

MASTER OF SCIENCE (MSN) STUDENT HANDBOOK

LAST UPDATED: JANUARY 2024



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY
CORPUS
CHRISTI

COLLEGE OF
NURSING
& HEALTH
SCIENCES

Master of Science in Nursing Program

College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CONHS)

Island Hall-317

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMU-CC)

<https://www.tamucc.edu/nursing-and-health-sciences>

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SECTION I

MESSAGE FROM DR. CHRISTINA MURPHEY, ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR NURSING

Welcome to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Programs at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi! This handbook is a document developed for students to reflect on the mission of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences as well as information on the **three program options offered (Nurse Educator, Leader in Nursing Systems, and the Family Nurse Practitioner)**.

This handbook is designed to serve as a resource to help with your questions about the graduate programs. It is a companion for the catalog of the entry year: <https://catalog.tamucc.edu/> and in case of any contradiction, the graduate catalog of record is the true source of information, as well as the College of Graduate Studies handbook <https://www.tamucc.edu/grad-college/current-students/assets/documents/masters-student-handbook.pdf> . The Masters Student Handbook from the College of Graduate Studies handbook provides university-wide information relative to student resources, academic policies, financial assistance, information on coursework requirements, advising, professional organizations and policies and procedures are included.

Students will also use this handbook in conjunction with the College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CONHS) website and current degree planners to facilitate progression in their respective program option within the MSN degree.

VISION

Enriching lives, advancing healthcare, one Islander at a time.

MISSION

The TAMUCC College of Nursing and Health Sciences is committed to promoting a learner-centered and caring environment that facilitates student success and engagement in a global context. Delivering nationally recognized, evidence-based educational programs that serve a diverse student population, the college sets clinical standards of excellence in healthcare, and actively advances scholarly research and leadership. The activities are fostered in a collaborative, inter-professional, and multicultural learning community.

SECTION II
PROGRAM COORDINATORS, FACULTY & STAFF

Note: CV's for graduate faculty are posted on the CONHS website (click on read more below name)

Link: [Nursing Practice Department | College of Nursing and Health Science | Texas A&M University-CC](#)

Program Coordinators:

Nurse Educator Program

Heather DeGrande, PhD, RN, CCRN-K, Assistant Professor, Office: Island Hall 333, Phone (361) 825-3696, heather.degrande@tamucc.edu

Leadership in Nursing Systems Program

Heather DeGrande, PhD, RN, CCRN-K, Assistant Professor, Office: Island Hall 333, Phone (361) 825-3696, heather.degrande@tamucc.edu

Family Nurse Practitioner Program

Elizabeth Loika, DNP, PNP-C, FNP-C, USAF, Lt. Col., (Ret.), Associate Professor, Office: Island Hall, 343, Phone (361) 825-5280, elizabeth.loika@tamucc.edu

Faculty:

Dixie Andelman, DNP, APRN, FNP-C, BC-ADM, Assistant Professor

Faezeh Babaieasl "Dr. Naz", PhD, MSN, RN, Assistant Professor

Heather DeGrande, PhD, MSN, RN, CCRN-K, Assistant Professor

Cynthia DeLanie EdD, MSN, RN, Assistant Professor

Sandra Golaszewski, DNP, MSN, Clinical Assistant Professor

Sarah Guy, PhD, MSN, RN, Assistant Professor

Hadi Kooshlar, Ph.D., MSN, MHS, BSN, RN, Associate Professor and Department Chair Department of Nursing Practice

Melissa Leal, EdD, MSN, RN, CHSE, Assistant Professor

Elizabeth Loika, DNP, FNP-BC, PNP-C, Clinical Associate Professor

Christina Murphey, PhD, RN, Associate Dean for Nursing and Interim

Miguel Perez, PhD, MSHCA, Assistant Professor

Tammy Walker-Smith, DNP, MHA, FNP, Assistant Professor

Staff:

Conny Hauf, Graduate Academic Advisor, Phone (361) 825-2568, email: constance.hauf@tamuc.edu

SECTION III

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Program Description

The Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Master of Science in Nursing degree enhances and expands the clinical competence of baccalaureate nurses. The focus of the degree is to prepare nurses for advanced nursing practice as nurse leaders, family nurse practitioners, or nurse educators. Emphasis is placed on facilitating health care delivery within a multicultural framework. The curriculum includes four core courses and specific courses related to role specialization within the three programs. Three minor areas of study are also available for students seeking to refine their skills as leaders/managers, practitioners, or educators. The variety of learning opportunities and the flexibility of options provided by the curriculum will accommodate the diverse clinical and functional interests of students who enroll in the program. Each program provides a specialty area of study that includes courses with clinical laboratory components that whenever possible, can be completed in the communities where students reside. In some cases, students may have to travel to clinical agencies to access experiences essential to course objectives.

