TITLE: GRADUATE PROGRAM ADMISSIONS

POLICY: The Graduate Academic Affairs Committee (GAAC) acts as the admissions committee for the graduate program (MN and DNP applicants). Faculty volunteers may be solicited. A final list of applicants is recommended to the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education. The Associate Dean recommends applicants for admission to the Dean of The Graduate School. The Dean of The Graduate School admits students into the college’s graduate program. A maximum number of admissions will be determined annually by the Dean and Associated Dean based on resources.

Requirements for admission to the graduate program:

Minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0.

1. A baccalaureate degree in nursing from a nationally accredited upper division program which included supervised clinical practice in a variety of nursing settings, including community/public health and management.
2. Successful completion of undergraduate courses in physical assessment, community/public health, research, statistics, and an undergraduate psych/mental health course for DNP (Psych/Mental Health).
3. Current unencumbered licensure as a registered nurse. If clinical education experiences are to be completed in Montana, licensure in Montana is required.
4. Favorable recommendation from the College of Nursing admissions committee.
5. TOEFL score of 580 or computer equivalent, if applicable.

Clinical Experience Preferred
In general, one year of clinical experience is preferred for the DNP (Family/Individual and Psych/Mental Health). There are no clinical experience preferences restrictions for the MN degree (Clinical Nurse Leader).

Evaluation materials used by committee to score each applicant:
   Pre-application (includes essays in space provided)
   Application to The Graduate School
   Cumulative Undergraduate Grade Point Average calculation
   Grade Point Average for Final Two Years Undergraduate Work calculation
   Three reference letters (on standard form)
   Official transcripts
   Two faculty interviews

Attachments:
Evaluation of Applicant Portfolio
Graduate Program Interview Guide
RATIONALE: Guidelines for evaluating applicants for the graduate program assures consistency in the process.

Reviewed & Approved by:
Level I: GAAC (February, 2013)
Level II: Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education (April, 2013)
**Evaluation of Applicant Portfolio**  
*(To be completed by two faculty evaluators)*

Applicant Name: __________________________ Date: ______________

CNL or DNP (Focus) Degree: ________________________________

Evaluator: ______________________

Undergraduate GPA _________ Last 60 semester credits GPA _______

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<th>Score</th>
<th>1a.</th>
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<th>Total</th>
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<td>Content/thinking skills</td>
<td>Thoughtfulness of response</td>
<td>Thoroughness of response</td>
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<td>Average score of the three references</td>
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<td>Verbal communication skills</td>
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Score: 1a._______ 1b._______ 2a._______ 2b._______ 3a._______ 3b._______ Total _______

Average = Total ÷ 6 = ___________

Ranked Score ________________ (Evaluator’s ranking of candidate within the group of applications reviewed)
**Graduate Program Interview Guide**

**Purpose:** The purposes of the interview are to: 1) establish rapport with the applicant, 2) clarify information about the graduate program, 3) assess the applicant’s fit with the graduate program, 4) assess the applicant’s fit with the curriculum focus selected, 5) assess the applicant’s potential for completing the program in a timely manner, and 6) initiate a discussion about clinical project topics. Thank the applicant for their time.

Identify yourself as the interviewer and review the purpose of the interview. The interview will take approximately one-half hour. Prior to asking the interview questions explain that the admissions committee looks at the complete portfolio.

**Applicant:**

**Interviewer:**

1. To begin, please tell me about your professional background. (positions, roles, responsibilities, etc.)

2. What professional activities (continuing education, professional organizations, advocacy, reading journals, etc.) have you participated in within the past year or two?

3. Could you say a few words about how you decided to pursue graduate education in nursing?
   a) I understand that you are interested in the ________________ degree in the graduate program. I am interested in learning more about your understanding of the role. For example, what do you see as two main characteristics of nurses who practice as a ________________________________?
   b) What about this role that appeals to you?
   c) Can you tell me about your career plan? (e.g. What do you see yourself doing in 5 years? Could probe here about teaching/nursing education courses.)

4. Please tell me about the strengths you have (qualities, skills, support, etc.) that will facilitate your success in graduate school.

5. As you consider graduate education what do you foresee as potential stumbling blocks (time off work, distance travel, family issues, finances, etc.)?

6. As you most likely know at this point, completing a clinical project is a requirement for the masters and doctoral degrees. Sometimes students approach graduate study with an idea of what they would like to do for a project, others have not thought too much about it yet. During this interview, we wanted to start a bit of a dialogue to learn your thoughts about what you might like to do.
   [See what the student has to say. Depending on what the student says, we could say something like: “That might fit nicely with what ‘x-faculty’ is doing.” If they don’t have any idea or if their idea is completely different from what any of us are doing, we could follow with:
   We often encourage students to work with CON faculty who have expertise in a particular area. These areas include: (list). How might you see yourself working with any of these topics?]

7. Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

8. Do you have any questions for me?
INTERVIEWER: Describe ambiguities and aspects of the program

➢ Describe variety of teaching methods used: telecommunications, interactive video, on-line coursework (D2L), clinical experiences

➢ Clinical experiences may be in rural settings (travel may be required)

➢ Travel required for F-F/orientation in Bozeman and to any college campus (Billings, Bozeman, Great Falls, Kalispell, Missoula) for graduate intensive classes

➢ *N503 Curriculum Development and N504 Assessment & Evaluation in Education* - these two education courses alternate during summer semester. To complete the Certificate of Nursing Education in the first year, summer admission is required (indicate below “summer” as the term to begin).

➢ Computer skill expectation: word processing, spread sheets, data management, Internet, and e-mail (prompt for details re: E-mail - attachments; Word processing - cut, paste, tables)

➢ Computer availability: need e-mail & Internet access. Students will be required to set up a MSU e-mail account that will be used for all correspondence of University and College of Nursing business.

ENROLLMENT PLANS:

☐ CNL 4 semester Program of Study or
☐ CNL 6 semester Program of Study

☐ BSN to DNP (Family/Individual) 3 year Program of Study or
☐ BSN to DNP (Family/Individual) 4 year Program of Study or
☐ MN to DNP (Family/Individual) Program of Study

☐ BSN to DNP (Psych/Mental Health) 3 year Program of Study or
☐ BSN to DNP (Psych/Mental Health) 4 year Program of Study or
☐ MN to DNP (Psych/Mental Health) Program of Study

☐ Certificate in Nursing Education

_________________________________________
indicate term to begin (may begin in summer if taking Nursing Education course)

INTERVIEWER RECOMMENDATION:

1. Do NOT recommend 2. Recommend with reservations 3. Fully recommend

Rationale for recommendation -- Interviewer notes: