Academic Standing</i>	19-20
<i>Academic and Professional Integrity</i>	20
<i>Research Integrity and Responsible conduct of Science</i>	20
<i>Student Absences for Religious Reasons</i>	20
<i>Withdrawal from a course</i>	20
<i>Withdrawal from Boston College</i>	21
<i>Transfer of Credit/s</i>	21
<i>Graduation</i>	21
<i>May Graduation</i>	21
<i>August and December Graduations</i>	21
<i>Time Limits</i>	22
<i>Policy on “Not Registered” (NR) students</i>	22
<i>Leave of Absence (LOA)</i>	22
<i>Re-Admission</i>	22
<i>Academic Advisement</i>	22
<i>Plan of Study</i>	23
<i>Summer Sessions</i>	23
II. THE MASTER’S PROGRAM	23-35
A. <u>ACCREDITATION</u>	24
B. <u>CERTIFICATION</u>	24
C. <u>MASTER’S PROGRAM OBJECTIVES</u>	24
D. <u>CURRICULUM</u>	25
1. Curricular Overview.....	25-26
2. Core Courses.....	26
3. Research Requirements.....	27
4. Pharmacology/Pharmacotherapeutics.....	27
5. Clinical Specialty Courses.....	27-28
6. Clinical Practica.....	28
E. <u>LIABILITY INSURANCE/LICENSURE</u>	28
F. <u>PATHOGEN EXPOSURE</u>	28
G. <u>NEEDLESTICK INJURIES</u>	29
H. <u>BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS</u>	29
1. Exposure to Blood Borne Pathogens.....	29
I. <u>INDEPENDENT STUDY</u>	29
1. NU 801 Masters Thesis Option.....	29
J. <u>MASTER’S COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION</u>	30
K. <u>MASTER’S ENTRY PROGRAM</u>	30-31
1. Sample Curriculum.....	30-31
2. Academic Policies.....	31
3. Preparation for NCLEX-RN.....	31
4. Criteria for Progression.....	31
L. <u>SPECIALTY PROGRAMS</u>	32
1. CRNA.....	32
<i>CRNA Plan of Study</i>	33
2. MS/MBA.....	34
3. Additional Specialty Concentration.....	34

4. RN/MS.....	34
5. Pastoral Ministry-Nursing/Joint Degree.....	34
6. MS/Ph.D.....	34
7. Master's Completion Program.....	35
8. 5th Year or BS/MS Plan.....	35
III. DOCTORAL PROGRAM.....	35-49
A. UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIPS.....	35-36
1. Purpose of the Fellowship.....	35
2. Current Process.....	35
3. Length of the Award.....	35
4. Nature of Fellowship Work.....	35-36
5. Availability.....	36
6. Collaboration.....	36
7. Evaluation.....	36
B. SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS.....	37
1. Course Requirements.....	37
2. Language Competency.....	37
3. Comprehensive Exam.....	37
4. Dissertation Proposal Preparation.....	37
5. Completion of Dissertation Research.....	37
6. Defense of the Dissertation.....	37
7. Deposit of Dissertation.....	37
C. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM.....	37-38
D. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES.....	38
E. PROGRAM OF STUDY.....	38-39
F. PROGRESSION THROUGH THE PROGRAM.....	39-42
1. Program Requirements.....	39
2. Criteria for Progression in Course Work.....	40
3. Language Competency.....	40
<i>Computer Literacy</i>	40
<i>Foreign Language Competency</i>	40
4. Comprehensive Examination.....	40-42
<i>Eligibility</i>	40
<i>Registration for Comprehensive Exam</i>	40
<i>Comprehensive Exam Committee</i>	41
<i>Scheduling</i>	41
<i>Written Exam</i>	41
<i>Oral Exam</i>	41
<i>Evaluation</i>	42
<i>Consequences of Failure</i>	42
<i>Admission to Candidacy</i>	42
G. DISSERTATION PHASE.....	42-49
1. Course Registration and Doctoral Continuation.....	43
2. Committee Selection.....	43
3. Statement of Intent to Submit Proposal.....	43-44
4. Preparation for the Dissertation Proposal.....	44
5. IRB Approval Processes.....	44-45
6. Proposal Defense.....	45

7.	Conduct & Writing of Dissertation Research.....	46
	<i>Dissertation Preparation Instruction Packets</i>	46
	<i>Writing the Dissertation</i>	46
	<i>Changes in Dissertation Committee Membership</i>	46
8.	Defense of the Dissertation.....	46-48
	<i>Conduct of the Defense</i>	48
9.	Scheduling Graduation.....	48-49
IV.	PROGRAM FORMS (Available in the Graduate Office and on the nursing website http://www.bc.edu/schools/son/graduate/forms/).....	49
	A. <u>DOCTORAL PROGRAM FORMS</u>	
	i. Ph.D. Plan of Study 3 year	
	ii. Ph.D. Plan of Study 4 year	
	iii. Comprehensive Examination Application Form	
	iv. Intent to Submit Proposal	
	v. Proposal Defense Form	
	vi. Dissertation Committee Form	
	vii. Dissertation Committee Change Form	
	viii. Doctoral Change of Advisor Form	
	ix. Notice of Dissertation Defense	
	x. Dissertation Signature Title Page	
	xi. Dissertation Submission Checklist	
	xii. Request for Required Course Substitution	
	B. <u>MASTERS PROGRAM FORMS</u>	
	xiii. MS Program Plan of Study	
	xiv. Change of Advisor/Change of Specialty	
	xv. Research Option	
	C. <u>FORMS FOR MS & DOCTORAL PROGRAMS</u>	
	xvi. Request for Required Course Substitution	
	xvii. Research Proposal Endorsement	
V.	APPENDIX I	
	A. <u>DISSERTATION AND GRADUATION COMPLETION CHECK LIST</u>	

GENERAL INFORMATION APPLICABLE TO ALL GRADUATE PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

The first section relates to information applicable to all graduate programs. This section is followed by one on the Master's program and then one specifically on the doctoral program. The program information is also available on the Boston College website.

History of the School of Nursing

Boston College inaugurated the School of Nursing in response to the need for a Catholic collegiate school of nursing in the Greater Boston area. With the cooperation of His Excellency, Most Reverend Richard J. Cushing, Archbishop of Boston, a program was offered in February 1947 leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Nursing for registered nurses. In September 1947, a basic collegiate program of five years leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science was introduced for high school graduates. Beginning in September 1950, a four calendar-year basic collegiate program was initiated, and in 1957 this was shortened to four academic years. In the Spring of 1960 the School of Nursing moved from downtown Boston to the Chestnut Hill campus and occupies its own building, the gift of His Eminence Richard Cardinal Cushing. In 2001-2002, the school received a generous gift from the late William F. Connell and the school is now known as the William F. Connell School of Nursing.

History of Graduate Programs in Nursing

Graduate courses were offered in 1952. In the beginning they were shaped by society's needs and faculty preference. There was the continuing need for teachers of nursing. Many of the first grants given to nursing, were given to prepare these faculty. So it was that Boston College gave advanced courses in medical-surgical nursing and pediatric nursing. These courses were taught by Marie S. Andrews and Stephanie Szloch, respectively, to nurses earning a master's degree in education. By the spring of 1956 Dean Rita P. Kelleher realized that such a degree did not adequately meet the needs of nurses. The education degree was accredited by the Association of New England Colleges and not by the National League for Nursing. Nursing sought to bring its program into conformity with the standards for the profession, and proposed a master's degree in nursing with a minor in education. Such a degree would prepare its recipients more appropriately.

The Graduate School of Arts and Science accepted responsibility for awarding the Master of Science degree. The graduate degree in nursing dates from 1958.

The Ph.D. program, approved by the Board of Trustees, September 1986, began in Fall 1988. Ten students were admitted in the program's initial year; the program expanded to 30 students at the end of three years. The major focus of study centers on clinical research related to patient phenomena of concern and the clinical judgments nurses make while providing care. Areas of concentration include ethics, ethical judgment and decision-making, nursing diagnosis and diagnostic/therapeutic judgments; and human response patterns in health and illness.

In the 1993-94 academic year, there was a general reorganization of Graduate Arts and Sciences and the Schools of Nursing and Education assumed administration of the graduate programs in their respective areas. This organizational change has strengthened the already vigorous and vital graduate programs in the School of Nursing.

Boston College School of Nursing Mission Statement

The mission of Boston College School of Nursing is to prepare professional nurses whose practice reflects a humanistic ethic and is scientifically based, technically competent, and highly compassionate. The Boston College nurse learns to think critically and to develop leadership skills throughout the baccalaureate, master's and doctoral programs. The faculty of the school aim to develop and disseminate knowledge for the advancement of professional practice and the improvement of health care by providing an environment that supports the personal development and scholarship of its faculty and students. The mission of Boston College School of Nursing is congruent with that of its parent institution, with an emphasis on the development of the whole person. The School of Nursing focuses on preparing each student as a life-long learner, as a health professional and as a person who will use knowledge in service to others.

The graduate of the Baccalaureate program is prepared as a generalist to provide care to individuals, families and groups by formulating diagnostic, ethical, and therapeutic judgments with the aim of promoting, maintaining and restoring health. The graduate of the Master's program is prepared as an advanced practice nurse with specialized knowledge and skills for providing quality patient care. These nurses are prepared to promote nursing practice through leadership, mentorship, and research-based care. The graduate of the doctoral program contributes to the development of knowledge through research and theory building and the dissemination of findings in scholarly forums.

Boston College School of Nursing Philosophy

Nursing is the art and science of human caring. The recipients of nursing care are individuals, families, aggregates of people, and communities who are sick and well; culturally and linguistically diverse; within all socioeconomic strata; and at all stages in the life cycle. The study of nursing is based on a common intellectual heritage transmitted by a liberal education and the art and science of nursing. Nursing activities focus on the life processes and patterns of the individual in the context of family and community. Nursing recognizes the contribution of cultural diversity and social environments to the health/illness beliefs, practices, and behavioral responses of individuals and groups.

Nursing education prepares students for practice by building on the foundational knowledge derived from the liberal arts and sciences. Nursing curricula are logically ordered to provide core knowledge and the application of that knowledge. The preparation for holistic nursing care requires a holistic approach in education, and education is most effective when it involves active participation by the learner. Students are supported in developing clinical skills as well as the ability to think and act ethically. Students are active participants in shaping the learning environment within the School of Nursing.

The Boston College School of Nursing instills the values of service to others, truth through scholarly inquiry, and justice through promoting equal access to care for all people. Service, scholarship, and justice in caring include all people in the global community, particularly the underserved. The faculty believe that promoting the physical, psychological, and spiritual aspects of health are essential to understanding the human dimension of holistic nursing care. Nurses engage in partnerships with individuals and groups to promote and optimize wellness. They respect the uniqueness of the person and the individual's right to choose and actively participate in decisions about health care. Nursing promotes self-determination by empowering clients and advocating for those who cannot do so independently.

Organizational Structure of School of Nursing

The Dean of the School of Nursing is responsible for the overall administration of the School.

Dean	Barbara Hazard Office: Cushing 203 Extension: 617-552-4251
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The Associate Deans are responsible for most aspects of the undergraduate, master's and doctoral programs.

Interim Associate Dean for Graduate Programs	Dr. Lois Haggerty Office: Cushing 202 H Extension: 617-552-3668
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Interim Associate Dean for Undergraduate & Master's Entry Program	Dr. Catherine Read Office: Cushing 202 G Extension: 617-552-6418
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Department Chairpersons are responsible primarily for clinical specialty courses at the master's level and for faculty within that clinical specialty.

