

**GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF NURSING & HEALTH STUDIES**

**OVERVIEW AND POLICIES FOR THE GRADUATE NURSING STUDENT**

**Overview of the Graduate School**

All graduate students are formally enrolled with the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (GSAS), so all official paper work must be forwarded to the Dean's Office for approval. The Academic Affairs contact who can sign add/drop forms, consortium requests, process leaves, etc. is Cara Richards, [clr32@georgetown.edu](mailto:clr32@georgetown.edu) or 202-687-5866. All official graduate school files are housed at the GSAS in ICC 302. Copies of paperwork are kept internally at the NHS but all original documentation must go to GSAS for the student's official record.

The Graduate School sets the minimum requirements for academic performance and standing; individual departments at the NHS have set higher standards and additional requirements. It is important to be familiar with both the Graduate School's policies and procedures as they apply to all NHS graduate students as well as the NHS and it is our role to help communicate and uphold these with our students and faculty. The Graduate Bulletin can be found at: <http://grad.georgetown.edu/pages/bulletin.cfm>

**Program of Study**

Upon matriculation to the Graduate School, all graduate students are normally given three years to complete their degree program. If a student requires additional time, they must apply to the GSAS for an extension to graduate during their final term of eligibility. This can be done by completing the online "Student Petition for Change to Graduate Program" form: [http://grad.georgetown.edu/pages/current\\_student\\_forms.cfm](http://grad.georgetown.edu/pages/current_student_forms.cfm)

Students are permitted to change majors within the graduate NHS Programs with approval of the appropriate program director. Across APN programs, this can be handled internally by completing a "Student Petition for Change to Graduate Program" form: [http://grad.georgetown.edu/pages/current\\_student\\_forms.cfm](http://grad.georgetown.edu/pages/current_student_forms.cfm) Once approved, the student's major is inputted into the student information system.

For students transferring from an APN program to the MHSA program and vice versa, the program may need updated recommendation letters, a new essay, etc., but a completely new admissions file does not need to be created – this can be coordinated internally between the Enrollment Management Team.

## **Academic Performance**

The Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Student Bulletin states that the “Graduate School establishes minimum academic requirements for students in graduate programs at Georgetown University, and programs are encouraged to set higher standards.” Students in NHS graduate programs are required to satisfy the academic standards of the Graduate School as well as the additional standards of the NHS and their individual programs.

Students in NHS graduate programs are required to achieve a Quality Point Index (QPI) of no less than 3.000 in order to remain in good academic standing and to graduate. Students may not fail any course. A student who receives a grade of an ‘F’ in any course will be terminated from the program; the nursing graduate programs do not allow repeat of courses for credit. Finally, NHS graduate nursing students are also required to meet clinical standards established by program faculty, as outlined in the program specific policies and handbooks.

## **Clinical Performance and Clinical Remediation**

As noted, students in the NHS graduate programs are required to meet the clinical standards established by program faculty. Students who experience difficulty meeting these standards may be placed on a remediation plan. Examples of instances in which remediation is likely to be appropriate include cases in which the student’s performance reflects a deficit of knowledge, inability to critically think and prioritize care, a lack of psychomotor/technical skills, deficits in overall ability, or otherwise presents a serious safety threat.

The ways in which a student is failing to meet the clinical standards shall be documented in the student’s record (e.g., evaluations, performance appraisals, counseling notes, anecdotal reports as appropriate), and the student shall be notified as soon as reasonably possible of any perceived difficulties.

Any student who demonstrates serious issues meeting clinical standards may be placed on a remediation plan at the discretion of the program director after consultation with the program faculty. The remediation plan shall be discussed with the student, and memorialized in writing. It will identify specific problems, the plan for resolution of those problems, and the time frame for resolution. Remediation plans may also:

- identify a preceptor or preceptors to work with the student;
- specify the length of the remediation period, which will typically be thirty (30) days, but shall not exceed sixty (60) days;
- identify specific steps for addressing the student’s identified deficiency; and
- list the standards or criteria the student must meet to be released from the remediation status.

