Program Mission Statement

The mission of the School of Nursing is to educate nursing students at beginning and advanced levels through excellence and innovation in teaching, scholarship and service. Vision: To be a center for excellence in nursing education; recognized for innovation, scholarship, and service in the preparation of professional nurses who advocate for health and who collaboratively care for individuals, families, communities and populations throughout the life cycle in a variety of settings. Values: The School fosters a commitment to values, attitudes and ethical dimensions, including integrity, respect, collaboration, cooperation and social justice that are hallmarks of professional nursing. The School is committed to upholding and maintaining both professional nursing standards and a code of ethics for nursing.

Student Learning Outcomes

Graduates will be able to:

Knowledge of Literature of Discipline
  • Synthesize theory and research to develop a conceptual framework for advanced nursing practice
  • Incorporate theory and research findings into advanced clinical practice

Independent Learning/Scholarship
  • Demonstrate a commitment for continued professional growth through self-directed learning
  • Implement the research process by conducting a research project or thesis

Professional Skills
  • Collaborate and consult with family members and other professionals.
  • Demonstrate competency in the advanced practice role in delivering comprehensive care to individuals and families in a variety of community settings
  • Assume responsibility and accountability for independent nursing practice and improvement of health care
  • Contribute to professional leadership in nursing through education, research and collaborative practice

Critical Thinking (Optional)
  • Analyze nursing practice, health policy, and legal, social and ethical issues as they impact health care.

Assessment Approaches

Clinical Areas: All students are assigned to a preceptor who works one-on-one with them in the clinical setting. The preceptors provide ongoing feedback to the students in conjunction with the assigned faculty member, as well as a final evaluation, also in conjunction with the assigned faculty member. An evaluation tool which identifies specific behaviors students are expected to exhibit during their clinical experiences, is the vehicle by which preceptors record their final evaluation of student clinical performance. Clinical performance is graded on a pass/fail basis. Clinical sites/preceptors: All clinical sites are evaluated prior to assigning students. Further, there are specific criteria (established by the national accrediting bodies) which preceptors must meet before they can serve in that capacity. Students also have the opportunity to evaluate both their preceptors and the clinical sites at the end of each rotation, using a standard tool provided by the SON. Courses: Students are expected to achieve an average of 75% on all tests in every course. Once the required test average has been earned, grades on other assignments (papers, projects, etc) are included with the tests to arrive at the final grade for a course. Papers and projects are graded based on specific criteria. Because many courses are team taught, faculty use various means to assure consistent grading. For example, both faculty may grade the same paper as a check for intrarater reliability, or faculty may divide the projects/papers so that one faculty grades all of the student work for a single assignment. In the case of student presentations, peer evaluations also make up a portion of the grade. The peer evaluations themselves are also graded but in this instance by faculty. Use of information/presentation technology is required for all student presentations. Faculty: Students have opportunity to evaluate faculty at the end of each course through use of the University sanctioned ISQ form. Comprehensive Examination: During the last semester of the primary care nurse practitioner track, all students are expected to pass a comprehensive examination at the 75% level. In the nurse anesthesia track, students must successfully complete the Self Evaluation Examination (SEE) administered by the Council on
Certification of Nurse Anesthetists at the end of both the first and second year of the program. Master's Project/Thesis: All graduates of the MSN program regardless of track complete either a thesis or project. The thesis must be research based and conducted by the student, however students may satisfy project requirements in a variety of ways. The project can be in the form of a pilot study for future research, collaboration with a faculty member on the faculty's research, or an integrated literature review submitted for publication. Certification Examination: All graduates of the MSN program are expected to sit for the national certification examination in their respective areas of concentration. SON graduates have consistently scored above national averages on certification examinations. Employment: A final assessment strategy used by the SON is the tracking graduate employment rates. Approximately 98% of graduates are employed in the area of their choice in advanced practice within six months of completion of the program.

Part II: Four-Year Cycle of Assessment
The SON has an ongoing Evaluation Plan. The evaluation plan provides for ongoing review of various areas related to the SON. Changes are made as deemed appropriate through the findings of the evaluation process, feedback from students and alumni and feedback from employers of our graduates. In addition, changes are made as deemed appropriate to meet the changing needs of the health care environment and our constituents.