Department Chairpersons: Adult Health:	Dr. Rita Olivieri; 617-552-3669
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Psychiatric Mental Health & Community Health:	Dr. Anne Norris; 617-552-6810
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Maternal-Child Health:	Dr. Sandra Mott; 617-552-4278
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Center for Nursing Research:	Dr. Mary Duffy; 617-552-3123
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Carroll Endowed Chair:	Dr. Judith Vessey; 617-552-8817
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Teacher of Record (TOR)

Teachers of Record are faculty who are responsible for coordinating faculty and student activities within a course. Their areas of responsibility include the course syllabus, compiling exams, and computing grades.

Faculty

Faculty may be full-time or part-time. Most full-time faculty teach in more than one level of the program. Faculty schedules for each semester are posted on their office doors and with the receptionist in Cushing 202. Each faculty member has a designated assistant. Faculty may be contacted via phone and voice mail, e-mail, or through their assistants.

Communications

There are a variety of mechanisms for enhancing timely and effective communication within the School of Nursing. Each faculty member and staff member has voice mail and e-mail. Each faculty or staff person at BC can be reached via e-mail using the following e-mail format: `firstname.lastname@bc.edu`. (usually) They also may be contacted via the Boston College website.

E-mail is the main vehicle for communication with the Graduate Office. **Important announcements are made via e-mail.** All students are responsible for checking their BC e-mail at least every other day. Students should obtain e-mail accounts by contacting Help Center in Gasson Hall 12. This provides access to e-mail as well as to the Internet/World Wide Web, the online resources of the BC libraries, the School of Nursing Web page (www.bc.edu/nursing), and Infoeagle (www.bc.edu/info) which provide a great range of information. **Each graduate student must activate his/her BC email account in order to receive important messages from the Graduate Office.** You can arrange to forward your BC e-mail to another e-mail account if you wish.

There is an official Graduate Program Bulletin Board in the foyer of Cushing Hall. A Student Communications Center is located in Cushing 211. Each matriculated student has a mail slot where she/he may receive general notices or individual notes. Each student is responsible for checking his/her mail slot routinely, i.e., at least each week. In addition there are bulletin boards for various notices.

Graduate Programs WebCT site. The School of Nursing Graduate program has a WebCT site for all graduate students. This site contains valuable information about financial aid resources, handbooks, forms, announcements and notices, calendar, and links to other relevant information within BC as well as outside. Students should check information in this site on a regular basis.

RESOURCES

Information about activities and resources for graduate students across the university is located at the Murray Graduate Center Website www.bc.edu/gmc

All Graduates students: Graduate students may not receive university financial aid (stipend and/or tuition scholarships) from two schools or departments simultaneously without the Dean's approval. Graduate students who hold fellowships or assistantships may not be employed full-time without Dean's approval.

Financial Aid

Academic Awards

Stipends and scholarships are available to aid promising graduate students in the pursuit of their studies, including: University fellowships (Ph.D. students), Teaching Assistantships, Research Assistantships, Tuition Remission, Scholarships, and Federal Traineeships (depending on federal funding). Individuals whose applications are complete will routinely be considered for tuition remission at the time of admission by the GSON; no separate application is necessary. However a letter of request or application from the student to the Associate Dean of GSON is required in order to be considered for assistantships or any additional tuition remission that may become available. A special application is required for consideration for a traineeship.

A limited number of School of Nursing scholarships are available and are generally awarded at the time of admission. Students should check bulletin boards for other scholarships that may become available.

The scholastic requirements for obtaining these stipend or scholarship awards are necessarily more exacting than those for simply securing admission to the Graduate School.

See the GSON WebCT site and the GSON webpage for additional information about external sources of scholarships and financial aid. <http://www/bc.edu/nursing>

Teaching Assistantships (TA)

The Graduate School has available a limited number of Teaching Assistantships. These provide for a stipend. The Teaching Assistant (TA), in addition to her or his program of studies, is usually responsible for up to 15 hours per week of teaching/instructional activities in the undergraduate or graduate program. Students who wish to be considered for a TA position should file a talent search form in the Graduate Office.

Research Assistantships (RA)

Research Assistantships may be available through faculty grants. The nature and number of hours involved are determined by the faculty member holding the grant.

Assistantships provide a stipend that varies among projects. Students who wish to be considered for these opportunities as they arise should file a Talent Form in the Graduate Office as well as checking bulletin boards for announcements.

Traineeships

Traineeships provide a monthly stipend to eligible students. Students must be full time (9 credits/semester) and must be US citizens or permanent residents. Part-time students in their last year of study are also eligible if they are enrolled in clinical practica. Preference is usually given to those who are in their clinical practicum year. Students in the master's entry program are eligible after completion of the first year if they meet the above criteria.

Since this is money provided by the federal government, availability of the funds, the time of the award, and the amount awarded, depends on the federal government. The grant is usually announced by early July; applications are then available in the Graduate Office. The notice of availability of applications will be sent to students via e-mail. Students are required to meet the application deadline to receive funding.

Procedures for Financial Aid Recipients

Teaching Fellows and Assistants are full-time graduate students enrolled in at least nine (9) credits per semester. Consequently, they may not accept any additional commitment of employment without prior consultation with and permission approval of the Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Nursing.

At the opening of each school year, or at whatever other time financial aid may be awarded, recipients must report to the Graduate Admissions Office to fill out personnel cards and tax information forms.

An aid recipient who relinquishes an Assistantship or a tuition scholarship must report this matter in writing to the Associate Dean. These awards may be discontinued at any time during an academic year if either the academic performance or in-service assistance is of an unsatisfactory character. They may also be discontinued for unprofessional conduct or conduct injurious to the reputation of the University.

Other Sources of Financial Aid

Students interested in other sources of financial aid, such as work-study funds and various loan programs, should inquire at the University Financial Aid Office where all such aid is administered. Students receiving loans are expected to meet their ethical, legal and professional responsibilities in repayment of these loans. In addition the School of Nursing provides information about outside scholarships available to master's students on its webpage <http://www.bc.edu/nursing>. Another useful website for scholarship information is <http://www.discovernursing.com>. Information about university-wide Teaching or Graduate Assistantships is available through the Murray Graduate Center web site www.bc.edu/gsc

University Resources

The Libraries

The Boston College Libraries offer a wealth of resources and services to support the teaching and research activities of the University. The book collections exceed 2 million volumes, and approximately 21,000 serial titles are currently received. Special collections for nursing are housed in the Mary Pekarski Nursing Archives in Burns Library and include: nursing ethics, nursing history, and the recently acquired collections of the North American Nursing Diagnosis Association (NANDA) and the American Association of Nursing Attorneys.

Membership in two academic consortia, the Boston Library Consortium and the Boston Theological Institute, adds still greater dimensions to the resources of the Boston College Libraries, providing Boston College faculty and graduate students who have special research needs access to the millions of volumes and other services of the member institutions. Through membership in New England Library Information Network (NELINET), there is on-line access to publishing, cataloging and interlibrary loan location from the OCLC, Inc. data base, which contains over thirty-six million records from the Library of Congress and from more than 25,000 contributing institutions worldwide.

Boston College Libraries is a member of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) Boston College was among the first schools in the country to offer an on-line public computer catalog of its collections. The Libraries' computerized system provides instant access to information on library holdings, as well as supporting book circulation and acquisitions' procedures. Students may browse the catalog using video display terminals in all the libraries, and may access the catalog via computer from their homes or offices. In addition, the libraries offer computer searching of hundreds of commercial data bases in the humanities, sciences, business, and social sciences through an in-house CD-ROM network, through access to outside databases, and through the library computerized system. Access to an increasing number of full-text journals is available online.

Information on use of the libraries is contained in the Guide to the Boston College Libraries, on the Boston College website and other brochures available in the libraries.

There is a reference librarian assigned to each discipline. Wanda Anderson (552-4457) is the Reference Librarian for Nursing.

Students should arrange for orientation to the library resources through the many library offerings provided.

Graduate Student Center

The John Courtney Murray, S.J. Graduate Center is a facility established to meet the needs of graduate students. It is located across Beacon Street at 292 Hammond Street. . The Graduate Center provides opportunities to gather for discussion, reflection, presentations, meals, and social functions. It offers a computer lab with PCs and MACs, study rooms with network stations, network activated jacks and wireless network connections for laptop computers, dining facilities, and an administrative staff to act as advocates for all graduate students. The Murray Graduate Center also serves as a coordinating center for graduate student groups such as the Graduate Student Association, Graduate International Student Association, and the Graduate AHANA Student Association. To reserve space for graduate events or for more information please see the Graduate Center web site located at: <http://www.bc.edu/gsc> or call 552-1851.

Student Lounges

Students are free to use student lounges in any Boston College buildings. Students may wish to book study rooms in O'Neil Library or in the Murray Graduate Student Center for small group study.

Kennedy Resource Center (KRC), Cushing Hall Room 426, School of Nursing. This center houses audiovisual programs and computer-assisted instruction.

Simulation Laboratory (Cushing 407/408) This is a state-of-the art simulation laboratory in which students may learn and practice a variety of nursing skills. This may be used by students as part of their coursework or may be booked by an individual student for additional practice.

Computer Classroom Laboratory (Cushing 434) is used for instruction in research courses.

Academic Development Center O'Neill Library (552-8055)

The Academic Development Center is primarily responsible for providing free tutoring to the student body at large, support services to students with learning disabilities or Attention Deficit Disorder, and instructional support for graduate students and faculty. They can assist students who need help in improving their writing skills.

Responsible conduct of research programs

<http://www.bc.edu/research/rcip/rcr>

This program includes workshops related to professional skills and ethics in conducting research. They are usually held in the evening and include plenary presentations with small group discussions. A buffet dinner is provided. There are also “brown bag” luncheon sessions on topics on the responsible conduct of research. To reserve a space, send an email to rcrprog@bc.edu with your name and school affiliation. Questions can be directed to Karen Muskavitch, muskavka@bc.edu.

Beth Israel/Longwood Hospitals Research Grand Rounds (*For Doctoral Students)

This program consists of weekly lunchtime discussions of research related topics that are generally clinically focused. It is conducted at the Beth Israel Hospital for those enrolled in residency programs at the Hospital. Ph.D. students interested in attending should speak with Dr. Barbara Wolfe for additional information.

Dana Farber Cancer Institute Research Seminars (*For Doctoral Students)

The Cantor Center at Dana Farber Cancer Institute welcomes nurse doctoral students who wish to attend Brown Bag Seminars that include discussions of research work in progress as well as practice and critique of presentations for upcoming conferences. Student may enjoy and benefit from the critiques and scholarly dialogues. These seminars take place the second and fourth Tuesday of each month (September through June), 11 – 12:30 pm at Dana – Farber. For more information, including scheduled topic, speaker, and room location, call the Cantor Center’s main number 617-632-1925.

Online Writing Lab (OWL)

This resource provides assistance for brief questions about writing as well as materials and resources related to writing. There are also longer and more interactive presentations on writing and research skills. See web site at : <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>.

AHANA Student Programs.

The goal of this office is to promote the optimal academic achievement of African-American, Hispanic, Asian and Native-American (AHANA) students at Boston College especially those identified as being at potential academic disadvantage. The services available include the following: tutorial assistance, academic advisement, individual and group counseling tracking of academic performance, and career counseling. In addition to these services, the office assists AHANA student organizations in developing and implementing cultural programs.

Graduate AHANA Association - Murray Graduate Center - 552-1663

Career Center

The Career Center provides comprehensive resources and information concerning all aspects of career planning and job hunting. Its services are available to graduate and undergraduate students in all schools and concentrations, as well as to alumni.

For the job hunter, the Career Center provides group and individual assistance in resume writing, interview preparation, and job hunting strategies, an on-campus-recruiting program, current job listings and a credentials service.

Graduate students are encouraged to visit the Career Center at 38 Commonwealth Avenue, where they can pick up the Center's monthly publications. The Career Center is open on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings until 7:30 p.m. during the academic year for the convenience of graduate students and alumni.

Chaplains

The Chaplains' Office strives to deepen the faith of Boston College students by offering opportunities to discover, grow in, express and celebrate the religious dimensions of their lives in personally relevant ways. In addition, it works to foster justice by developing social awareness and to build a sense of community as a Christian value in the whole University. Chaplains from a variety of faiths are available. Offices are located in McElroy Commons, Room 215, 552-3475.

University Counseling Services (UCS)

UCS provides counseling and psychological services to the students of Boston College. The goal of UCS is to enable students to develop fully and to make the most of their educational experience. Services available include individual counseling and psychotherapy, group counseling, consultation, evaluation and referral. Students wishing to make an appointment may contact a counselor in any one of the counseling offices on campus (Gasson 108, 552-3310, Campion 301, 552-4210; Service Bldg. T100, 552-3927).

Office of the Dean for Student Development, Associate Dean for Graduate Life, Katherine O'Dair

The Office of the Dean for Student Development coordinates the planning, implementation and evaluation of programs and services for graduate student development. This includes overseeing students' clubs and organizations, programming, the Graduate Student Association, alcohol and drug education, off-campus and commuting student affairs, and international student services. The Dean and assistants are also responsible for coordinating policies and procedures concerning student conduct and discipline, and the judicial process.

Graduate students can reach Katherine O'Dair at the John Courtney Murray Graduate Center, 292 Hammond Street, 552-3482.

Services for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities applying to Boston College are strongly encouraged to make their disability known voluntarily to the Admissions Office. This information will not affect the decision on admission; rather, it will give the University the opportunity to offer specific assistance and support through programs and services provided by different departments on campus.

For more information regarding services for students with disabilities contact Pauline Donnelly, Assistant Dean for Students with Disabilities, in the New Administration Building Room 214, 552-2238. For more information regarding services for students with learning disabilities contact Dr. Kathleen Duggan, Coordinator of Academic Support Services for Learning Disabled Students, Academic Development Center, O'Neill Library, 617-552-8093. Any student requesting accommodations due to a documented disability must notify the faculty within the first two (2) weeks of a course.

Graduate Student Association

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) of Boston College is an autonomous organization that serves students in the Graduate Schools of Arts and Sciences, Nursing, Social Work, the Lynch Graduate School of Education and the Carroll Graduate School of Management. Currently, approximately 4,000 full and part-time and special students are enrolled in these programs.

The GSA exists to provide academic support to students in the form of conference grants and special group funding, to host social, cultural and academic programs for graduates, and to inform the graduate community of matters of interest to them. The GSA also advocates for graduate student interests within the University community. The GSA nominates graduate students to serve on a variety of committees, including the University Academic Council, the University Committee on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, the Graduate Educational Policy Committee and the new student center committee.

The GSA is funded by the activity fee charged to every graduate student at registration and is governed by the GSA Student Council, composed of student representation from each academic department. The council and staff work together to strengthen the collective voice of graduate students. The GSA publishes an annual Graduate Students Achievement Profile on-line, that lists all graduate students who have published or presented papers, won awards or otherwise been acknowledged for their work.

The School of Nursing's Graduate Nurses Association (GNA) has membership in the GSA and two members of the GNA are appointed by the membership to represent graduate nursing students at meetings and related activities.

The GSA has its offices in the John Courtney Murray, S.J. Graduate Center which opened on December 3rd, 1997, and located at 292 Hammond Street across Beacon Street from McElroy Hall. A fully equipped kitchen, comfortable "parlor" rooms and plenty of space for study have been remodeled for the graduate student's convenience. All graduate students are welcome to attend the GSA's weekly luncheon meetings held from 12 noon to 1:00 p.m. once a month while classes are in session. The GSA's telephone number is 617-552-1854.

Graduate Nurses Association (GNA)

The GNA meets regularly in the School of Nursing to provide a forum for concerns and interests of graduate students. Periodically it sponsors coffee hours or luncheons so that graduate students can interact with each other and with faculty on an informal basis. The GNA also is involved in a variety of projects to help fund various groups in the community. The GNA office is located in Cushing 211A and the phone number is 552-0233.

Health Services

The primary goal of University Health Services is to provide confidential medical/nursing care and educational programs to safeguard the physical well being and mental health of the student body. It is located in the ground floor of Cushing Hall on the Chestnut Hill Campus and the phone number is 552-3225.

The services include a walk-in clinic as well as medical, surgical, gynecological, orthopedic, nutrition, physical therapy, allergy and immunization clinics. The In-Patient Infirmary is open 24 hours a day when school is in session.

The Health/Infirmary Fee for medical care on campus is not a substitute for a health insurance policy. Massachusetts law requires that all university students registered for 75 percent of a full-time course load be covered by an Accident and Sickness Insurance Policy so that protection may be assured in case of hospitalization or other costly outside medical services. Insurance information is available at University Health Services Office in Cushing Hall.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Immunization/Health Requirements

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Law requires all graduate nursing students to show evidence of satisfactory immunization against measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, diphtheria and hepatitis B. New students (starting AY 2005 – 2006) are also required to have the meningitis vaccine or sign a waiver if they decide not to be immunized against meningitis. Students who fail to provide adequate documentation of immunization will not be permitted to register and attend classes. The only exceptions permitted are when immunization requirements conflict with personal religious belief or when a physician documents that immunizations should not be given due to pre-existing medical problems.

Additional SON requirements include: varicella titre, and an annual TB test. The School of Nursing requires certified evidence of good health and a TB test within one year of enrollment in a clinical practicum course. More frequent testing for TB may be required by specific clinical agencies.

CORI Checks

Increasingly hospitals and health care agencies that are used by Boston College School of Nursing for clinical experiences are requiring that all students and faculty be investigated for any felonies before they can be at that agency. The mechanism for this is called a CORI check. All master's students must have on file in the Graduate Office permission for Boston College to obtain CORI checks and permission for the actual CORI requests. Failure to have these on file could prevent a student from participating in a clinical practicum.

Academic Policies

Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend classes regularly. Students who are absent from class or clinical practica will be evaluated by the faculty as to their ability to meet course objectives. Students are expected to notify faculty prior to a scheduled clinical session if they will be absent or tardy.

In some instances, a student misses too many classes or clinical days to satisfactorily complete the course. In such cases the student should discuss withdrawing from the course with the professor and academic advisor. All withdrawal requests are signed by the Associate Dean.

A student who is absent from class is responsible for the class content as well as for knowledge of any announcements that may have been given. In the case of an anticipated prolonged absence for illness or injury, the student obtains a Leave of Absence Form from the Office of the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs. The Dean will notify the student's professors of the leave of absence.

If classes are cancelled due to a severe snowstorm, power failure, or some other emergency, notification will be broadcast on radio and television between 6:30 and 8:30 a.m. Stations announcing this information are WBZ (1030 AM), WRKO (680 AM), and WBMX (98.5 FM) on radio, as well as Channel 4 (WBZ-TV) and Channel 5 (WCVB-TV) on television. Notification is also available by calling 552-INFO. Students who miss classes or clinical experience for religious reasons should discuss this with the faculty member in advance so alternative arrangements can be made.

Guidelines for courteous cell phone use

Out of respect for faculty and fellow students, please turn off your cell phones in class. If you need to be available in case of personal or professional emergencies, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- put your phone on a vibrate setting
- sit near the door
- if you receive a call, immediately exit the classroom and answer the call well out of earshot of classrooms and offices.

Exams and Quizzes

Students are responsible for taking all tests, quizzes, and examinations when they are given and have no automatic right as students to be given a make-up examination. Therefore, students should pay special attention to the announced dates and double check the time, date, and place of the final examination.

If students miss an exam, they should contact the professor immediately and ask if she or he will discuss options to make up work that was missed. Any arrangements must be worked out between the faculty member and the student.

Lost Work

It is the student's responsibility to see that the faculty member receives the work submitted. Students should always make a copy of a paper or project before submitting it, especially if mailing it or leaving it at a department office.

If a student does not receive the graded work back on time or if there is any doubt as to whether it has been received, it is prudent to check with the faculty member immediately.

Grading

In each graduate course in which she or he registers for graduate credit, the student will receive one of the following grades at the end of the semester: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, or F. The high passing grade of A is awarded for course work that is distinguished. The ordinary passing grade of B is awarded for course work that is clearly satisfactory at the graduate level. The low passing grade of C is awarded for work that is minimally acceptable at the graduate level.

Academic credit is granted for courses in which a student receives a grade of A, A-, B+, B, B-, or C. No academic credit is granted for a course in which a student receives a grade of F.

The following scale is used in graduate courses in the William F. Connell School of Nursing:

A 94 -100 %

A- 90-93

B+ 87-89

B 84-86

B- 80-83

C 74-79

F Below 74

Incomplete and Deferred Grades

All required work in any course must be completed by the date set for the course examination. A student who has not completed the research or written work for a course, may, with adequate reason and at the discretion of the faculty member, receive an I (incomplete). A student must successfully complete courses that are prerequisites to a course before enrolling in the subsequent course. If a course in which the student has an Incomplete is not a prerequisite, the course must be completed within four months.

An incomplete grade (I) that is longer than four months will be converted to F. Any exception must have approval of the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs. All courses must be successfully completed in order for students to be eligible to sit for master's or doctoral comprehensive examinations.

Late Papers/Research Projects

Students are responsible for submitting all written work for a course to the faculty member by the specified deadline. Professors are not obliged to accept any work beyond the deadline or to grant extensions. All arrangements for submission of the work must be negotiated directly between the faculty member and the student.

Academic Evaluation Disputes

Students have the right to know the components of a course on which the final grade will be based, to be graded fairly in relation to the other students in the course, and to understand why a particular grade was given. The faculty member has the right to determine which course components will be graded and the weight that will be given to each, the right to determine the grading scale to be employed, and the responsibility to grade students consistently on that scale. She/he is also expected to provide a syllabus for each course, specifying dates for assignments and examinations, and the weight given to each course component in determining the final grade, as well as objectives for the course. If the student feels, in light of the above, that a grade is unfair, the student should first make an appointment to see the professor, bring a copy of the paper or exam in question, and request that she or he explain why and how the grade was determined. If, after discussing the grade with the faculty member, the student still feels the grade is unfair, the student may appeal to the chairperson of the department in which the course is offered. If this discussion does not produce a satisfactory resolution, the student may file a formal appeal. The Graduate Associate Dean will explain this procedure.

Academic Standing

The following policies apply to overall grade point average and course grades for students in the Master's program.

A Grade Point Average of (GPA) of 3.0 is required. If the GPA falls below 3.0 the student will be on academic review. Students receiving an "F" in one course, or six (6) or more credits or two (2) courses of "C" also will be placed on academic review. Academic review may result in recommendations that coursework be repeated, that the student be placed on academic probation, or that the student be dismissed from the program.

See section under Master's Entry Program for grading policies for that program.

Students in the Ph.D. Program must maintain an average grade of B or better. A grade of C or lower in any course is cause for academic review.

Academic and Professional Integrity

Students are expected to have high standards of integrity in both the academic and clinical settings. Integrity is a reflection of the respect that one holds for oneself and others. It is reflected by student behavior in the school, clinical setting, and other environments. Unprofessional conduct is considered serious and may result in dismissal from the school.

Please see the Boston College Catalog 2005-2006 for statements on academic integrity policies and procedures. Expected ethical behavior in clinical situations is based on the American Nurses' Association Code for Nurses. Students are expected to protect patients' confidentiality, and to be honest in any documentation regarding the patient's condition and their own assessments and interventions. Students are expected to maintain high professional standards, including being physically, intellectually, emotionally, and academically prepared when caring for patients.

Research Integrity and Responsible Conduct of Science

Scientific integrity, the conscious adherence to a set of ethical principles, is the hallmark of all scholarly disciplines, including nursing. Boston College is guided by the ethical principles regarding all research involving human subjects. Graduate students in the School of Nursing who plan to conduct research with humans or material of human origins must submit their research proposals to the Boston College Institutional Review Board (BCIRB) for review and approval prior to carrying out the project. See the website <http://www.bc.edu/research/rcip/human/>

Student Absences for Religious Reasons

Any student who is unable, because of her/his religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such examination, or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study or work requirement that may have been missed because of such absence on any particular day. However, such makeup examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon the University or the faculty.

Withdrawal from a Course

Students who withdraw from a course after the registration period but before the last three weeks of class will have a W recorded in the grade column of their permanent record. The last date for withdrawal from a course is specified on the Academic Calendar for each semester. Students will not be permitted to drop courses during the last three weeks of classes or during the exam period; students who are still registered at this point will receive a final grade for the semester.

Students may withdraw from a course or change from credit to audit up to three weeks prior to examinations and may receive a partial tuition refund on withdrawals submitted during the three weeks following registration. Students changing from credit to audit receive no refund.

Withdrawal from Boston College

Students who wish to withdraw from Boston College in good standing are required to file a Withdrawal Form in the University Registrar's Office. In the case of students who are dismissed for academic or disciplinary reasons, the appropriate college administrator will complete this form.

Transfer of Credit/s

Students who have completed one full semester of graduate work at Boston College may request transfer of not more than six graduate credits earned elsewhere. Only courses in which a student has received a grade of B or better, and which have not been applied to a prior degree, will be accepted. To transfer a course in lieu of a required course, the student must provide a copy of the course description and course syllabus, which is then reviewed by the course faculty and the Associate Dean for equivalency (see forms in the Appendix and on the GSON website. Credit received for courses completed more than ten years prior to a student's admission to his or her current degree program are not acceptable for transfer. Transfer of Credit forms, which are available in the Graduate Programs Office, should be submitted together with an official transcript to the Associate Dean for approval. If approved, the transfer course and credit, but not a grade, will be recorded on the student's permanent record.

Graduation

The University awards degrees in May, August and December of each year, although commencement ceremonies are held only in May.

May Graduation

Graduate School degrees are awarded at the annual May commencement. Students who plan to graduate in May should file a Graduation Form (on-line) by the deadline stated in the Academic Calendar (usually early in February). For students who sign up for graduation but who for some reason do not graduate on the anticipated date, the Registrar's Office will automatically move them up to the next scheduled graduation period.

Diplomas are distributed to individual students at the School of Nursing Ceremony immediately following the completion of the overall university commencement exercises. Diplomas will be mailed to students unable to attend commencement. Diplomas or transcripts will not be awarded or issued unless all financial and library accounts and fees have been paid.

August and December Graduations

Graduate students who have completed all degree requirements by August 31 or December 31 are eligible to receive the degree as of those dates. The procedure is the same as for May graduation. Since there are no commencement exercises in December or August, the names of those receiving degrees will be included in the program of the following May commencement. Those students who would like to participate in the May ceremonies must notify the Graduate Office.

Time Limits

Master's students are permitted five consecutive years from the date of acceptance into the program for completion of all requirements for the Master's degree. Doctoral students have a maximum of eight consecutive years to complete all requirements for the doctoral program. Extensions are permitted only with approval of the department concerned and the Associate Dean.

Policy on Not Registered (NR) students

All students enrolled in a degree program must register for a course/s each academic semester until their degree is successfully completed. Matriculated students who are not registered must complete an LOA or Withdrawal form and return it to Graduate Programs Office (Cushing 202H).

Leave of Absence (LOA)

Students enrolled in a degree program who do not register for course work, Thesis Direction or for Master's Interim Study, or Doctoral Continuation in any given semester must request a leave of absence for that semester. Leaves of absence are not normally granted for more than one semester at a time. Students may obtain the Leave of Absence Form from the Graduate Programs Office and submit this form to that office for the Dean's approval. Leave time will normally be considered a portion of the total time limit for the degree unless the contrary is decided upon initially between the student and the Dean. Students must meet any conditions specified for return from a leave of absence. Students on leave of absence must still follow procedures and deadlines for initiating the placement process for clinical practica; clinical placements may not be available if these requirements are not followed. Students must notify the Graduate Office by March 1 prior to academic year in which they plan to return and enroll in clinical practica.

Re-Admission

Students who desire readmission will initiate the process in the Graduate Programs Office. Applications for readmission should be made, and the readmission fee paid, at least six weeks before the start of the semester in which the former student seeks to resume study. The readmission fee will be billed to the student's account.

The Associate Dean will make the decision on the readmission application, and the Registrar's Office will notify the former student about the action taken. The decision will be based on consideration of the best interests of both the student and the University.

Academic Advisement

It is the student's responsibility to take advantage of the advisement system. Each student, upon entering the School of Nursing, is assigned to an advisor, a faculty member in the School of Nursing. Usually this advisor continues as advisor throughout the student's program of study. Exceptions are when the faculty member is on sabbatical, leaves Boston College, or the student requests a new advisor. Students should meet with their advisors on a regular basis, especially prior to registration in the fall and spring. The faculty advisor must approve the student's initial Plan of Study and any changes. Students are expected to keep their advisors informed about their academic progress and to seek assistance with problems in a timely way.

Plan of Study

Each student must have on file in the Graduate Office a Plan of Study signed by the student and faculty advisor. This must be kept up to date. In addition to providing guidance to students in progressing through the curriculum, the plans of study are used to predict course enrollments. Plans of study for MS and Ph.D. programs can be attained from the Graduate Office, the BC website (<http://www.bc.edu/schools/son/>) or from the GSON WebCT website.

Summer Sessions

The Graduate School of Nursing usually offers several courses during Summer Session I and Summer Session II. Courses with less than 10 students may be cancelled. In order to plan and have reasonable assurance of course enrollment, students must indicate their plans to take summer session courses by April 1 in the Graduate Office (They must also officially register for these courses through the university registrar).

THE MASTER'S PROGRAM

The Master's program prepares graduates for advanced nursing practice. Advanced nursing practice encompasses the direct care role and other role components of research, teaching, consultation, collaboration, management, and leadership. The direct care role reflects independent, autonomous evidence - based actions at the expert level. Overall role development as an advanced practice nurse is based on nursing knowledge and the utilization of knowledge from other disciplines.

The American Nurses' Association definition of advanced nursing practice provides a general framework for the master's program curriculum:

Nurses in advanced practice have a graduate degree in nursing. They conduct comprehensive health assessments. They demonstrate a high level of autonomy and expert skill in the diagnosis and treatment of complex responses of individuals, families and communities to actual or potential health problems. They formulate clinical decisions to manage acute and chronic illness and promote wellness. Nurses in advanced practice integrate education, research, management and consultation into their clinical role and function in collegial relationships with nursing peers, physicians, professionals and others who influence the health environment (American Nurses Association, 1991, 2003, 2004).

Advanced nursing practice is concerned with the recognition and treatment of complex human responses in health and illness within a specific patient population. Theory and research are viewed as integral to advanced practice. Clinical judgment is a decision making process that uses diagnostic, therapeutic and ethical reasoning to identify and respond to patients' needs. This process is used to isolate problems and implement research-based and theory-based nursing interventions to achieve desired patient outcomes.

Specialization occurs through the acquisition of in-depth knowledge about life processes as well as identification of responses and phenomena occurring in a particular patient population. The application and use of theory and research are essential elements of advanced practice.

Master's students select their area of specialization through the specialty area chosen for study (e.g., adult health, gerontology, pediatrics, women's health, community/family nurse practitioner; psychiatric-mental health, nurse anesthesia). Specialization is augmented by support courses and concentration on more specific patient populations within each major specialty area: (e.g., nursing care of clients with AIDS, clients with present and past trauma and abuse, clients with cancer or cardiac problems, etc.)

ACCREDITATION

The Master of Science Degree Program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). There is no accreditation body for doctoral programs in nursing.

CERTIFICATION

Graduates of the Master's Program are eligible to apply for certification by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) of the American Nurses Association as a Nurse Practitioner or Clinical Nurse Specialist in their area of specialization. Graduates of the women's health nursing curriculum are eligible to sit for the National Certification Corporation (NCC) examination for women's health (OB/GYN) nurse practitioners. Graduates of the pediatric nurse practitioner program can sit for the ANCC exam or the exam by the certification board of NAPNAP. Graduates of the nurse anesthetist program take the examination of the Council on Certification of Nurse Anesthetists.

MASTER'S PROGRAM OBJECTIVES (Accepted by Faculty Assembly May 9, 2001)

1. Implement a philosophy of nursing congruent with the Judeo-Christian values that support the intrinsic worth of each human being;
2. Incorporate theory, research and values within a conceptual framework for nursing practice;
3. Generate clinical judgments (diagnostic, therapeutic, and ethical) to guide the selection and evaluation of nursing interventions for complex health problems;
4. Use outcome criteria to evaluate effectiveness of clinical practice;
5. Identify researchable questions that arise from clinical practice;
6. Use current knowledge to provide high quality health care, initiate change, and improve nursing practice;
7. Coordinate care for clients from diverse populations across health care systems;
8. Collaborate with clients and other professionals to promote quality care;
9. Implement the role of the advanced practice nurse within a specialized area of clinical nursing practice;**
10. Articulate the role of the advanced practice nurse and its influence on health care and policy on local, state, national, and global levels.

**Areas of specialization include adult health, gerontology, pediatrics, women's health, community/family nurse practitioner, psychiatric-mental health, and nurse anesthesia

CURRICULUM

Curricular Overview: The Master's Program

(**The Master's Entry Program and Nurse Anesthesia Program are described later)

The standard master's program for RNs with a BSN requires 45 credits and can be completed full time in 18 to 24 months. Most students, however, take the program on a part-time basis, usually over 2.5 -3 years. Students have 5 years to complete the program.

The curriculum is designed around three components: core content considered basic to advanced practice nursing regardless of specialty area; support courses (electives and required prerequisites); and specialty courses (theory and practicum courses). Core courses consist of the conceptual basis for advanced nursing practice, ethical reasoning, research, pharmacotherapeutics/pharmacology, advanced health assessment, physiological life processes, and the scope of the advanced nursing practice role. These courses provide a foundation for the study of patient responses and therapeutics within each clinical specialty area used by nurses to effectively intervene and resolve patient problems. The clinical specialty courses consist of a total of 18 credits taken over a two-semester sequence. The support courses are cognates, electives, or other required prerequisite courses that support the student's specialization.

In some clinical specialties, students may choose preparation as a nurse practitioner (NP) or as a clinical nurse specialist (CNS).

Core courses:

- NU 415 Conceptual Basis for Advanced Nursing Practice (3 cr.)
- NU 416 Ethical Reasoning and Issues in Advanced Nursing Practice (3 cr.)
- NU 417 Advanced Nursing Practice within Complex Health Care Systems (3 cr.)
- NU 420/426 Pharmacotherapeutics/Psychopharmacology (3 cr.)
- NU 430 Advanced Health Assessment Across the Life Span (3 cr.)
- NU 520 Nursing Research Theory (3 cr.)
- NU 672 Physiological Life Processes (Pathophysiology) (3 cr.)
- Research Practicum Options (students choose one)*
 - *NU 523 Computer Analysis/Health Data (3 cr.)
 - *NU 524 Masters Research Practicum (3 cr.)
 - *NU 525 Integrative Review/Nursing Research (3 cr.)

Elective (3 cr.)

Specialty Courses:

18 credits

- NU _____ Advanced Theory I (3 cr.)
- NU _____ Advanced Practice I (6 cr.)
- NU _____ Advanced Theory II (3 cr.)
- NU _____ Advanced Practice II (6 cr.)

* After completing 6 credits of research, a student may opt to take NU 801 Master's Thesis, which may be part of the 45 credits for the degree.

Adult Health Nursing

Ambulatory Care Adult Nurse Practitioner

NU 462 NU 463 NU 562 NU 563

Ambulatory Care/Gerontological Nurse Practitioner

NU 428 NU 462 NU 465 NU 562 NU 565

Adult Clinical Nurse Specialist

NU 462 NU 467 NU 562 NU 480

Community Health Nursing

Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)

NU 472 NU 473 NU 572 NU 573

Community Health CNS

NU 472 NU 475 NU 572 NU 480

Maternal Child Health Nursing

Pediatric Ambulatory Care (PNP)

NU 452 NU 457 NU 552 NU 557

Women's Health (Ob/Gyn/Women's Health NP)

NU 452 NU 453 NU 552 NU 553

Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing

Psychiatric Mental Health CNS

NU 443 NU 445 NU 543 NU 545

Core Courses

Core courses provide content generic to all the areas of advanced practice; this knowledge is then applied within the course of each specialty. Core content provides a basis for students to incorporate nursing theory, research, advanced practice role theory and scope of practice, health assessment, ethical reasoning, pharmacology/pharmacotherapeutics, physiological life processes, and expert clinical judgment in a specialized area of nursing.

Conceptual Basis for Advanced Nursing Practice: This core course discusses the theoretical foundations of advanced practice nursing.

Advanced Nursing Practice within Complex Health Care Systems: This core course focuses on the role of the advanced practice nurse within complex health care systems

Ethical Reasoning and Issues in Advanced Nursing Practice: This core course focuses on the ethical responsibilities of the advanced practice nurse and current ethical issues in health care.

Advanced Health Assessment Across the Life Span: This core course is designed to provide advanced practice nursing students with planned classroom and laboratory experiences to refine health assessment skills.

Pathophysiology: This core course is a study of physiologic theories applicable to nursing. It focuses on normal and abnormal life processes with application to exemplar cases.

Research Requirements

Research: The required research sequence (6 credits) provides essential understanding of research concepts and methodology as a basis for utilizing research in practice and connecting theory and research in nursing practice. All students take NU 520 Nursing Research Theory and an additional three credit research practicum. The research practicum can be completed through several options. In NU 524 Master's Research Practicum students participate in some aspect of research such as their own individual research project, working within a faculty member's ongoing research, conducting a quality assurance study or conducting research utilization study. NU 523 Computer Analysis of Health Data provides the student with the opportunity to use computerized statistical packages that can be used to address research questions. In NU 525 Integrative Review of Nursing Research students systematically analyze the nursing research literature to answer a research question. An opportunity also is provided for interested students to do a Master's Thesis, which would be additional to the required two-course research requirement.

Pharmacology/Pharmacotherapeutics:

Pharmacotherapeutics (NU 420) is a core course that provides the advanced practice nurse with an understanding of pharmacology and pharmacotherapeutics as they relate to the advanced practice nurse, including prescribing.

Psychopharmacology (NU426) is the required pharmacology course for students in the psychiatric-mental health-nursing specialty.

Clinical Specialty Courses

The clinical specialty courses focus on the phenomena and responses of concern for specific patient populations and on advanced practice role development. Students develop caseloads of patients and manage health care for varying amounts of time, depending on the clinical specialty, population, and setting.

In the first semester of these specialty courses, the focus is on application of advanced health assessment strategies and understanding of life processes, functional health patterns and human responses to the lived experience. In the second semester courses, intervention becomes more central and the direct care and patient management role is further developed and expanded into the indirect role components. Emphasis is placed on understanding and critiquing the theory and research base behind life processes, human responses, and therapeutic interventions.

In each clinical specialty track, students analyze patient care delivery systems for their impact on patient care, nursing and health care delivery, and develop strategies to improve care delivery in that setting. Clinical practice hours are those required for certification in the students' clinical specialty (usually 600 hours).

Students in the Master's Entry Program must successfully complete the first year of full-time study in this program and achieve RN licensure; they then complete all of the coursework in the above curriculum.

RN/MS students must successfully complete all baccalaureate level courses and examinations, including the GRE, before progression into the above curriculum.

Clinical Practica

Students planning to take clinical courses must sign up for these and make a deposit by December 31. Decisions to take clinical courses after this date may be accommodated based on preceptor availability. However, placements cannot be guaranteed for requests that are made after April 1.

Students must have up-to-date immunizations, and a TB test and statement of good health within a year of entering a clinical course. Additional testing may be required by specific agencies.

The number of clinical hours and kinds of clinical experiences required for certification varies in each specialty. Students should be sure that they meet the hour and other practice requirements for their specialty.

The clinical placement(s) for each student is chosen by the faculty in accordance with the course objectives and the student's objectives and areas of interest. Students are encouraged to provide suggestions for preceptors or agencies; however, they should not approach an agency or preceptor unless given permission to do so by the faculty.

In the clinical areas, students should clearly identify themselves with a name badge as a Master's Student in the Boston College Graduate School of Nursing.

Criminal background checks (CORI) are required by many clinical agencies. Students need to complete permission forms, which must be on file.

LIABILITY INSURANCE/LICENSURE

Students who are Registered Nurses (RN's) must arrange for their own individual malpractice liability insurance. (Note: A liability policy provided by an employer may not cover the RN other than when she/he is practicing as an employee.) Master's students must provide evidence of individual liability insurance and Massachusetts RN licensure upon enrollment in a course with a clinical component. Exceptions to the Massachusetts RN license requirement are granted on a case-by-case basis when the clinical portions of courses are arranged in other states.

PATHOGEN EXPOSURE

As part of their clinical nursing courses, students are responsible to use precautions to prevent exposure to or transmission of pathogens. It is the student's responsibility to use the appropriate techniques when caring for patients in the specific clinical setting. The Kennedy Resource Center has information about the latest policies and procedures from OSHA and CDC. If exposure occurs, the student must immediately inform her/his preceptor and faculty advisor and follow agency protocols. A written report of the incident also must be provided to the Graduate Office and University Health Services.

NEEDLESTICK INJURIES AND OTHER EXPOSURES TO BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS

Students are expected to take precautions to prevent needlestick injury in the clinical area. If such an injury occurs, the faculty member should be notified immediately and a written report should be provided to the Graduate Office.

BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS

Exposure to Blood Borne Pathogens

Immediate assessment and confidentiality are critical issues and direct the following actions: If a student, or faculty member, while engaged in clinical practice activities has an exposure to potentially infected body fluid from a client, the first action is to:

- a. IMMEDIATELY remove soiled clothing and wash the exposed area with soap and water.
- b. Notify faculty member
- c. Report to nearest emergency room.. If treatment for HIV is to be initiated, it is optimally initiated within 2 hours of exposure.
- d. Identify self as student/faculty with a possible HIV/HBV or Hepatitis C exposure.
- e. Give close attention to filling out the Accident Report for the agency, School of Nursing and University Health Services. A copy of the agency report form must be forwarded to the Office of the Dean, School of Nursing within 72 hours of exposure.

Boston College, in the position of guarantor, will assume the financial responsibility, if necessary, for emergency assessment and interventions through the first 72 hours after the exposure incident occurs.

No member of the Boston College community, either student or faculty, shall be denied medical evaluation and counseling based on immediate fee-for-service.

INDEPENDENT STUDY (NU 699)

Students may choose to do an independent study as an elective. The student works under the direction of a faculty member. Forms for the approval of proposals for NU 699 are available in the Graduate Office and on the GSON WebCT site.

NU 801 Masters Thesis Option

The nursing thesis follows the research theory and research option. Students elaborate on learning experiences gained in the research course by completing an individual clinical research project under the guidance of a faculty member and a reader. Guidelines are available in the Graduate office.

MASTER’S COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

At the end of the program all students must pass a comprehensive exam which gives students the opportunity to demonstrate their integration and application of core content with specialty knowledge and skills. The exams may be verbal, written, or both, as determined by each department.

Students must be in good academic standing during their final semester of course work with anticipated progress towards meeting that semester’s course requirements to be eligible to take comprehensive exams. Students must also have successfully completed all previous course work in order to take comprehensives. This examination also serves as program outcome measure for the master's degree program. (see additional information in later section).

Each candidate should consult her or his department to learn the time and nature of the comprehensive examination. Registration for comprehensives will take place directly with the individual departments. Questions on the nature and exact date of examinations should be directed to the department chairperson or the Graduate Programs Office. The following grading scale is used: pass with distinction (PwD), pass (P), and fail (F). Generally, within two weeks, notification of examination results will be sent in writing to the Registrar's Office and the individual student. A candidate who fails the Master's Comprehensive Examination may repeat the examination only once. Students who have completed their course work should register for Master's Interim Study (888) each semester until they complete their comprehensive examinations. Only the registration fee and the activity fee are charged during this period; no credit is granted.

MASTER’S ENTRY PROGRAM

Sample Curriculum

This program is designed for individuals who have a baccalaureate degree in another field and who are not nurses. In this program, students study generalist nursing on a full-time basis and after receiving a license as a Registered Nurse, they then proceed into the specialist coursework.

YEAR I*

<i>Fall Semester</i>		<i>Spring Semester</i>	
Pathophysiology	3	Pharmacology in Advanced	3
Pharmacology/Nutrition	3	Practice Nursing	
Nursing Science I	6	Nursing Science II	6
Clinical Practice in Nursing I	4	Clinical Practice in Nursing II	6
<i>Summer Session I</i>		<i>Summer Session II</i>	
Advanced Health Assessment	3	Nursing Research Theory	3
Across the Lifespan		NCLEX exam	
Synthesis Clinical	3		

*Must be taken full-time.

YEAR II**

<i>Fall Semester</i>		<i>Spring Semester</i>	
Conceptual Basis for Advanced Practice Nursing	3	Scope of Advanced Practice Nursing	3
Ethical Reasoning and Issues in Advanced Practice Nursing	3	Research Practicum	3
Advanced Theory Specialty I	3	Advanced Theory Specialty II	3
Advanced Practice Specialty I	6	Advanced Practice Specialty II	6
		Total Credits	70

**Can be taken part-time or full-time.

Academic Policies

Accelerated Master's Entry into Nursing Program (AMEN)

The following are policies that are specific to the Accelerated Master's Program.

Progression:

The Master's Entry Program was designed with the philosophy that students who already possess a baccalaureate degree and the prerequisite courses, and who meet the admission criteria will be able to successfully complete the first year of the "accelerated" portion of the program. In eleven months of intensive study, students are prepared to sit for the RN licensing exam. Consequently, the schedule for the first year is intensive and includes many hours in the classroom, in clinical agencies, and in completing reading and paper assignments. While both semesters are rigorous, the fall semester is somewhat less demanding than the spring semester. Therefore, the fall semester is considered probationary. Students must meet the requirement of achieving a minimum grade of B (84) in every class in the fall in order to progress to the spring. Students must also pass clinical competency exams in no more than two attempts or they will receive a failing grade in the clinical course. The curriculum allows no time for remediation. Students will not be allowed to repeat courses if they receive less than a B in any course or if they withdraw. The Master's Entry Committee will evaluate student progression and retention after each semester.