The determination of whether a student has satisfied the criteria for release from remediation will be made by the program director of the program in which the student is enrolled, in consultation with the program’s clinical faculty.

If a student is unable to satisfy the criteria of the remediation plan, the student may be terminated from the program. Students who successfully complete a remediation program may continue in the program in good standing. A student can be on remediation only once during their enrollment in a NHS graduate program. Failure to meet the clinical guidelines or requirements after a period of remediation will result in termination from the program.

### **Appeals of Academic Decisions**

Students who wish to contest a grade received in a non-clinical course may do so through the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences grade appeal process, explained in the Graduate Bulletin at [http://grad.georgetown.edu/pages/reg\\_3.cfm#appeals](http://grad.georgetown.edu/pages/reg_3.cfm#appeals).

Students who wish to contest the assessment of their progress in a clinical course, including decisions regarding whether they have successfully completed remediation, may do so by filing an appeal with the Program Coordinators Committee, consistent with the process described below:

1. The Program Coordinators Committee is made up of all program directors and the assistant chairs in the Department of Nursing. The Assistant Chair for Education & Practice is the chair of the Program Coordinators Committee. Students wishing to file an appeal shall submit a written request to appeal, detailing the decision being appealed and the basis for the appeal, to the Chair of the Program Coordinators Committee. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Chair will convene the Committee as expeditiously as possible to consider the appeal.

Prior to meeting of the Committee at which the vote will be taken, the student will be:

- notified of the time, place, and date of the Committee's meeting by the Chair of the Program Coordinators Committee.
- provided copies of documents that are presented to the Committee in connection with the appeal
- advised that he/she may challenge any member of the Committee upon presenting persuasive evidence that the member would be unable to render a fair, impartial, and objective decision based only upon the information presented at the meeting.
- advised that he/she may submit a written statement and any other evidence he/she believes relevant to the appeal. The student must submit any such information a minimum of a week prior to the scheduled meeting.

### **Conduct of Appeal Meetings by the Program Coordinators Committee**

- The meeting is an educational process, and administrative in nature.
- The Committee may consider any information it deems relevant to the appeal.
- The meeting may be recorded at the discretion of the Committee.
- The student may be accompanied to the meeting by a support person of the student's choosing, but that individual may not participate in the meeting in any way.

- The Program Director or Assistant Program Director or Clinical Coordinator\_(specific to program) will forward the student's record and pertinent information to the Committee.
- The Program Director or Assistant Program Director and/or Clinical Director or his/her designee will be present either in person or via teleconference to present information and answer questions about the student's record.
- The student shall have an opportunity to make a presentation to and answer questions from the Committee
- After all information pertinent to the case has been presented, the involved Program Coordinator and the student will be excused and the remaining members of the Committee will hold closed deliberations for discussion and voting.

The Program Coordinators Committee shall make a recommendation to the Chair of the Department of Nursing regarding the disposition of the appeal. The recommendation shall be communicated in writing from the Chair of the Committee to the Chair of the Department and must reflect the view of a majority of the members. In the event there is disagreement among Program Coordinators Committee members, a minority opinion may be prepared and submitted to the Department Chair along with the Committee's recommendation.

The Department Chair shall review the Committee's recommendation, and if s/he is supportive of the recommendation, implement the recommendation. In the event that the recommendation is for a student to be terminated from his/her program, the Department Chair shall forward the recommendation to the Graduate School, which makes all final determinations regarding termination, consistent the policies outlined in the Graduate Bulletin at [http://grad.georgetown.edu/pages/reg\\_3.cfm#performance](http://grad.georgetown.edu/pages/reg_3.cfm#performance).