All clinical education and training must be accomplished in the state of Texas.

The baccalaureate degree program in nursing/the master's degree program in nursing/Doctor of Nursing Practice program and/the post-graduate APRN certificate program at Texas A&M University Corpus Christi are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.cneaccreditation.org>)

Program Goals and Expected Outcomes

The goals of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences assist the College in implementing the University and College missions:

- To develop within the student the knowledge and skills necessary for beginning professional and advanced nursing practice, cultivating basic and specialized abilities needed to successfully pursue a career
- To promote the concept of nursing as caring and facilitate attainment of a care delivery system sensitive to multicultural communities and their health values
- To offer individuals the opportunity to increase the breadth and depth of the theoretical base for nursing practice, enhance and expand competence, prepare for role specialization, and contribute to the discovery of new nursing knowledge
- To provide an educational environment of respect within which students may evolve as broadly educated, technology competent, responsible, and accountable professionals dedicated to the principles of lifelong learning
- To build a foundation for life-long learning & systematic practice

- To serve the community as nursing experts, leaders and consultants in professional organizations, health promoters, providers of health care policy information and advocates of ethical distribution and usage of resources. The Graduate Nursing Program aims to provide baccalaureate nurses with learning experiences that will increase the breadth and depth of the student's theory base for nursing practice, enhance and expand their competence, and prepare students for role specialization. Students may complete MSN degree in three different program specialties: Family Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Educator, and Leadership in Nursing Systems.

The expected outcomes of the MSN programs are as follows:

Graduates of these programs will:

- Critically analyze, interpret, and integrate appropriate knowledge, research, and theories to meet the health care needs of diverse populations.
- Apply competent leadership and collaborative skills as members of a multi-professional health care workforce to promote high quality and safe patient care.
- Design evidence-based plans to sustain quality initiatives that promote a transparent professional environment and contribute to the delivery of safe high-quality care.
- Integrate research into professional practice through the implementation of translational processes.
- Demonstrate competence and accountability as clinicians, educators, and leaders in advanced healthcare roles.
- Model caring, sensitivity and respect in the delivery of health care to culturally diverse populations.
- Operationalize principles of ethical, legal, financial, and economic theories as applied to health care delivery systems.
- Guide the adoption and use of information, communication technologies and resources to document patient care and improve patient outcomes.
- Evaluate the effect of legal and regulatory processes on nursing practice, healthcare delivery, and outcomes using critical analysis of policies that influence health services.

Program Options

MSN Degree. Registered nurses who want to earn a Master of Science in Nursing degree may enter the graduate program through one of three entry options. These options include the BSN (also referred to as traditional), RN-Bridge, and RN-MSN options.

There is no required thesis or graduate advisory committee to complete the MSN. The thesis option is available for those students interested in pursuing scholarly investigation of a research proposal topic (NURS 5399 Thesis).

BSN-MSN: Applicants who have earned a BSN from an accredited program can start graduate course work upon admission to the MSN program.

RN-Bridge: Applicants who are registered nurses with baccalaureate degrees in disciplines other than nursing can enter the MSN program through RN-Bridge MSN option. Students must complete undergraduate level courses before they can begin graduate courses that lead to the MSN.

The 18 hours of RN-Bridge undergraduate courses include:

- NURS 3435 Health Assessment 4 sem. hrs.
- NURS 4318 Nurse as Research Consumer 3 sem. hrs.
- NURS 4560 Nursing Care of Community 5 sem. hrs.
- NURS 4471 Leadership/Management 4 sem. hrs.

RN-MSN: Applicants who are registered nurses with associate degrees in nursing can enter the MSN program through the RN to MSN option. Articulation agreements exist between A&M-Corpus Christi and associate degree nursing programs to support student access to this MSN entry option. Registered nurses who have earned a diploma or associate degree in nursing from an accredited program and who meet all other requirements for admission into the MSN degree program are eligible to apply for the RN-MSN entrance option. Students who enter the MSN program through this option will not earn a bachelor's degree in nursing at any stage of their course work.