Preparation for NCLEX-RN (National Council Licensure Exam for Registered Nurses)

Each student will be expected to do the following:

1. Attend NCLEX Information sessions conducted by the Associate Dean of the Undergraduate Program or her designee.
2. Take the Mosby Assess test unless the Associate Dean waives the requirement.
3. Take any or all portions of an NCLEX review course if so recommended by the Associate Dean via the Master's Entry Committee.

Criteria for Progression to the Specialist Curriculum Clinical Courses

1. The student must be licensed as a registered nurse.
2. The student must have a B average or better.

SPECIALTY PROGRAMS

Special Options within the Master's Degree Program.

CRNA

Certified Register Nurse Anesthetist. The nurse anesthesia program is a collaborative effort between the William F. Connell School of Nursing and Anaesthesia Associates of Massachusetts. The curriculum design takes advantage of the core courses common to all Master of Science nursing specialties and combines these with the advanced physiologic and pharmacologic principles specific to nurse anesthesia practice. Clinical practica at the varied facilities for whom the Anaesthesia Associates of Massachusetts provide anesthesia services give students broad hands-on experience. The 27-month full-time curriculum was accredited by the Council of Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs in October 2002.

CRNA Program Plan of Study

Year One – Spring semester	Credit Hours
NU 420 Pharmacotherapeutics in Advanced Nursing Practice	3
NU 415 Conceptual Basis for Advanced Nursing Practice	3
NU 672 Patho Physiologic Life Processes	3
NU 490 Physiologic Variables for Nurse Anesthesia I: Respiratory	3
NU 491 Chemistry and Physics for Nurse Anesthesia Practice	3
Year One – Summer semester	
NU 492 Basic Principles of Nurse Anesthesia	3
NU 493 Pharmacology of Anesthetics and Accessory Drugs	3
NU 494 Physiologic Variables for Nurse Anesthesia II: Cardiovascular	3
NU 520 Nursing Research Theory (SS II)	3
NU 430 Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan (SS I)	3
Year Two – Fall semester	
NU 591 Clinical Practicum in Nurse Anesthesia I	3
NU 590 Physiologic Var. for Nurse Anesthesia III: Neurological, Endocrine and Renal	3
NU 416 Ethical Issues in Advanced Nursing Practice	3
Research II (Choose one of three options – NU 523, 524, 525)	3
Year Two – Spring semester	
NU 592 Advanced Principles for Nurse Anesthesia Practice	3
NU 593 Clinical Practicum in Nurse Anesthesia II	3
NU 417 Scope of Advanced Practice Nursing	3
Year Two – Summer semester	
NU 595 Clinical Practicum in Nurse Anesthesia III	3
Year Three – Fall semester	
NU 691 Nurse Anesthesia Residency I	1
Year Three - Spring semester	
NU 693 Nurse Anesthesia Residency II	<u>1</u>
Total credits	56

MS/MBA Dual Degree

The MS/MBA dual degree is a combined program for both the education of advanced practice nurses and preparation in business administration in the Wallace E. Carroll Graduate School of Management at Boston College. Students work toward completion of both degree requirements concurrently or in sequence. Through overlap of electives that would meet the requirements of both programs, the total number of credits for both degrees can be reduced.

Additional Specialty Concentration

The additional specialty concentration option is designed for registered nurses who have a master's degree in nursing and who wish to enhance their educational background in an additional specialty area. It is a non-degree program of study, individually designed by the student and faculty advisor to meet career goals.

RN/MS

RN-MS students are required to satisfy all undergraduate science and liberal arts course requirements. Course substitution for university core requirements may be allowed on an individual basis. Credit may be received by direct transfer, exemption exam, or actual course enrollment. Students are required to successfully pass the NLN Nursing Acceleration Challenge examinations in Adult, Psychiatric-Mental Health, Child and Childbearing Nursing, Pathophysiology, Pharmacology/Nutrition, and Fundamentals. Completion of BC School of Nursing prerequisite nursing, science and liberal arts courses is viewed as establishing baccalaureate level competencies as a basis for the study of advanced practice nursing.

RN-MS students complete the Master's degree in the same sequence and with the same master's courses as other master's students.

Pastoral Ministry and Nursing – MA/MS

Students may earn a joint degree with the Institute for Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry at BC and the Connell School of Nursing.

MS/Ph.D. Program

This program is designed for individuals with a BS who wish to obtain both preparation in advanced practice nursing as well as preparation at the doctoral level for clinical research. The program allows for 12 credits of the Master's program (Nursing Research Theory, MS research practicum, Master's elective and Conceptual Basis of Advanced Nursing Practice) to be met through doctoral program courses. It can be completed in four years of fulltime study.

Master's Completion Program

This program allows nurse practitioners who are nationally certified to complete requirements for a master's degree.

5th Year or BS/MS plan

This plan provides an opportunity for highly qualified students enrolled in BC's baccalaureate program to be admitted during their junior year to the master's program. They take selected master's courses during their undergraduate program and then can complete the master's at Boston College with one additional year of study. Students interested in this option should consult with Dr. Catherine Read, Interim Associate Dean for Graduate Programs.

THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM

UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIPS

Purpose of the Fellowship

To encourage highly qualified students to enroll in doctoral studies (Ph.D. or MS-Ph.D.) and to increase engagement as a student and developing researcher.

Current Process

Each year five students who have the highest academic credentials are offered the Boston College University Fellowship. The Fellowship requires that the student be enrolled in full-time doctoral study and provides tuition and a yearly stipend of approximately \$9800. Students' academic credentials are ranked based on a rating of their admission materials. The overall ranking includes academic credentials, goal statement, professional activities, personal interview, writing sample, and prior research experiences and expertise. GRE scores and GPA are weighted more heavily than other aspects of the application materials.

Length of the Award

As of the 2005-2006 academic year, the Fellowships at the SON are for two academic years. The award is given at the time of admission and has the potential to be renewed for a second year based on an evaluation process between the faculty member with whom the fellow is working and the doctoral fellow in consultation with the Dean. The evaluation includes but is not limited to (1) quality of work performed, (2) communication with faculty and research team, and (3) availability to conduct research work.

Nature of Fellowship Work

The work of nurse researchers is complex and is part of a continuum that includes all the aspects of the research process. Fellows will collaborate with faculty members who are engaged in research.

Work experiences can include formulating researchable ideas, library searches, IRB applications, grant proposal writing, data collection, data inputting, data analysis, manuscript writing, and poster and podium/guest classroom presentations. It is important to understand that fellows are not asked to do anything that nurse researchers would not do themselves.

The faculty nurse researcher also has an opportunity to socialize and mentor the student into a variety of research forums where research initiatives can be developed and expanded. University Fellows are given the opportunity to collaborate with faculty nurse researchers and are expected to actively engage in these research-related activities.

Availability

University Fellows within the CSON **must** plan a work schedule with the faculty mentor for 8 hours during the work week at Boston College. Some flexibility may be possible in scheduling this time. It is expected that when students accept the Fellowship, they realize there is a commitment to be available to faculty during the workweek rather than during weekends or from home. When students agree to participate in the Fellowship program, it is **highly** recommended that they not work full-time. However, if this is not possible for any student, then they must make sure that the work of the Fellowship is performed in a satisfactory manner. A contract addressing this stipulation will need to be signed by the student, Associate Dean, and faculty before the fellowship begins and after each year of the Fellowship that follows.

Collaboration

University Fellows become members of a research team. As such, they will be mentored into a collaborative role with faculty actively engaged in research. Students and faculty will have many opportunities to discuss research issues. These opportunities will give the Fellow a chance to share ideas and personal insights and participate in decision-making related to the progression of the research study. Faculty will create an environment that gives the student a safe space to ask questions and explore insights to natural conclusions. The Fellowship offers students opportunities to advance their research knowledge and skills and enhance their ability to conduct independent investigations.

It is also the responsibility of the faculty to be available throughout each semester by a mutually agreed upon format (electronic, fact-to-face meetings, phone) to give direction and advice related to project completion as well as develop a forum for exchange.

Evaluation

Each University Fellow will participate in an evaluation process at the end of each Fellowship year usually at the end of the spring semester. At the beginning of each academic year the students will develop outcome criteria with their faculty mentors. These criteria will be used as an important part of the evaluation process. There are times when the work of the faculty mentors or the relationship between the mentor and Fellow may not be congruent to achieve the goals of the Fellowship for the given year. If this occurs, Fellows will have the opportunity to seek reassignment to another faculty member after consulting with the Dean of CSON in consultation with the faculty mentor.

While it is anticipated that the Fellowship experience will be a positive one for both the student and the faculty, it is the prerogative of the Dean of the CSON to terminate the fellowship if the Fellow's performance is not been deemed satisfactory by the faculty member.

SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS

for Ph.D. in Nursing at Boston College

1. Course Requirements

After being admitted to the program, students work with their advisors to prepare a Plan of study, which meets the requirements, set by the Doctoral Program Committee. Once signed by the advisor, the plan of study is submitted to the Graduate Programs Office. Course credits may exceed the 46 credits stipulated by the program.

2. Language Competency

Students must pass an examination in a foreign language or demonstrate computer literacy through completion of SON course work.

3. Comprehensive Examination

Students must successfully complete both the written and oral components of the examination. After successful completion of the Comprehensive Exam, students are admitted to candidacy.

4. Dissertation Proposal Preparation

After comprehensives, students register for dissertation advisement courses (NU 901-902). During these one or two semesters, students select the dissertation committee and file Intent to Submit Proposal for Dissertation, schedule proposal defense, and defend proposal.

5. Completion of Dissertation Research

After successfully defending a proposal, a student registers for NU 999 Doctoral Continuation each semester for the duration of dissertation research and defense.

6. Defense of the Dissertation

Student presents dissertation research to his/her committee in a public hearing.

7. Deposit of the Dissertation

After final version approved by committee, dissertation copies are submitted to the Graduate Programs Office.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM

The Ph.D. Program in Nursing is a post-Master's research-oriented degree. The focus of this program is on preparation for leadership roles in nursing, especially in clinical nursing research.

The program offers a variety of learning opportunities through course work, interdisciplinary colloquia, independent study, and clinical research practica. Policies and procedures are consistent with those of the University. Program planning is determined according to the individual's background, research interests, and stage of development in scholarly activities.

Low student-faculty ratios and research mentorship permit students to complete the program in the normative amount of time. Multiple resources for scholarly development are available within the University and in the research and clinical nursing centers of the Greater Boston area.

Course work may be taken on a three or four year trajectory. The three year full-time plan allows the student to take ten credits of course work per semester for the first two years of study before entering the dissertation phase of the program. Students in the part-time four-year plan take six to seven credits of course work per semester for the first three years of study prior to beginning the dissertation phase of the program.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES (Approved by Faculty Assembly, March 13, 2002)

The graduate of the doctoral program will:

1. Create future directions and strategies for developing nursing as a science and an art through synthesis and critique of knowledge for nursing.
2. Apply a range of methods of scholarly inquiry, including quantitative and qualitative methods, to the development of knowledge for nursing.
3. Demonstrate ethical, social, legal and moral responsibility in the conduct of clinical nursing research.
4. Participate in the development of knowledge-based solutions to socially and ethically significant issues in health care.
5. Articulate the perspective of nursing in multidisciplinary dialogue for the common good of a diverse and global society.

PROGRAM OF STUDY

The curriculum of the program includes three core areas of study: knowledge development in nursing, substantive nursing content, and research methods. The knowledge development component includes courses in philosophy of science, epistemology of nursing, and strategies for developing nursing knowledge. Substantive nursing content is acquired through the study of concepts (becoming, life processes, health), and programs of research (uncertainty, sensory preparation, etc.), and processes (ethical and diagnostic and therapeutic judgment). The research component of the program includes qualitative and quantitative research methods, statistics, clinical research, research practica, and dissertation advisement. Relevant cognate courses are required for each chosen area of research concentration in addition to the core areas of study.

