



SCHOOL OF NURSING
Master's Entry-to-Nursing Practice (MENP)
STUDENT HANDBOOK

In effect from
August 16, 2023 to August 15, 2024

The School of Nursing reserves the right to make changes to the handbook when unforeseen circumstances occur. These changes will be communicated to students as early as possible.

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UNIVERSITY STATEMENT

The A-Book Student Handbook serves to familiarize all undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students with Aurora University's academic policies and procedures. This Handbook may be altered by the University at any time without notice, and students are urged to contact the Dean of Students to ensure that they have obtained the latest version of the Handbook. A department or program may adopt more specific policies or procedures applicable to the particular program of study. Together, the policies and procedures set forth in A-Book and the nursing program-specific policies constitute your resource guides regarding the academic requirements of Aurora University.

These policies and procedures do not constitute a contract, do not reflect binding commitments by the University, and may not be relied upon as such. Students also have a responsibility to stay current on applicable policies and procedures for their particular degree program.

UNIVERSITY NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Aurora University (the "University") is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility and mutual respect. Aurora University does not discriminate, or tolerate discrimination against any member of its community on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex/gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, pregnancy, veteran status, marital status, familial status, genetic information, or any other status protected by applicable federal, state or local law in matters of admissions, employment, or in any aspect of the educational programs or activities it offers, as required by the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, and national origin); Title I of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (disability); Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (age); and any other applicable local, state, and federal laws. The University also provides reasonable accommodations and other services to students and employees with disabilities when modifications are required to provide access to the University's educational programs and activities. More information regarding requesting accommodations is available at <https://aurora.edu/academics/resources/ada/index.html> or by emailing disabilityresources@aurora.edu.

ACCREDITATION

The Aurora University School of Nursing MENP program is approved by the Illinois Board of Nursing and accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

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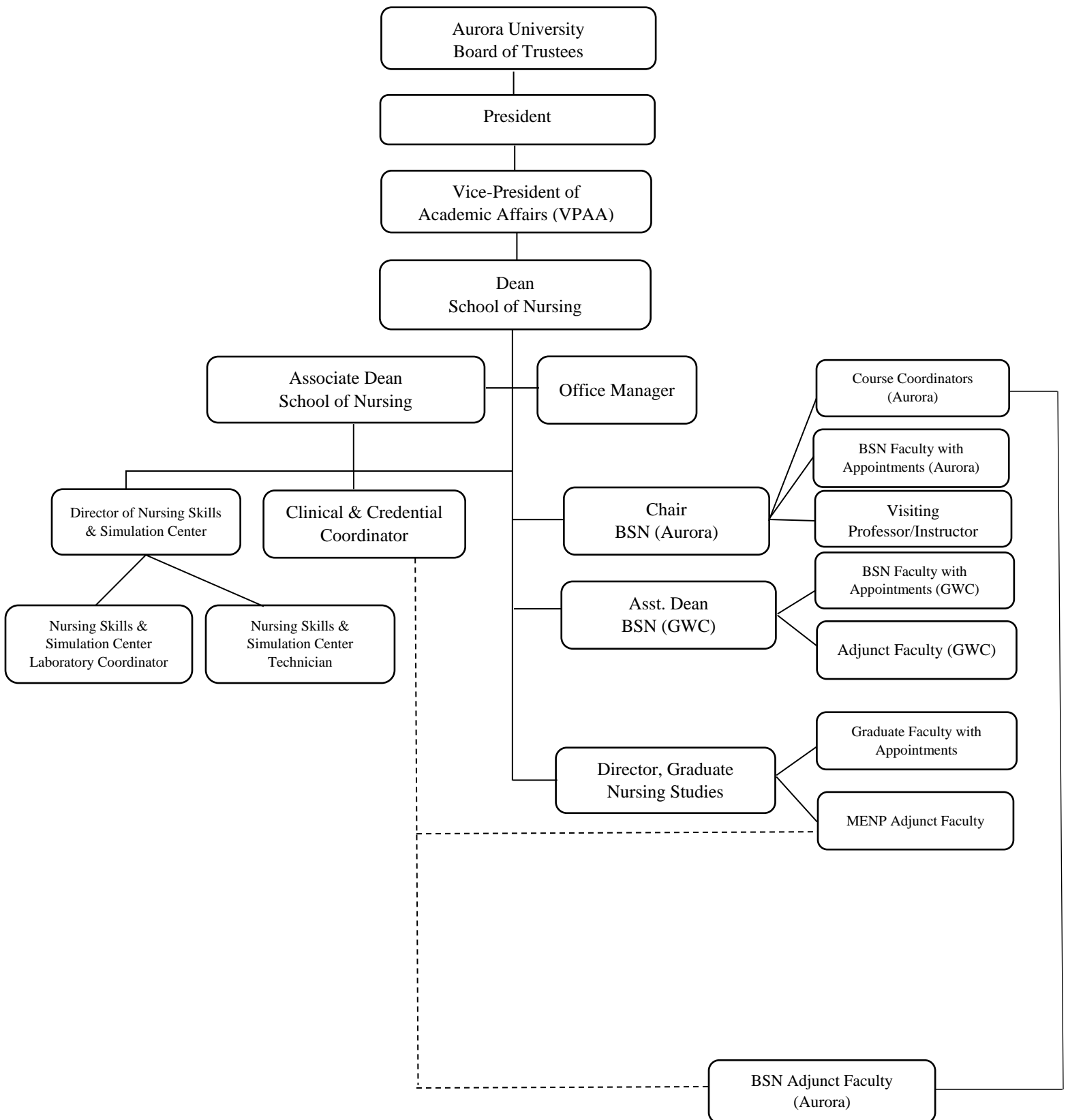
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Aurora University School of Nursing Organizational Chart



MENP PROGRAM MISSION/PURPOSE

To prepare a diverse population of professional nurses for ethical practice, transformational leadership, and life-long learning.

Program Vision

To prepare professional nurses to transform healthcare delivery in a rapidly changing world.

Program Philosophy

Nursing graduates must be well-prepared to think ethically, conceptually, and theoretically to better inform safe, evidenced-based nursing care. Students must not only be introduced to the knowledge and values of nursing as a discipline, but they must be guided to practice clinically as collaborative leaders and interprofessional team members in complex organizations.

Program Professional Standards

The MENP program is based on the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's The Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing (2011).

Program Goals:

1. To prepare graduates to practice as master's prepared generalists to be providers of direct and indirect care; designers, coordinators, and managers of care, and members of the nursing profession and are leaders and advocates for patients and the profession.
2. To prepare graduates to practice as master's prepared generalists through a liberal education in the sciences and the arts and a comprehensive nursing curriculum based on established standards.
3. To prepare graduates to practice as master's prepared generalists committed to lifelong learning.

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the program, graduates will be able to:

1. Integrate theory from nursing, arts and sciences in the planning and delivery of patient-centered, population-focused care.
2. Identify and utilize best practice evidence to inform practice in education, leadership, care coordination, and management of quality care outcomes.
3. Champion ethical decision-making and social justice in all aspects of practice as related to self, patients, family, populations, health care delivery systems and educational systems.
4. Safely and appropriately utilize technology to assist in the critical analysis and application of information and research to improve the quality of healthcare outcomes.
5. Utilize communication and collaborative skills as a leader, advocate and change agent to enhance the delivery of health care and influence health policy.
6. Develop and implement transformational leadership strategies within the interprofessional team to improve health outcomes.

7. Exhibit an understanding of complex micro and macro organizational systems and demonstrate the ability to use relevant theory to design, deliver and evaluate health care.
8. Incorporate strategies for prevention, wellness, and risk reduction for diverse populations across the continuum of care.
9. Develop a level of scholarship that lays the foundation for doctoral study.

Comparison of Aurora University’s and the MENP program’s mission, vision, values, and program-level student learning outcomes.

	Aurora University	MENP Program
Mission/ Purpose	Aurora University is an inclusive community dedicated to the transformative power of learning. As a teaching-centered institution, we encourage undergraduate and graduate students to discover what it takes to build meaningful and examined lives. Our singular goal is to empower our students to achieve lasting personal and professional success.	To prepare a diverse population of professional nurses for ethical practice, transformational leadership, and life-long learning.
Vision	Aurora University will be known and experienced as an exemplary institution of higher learning. We will draw upon the values of integrity, citizenship, continuous learning and excellence to provide our students with life-changing educational experiences. As an inclusive and vibrant community, inspired by the traditions of the past, we hope students will find what matters and build their life around it. In this way, we will help create a promising future for our university and our students.	To prepare professional nurses to transform healthcare delivery in a rapidly changing world.
Values	Integrity Citizenship Continuous learning Excellence	Altruism Autonomy Human dignity Integrity Social justice
Student Learning Outcomes	The university is committed to assessing within its general education program six categories	Upon completion of the program, the MENP graduate will be able to: 1. Integrate theory from nursing, arts and sciences in the planning and delivery of

	<p>of learning outcomes. These include:</p> <p>Creative thinking Discovery and reflection Quantitative reasoning Intercultural knowledge Social scientific inquiry and analysis Scientific reasoning</p> <p>In addition, the university is committed to assessing the following two university learning outcomes in both the general education program and the major programs:</p> <p>Effective communication Critical thinking</p>	<p>patient-centered, population-focused care.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Identify and utilize best practice evidence to inform practice in education, leadership, care coordination, and management of quality care outcomes. 3. Champion ethical decision-making and social justice in all aspects of practice as related to self, patients, family, populations, health care delivery systems and educational systems. 4. Safely and appropriately utilize technology to assist in the critical analysis and application of information and research to improve the quality of healthcare outcomes. 5. Utilize communication and collaborative skills as a leader, advocate and change agent to enhance the delivery of health care and influence health policy. 6. Develop and implement transformational leadership strategies within the interprofessional team to improve health outcomes. 7. Exhibit an understanding of complex micro and macro organizational systems and demonstrate the ability to use relevant theory to design, deliver and evaluate health care. 8. Incorporate strategies for prevention, wellness, and risk reduction for diverse populations across the continuum of care. 9. Develop a level of scholarship that lays the foundation for doctoral study.
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MENP PROGRAM ADMISSION STANDARDS

The MENP program is built with 75 semester hours and includes a full-time, two-year plan of study. Prior to entry into the MENP, program students must have met the following eligibility and pre-requisite course requirements:

- A baccalaureate degree in any field from a regionally accredited institution with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 on a 4.00 scale
- Prerequisite courses completed prior to admission with a “C” or better:
 - o Introductory Statistics
 - o Anatomy & Physiology I & II

- Microbiology
- General Chemistry with lab
- A general Psychology or Sociology course
- Official transcripts from all graduate and undergraduate institutions attended
- A current professional resume or curriculum vitae
- Three letters of recommendations that can speak to the candidate's integrity and potential for success in a graduate program.*
 - At least one letter must be from a direct supervisor or faculty member.
- A personal essay addressing candidate's professional attributes, ability to manage a rigorous curriculum and career goals (max. 500 words).*

*If the applicant is a recent (within 5 years) Aurora graduate, the recommendation and essay requirements are waived.

HANDBOOK POLICY

This handbook is intended to provide students information and to provide answers to the most commonly asked questions posed by new and returning students as they progress through the program. The purpose of this handbook is to complement, NOT replace, the University Graduate Catalog or A-Book.

Each student receives an electronic copy of the Aurora University School of Nursing MENP Program Student Handbook when they begin the program and when the handbook is updated. It is the responsibility of the student to be knowledgeable and observe all policies and procedures related to the nursing program. In no case will a policy be waived or an exception granted because students claim unawareness or contend that they were not informed of the policy or procedure.

All statements and policies published in this Handbook are in effect for the time period published on the cover of the Handbook. The SON reserve the right to change statements and policies during the year the handbook is in effect, with the provision that students are informed in writing of those changes. Annually, students are required to sign the handbook acknowledgement page (Appendix F) and upload it to their CastleBranch account.

PROFESSIONAL RN LICENSURE

The MENP program prepares students for the NCLEX-RN[®], but does not have a role in issuing RN licenses in Illinois or any other state.

Illinois RN licenses are issued by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) based on current Illinois Nurse Practice Act laws, rules and regulations.