The RN-MSN student must complete 58 credit hours of designated general education and support courses in accordance with the A&M- Corpus Christi University Core Curriculum transfer policy requirements and the Bachelor of Science degree requirements for prescribed support courses, as specified in the Undergraduate Catalog. Equivalency tables are available showing which general education and nursing courses will be accepted for transfer to meet these required hours.

Prior to beginning master's level course work, the RN-MSN student must complete the following prescribed course work:

- NURS 3435 Health Assessment (may complete through Challenge Examination) 3 sem. hrs.
- NURS 4324 Nurse as Caregiver (may complete through Challenge Examination) 3 sem. hrs.
- NURS 4560 Nursing Care of Community 5 sem. hrs.
- NURS 4471 Leadership/Management 4 sem. hrs.
- NURS 4318 Nurse as Research Consumer 3 sem. hrs.

Course work completed by students in the RN-MSN program may transfer to the undergraduate RN-BSN track if students decide they are unable to maintain the accelerated pace of the RN- MSN track. Students may not reenter the RN-MSN track once they have withdrawn from this option.

Post Masters Certification. Post-master's certification is available for students that have earned

their MSN Degree. Certification will allow registered nurses to expand their scope of practice beyond the role or population focus associated with their current credentials. Students admitted to the Post-Masters- Certification will be considered to have completed the MSN core courses based on the completion of the master's degree. All progression requirements apply to students enrolled in this program. See Role Specialization Section for available list of minor or post- masters' areas of study.

Non-degree-seeking students. Non-degree status is designated for the student who wants to enroll in graduate course work to meet unique personal or career goals that do not lead to a graduate degree or certification. Colleges may place restrictions on the enrollment of students admitted in this status. Students must see a nursing advisor and the graduate nursing department chair to discuss their related educational goals.

SECTION IV ACADEMIC PROGRESSION

Program Admission

Admission information and deadlines can be found on the website:

<https://www.tamucc.edu/nursing-and-health-sciences/nursing-practice/index.php> under programs of study.

The MSN NE and NLS programs use a rolling admission process, however we encourage students to apply early. This will allow for enough time to also apply for and qualify for federal student aid and scholarships. Applications will not be reviewed until all required materials have been submitted and received.

The college reserves the right to defer admission in the case of low enrollment. Students will be notified and given options if a selected track is not offered.

The following program requirements apply to all nursing graduate students upon admission and throughout program of study. Students must:

1. Have completed an undergraduate nursing program or earned a diploma from an NLN-AC or AACN-CCNE accredited school of nursing.
2. Successfully complete (with a grade "C" or above) a course in statistics
3. Hold current unencumbered licensure as a registered nurse with authorization to practice in Texas.
4. Applicants who have not yet obtained a Texas nursing license can be conditionally admitted to the MSN Program but are required to obtain their Texas nursing license by the end of the first semester in the graduate program with a waiver request.
5. Have earned a satisfactory grade point average (4.0 scale): 3.00 GPA on the last 60 semester hours. Students with a GPA less than 3.00 may be considered for conditional admission with a waiver request.
6. Write an original essay describing professional goals associated with graduate nursing education specific to the chosen role specialization.
7. Submit three letters of recommendation from individuals who can address their potential for graduate study. At least one of these references should be from an individual who can address an applicant's level of professional competence.
8. Provide a current resume that delineates an applicant's professional contributions and work experiences and contains sufficient information to represent the applicant's accomplishments in nursing. The resume should include information about an applicant's professional activities outside the workplace.
9. Upon admission to the College, complete a criminal background check.

10. Complete a non-chain of custody urine drug screen.
11. Purchase professional liability coverage through the University. Fees for this coverage are included in the fees paid at the time of registration at the beginning of each academic year.

Additional information will be required from applicants before full admission can be granted. Applicants must demonstrate compliance with Texas Administrative Code immunization for health professional student regulations, Texas Board of Nursing disclosure of criminal history or disciplinary action, and affiliated clinical agency requirements for access to clinical experiences. Details are outlined under the Program Requirements section below.

Progression, Regression and Dismissal

All students must meet the standards for minimal performance and progression established by TAMU-CC Office of Graduate Studies. See catalog section on *Graduate Academic and Degree Requirements*: <https://catalog.tamucc.edu/graduate/academic-degree-requirements>. Students must also adhere to the College of [Graduate Studies Student Handbook](#).

Progression

Admission to the CONHS is highly competitive. Students are expected to progress through the program per their degree plan. If students do not follow the prescribed degree plan, they will be re-sequenced. The process of resequencing will delay graduation timelines depending on enrollment in needed courses.

Students who drop a course or do not enroll in a semester in which they are eligible to enroll will only have access to subsequent courses in their area of study when space is available. Therefore, it is highly recommended that students consult the graduate nursing academic advisor or the graduate nursing respective program coordinator before withdrawing.

Students who do not attend for two years, will be required to reapply to the University. Students should consider applying for a leave of absence (see below), especially if the time-to-degree and recency of credits requirements will be impacted by a needed absence.

The requirements for a master's degree at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi must be completed within seven years after admission to the program. The seven-year period begins the first semester of enrollment and is calculated from the date of degree conferral. Credit that is more than seven years old will not be counted toward a master's degree. Exceptions will require strong justification in writing from the student requesting the exception as well as submission of a revalidation plan. Credits earned at another university are not eligible for an exception. Written approval from the major department chairperson, the dean of the college offering the degree, the Graduate Dean, and the Provost are required. See the revalidation

process below.

In order to revalidate dated courses, students should carefully attend information in the catalog (see [Graduate Academic and Degree Requirements](#) section of the catalog). Revalidation requests should be made using the [Revalidation Request Form](#). Revalidation requests will be reviewed accordingly and may not be approved.

Students experiencing life changing or catastrophic events should consult with their program coordinator and/or department chair and request a [Leave of Absence](#) in writing from the College of Graduate Studies using the Request for [Leave of Absence Form](#). A student who is in good standing may petition for a leave of absence of no more than two full academic terms. The maximum number of leave of absence requests permitted in a program is two. A request for a leave of absence requires approval in advance by the faculty advisor, Program Coordinator, College Dean, and Graduate Dean. If the Graduate Dean approves the petition, the registration requirement is set aside during the time of the leave. Students should be aware that leaves of absences require suspension of all activities associated with the pursuit of the degree. See the catalog for more information.

To ensure academic integrity and reduce conflicts of interest in the MSN program, it is highly recommended for TAMUCC CONHS faculty to pursue MSN education in another college of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi or another Texas A&M University.

Regression

1. When a grade lower than a C is earned, the student:
 - a. Must repeat a course in which a grade of D, F, or W (Withdrawal) was earned.
 - b. May be placed on scholastic probation if the GPA falls below 3.0 because of the D, F, or W.
 - c. Will be removed from scholastic probation in accordance with university policy.
See Scholastic Probation and Enforced Withdrawal in the catalog:
<https://catalog.tamucc.edu/graduate/general-academic-policies-regulations/>
2. May not progress to courses for which that course is a prerequisite when a grade of D, F, W or I (Incomplete) was earned. If the student earns a third C or below in the program, the student cannot progress further and is required to withdraw from the program even when the GPA does not fall below 3.0. (Grades earned in the RN-Bridge or RN-MSN program count in the total number of grades earned in the program. Therefore, all grades below a B will be considered in progression decisions.)
3. The student cannot progress to the next course after withdrawing from two courses in the program unless approved by the College of Nursing and Health Sciences Department of Nursing Practice Admissions and Progression Committee. A plan to complete the program must be submitted to the Committee before a progression decision can be made. Admission

to courses that need to be completed will depend on space availability.

4. Students admitted conditionally to the College must earn a B or better in each of the first four MSN courses to remain in the MSN program. If a grade of less than B is earned during the period the student is classified as a conditional student, the student will be prohibited from further enrollment in the MSN program. Students pursuing the RN- Bridge or RN-MSN options are not eligible for enrollment under the conditional admission status.
5. Students in the RN-Bridge and RN-MSN programs must complete the undergraduate course work before beginning graduate classes. To progress in these entrance options, students must maintain a 3.00 grade point average. Students may earn credit for NURS 3435 (Health Assessment) and NURS 4324 (Nurse as a Caregiver) through a challenge examination process when a score of 83% or better is earned on the examination. If the challenge examination results are not successful, the student may move to the RN-BSN track and take the course in question. The student may not reenter the RN-MSN track. The student may not progress through the RN-MSN track if the challenge exam score is less than 83% and the student does not want to enter the RN-BSN option.

Academic Integrity

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, which include but are not limited to illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, plagiarism, or collusion in any of these behaviors. All students should familiarize themselves with the full Academic Integrity Policy as well as the processes and procedures used to address violations thereof. You can find additional information in the [Academic Integrity](#) section of the catalog. Students can also access University Rules and Procedures [13.02.99.CO.04](#): Student Academic Misconduct Cases.

Dismissal

1. A student may be dismissed from the program without previous warning for unsafe and/or unprofessional behavior identified by college administrators and faculty. The conduct of nursing students should meet ethical standards as defined by the American Nurses Association (ANA) in the *Code of Ethics*. Personal integrity is reflected in professional judgments. Consequently, the College reserves the right to dismiss students from the program for unprofessional or unsafe behavior.
2. Students are expected to maintain Texas Board of Nursing RN licensure, immunizations, and all other compliance requirements (those required on admission) throughout the duration of the program and for entrance into and completion of clinical experiences. The CONHS reserves the right to dismiss

- students from the program when compliance requirements are not met.
3. Students dismissed from the program for unprofessional above and/or unsafe behavior (including #1 & or 2 above) are ineligible for the Grade Appeal process.

College of Nursing and Health Sciences Student Grade Appeal Process

The CONHS adheres to the [University's Student Grade Appeal](#) Procedure found in Procedure Section 13.02.99.c0.03

Program Degree Requirements

All didactic courses in the MSN program are in online format. For MSN courses with a clinical component, clinical is conducted at a site appropriate to the course content. See [Preceptor Guide](#) and [FNP Clinical Guidelines](#).

The course of study for the **Nurse Educator MSN** program consists of the components listed below.

MSN Program Core courses:

NURS 5310 - Science in Nursing **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5314 - Research Methods in Advanced Nursing Practice **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5315 - Health Policy and Cultural Diversity **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5316 - Introduction to Advanced Practice Role Development **3 sem. hrs.**

Total: 12 sem. hrs.

Nurse Educator

	Sem Hrs
1. Core courses	12
2. Role specialization courses	25

The student selects role specialization in Nurse Educator. The following courses constitute the respective specialty areas of study:

NURS 5324 - Health Assessment for Advanced Practice (45 clinical hours) **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5326 - Advanced Physiology with Pathophysiological Applications **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5351 - Advanced Pharmacological Concepts for Nursing Educators **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5352 - Nursing Curriculum Planning, Development, and Evaluation **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5353 - Theory and Concepts for the Nurse Educator **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5354 - Assessment, Measurement, and Evaluation in Nursing **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5355 - Instructional Teaching Strategies **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5459 - Education Practicum for the Nurse Educator (135 clinical hours) **4 sem. hrs.**

Total: 25 sem. hrs.

Total Clinical Hours: 180

Degree Total: 37

The course of study for the **Leadership in Nursing Systems MSN** program consists of the components listed below.

Leadership in Nursing Systems

	Sem Hrs.
1. Core courses (above)	12
2. Role specialization courses	28

The student selects role specialization in Leadership in Nursing Systems. The following courses constitute the respective specialty areas of study:

NURS 5163 - Project Management for Nurse Leaders **1 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5261 - Human Capital Management **2 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5331 - Nursing Informatics **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5360 - Health Care Financial Management (45 clinical hours) **3 sem. hrs.**

This course is cross-listed with HCAD 5325 Health Care Financial Management (Nursing students should register for NURS 5360)

NURS 5362 - Leadership Theories in Nursing Practice (45 clinical hours) **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5364 - Organizational Design & Behavior in Nursing Practice Environments **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5365 - Quality and Outcomes Management **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5469 - Patterns of Care Delivery (135 clinical hours) **4 sem. hrs.** (Capstone Course)

HCAD 5320 - Health Economics and Policy **3 sem. hrs.**

HCAD 5330 - Health Law and Ethics **3 sem. hrs.**

Total: 28 sem. hrs.

Total clinical hours: 225

Degree Total: 40 sem. hrs.

The course of study for the **Family Nurse Practitioner MSN** program consists of the components listed below.

Family Nurse Practitioner track

	Sem. Hrs.
1. Core courses (above)	12
2. Role specialization course	37

The student selects role specialization in Family Nurse Practitioner. The following courses constitute the respective specialty areas of study:

NURS 5322 - Advanced Pharmacological Concepts **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5323 - Finance for the Nurse Practitioner **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5341 - Wellness and Health Promotion **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5326 - Advanced Physiology with Pathophysiological Applications **3 sem. hrs.** NURS

5624 - Advanced Health Assessment and Differential Diagnosis (90 clinical hours) **6 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5644 - Management of Acute and Chronic Illness I. (135 clinical hours) **6 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5645 - Management of Acute and Chronic Illness II (135 clinical hours) **6 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5746 - Integrated Clinical Practice: FNP (270 clinical hours) **7 sem. hrs.**

Total: 37 sem. hrs.