Forty-six (46) credits are the minimum for meeting the degree requirements. Student background and interest may require additional credits.

NU 701 Epistemology of Nursing: 3 credits
NU 702 Strategies for Knowledge Development: 3 credits
PL 593 Philosophy of Science: 3 credits
NU 710 Themes of Inquiry I: Clinical Topics: 3 credits
NU 711 Themes of Inquiry II: Clinical Judgment: 3 credits
NU 820 Expanding Paradigms for Nursing Research: 3 credits
NU 821 Nursing Research and Health Policy Formulation: 3 credits
Quantitative/Qualitative Methods of Research: 6 credits

Statistics/Computer Application and Analysis of Data: 3 credits
Measurement in Nursing Research- References Data: 3 credits
Advanced Qualitative/Quantitative Methods: 3 credits
NU 810 Research Practicum I: 1 credit
NU 811 Research Practicum II: 1 credit
NU 812 Research Practicum III: 1 credit
NU 813 Research Practicum IV: 1 credit
Cognate/Elective: 3 credits
NU 998 Doctoral Comprehensives: 0 credits
NU 901 Dissertation Advisement: 3 credits
NU 902 Dissertation Advisement: 3 credits
TOTAL: 46 credits

NU 999 Doctoral Continuation: 1 credit (*For students who have not completed their dissertation in 3 years, if full-time or 4 years if part-time.)

Plans of Study (see appendices for 3 year and 4 year plan of study)

Cognates/electives are related to the student's area of research concentration. The number of credits in cognates is based on need, prior educational background and course work.

PROGRESSION THROUGH PROGRAM

1. Program Requirements

The doctoral courses, Research Practica, Colloquia, and Research Development Day are an integrated approach to student research development in the Ph.D. program. Students work with their advisors to formulate an individualized plan of study that includes courses offered inside the SON, elsewhere at BC, or at other universities as needed. Advisors also work to plan a series of four one-credit Research Practica that facilitate skill building and preparation for the student's dissertation research. The Practica may be supervised by the advisor or other faculty at BC School of Nursing. Information on Research Practica can be obtained from the Graduate Programs Office.

The Colloquia are evening gatherings held periodically during the semester. Attendance is required for all students. The purpose of the Colloquia is to share and discuss the work of fellow students with input from faculty, and to provide support and guidance from students and faculty in the development and conduct of student research.

Research Development Day is held annually and consists of brief summary presentations by students of their dissertation research designs, progress, pilot work, and preliminary findings as relevant to the student's level in the program. The purpose of the day is to give students the opportunity to gain input from a wide range of faculty and students and to learn from their colleagues' work. Faculty, fellow students, and some incoming students comprise the audience. All students must present twice during their course work (after completing NU 811 & 813) -- at the end of each year of coursework for those in the 3-year plan and at the end of the first and third or second and third years for those in the 4-year plan. Students should work closely with their advisors to plan their presentations.

2. Criteria for the Progression in Course Work

Students must maintain an average grade of B or better. A grade of C or lower in any course is cause for academic review.

3. Language Competency

Students must demonstrate proficiency in either a language other than English, or demonstrate Computer Literacy.

Computer Literacy

Completion of the doctoral program requirements such as course work, written and oral components of the comprehensive examination and dissertation research provides students with the skills needed to be computer literate. Therefore, computer literacy may be demonstrated by completion of all Ph.D. program requirements.

Foreign Language Competency

If a student desires to demonstrate competency in a foreign language, an examination or series of courses may be completed. The languages accepted include most classical or modern languages. Students who wish to fulfill the language requirement by taking an exam in Spanish, French, German or Russian should register for these examinations in the Office of Testing.

4. Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examination is designed to ascertain whether the student is to advance to doctoral candidacy. The examination consists of two parts: written and oral. The examination is intended to provide a sample of the student's capacity for original thought, theoretical and professional sophistication, research expertise, substantive knowledge, and ability to analyze and synthesize knowledge in nursing science.

Eligibility

A student in good academic standing (no incompletes or failures in required course work) may take the comprehensive exam during or after the last semester of course work.

Registration for Comprehensive Exams

Students must contact the graduate office to register for NU 998 (Doctoral Comprehensives) in the semester in which they will be taking the exam. (Note: No credit is granted for NU 998.) In addition, students intending to sit for the comprehensive examination should deliver a Comprehensive Examination Application Form to the Graduate Programs Office at least four weeks prior to the posted dates for the examination. The student must also notify her/his advisor by the same date. If the student has special needs that require accommodation during the written exam, a letter explaining the needs should be submitted to the Associate Dean along with the application form.

If not registered for other courses during the semester when they take the Comprehensive Examination, students will need to pay a fee (1 credit).

Comprehensive Examination Committee

The following procedure will begin as of the May/June 2006 exam date. With the advisor, the student selects an examination committee of two faculty members for the comprehensive examination. A third faculty member will be selected by the Ph.D. Program committee. A fourth member will participate as a non-voting member to be oriented to the exam process. The committee is subject to approval of the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs. The student may choose any doctorally-prepared faculty members in the SON to sit on the comprehensive examination committee. All members of the committee must be members of the SON faculty. For the September, 2005 exam date, the student selects all three committee members.

Scheduling

Comprehensive examinations are offered twice a year, in the spring (usually May/June) and fall (usually September). All students take the written component at the same time, whereas the oral component is completed individually after the written portion has been completed.

Students are responsible for scheduling the oral exam with their committee members at a mutually convenient time on a date specified for oral comprehensive examinations and reserving a room with the SON receptionist (617-552-4250). Once the room has been scheduled, students should inform all committee members in writing of the time and place for the examination.

Written Examination

The written component of the comprehensive examination is a take-home exam. Students may use their own computers and resources or complete the exam at BC. Students will all have the same 1.5 day period of time in which to write their exam. For example, questions may be emailed to students at 7 AM on the exam date and answers must be emailed back by 3 PM the following day.

The exam consists of 4 questions to be answered in writing. The questions are developed by the doctoral program faculty. Areas to be examined reflect the doctoral program objectives. Topics include but are not limited to knowledge development, research methods, substantive knowledge, clinical and ethical judgment, and nursing/health care issues and health policy. In responding to exam questions, students should integrate content from these areas.

Answers must be in essay form, be complete and concise, and include reference to the work of key authors in these areas. The exam should be typed in 12-point font, double spaced with 1-inch margins. Page limit is 10-12 pages per question. References should be included, using APA format.

Students attest their adherence to principles of academic integrity by signing a prescribed statement that will accompany the exam.

Oral Examination

Upon completion of the written portion of the comprehensive examination, the oral portion is scheduled with the committee members for a period of 1.5 to two hours. The student's written responses help to give focus to the oral portion, but do not limit discussion. Other topics related to the program objectives may be addressed during the oral portion of the examination.

Evaluation

The criteria for evaluation include demonstration of:

- a. clarity and succinctness in written and oral discussion
- b. ability to conceptualize, analyze, and synthesize
- c. capacity for organized thought
- d. substantive knowledge
- e. research methods expertise

The following grading system is used:

Pass with distinction	PWD
Pass	P
Fail	F

Following completion of the comprehensive examination, the chairperson of the examination committee submits an official ballot, graded and signed by each member of the committee, to the Associate Dean. The student receives a copy of the ballot.

Consequences of Failure

A student who fails the doctoral comprehensive examination may take it over again no more than once and not sooner than the following semester. The date for retaking the examination must be negotiated with the advisor. A new committee may be convened.

Students who have completed all course work but have not passed the written and oral portions of the Comprehensive Examination are not eligible to be admitted to candidacy and therefore may not register for dissertation advisement. The student must re-register for Doctoral Comprehensive NU 998 in the semester when the student plans to retake the exam.

Admission to Candidacy

A student attains the status of a doctoral candidate by passing the doctoral comprehensive or qualifying examination and by satisfying all departmental requirements except the dissertation. Doctoral candidates are required to register each semester for either dissertation advisement or doctoral continuation until completion of the dissertation.

DISSERTATION PHASE

See the Graduate Programs WebCT site and appendices of this handbook for copies of relevant forms. Students should obtain a dissertation packet from the Graduate Office.

Students enter the dissertation phase of the doctoral program after passing the comprehensive examination. The appropriate procedures are described in order to facilitate a successful transition from the status of doctoral candidate to graduate of the Ph.D program. In general, there are nine steps to consider in order to complete the dissertation phase successfully.

STEP 1 – Course registration after becoming a candidate

After admission to candidacy, the student registers for Dissertation Advisement (NU 901 and NU 902). (Each of these courses is considered a full-time course load for registration purposes.) The Teacher of Record (**TOR**) for NU 901/902 is the Chairperson of the dissertation committee, or, until the Chair is named, the **TOR is the** student's advisor. If more than two semesters is needed to complete the defense of the dissertation, the student registers for NU 999 Doctoral Continuation each semester until successful defense of the dissertation. All students are required to register and pay for doctoral continuation during each semester of their candidacy. Students register for doctoral continuation after completing all courses including the required two or more semesters of dissertation-related coursework. Failure to register for Doctoral Continuation can affect access to BC resources such as e-mail, library, databases, and other support services and resources. Payment of equivalent doctoral enrollment fees is required before a student can return after a lapse in enrollment.

STEP 2 – Dissertation committee selection

The student, through the Intent to Submit Proposal process and proposal form, initiates committee selection. Students may select the dissertation committee at any time before or during enrollment in Dissertation Advisement (NU 901/902).

The purpose of the dissertation committee is to guide the student through the dissertation phase of the program and determine the student's ability to contribute new knowledge or add to existing knowledge through research. Students should select committee members who will provide expertise to support the topic and methods chosen for the dissertation. Committee members must be available for full participation on the dissertation committee.

The dissertation committee consists of a minimum of three members with doctoral preparation. At least two should be from the faculty of the School of Nursing. The remainder may be (but are not required to be) members of the faculty of another school within the university or appropriately prepared persons outside the university. When selecting a committee member from outside of the School of Nursing, the student attaches the individual's two page biosketch or C.V. to the Intent to Submit Proposal Form and submits the completed form to the Graduate Programs Office. Faculty members who leave the university may serve on a dissertation committee (if they agree to do so) for *1* year after they leave. If a longer period is required, a written request must be submitted to the Associate Dean for approval. The Chairperson and committee members are chosen by the student, approved by her/his advisor (who may be selected as Chair by the student), and appointed by the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs. The Chairperson is a School of Nursing faculty member who agrees to take major responsibility for dissertation guidance.

STEP 3 – Statement of Intent to Submit Proposal

The Statement of Intent to Submit Proposal consists of the Intent to Submit Proposal form and an attached one-page abstract. The abstract should include: Title, Significance of Problem to be studied, Research Questions, and Proposed Method. These forms are available in the office of the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs.

Faculty signatures on the Statement of Intent form connote agreement to serve on the committee and acceptance of the student's preliminary research plans. The faculty advisor's signature indicates agreement that the student is ready for the dissertation phase of the program.

Once all members' signatures have been obtained, the Intent form is submitted to the Graduate Programs Office, with photocopies provided to each committee member, the faculty advisor, and the Graduate Programs Office.

STEP 4 – Preparation of the dissertation proposal

Students should communicate frequently and work closely with members of the dissertation committee to insure progress in all areas of the proposal. The proposal should be written so that with expansion and revision it will comprise the initial chapters of the dissertation and provide the basis for application to appropriate Institutional Review Board(s).

Suggested contents of the proposal are as follows:

Chapter 1: Statement of problem; significance of problem; purpose of the study, definitions, assumptions based on existing knowledge, and hypotheses or questions.