For questions about one's eligibility for a RN license in Illinois, see the IDFPR Illinois Center for Nursing website at <http://www.idfpr.com/profs/Nursing.asp>

For information on felony convictions, see

<http://www.idfpr.com/FAQ/DPR/ForcibleFelonyPetitionNewAppsFAQ.pdf>

For more details about nurse licensure in the U.S., visit the [NCSBN Nurse Licensure Guidance](#) website.

MENP PROGRAM ACADEMIC POLICIES & PROCEDURES

1. Email Communication

The SON utilizes the student's AU email address exclusively to communicate with students. Course information/communication, clinical/lab schedules, LMS (Moodle) announcements, university-wide announcements, and CastleBranch requirements are examples of information that will be communicated via email. It is the student's responsibility to check their AU email account regularly.

2. Health Requirements

Aurora University uses CastleBranch services to ensure all students meet the requirements of the clinical facilities/agencies, SON, and university. Students will not be allowed to participate in clinical if any of the required documentation is not uploaded to their CastleBranch account by the due date listed in the MENP Program Clinical Resource Guide 2023-2024.

Due to the requirements of our clinical affiliates, the School of Nursing does not accept exemptions to vaccine requirements. All students admitted to the program are strongly encouraged to also be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. If a student requests a medical or religious exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine, the School of Nursing cannot guarantee placement at a clinical site and progression in the program.

3. Drug Testing/Screening

All expenses incurred in relation to drug testing/screening are the responsibility of the student.

Nursing students must have a negative drug screen on file in the SON by the first day of the school year. A cleared drug screen will be posted to your CastleBranch account. If a drug screen comes back positive, CastleBranch will attempt to contact the student to discuss the results and ask the student to provide documentation showing they have a prescription or had a procedure that would cause the results to show positive. Failure to meet the deadline for drug testing may result in failure to start the nursing program. A positive drug screen result may result in failure to start the program or immediate dismissal from the program.

Effective 1 January 2020, the recreational sale and use of marijuana became legal in the state of Illinois. This new law does not impact the current Aurora University Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace policy, which states that the university prohibits the unlawful manufacture, dispensation, distribution, sales, possession or use of a controlled substance or alcohol by students, faculty and staff in the workplace or while conducting university business or activities.

Use of alcohol, cannabis, or illegal drugs, or misuse of prescription drugs, are strictly prohibited in the nursing classroom, clinical or laboratory setting. Routine and "for cause" drug screens will include screening for the use of cannabis.

a. "For Cause" Drug Screening

If faculty observes a student behaving in a manner that is consistent with the use or misuse of alcohol, illegal drugs, or drugs which impair judgment, affecting either the classroom, clinical or laboratory setting, the student will be removed from the educational setting and required to submit to an appropriate screening immediately.

If the behavior is noted in the clinical setting, the student will be removed from patient care. The student will have to submit to the agency's drug screening and results will be shared with the SON Dean and MENP Director.

If the behavior is noted on campus in either the classroom or laboratory setting the university's campus security will be notified and the student will be transported to the contracted agency for drug testing.

If the result of the drug screening is negative, the student shall meet with the Dean of the SON and MENP Director within 24 hours of the test results to discuss the circumstances surrounding the impaired behavior. Based on the information provided and further medical evaluation if warranted, the Dean of the SON and MENP Director will make a decision regarding return to the clinical, classroom and laboratory setting.

If the drug screen is positive, the Dean of the SON and MENP Director will withdraw the student from all nursing courses. The student will pay the costs associated with the "for cause" drug screening.

A student's failure to comply with any aspect of the "For Cause" Drug Screening Requirement will result in the student's dismissal from the nursing program without option for readmission.

b. Readmission Following a Positive Drug Screening

Students who are withdrawn from the SON for reasons related to a positive drug screen must submit a letter to the Dean of the SON and Director of Graduate Nursing Studies requesting readmission to the nursing program.

Applicants must include documentation from a therapist specializing in addiction behaviors indicating status of recovery and/or documented rehabilitation related to the substances used or abused. Documentation must include a statement by the Therapist that the applicant will be able to function effectively and provide safe, therapeutic care for clients in the clinical setting.

If readmitted, the student will be subjected to random drug screening and/or to "for cause" drug screening at the student's expense for the duration of his or her studies in the nursing program. If the student has positive results on a drug screening after readmission to the SON, the student will be dismissed from the program with no option for readmission to the program.

4. Attendance

The faculty of the SON is committed to the development of professional values and behaviors in students. Regular and punctual attendance in scheduled classes is a reflection of professional conduct; therefore, students are required to attend class, lab and clinical, be on time and prepared to actively participate. Preparation is essential for effective participation. Obtaining missed content/materials is the responsibility of the student.

Repeated absences and/or incidents of tardiness will result in a referral to the Director of Graduate Studies.

a. Didactic Class Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all didactic classes. Additionally, students must be on time, be prepared, and actively participate. In the event of an unforeseen circumstance in which the student is unable to attend class, it is the student's professional responsibility to notify the instructor as soon as reasonably possible.

b. Lab Attendance Policy

Students are required to attend all lab sessions. Additionally, students must be on time, be prepared, and actively participate. In the event of an unforeseen circumstance in which the student is unable to attend lab, it is the student's professional responsibility to notify the instructor as soon as reasonably possible.

An absence may require appropriate documentation which may include a letter from a health care provider, obituary, letter of jury duty or other supporting documentation, such as AU wellness note, as requested by the course instructor. Students who miss a lab session will be required to complete a written make-up assignment and/or schedule a time to complete any missed skills check offs.

c. Clinical Attendance Policy

The nursing program has established a programmatic attendance policy that will help facilitate the learning of required knowledge, technical skills and patient care vital to success in the nursing profession. Attendance is required at all clinical experiences and is essential to meeting course and program learning outcomes.

i. Clinical Section Placement

Students are randomly assigned to clinical sections. Assignments are based on availability of sections and sites, number of students and agency constraints. Clinical assignments are scheduled every day of the week, including weekends, and can be during the day or evening. The clinical area includes sites across northern Illinois. Students are expected to provide their own transportation to and from clinical agencies and are responsible for all travel expenses, including parking cost.

ii. Clinical Absences and Tardiness

In order to ensure continuity of patient care, a student must notify the clinical faculty of an absence or tardiness prior to the start of the clinical shift as early as possible before the clinical start time. If a student fails to use proper notification procedures (“no call-no show”), the Director of Graduate Nursing Studies will be notified. Asking a classmate to inform the instructor that the student will be late or absent does NOT constitute proper notification.

