

**MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF NURSING POLICY # D-3**

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 Academic Programs. 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 Associate Dean based on resources. The deadline for application to the graduate programs will be December 15 each year. Recommendations for admission are based on a holistic evaluation of the applicant's metrics, experiences and attributes that contribute to the overall mission, vision, goals, diversity, and values of the university and the needs of the advanced nursing profession.

1) Metrics:

- a) Undergraduate and graduate minimum GPA of 3.0 is preferred.
- b) 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. Applicants completing the College's Associate Degree to Master's in Nursing program are eligible for admission.
- c) 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).
- d) Current unencumbered licensure as a registered nurse. If clinical education experiences are to be completed in Montana, licensure in Montana is required.
- e) Favorable recommendation from the College of Nursing admissions committee.
- f) If applicable, English proficiency scores as outlined by the Graduate School.

2) Experiences:

- a) In general, one year of clinical experience is preferred for the DNP degree.
- b) Montana residency preferred

3) Attributes:

- a) Career goals consistent with educational offerings
- b) Professional analytical, evidence-based nursing practice

4) Special Consideration for Applicants with a previous graduate degree.

- a) **Post Master's DNP:** Post Master's applicants who have earned an APRN master's degree from a nationally accredited program must meet all admission requirements and will be further evaluated by the DNP Program Coordinators and Associate Dean for Academic Programs through gap analysis of transcripts to validate education, clinical hours, and certification criteria has been met for the intended

population focus area. An individualized program of study will be developed to ensure DNP residency hours and all coursework is completed for the DNP degree.

- a) Post-graduate students who graduated from the MSU's College of Nursing's NP master's program, have current national APRN certification and state licensure, are currently practice as an NP, and are not adding a separate practice population focus are not required to take APRN core courses (NRSG 601, NRSG 602, and NRSG 603).
- b) Post-graduate students from a non-MSU NP program who are seeking certification in a population-focused area of practice in which they are not currently practicing or certified must meet the educational and certification criteria for the additional practice area as well as the educational criteria for the DNP.
- c) Adult Nurse Practitioners (ANP) or Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (PNP) who wish to sit for FNP certification must show evidence of completing the basic APRN core courses. PNPs must complete the clinical courses with the exception of the pediatric portion of NRSG 621. ANPs must complete NRSG 621 and NRSG 624 with an emphasis on the care of pediatric populations.
- d) FNPs who wish to obtain certification as a PMHNP must meet the educational and certification criteria for the additional practice area as well as the educational criteria for the DNP.

RATIONALE: Guidelines for evaluating applicants for the graduate program assures consistency in the process.

Reviewed & Approved by:

Level I: GAAC (February, 2013, April 2018, September, 2018); 4/26/19; 04/06/2020

Level II: Associate Dean for Academic Programs (April, 2013, April 2018; October 2018, August 18, 2019; April 29, 2020