Chapter 2: Theoretical basis (unless qualitative methods requiring inductive theory development after data analysis are proposed); synthesized review of literature, relevant findings from pilot work; and other information deemed relevant by the committee.

Chapter 3: Study methodology; proposed sampling methods; instruments; and data analysis plans; modifications based on pilot study; timeline for completion; plans for IRB approval at Boston College and other agencies.

Appendices: Instruments, consent form, letters of support or approvals from agencies and/or IRBs.

STEP 5 – Human participants' protection and IRB approval processes

Human participants' protection is a critical step that precedes data collection. Therefore, data collection for the dissertation does not begin until after the committee and the relevant IRBs approve the proposal in writing. The Boston College IRB will not approve a proposal until the committee has approved it at the proposal defense. Pilot studies may be conducted before the dissertation proposal defense with IRB approval. Faculty will guide students in obtaining the relevant IRB approvals for this pilot work. Any applications for grants or for IRB approval must have prior written approval by the Chairperson of the dissertation committee. The form can be obtained from the graduate office or on the web at <http://www.bc.edu/research/rcip/human/> or at the GSON WebCT site.

Plans for the IRB approval processes at Boston College and at other agencies must be clearly identified. Appropriate letters of approval must be submitted to the Chair of the committee prior to initiating data collection.

A copy of the IRB approval is to be included in the appendices of the dissertation. (Institutional identifiers may be redacted as necessary at the discretion of the committee).

Students are expected to utilize principles of responsible conduct of research, and to implement any specifications or conditions imposed by IRBs. The dissertation committee and the IRB must approve any deviation from the approved dissertation proposal related to human subject participation. Students must submit yearly or periodic reports and/or applications for continuing approval to the IRB(s) as specified by each IRB.

STEP 6 – Proposal defense

At least 15 business days in advance of the proposal hearing, the student delivers copies of the proposal to each member of the dissertation committee for review. Prior to scheduling the hearing, the dissertation committee must agree that the plan for research is ready for implementation. Any reader who has serious reservations about the status of the proposal will advise the Chairperson of the dissertation committee, who will then meet with the student and advise the student to postpone the meeting. When the committee agrees that the student is ready to proceed, the candidate files the proposal defense form with the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, and consults with committee members to reserve a room at a mutually agreeable time and date. These arrangements must be made at least 10 business days prior to the intended date of the hearing.

At the proposal defense hearing, doctoral candidates will meet with members of their dissertation committee to discuss the dissertation proposal and to answer questions related to the proposal. The committee will make one of four decisions at the end of the hearing:

- The proposal is accepted.
- The proposal is accepted with stated qualifications.
- The proposal is rejected in its present form, but may be revised and resubmitted at a later date; at which time another proposal hearing will be scheduled when the committee agrees the proposal is ready.
- The proposal is rejected.

At the conclusion of the proposal hearing, if all members are satisfied that the student is ready to proceed with the research, committee members sign the Proposal Defense Form (provided by the dissertation Chair at the time of the hearing). Signatures indicate that the research plan is approved. After the proposal hearing, the student makes revisions as recommended by the committee, submits copies of the revised proposal to committee members and to the Graduate Office, and arranges for follow-up meetings with committee members as necessary to meet the student's needs. In addition, it is advisable to clarify how each committee member is to be involved during the dissertation process prior to terminating the proposal hearing. If the committee indicates that major revisions are required, the proposal will not be accepted and the committee members will not sign the Proposal Defense Form.

STEP 7 – Conduct and writing of dissertation research

Dissertation Preparation Instruction Packets

Following approval of the dissertation proposal, the student should obtain the packet containing dissertation preparation information from the Graduate Office.

The packet includes guidelines for formatting the abstract (Dissertation Guidelines handout) and document to UMI specifications, application for microfilming and copyright by UMI, and a survey of doctoral program graduates. Title pages (Dissertation Signature Title Page form- 2 originals) for committee signatures are provided, as is a sample of a traditional title page that also should be included in the dissertation. These materials are also on the Graduate Programs WebCT site. Instructions for numbers of copies of various documents to be submitted with the final approved copy of the dissertation (after the defense) are also included.

Writing the Dissertation

The completion of a dissertation is a major requirement for the doctoral degree. It is an independent scholarly work that must be approved by a committee of readers. The written dissertation is developed under the supervision of the committee Chair and the other committee members. The process for development and review shall be at the discretion of the Chair in concert with the other committee members and the student.

Completion, defense, and submission of the final version of the dissertation must occur within 8 years of initial enrollment into the BC Nursing Ph.D. Program. This 8-year period includes any leaves of absence (LOA). LOA forms and procedural information are available from the Graduate Programs Office. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the deadline for submission of the final version of the dissertation.

Changes in Dissertation Committee Membership

If changes occur in committee membership during the dissertation phase, a Dissertation Committee Change form should be filed in the Graduate Programs Office. The Associate Dean of Graduate Programs must approve all changes. New committee members must agree with the approved proposal or a new proposal hearing may be required.

STEP 8 – Defense of the dissertation

Candidates who have successfully completed the proposal hearing and written the dissertation are required to defend their dissertation research in a public hearing. The public oral defense of the dissertation followed by submission of the final approved copy to the Graduate Office is the final milestone in completion of the Ph.D. degree. Dissertation defenses are to be scheduled between September 1 and June 15.

The candidate becomes eligible for an oral defense when all members of the committee have reviewed a complete dissertation with all components (including face page, dissertation committee signature page, copyright page, abstract, acknowledgements, table of contents, appendices), agree that the dissertation is complete and ready for presentation. All members of the committee must sign a form indicating that they have read the final draft, that it is complete and includes all of the sections specified above, and that they agree that the candidate is ready to proceed with the defense. The dissertation defense cannot be scheduled until this form is submitted to the Graduate Office.

At least 5 weeks prior to the planned date of the defense, the candidate submits the final draft of the dissertation, including abstract, title pages, appendices, etc. to committee members. This copy must be complete in all respects and formatted appropriately for final approval at the time of the defense, in accordance with instructions found in the dissertation packets available in the Graduate Programs Office. After consulting with committee members regarding a convenient date and time, the student tentatively books a room for the defense with the SON receptionist (552-4250) and arranges for any needed equipment. Within 3 weeks after the submission, the student obtains written approval from all committee members that they have read the entire dissertation and approve going forward with the defense. Approval means that no substantive changes need to be made prior to the defense (e.g. other than correcting a minimum number of typographical errors).

After the Chair and committee members agree that the dissertation is ready to be defended and at least 2 weeks prior to the intended defense date, the candidate confirms the previously scheduled room arrangements and submits the defense date, time, location and title on the appropriate form to the Graduate Programs Office.

The dissertation defense is an open hearing. Posting of public notices of the defense is the responsibility of the Graduate Programs Office. The student is required to bring copies of the dissertation abstract to the defense for audience distribution.

The document should be considered a final product pending any minor changes or editorial corrections made by the committee as a result of the defense. Note that if any copyrighted materials (e.g. instruments) have been used, the student must have obtained written permission from the copyright holder both for permission to use the material in the research, and for inclusion and publication in the dissertation. If the copyright holder does not give permission to include the printed material in the dissertation, then the student cannot include copies of such material in the final version of the dissertation. Documentation of permissions for use, confirmation of purchase, and relevant correspondence are included in the appropriate appendix in the dissertation.

Conduct of the Defense

At the defense, the student presents a summary of the completed research and responds to questions from the committee and other attendees. The dissertation defense is to be based on the final draft reviewed by the committee; no new findings or interpretations are to be presented by the student. Except in unusual circumstances, dissertation defenses will not exceed 2 hours. When the committee has been satisfied and has indicated its desire to vote, the members will meet privately and will reach a decision on the status of the final draft.

The committee will deliberate and vote for Pass or Fail. The committee will provide a list of recommendations for changes in the dissertation. In general, any changes substantive enough to require more than 2 weeks to complete should be the basis for a failure. All members of the committee must sign the ballot before the dissertation can be considered accepted.

The candidate will be informed of the committee's decision as soon as the committee has finished its deliberation and voting. If the committee is satisfied with the dissertation, signatures on title pages may be obtained at the conclusion of the defense. If substantive changes are required, signatures should be delayed until these changes are completed to the satisfaction of the committee. The signed title pages signifying successful completion of the dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate Programs Office when the final approved copy of the dissertation is submitted.

The dissertation defense is a formal occasion for the candidate to defend his or her scholarly work publicly. The candidate's committee determines the outcome after the defense. Because the outcome is not decided until after the committee meets in private, celebrations prior to the announcement of the outcome are not appropriate.

Although not required, graduate students are expected to submit an abstract to be considered for presentation at a scholarly conference and a paper summarizing the results of their dissertation research to a professional journal for publication consideration. Faculty members who have made substantive contributions to the study frequently collaborate on writing the paper for publication. In all cases, however, the author of the dissertation is the first author listed on any paper based on the dissertation submitted for publication (see APA Ethical Principles). Students whose work is accepted for publication are asked to send a copy of the article to the Office of the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs.

STEP 9 – Scheduling Graduation

Students desiring to earn their degree by a specific graduation date need to meet the deadline published by the Registrar's Office for submission of signed and completed copies of the dissertation. Students need to plan well in advance to complete the dissertation and the defense before the specified deadline. It is not unusual for committees to require some degree of modification in the dissertation report following the defense. Final approved copies of the dissertation must be filed by early April for May graduation. (See Graduate Programs Office for specific date). Students should reserve time and resources for making these changes after the defense and before the deadline for submission of the final version. The final signed and approved copies must be filed in the Graduate Office at least 2 weeks after the dissertation defense or 2 weeks prior to the university deadline, whichever is sooner.

Students must sign up for graduation on line via Agora by the date specified for each semester. This procedure involves verifying information on file in the graduate office and specifying the name to be written on the diploma. Students also need to notify the Graduate Office in writing of their plans to graduate.

The university awards degrees three times a year: May, August 31st, and December 31st. A commencement ceremony is held only in May; students who have been awarded degrees the previous August and December are invited to participate in the May graduation.

Typically, the dissertation must be filed with the University by early April in order to officially receive a diploma at the May Commencement. A student not meeting this deadline may be eligible to participate as a “walker” in the School of Nursing Commencement (which follows the main university graduation ceremonies) if the defense has been successful and the committee has signed the ballot by the date specified by the Graduate Office. The diploma will not be issued until after the final dissertation copies are filed. Consult the Graduate Office for specific dates for filing final copies of dissertations for official graduation and also for being eligible to be a “walker.”

PROGRAM FORMS

(Available in Graduate Office and on the web at <http://www.bc.edu/schools/son/services/student-form/> and at the GSON WebCT site)

DOCTORAL PROGRAM FORMS

- i. Ph.D. Plan of Study 3 year
- ii. Ph.D. Plan of Study 4 year
- iii. Comprehensive Examination Application Form
- iv. Intent to Submit Proposal
- v. Proposal Defense Form
- vi. Dissertation Committee Form
- vii. Dissertation Committee Change Form
- viii. Doctoral Change of Advisor Form
- ix. Notice of Dissertation Defense
- x. Dissertation Signature Title Pages
- xi. Dissertation Submission Checklist
- xii. Request for Required Course Substitution

MASTER'S PROGRAM FORMS

- xiii. MS Program of Study
- xiv. Change of Advisor/Change of Specialty
- xv. Research Option

FORMS FOR MS & Ph.D. PROGRAMS

- xvi. Request for Substitution of a Required Course
- xvii. Research Proposal Endorsement

APPENDIX I – DOCTORAL PROGRAM COMPLETION CHECKLIST