Clinical absences, tardiness or leaving before the end of the clinical shift will be documented on the clinical evaluation form and may affect the student’s ability to meet course outcomes and satisfactorily pass the course. Depending on the individual circumstance, an absence may require appropriate documentation which may include a letter from a health care provider, obituary, letter of jury duty or other supporting documentation, such as AU wellness note to be provided to the Director of Graduate Studies. After a significant medical event, documentation is required from a licensed healthcare provider that the student is able to safely return to the clinical site without any limitations. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the course coordinator of any foreseen interruptions in clinical time within the first week of the course.

Under certain conditions, the clinical agency may request the student not to return to the clinical site. At that time the student may need to withdraw from the course if not able to meet core performance standards.

Attending the first clinical day/clinical orientation is imperative for the student to be successful in the clinical component of the course. If a student is absent for the clinical orientation, the Director of Graduate Nursing Studies will be notified immediately and the student will be referred to the course coordinator and be required to make-up orientation activities as necessary.

In a case of illness, the student is required to provide appropriate documentation; examples include a letter from a health care provider/Timely care/AU wellness center. The student may also be asked to provide documentation such as an obituary, letter of jury duty or other supporting documentation for an absence unrelated to illness.

The student will be required to complete a written make-up assignment assigned by the faculty member. Failure or refusal to complete the assignment will result in clinical, and therefore, course failure.

A second clinical absence without acceptable documentation will result in a course failure.

iii Clinical Punctuality

Punctuality is a professional responsibility – students should not interrupt or delay other students and faculty once the clinical experience has begun. Tardiness is defined as arriving after the scheduled clinical start time. It is within the clinical faculty member’s discretion to dismiss/send a student home if the student’s late arrival will interrupt the clinical experience and continuity of patient care.

d. Inclement Weather

AU personnel always monitor the weather closely. In case of inclement weather, watch the university website or register for the university text messaging service for updates on campus closings. Clinical sessions are cancelled/ended early when the university closes/is closed.

5. Grading & Testing

At the end of the course, **letter** grades are awarded as defined in the AU Graduate Catalog. The grading scale in the MENP program is:

Letter grade	Percentage
A	90.00-100
B	80.00-89.99
C	70.00-79.99
D	60.00–69.99
F	59.99-BELOW

The total course grade for any nursing course must be 80% or above to pass the course.

Under general university standards, all graduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative program/major GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale to remain in good standing.

The overall goal for a testing policy in the MENP program is to be consistent and better prepare students to succeed on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN®). Students must adhere to the following requirements. Failure or refusal to follow these requirements will result in the student’s removal from the exam and referral to the PPRC and/or Director of Graduate Nursing Studies.

a. Missing an Exam

- i. If a student misses an exam, documentation excusing the absence must be provided to the course faculty as soon as possible. Refer to the clinical absences section for accepted documentation.
- ii. Make-up exams are only granted with faculty permission and are scheduled by the course faculty at a date and time of their choice.

- iii. A second exam absence will result in referral to the Director of Graduate Nursing Studies and possible dismissal from the course and/or program.

b. Testing Environment

- i. Students are expected to contribute to a quiet and calm testing environment by raising their hand when needing assistance from the proctor and speaking in a low tone of voice.
- ii. Depending on the number of students and classroom size, students may be assigned seats.
- iii. All personal items including hats, scarves, jackets/coats, electronic devices such as mobile phones, Fitbit and Smart watches must be silenced and stored in backpacks and placed in an area designated by the proctoring faculty member.
- iv. No personal calculators are allowed.
- v. NO food or water bottles are allowed.
- vi. Scratch paper will be provided.
- vii. Noise reducing ear plugs are allowed.
- viii. Due to the length of exams and to ensure exam security, students are not allowed to leave the room once the exam has started.

*Please note: In cases where students can use their own laptop for the exam (tablets, e.g., iPad, are sometimes not compatible with the test administration software), they are responsible for making sure that they do not experience any technological difficulties or interruptions during the exam. Technical problems with the student's personal device are not considered an acceptable reason to be allowed to restart or retake the exam.

Also see the university's Disability Statement about accommodations for exams.

c. Online Exam Security

During a computer-based exam, students must follow these procedures:

Students must use a computer that has the Safe Exam software installed. Safe Exam is a web browser software program that turns any computer temporarily into a secure workstation. It controls access to resources like system functions, other websites and applications and prevents unauthorized resources being used during an exam. The Safe Exam browser for Moodle will need to be downloaded on the testing device so it can be utilized with the Moodle testing platform.

d. Exam Set-up & Functionality

Exams and/or quizzes will be set-up to emulate the NCLEX-RN® to the extent possible. This can include the following settings:

- i. The exam is timed. Exam length is typically 1.5 minutes per question. E.g., a 50-question exam will have a time allotment of approx. 75 minutes.
- ii. Once the exam is started, it will automatically close at the end of the allotted time, regardless if the student answered all questions. Any unanswered questions will be marked as incorrect.
- iii. Students will only see one question at a time and the question must be answered before the student is able to move forward to the next question.
- iv. Students will not be able to go backward to the previous question.
- v. Students will not be able to 'bookmark' questions to return to at a later point.
- vi. Once the student clicks on 'submit' after the last question, the exam will close and cannot be reopened.

e. Exam Results

- i. Grades will be released via the Moodle course shell, no exceptions.
- ii. Time frame for posting of grades is at the discretion of the faculty, but every attempt will be made to post grades within 48 hours of the exam.
- iii. Faculty may offer an exam review **outside** of regular class times that is optional but recommended for students to attend.