Total Clinical Hours: 630

Degree Total: 49 sem. hrs.

Minor Areas of Study

The College of Nursing and Health Sciences offers three minor areas of study that provide students with a secondary specialization focus. The courses that constitute the minors are taken in addition to the courses required for the role specialization.

[Nurse Educator Minor](#)

[Leadership in Nursing Systems Minor](#)

Nurse Educator Minor Required Courses

NURS 5352 - Nursing Curriculum Planning, Development, and Evaluation **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5353 - Theory and Concepts for the Nurse Educator **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5354 - Assessment, Measurement, and Evaluation in Nursing **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5459 - Education Practicum for the Nurse Educator* **4 sem. hrs.**

Total: 13 sem. hrs.

Emphasis is on instruction in curriculum, program and course design, development, and evaluation. Focus is also placed on theory and concepts for the development of the nurse educator role. A laboratory experience consisting of teaching instruction in the academic or clinical area provides students with the opportunity to apply theory to classroom or clinical environments.

Leadership in Nursing Systems Minor Required Courses

NURS 5163 - Project Management for Nurse Leaders (1) **1 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5261 - Human Capital Management (2) **2 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5360 - Health Care Financial Management **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5362 - Leadership Theories in Nursing Practice **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5364 - Organizational Design & Behavior in Nursing Practice Environments **3 sem. hrs.**

NURS 5365 - Quality and Outcomes Management **3 sem. hrs.**

Total: 15 sem. hrs.

Graduate Requirements

<u>Course work</u>	<u>Semester Hours</u>
Core Courses	12
Nursing Specialty Courses	25-37

The TAMU-CC College of Graduate Studies Recency of Credit rule requires that all credit earned for a graduate degree must be completed within seven years of the first semester in which a student is enrolled in a graduate program. This requirement means that students are expected to complete their MSN program in seven years. In rare situations, an exception to this seven-year policy may be granted from the Dean for the College Graduate Studies when a student is unable to complete courses in this time period. The student must complete a request with an explanation as to why the exception should be made as soon as the student determines that courses will not be completed within this time frame. The request should be submitted to the Graduate Nursing Department Academic Advisor and the Graduate Nursing Department Chair.

Check the [College of Graduate Studies website](#) and the Graduate Catalog for the year you entered the program as well as the current Graduate Catalog for additional information that affects you!

Degree Plan

See the relevant section University Graduate Handbook. The degree plan must be completed before the student has completed 18 credit hours. Please contact the graduate academic advisor in the college about the degree plan.

Culminating Event/Exit Requirements

There is no culminating event for the MSN unless the student chose the thesis option. The culminating event for the Nurse Educator and Leadership in Nursing Systems students is the capstone project.

Notification of Intent to Graduate

Graduation upon completion of the course requirements is NOT automatic. The semester before graduation is anticipated, students should obtain an application from the Office of Admissions and Records by the deadline date as indicated in the University Class Schedule. Deadline dates are also available on the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi website.

SECTION V

PROGRAM SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Program/College Awards

Every semester (including summer semester), graduate faculty can select an outstanding student and a research award from the graduating group of MSN students (all tracks) for recognition within the college with a recognition certificate.

Conferences to Attend

Attending or presenting at annual leadership, education or nurse practitioner associate conferences is encouraged. The university may provide limited travel funds for presentations at conferences or subsidize travel to regional conferences.

Additional Information

Information, policies, and procedures about tuition, fees, financial assistance, scholarships, and other topics important to graduate students can be found in the catalog. In addition to the catalog, web pages for offices and services on campus provide expanded information, forms, and contact names/phone numbers.

Some of those webpages include the following:

[College of Graduate Studies](#)

[Office of Student Financial Assistance](#)

[Office of International Education](#)

[Scholarships](#)

[GROW](#)

This handbook is intended to be read in conjunction with the Graduate Catalog:
<https://catalog.tamucc.edu/graduate> and the College of Graduate Studies Handbook:
<https://www.tamucc.edu/grad-college/current-students/assets/documents/masters-student-handbook.pdf>