### **Grounds for Termination**

The following are grounds for termination from a NHS graduate program:

- A. Inadequate academic performance, as reflected by a student's: (1) failure to achieve an overall QPI of 3.000 at the time of graduation (a student may be terminated on this basis if he/she has failed to achieve a QPI of 3.000 after 3 semesters or at the point at which it is determined that it is mathematically impossible for the student to earn the required 3.000 for graduation); (2) receipt of a grade of F in any course; or (3) failure to meet clinical performance standards.
- B. Unethical behavior or professional/personal misconduct. Behaviors warranting termination include, but are not limited to, violations of Georgetown University's Code of Conduct, professional standards of care, Code of Ethics for Nurses, and the regulations governing nursing practice through the individual state/district Nurse Practice Acts.

## **Leaves of Absence**

Graduate students are eligible to take up to four semesters of leave during their program of study (summer term does not count against the four semesters of eligibility). An LOA does not count against the 6 semesters of eligibility for completing the degree program and the student's exit term should be adjusted to factor in the time away. Standard LOAs can be applied for by completing the online "Student Petition for Change to Graduate Program" form:

[http://grad.georgetown.edu/pages/current\\_student\\_forms.cfm](http://grad.georgetown.edu/pages/current_student_forms.cfm)

A request for a medical leave of absence requires documentation from a medical provider and students should follow the CAPS process for exit and re-entry.

## **Transfer of Credit/Consortium**

Graduate students can take course work through the consortium; however, they must first get written approval from their Program Director/Department Chair in order to do so. This signed approval is then brought to the Graduate School office in ICC 302. This is generally only done when a course is not offered during the term that the student needs that particular class.

Graduate students are eligible to transfer in up to 25% of their degree program's total credit hours (i.e. a student could transfer in 10 credits towards a 40 credit hour program). A student must first get approval from their program director before enrolling in a course at another institution. In order to transfer in a course, the class must be at the graduate level, cannot have counted towards another degree program, and the student must earn a "B" or better. Upon completion of the course, the student should submit a petition for transfer of credits, signed by the faculty advisor along with an official transcript. Once signed the request for transfer is submitted to the GSAS. These requests can take a few weeks to process.

## **Graduation**

The Graduate School can award degrees on the last day of every month of the year, with the exception of the month of June. All students must apply to graduate by completing the online graduation application form: <http://grad.georgetown.edu/pages/graduation.cfm>

Students applying for graduation for July through January must file an Application for Graduate Degree by the first working day of the month in which they wish to receive the degree. Students who wish to apply to graduate in February, March, April, or May, must file an Application for Graduate Degree no later than the last day of the Add/Drop period in January. Those who do not do so will not have their names in the Commencement program book and their diplomas will not be available at the commencement ceremony in May. Reminders about the graduation application deadlines should be sent to NHS graduate students by the Office of Academic Affairs reminding them of the process and deadline. Failure to complete the application can delay graduation! All grades must post inclusive of transfer credit before this clearance occurs. Graduate degrees can be awarded every month except June.

Below are the typical graduation months by program along with the required credit hours for each program:

Program	Credit Hours	Graduation Month
ACNP	40	July
CCNS	40	July
Education	35	July
FNP	44-46	December
NAP	45	December
Midwifery	46-51	December
Health Systems Administration	42	December & May

### **Post-Master's Students**

For individuals who already have a Master's degree in Nursing, a student has the option to complete post-Master's studies at the NHS. Additional theoretical and clinical knowledge can be acquired to prepare an advanced practice nurse to excel in an additional specialty. Once course work and clinical hours are acquired, the student may apply to the national board for certification in another clinical specialty (i.e. an Acute Care P who wants to be certified to practice as a Family NP). There is a PM option for FNP, ACNP, CCNS, NMW, and NED. Currently, these students are registered through SCS and the individual Program Directors write letters certifying that the students have met the eligibility requirements at the end of the program.

Admissions for the PM Program are managed in-house by our NHS Admissions Office in conjunction with the program directors. Here is the link to the admissions info on Post-Master's: <http://nhs.georgetown.edu/Nursing/postmaster.html>