Refer to the course syllabus for additional/other course-specific grading criteria, grade distributions or testing/exam procedures.

f. Final Exams

Final exams will be scheduled according to the university's final examination schedule and policy for the semester. No student should be expected to write more than (2) two final examinations on the same day. Any student who is scheduled for more than 2 finals on the same day should arrange with their instructors to have an alternative examination time prior to the final examination period. Alternative examination times are available on Thursday and Friday of examination week.

6. Nursing Skills Testing

It is the expectation that students will come prepared to lab.

- a. Lab assignments can be found in the syllabus for each course with a lab component. It is the expectation that the student will review the Clinical Skills assignment(s) prior to lab class. For entry into lab, the student will provide a copy of the completed test from Clinical Skills. The student will be unable to attend class without this documentation and it will be counted as a missed class.
- b. The student will practice that assigned skill(s) and demonstrate competency during lab time. If the student is unsuccessful in demonstrating the skill, the Nursing Skill

Remediation Form (See Appendix G) will be completed by lab faculty and given to the student.

- c. Within one week of the initial check-off, the student will (outside of didactic and clinical time) demonstrate the skill to faculty. Once the student has successfully demonstrated the skill, the observing faculty will sign the nursing skill remediation form and it is the student's responsibility to submit the signed form to the appropriate Moodle assignment drop box by 8AM the following day.
- d. Failing to successfully demonstrate a skill after two attempts will result in a course failure and prohibit the student from progressing in the nursing program.

7. Clinical Experience Evaluation

A student will be evaluated with each clinical experience. The pass/fail grade is based upon the student's performance using a standard rubric. The student is evaluated at both mid-semester and the end of the semester. If the student is not progressing mid-semester, a student improvement action plan (Appendix D) will be completed to assist the student in being successful. If a student fails the clinical experience, the student will fail all components of the course (didactic, lab, and clinical).

8. Interprofessional Collaboration & Conflict Resolution

Problems are best resolved at the level at which they occur. If a student is experiencing a problem or conflict in a course (didactic, lab or clinical), the student should first attempt to schedule a face-to-face meeting with the faculty member teaching that course, section, lab or clinical to talk about their concern. The faculty is committed to hear the student's view and concern and welcomes the opportunity to work collaboratively with the student toward a win-win solution. In case this first step does not alleviate the student's concern or the concern is about the student's immediate faculty member, the student should follow the MENP program chain of command as shown in the SON Organizational Chart.

a. Grade Appeal

The SON follows the AU grade appeal policy and procedure, found under Academic Regulations and Procedures in the AU Graduate Course catalog.

b. Formal Complaints

The process for filing a formal complaint can be found under the AU Student Complaint Policy and Procedure.

9. Academic/Retention & Behavior Alert

When a student's academic work and/or behavior falls below required or acceptable standards in any component or setting of a course, the faculty member will enter the appropriate alert: academic and/or behavior. In addition, the student may also be referred to the PPRC and/or be required to develop a Student Improvement Action Plan (See Appendix D).

When an academic alert is placed, the student and student's advisor will receive an email notification. Reasons for an academic alert can include unsatisfactory performance on an exam, in written assignments, in lab or clinical, or be attendance related. Before placing an academic alert, the faculty member will make every reasonable attempt to make the student aware of the academic concern before submitting the alert.

See the AU Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) for behaviors that could be considered: (a) dangerous or disruptive to themselves or other members of the university community; or (b) in serious violation of Aurora University's Student Code of Conduct.

10. Academic Integrity

Aurora University's core values include integrity and ethical behavior. A community of learners, Aurora University students and faculty share responsibility for academic honesty and integrity. The university expects students to do their own academic work. In addition, it expects active participation and equitable contributions of students involved in group assignments.

Aurora University's Code of Academic Integrity prohibits dishonest and unethical behaviors, regardless of intent.

11. Professionalism & Code of Conduct

The public consistently ranks nursing as the most trusted profession. Maintaining that trust requires that nurses, including student nurses, engage in professional behaviors with a positive attitude, integrity, respect, collegiality and benevolence. Adherence to expected professional conduct prepares students for entry into the professional community and protects patients, faculty, students, and healthcare staff from undue stress. **The SON maintains a zero policy for incivility, bullying, horizontal/lateral violence or similar behaviors and will vigorously investigate any suspected, reported or observed incidents.**

Examples of professional behavior becoming of a future registered nurse include:

- i. Approaching and treating faculty, peers, clients, families, and healthcare staff with respect and courtesy in all interactions (in person and electronically).
- ii. Using a person's/client's preferred name and title, i.e., Mr. Smith, Professor Smith, Dr. Smith. (Do not assume the person or patient wants to be addressed by their first name.)
- iii. All written (e.g., email) communication should be written in a professional and respectful manner. This means using a professional greeting, avoiding all caps, memes/gifs, slang or acronyms (e.g., 'u' instead of you, LOL, YOLO, TBH, etc.).

- iv. Using texting only if preferred/permitted by the instructor. If an immediate response is required, the student should use the telephone.
- v. Keeping all scheduled appointments except in cases of illness or emergencies.
- vi. Demonstrating evidence of the assigned preparation for class, laboratory, and clinical practice.
- vii. Taking ownership of own learning and incorporating faculty suggestions for clinical and academic improvement into learning experiences.
- viii. Demonstrating initiative and motivation in the classroom and clinical practice areas.
- ix. Completing assignments on time. Initiating appropriate and timely action when due dates or times cannot be met.

Specific to clinical practice:

- i. Adhering to the [Illinois Nurse Practice Act](#), the [ANA Code of Ethics](#), [HIPAA](#) regulations or any other statute which governs the practice of nursing.
- ii. Adhering to the attendance policy.
- iii. Providing competent, compassionate, and respectful patient care.
- iv. Not performing patient care that exceeds the student's educational preparation, knowledge level, skill level or the course learning outcomes/objectives. (Note: Students shall wait for the clinical instructor to arrive at the clinical agency before proceeding to a particular unit or department.)
- v. Asking appropriate questions of clinical instructors and the healthcare team when uncertain regarding patient care.
- vi. Notifying the clinical instructor of mistakes or patient safety incidents immediately and taking appropriate action.

a. Social Media

Internet social media networks and platforms such as YouTube, Snap Chat, Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, blogs and alike have become ubiquitous in society. Student nurses are welcome to use social media in their personal lives but must make sure not to post confidential, sensitive or proprietary information. Students are not allowed to take any photographs or videos in a lab, clinical or simulation setting or mention patients by name or provide any information or details that could possibly identify the patient, their family, or the clinical facility. The university and SON reserve the right to investigate and take disciplinary action against a student whose social media activity violates university or SON policies, HIPAA, and/or state or federal statutes.

Also see [NCSBN's Guide to the Use of Social Media](#).

b. Professional Practice Review Committee (PPRC)

The PPRC serves as a sub-committee to the Faculty committee and consists of a cross-sectional representation of the nursing faculty. Its main purpose is to review and recommend to the Director of Graduate Nursing Studies action to be taken following a referral and ensure

due process for the student. A systematic review of a PPRC referral in a timely and consistent manner is beneficial to the student, SON and all the parties involved.

After initial discussion of the incident with the Director of Graduate Nursing Studies, the faculty member will contact the Chair of the PPRC and request a committee review of the incident. The Chair of PPRC will then request a written statement (**PPRC Referral Form**) about the incident from the faculty member and the student, as indicated. The completed form(s) shall be submitted to the Committee Chair within three (3) working days. In addition, the Chair may request involved parties to be personally interviewed by the committee.

The PPRC will then meet to review the referral. Following the committee's review, a verbal report will be provided to the Director of Graduate Nursing Studies. This will be followed by a **written report** (summarizing the committee's conclusions and recommendations). The report will be placed in the student's file at the SON. The committee Chair will prepare the report. The Director of Graduate Nursing Studies will notify the student and faculty involved about the actions to be taken in regard to the student's standing or progression in the program.

12. Program Progression

The program builds in progression from one course to the next which is reflected in the required pre-requisite and co-requisite course requirements. Under general university standards, all graduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative program/major GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale to remain in good standing. To be eligible for progression to successive courses in the program, the student must meet the following requirements:

- i. The total/final course grade must be 80% or above to successfully pass the course. For courses that include exams/quizzes/tests, a minimum average of 80.0% on course exams is required **before** any other assignment grades or points are added.
- ii. If a student fails a nursing course, they must successfully pass it the second time before progressing in the program. If the student is unsuccessful the second time, they will be dismissed from the program. Students cannot enroll in the same nursing course a third time.
- iii. Students must pass all components of the course including didactic, lab and/or clinical. If a student fails one component, they fail the entire course and must repeat all components.
- iv. Two nursing course failures will result in dismissal from the nursing program.
- v. Upon failure of a nursing course, the student must meet with the MENP Director and complete a Nursing Course Failure Communication Form (See Appendix H).

a. Course or Program Withdrawal and Academic Leave of Absence

See the university's Office of the Registrar for more information on withdrawal and academic leave of absence. The SON has program-specific policies regarding **nursing** course withdrawals:

- i. A student may only withdraw from two different nursing courses.
- ii. Students who withdraw from a nursing course or are administratively withdrawn may be allowed to repeat a course only if space permits.
- iii. A student who withdraws from a nursing course due to a failing grade must submit a letter to the Director of Graduate Studies on or before the last day of classes of the term/semester, petitioning for permission to repeat the course. The letter must outline what steps the student will take to be successful on the second attempt. Petitions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and the decision to allow the student to repeat the course will be made by the Dean. Repeating the course is subject to space availability.

b. Administrative Withdrawal/Dismissal

- i. A student dismissed from the nursing program has the right to petition for readmission. A written letter requesting readmission to the program must be submitted to the PPRC within seven (7) business days of written notification of dismissal from the program.
- ii. Petitions for readmission will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- iii. Students can submit a decision appeal to the Dean of Nursing.
- iv. There is no guarantee of readmission and readmission is subject to space availability.

13. Dress Code

- i. Students are expected to maintain a professional appearance while on campus and in the classroom, including lab. When in clinical and simulation, the required SON uniform must be worn, including the student's AU name tag. *Some facilities/clinical sites may issue an identification badge (ID) to students. Students are responsible for returning the badge to the facility at the end of the rotation and any replacement fees charged if the ID is lost.
- ii. Faculty reserves the right to dismiss students from the classroom, lab or clinical if the student's appearance does not adhere to the dress code or could be considered 'unprofessional' or unbecoming of an AU student nurse.
- iii. Agencies may have a dress code more restrictive than the SON requirements. Students will comply with the dress code of the agency in which clinical learning activities are scheduled. This may include the removal of facial piercings or covering of visible tattoos.
- iv. Hair should be neat, clean and worn off the shoulder. Beards, mustaches and sideburns should be clean and neatly trimmed.
- v. Healthcare workers who wear artificial nails are more likely to harbor gram-negative pathogens on their fingertips than those who have natural nails, both before and after handwashing. Therefore, artificial nails should not be worn when having direct contact with patients (see the [CDC's guidelines on Nail Hygiene](#)).

- vi. Jewelry should be kept to a minimum and pose no risk of injury to either patients or the wearer. Scented perfumes, colognes, aftershaves, or lotions should be avoided.
- vii. Gum chewing is not allowed on the clinical units.
- viii. Smoking/vaping is not permitted anywhere on clinical agency property.

14. Student Athletes

University administration and faculty recognize the importance of student athletes to AU. The SON will attempt to accommodate the athlete when possible; however, some requests may not be able to be granted. The student athlete:

- i. Must provide the SON with a copy of their competitive schedule at the beginning of the semester that may necessitate an absence for class, lab or clinical. Students are responsible for notifying their instructor of any new/additional changes in the competitive schedule at least 2 weeks in advance, if possible. Any conflicts to class, lab or clinical will be evaluated on an as needed basis. Students must comply with the AU SON clinical attendance policy and NCAA regulations.
- ii. Student athletes should not miss a class, lab or clinical to attend practice (per NCAA regulations).

15. Liability Insurance

Aurora University provides, at no additional cost, liability insurance coverage to students enrolled in clinical nursing courses.

16. Student Injury or Exposure in Clinical Area

Students are responsible for having their own health insurance and must remain enrolled in a health insurance plan while attending the SON. Students injured while at school or in clinical are responsible for the cost of any medical treatment.

Students suffering an exposure potential or actual bloodborne pathogens are required to comply with clinical agency policies on such incidents, including potential testing for HBV, HCV and HIV at the agency where the exposure occurred. The student shall immediately report the exposure/incident to the clinical instructor who shall notify the Dean and Director of Graduate Nursing Studies immediately and complete a [clinical incident report](#) to be submitted to the Dean and Director of Graduate Nursing Studies.

17. Lab & Simulation Guidelines

The SON aims to provide a safe and effective learning environment for all students, staff and faculty using the simulation and lab areas. The following guidelines apply:

- i. All labs are locked unless occupied by faculty, staff and/or student workers. There must be a faculty, staff member or designated lab assistant present in order for students to be in the lab.

- ii. Students should be knowledgeable in the care, handling and proper use of equipment prior to using it. Equipment and supplies are to be used only for their intended purposes. No equipment is to be removed from the lab unless authorized by a faculty or staff member. Please report any malfunctioning, broken, or low inventory items to the lab/simulation faculty or staff.
- iii. Non-nursing students or unauthorized children and persons are not allowed in the lab/simulation area at any time.
- iv. Manikins are to be treated with the same care and respect as live patients.
- v. No food or drink (except water) is permitted
- vi. Students shall immediately report a safety incident or injury (e.g., needle stick injury) to the instructor who will complete a clinical incident report to be submitted to the course coordinator and Director of Graduate Nursing Studies.
- vii. Open lab hours for students to practice nursing skills will be posted. Additional practice lab time can be scheduled by appointment, if available.
- viii. The content of any simulation is to be kept confidential and not be shared with other sections or groups to maintain the integrity of the learning experience for all students.

18. Student Representation/Participation in Committees and Organizations

The SON offers students the opportunity to take part in a variety of organizations and committees. Students are encouraged to become active and involved both on campus and within the SON. Such involvement offers students additional learning experiences in leadership and collaboration, adds to the student's résumé, and captures the attention of prospective employers.

a. School of Nursing Governance

- i. Students are encouraged to participate in the governance of the SON by serving on one of the following committees: *Resources, Curriculum, Assessment, and Governance* (see Appendix E for descriptions of the committees). Student input into the policies, planning, and operation of the SON is strongly valued.
- ii. Each Fall term, students can submit a letter of interest to the Director of Graduate Nursing Studies.
- iii. Selected students (one per committee) will serve for one (1) calendar year.

b. [American Association for Men in Nursing \(AAMN\)](#)

The AAMN supports men who are nurses to grow professionally and demonstrate to each other and to society the increasing contributions being made by men within the nursing profession. AAMN also advocates for continued research, education and dissemination of information about men's health issues, men in nursing, and nursing knowledge at the local and national levels.

Membership is open to all students enrolled in the School of Nursing. A faculty member from the School of Nursing serves as the chapter advisor by providing support and guidance.

c. [National Student Nurses' Association \(NSNA\)](#)

Founded in 1952, NSNA is a nonprofit organization for students whose mission is to mentor students preparing for initial licensure as registered nurses, and to convey the standards, ethics, and skills that students will need as responsible and accountable leaders and members of the profession.

d. [Sigma Theta Tau International \(STTI or Sigma\)](#)

Sigma is an international community of nurses, dedicated to the advancement of knowledge, teaching, learning, and service through the cultivation of communities of practice, education, and research. The [Sigma Lambda Upsilon-at-Large Chapter](#) is a combined chapter from Benedictine University and Aurora University.

Appendix A

Professional Practice Review Committee (PPRC) Referral Form

Name of person completing form: Click or tap here to enter text. Role: Choose an item.

Name of person for referral: Click or tap here to enter text. Reason for referral: Choose an item.

Course Number & Title: Click or tap here to enter text. Location of incident: Choose an item.

Describe circumstances for referral. Provide as many details as possible. Attach supporting documents if applicable.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Referral submitted to the Chair of the PPRC on: Click or tap to enter a date.

Appendix B

Professional Practice Review Committee (PPRC) Summary Report with Recommendations

Name of person for referral: Click or tap here to enter text. Reason for referral: Choose an item.

Course Number & Title: Click or tap here to enter text. Location of incident: Choose an item.

Names of reviewers:

1. Click or tap here to enter text.
2. Click or tap here to enter text.
3. Click or tap here to enter text.
4. Click or tap here to enter text.

Summary of PPRC review:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Recommendations for actions to be taken (both short term and long term)

Click or tap here to enter text.

Report sent to Director of Graduate Nursing Studies (Zeb Koran, zkoran@aurora.edu) on Click or tap to enter a date.

Appendix C

Student Exposure/Injury/Incident Report

Date of report: Click or tap to enter a date.

Name of person completing report: Click or tap here to enter text.

Check one: Exposure Report Injury Report Incident Report

Student's Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

(*If more than one student involved, complete a separate form for each student)

Student email: Click or tap here to enter text. Student phone number: Click or tap here to enter text.

Date of incident: Click or tap to enter a date.

Approx. Time of incident: Click or tap

here to enter text.

Location where incident occurred: Choose an item. Location details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Description of incident:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Disposition of student following incident:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Report submitted to Director of Graduate Nursing Studies Click or tap to enter a date.

Appendix D

Student Improvement Action Plan

A SON faculty member/advisor must be working together with the student in developing the action plan. The faculty member/advisor is responsible for monitoring the student's progress and determining if the student has achieved their goal. A paper or electronic copy of the action plan will be sent to the MENP Director and placed in the student's SON records.

To be filled out by instructor

Student Name:

Where did the incident occur?

- Simulation Clinical Didactic Lab Other

What type of incident/error occurred (Mark more than one if needed)?

- Patient safety
 Safe medication administration
 Skill performance
 Assessment performance
 Critical thinking/clinical judgement performance
 Communication/collaboration
 Professional behavior
 Ethical practice
 Other (describe)

Explanation of incident/additional comments:

To be filled out by student:

Reflection on incident:

Goal(s)/outcome(s) I am aiming to achieve:

Measurable Actions to improve performance and achieve goal(s)/outcome(s):

Student Signature/Date

Instructor Signature/Date

Student (Print name)

Instructor (Print name)

***Electronic signatures accepted**

Appendix E

SON Committees

Governance Committee

The Governance Committee is established as the senior representative body of the School of Nursing and exercises the authority of the School of Nursing Faculty. The dean and associate dean shall serve as ex-officio members without voting privileges. The dean will vote only to break a tie.

Function: The function of this committee shall provide input and serve as a decision-making body in all issues which have an impact on the governance, curriculum, personnel and administration of the School of Nursing. It serves as the vehicle for shared governance within the School of Nursing on issues including strategic planning, evaluation, budget, and space. This committee shall utilize its committees as content experts in matters of business, including recommendations on policies, procedures and curriculum related to the committees' function.

Resource Committee

This committee consists of 2-3 full-time nursing faculty, 1 lab personnel, clinical and credential coordinator, and 2 students (1 represent the BSN program and 1 represent the MENP program). The chairperson shall be appointed by the dean.

Function: The function of this committee shall provide oversight, make recommendations, and evaluate all the learning resources for students including reference books, technology, and teaching aids, simulation laboratories and clinical sites. This committee will serve as a liaison between the School of Nursing and other institutions regarding educational resources offered within and outside the University.

Curriculum Committee

This committee consists of 4 full-time nursing faculty (2 that teach and represent the BSN program and 2 that teach and represent the MENP program), and 2 students (1 represent the BSN program and 1 represent the MENP program).

Function: This committee assures the curriculum of the BSN and MENP programs are developed, implemented, and revised in accordance with the program's mission, goals, and expected outcomes, reflects professional nursing standards and guidelines, the expectations of the community of interest. This committee curricular work is responsive to accrediting body standards, milestones, and deadlines, and goals of the BSN and MENP programs within the School of Nursing.

Assessment Committee

This committee consists of 4 full-time nursing faculty (2 that teach in the BSN program and 2 that teach in the MENP program), and 2 students (1 represent the BSN program and 1 represent the MENP program). The chairperson shall be appointed by the dean.

Function: This committee functions to assure both the BSN and MENP programs are effective in fulfilling their mission and goals as evidenced achieving the respective programs' outcomes as described in the programmatic evaluation plan (PEP) for student and faculty outcome achievement. The primary responsibility is development, implementation, and evaluation of assessment in accordance with the mission of the School of Nursing. This committee provides recommendations to the Governance Committee for the continuous improvement of the programs using data on program effectiveness. Indirect assessment of student learning outcomes occurs through the use of student satisfaction surveys, including course evaluations, teaching evaluations, and exit surveys.

Sub-Committees

MENP Admission Committee

BSN Admission Committee

Professional Practice Review Committee

Appendix F

STUDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Aurora University School of Nursing MENP Program Student Handbook provides information regarding policies and procedures in effect for the MENP Program. Please initial each statement and sign, date and print your name at the end (electronic signatures are acceptable).

____ I acknowledge that I have received a copy of Aurora University School of Nursing MENP Program Student Handbook.

____ I agree that I have read the handbook in its entirety. I understand it is my responsibility to ask questions about the contents of the handbook and to have those questions answered to my satisfaction.

____ I understand all policies as stated in the handbook and agree to abide by them.

____ I understand that failure to follow any of the policies in the handbook may result in my dismissal from the program.

____ I understand that I will be informed in writing via email of any changes to the handbook that occur prior to the next scheduled handbook revision.

____ I give permission to the university to keep copies of my assignments to show progression in the program for the purpose of accreditation and assessment. I understand that I may revoke/rescind my permission at any time.

PHOTO/MEDIA RELEASE

____ I hereby consent to the use of my photograph, image, voice, written and/or verbal statements (materials) by Aurora University in its publications, videotaping, advertisements, brochures, websites, etc. I agree that Aurora University may use my photo with or without my name for lawful purposes including the above. I further acknowledge that there is no agreement or promise on the part of the university to compensate me in any way for the use of my materials in said manner. I hereby release the university from any and every claim, demand, right, or cause of action of whatever kind or nature, either in law or equity, arising from the use of my materials.

____ I also authorize the use of any information I provide to the university with regard to my career, personal life and accomplishments for use in promotional materials.

PERMISSION FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION

In compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the School of Nursing at Aurora University requires the student's written consent before disclosing any personal information. The

consent to share this information may be withdrawn in writing at any time, as long as such documents are specific to information covered, dated and signed.

____ I hereby give Aurora University's School of Nursing permission to release the following information to clinical agencies and organizations used by the School of Nursing to assist in my education:

- Social Security Number
- Immunization Records
- Proof of Health Insurance
- CPR Certification for Health Care Professionals
- Drug Screen Results
- Criminal Background Check Results
- Fingerprinting Background Check Results
- COVID-19 Status and Test Results
- Birthdate
- Phone number
- Address
- Emergency contact information
- Any additional information requested by a clinical facility

Student (Signature)

Date

Student (Print Name)

(Upload signed acknowledgement page to your CastleBranch account)

(*Electronic signatures are acceptable)

Appendix G

Nursing Skill Remediation Form

This form should be completed by lab faculty when a student unsuccessfully demonstrated a skill during a check-off. More than one skill can be listed per form.

Student Name:

Course Name:

The student did not successfully complete the following Skill(s):

_____ Date:
Faculty Signature

Please bring this form to open lab to demonstrate competency in performing the skill(s) above per the lab Grading and Testing Policy.

The student has successfully completed the following skill(s):

The student was **not** successful after the second attempt

_____ Date:
Faculty Signature

If the student has NOT successfully completed a skill after two attempts, this will count a course failure.

Appendix H

Nursing Course Failure Communication Form

Student Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Term: Click or tap here to enter text.

Course Name: Choose an item.

Additional comments: Click or tap here to enter text.

Date of Communication with Program Director: Click or tap to enter a date.

Date of in-person or virtual meeting with Program Director: Click or tap to enter a date.

I decline a meeting with Program Director:

Name of Academic Advisor: Choose an item.

Date Advisor Notified (attach this form to email): Click or tap to enter a date.

Student (Signature)*

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Student (Print Name)

(*Electronic signatures are acceptable)