



MOFFETT & SANDERS SCHOOL OF NURSING



2024-2025 Graduate Nursing Student Handbook
Nurse Practitioner and Non-APRN Tracks



Table of Contents

WELCOME.....	6
NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT.....	7
INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW	7
A Brief History of Samford University.....	7
A Brief History of the College of Health Sciences	7
A Brief History of the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing	7
UNIVERSITY AND SCHOOL OF NURSING ACCREDITATION	7
MISSION STATEMENT OF SAMFORD UNIVERSITY.....	8
VISION	8
MISSION STATEMENT OF THE MOFFETT & SANDERS SCHOOL OF NURSING.....	8
VISION	8
VALUES.....	8
ORGANIZING FRAMEWORK.....	9
MSN PROGRAM OVERVIEW	9
MSN PROGRAM OUTCOMES.....	9
DNP PROGRAM OVERVIEW	10
DNP PROGRAM OUTCOMES	10
GRADUATE PROGRAM OUTCOMES	11
DNP CURRICULUM MODEL	11
Eligibility to sit for national nurse practitioner certification examination.....	13
FULL TIME VS. PART TIME STATUS	13
ACADEMIC POLICIES.....	13
Progression Policies.....	13
Grading Scale.....	15
Online Attendance and Participation	15
Grading Policies.....	15
Pass/Fail Grading Policy.....	16
Withdrawal Policy	16

Readmission Policy	16
Formal Complaint	16
Grade Appeals	17
Academic Integrity.....	17
Professional Conduct Policy	17
VALUE VIOLATIONS	18
ACCESS TO CANVAS COURSES.....	19
TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS.....	19
FORMAT FOR WRITING PAPERS.....	19
INDEPENDENT STUDY PROSPECTUS	19
REGISTRATION	19
SCHEDULE ADJUSTMENT	19
HONORS AND AWARDS	20
TRANSFER OF GRADUATE CREDIT.....	20
GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT.....	20
CAMPUS SERVICES AND INFORMATION	20
Electronic Mail.....	20
Samford Campus Portal.....	20
Books and Supplies.....	20
Campus Safety.....	21
Inclement Weather Policy	21
How You'll be Notified of an Emergency	21
Smoking Policy.....	21
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).....	21
Student Rights and Responsibilities.....	22
Student Conduct.....	22
Library.....	22
Mailing Address/Name Changes	23
Parking.....	23
University Health Services	23
Accommodations Process	23
FINANCIAL SERVICES (One Stop)	23
STUDENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF SCHOOL OF NURSING COMMITTEES	23

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WITH CAMPUS CHARTERS.....	24
Sigma Theta Tau International	24
Phi Kappa Phi.....	24
Omicron Delta Kappa	24
INFORMATION PERTAINING TO CLINICAL SITES.....	24
Policies of Agencies	24
Behavior in the Clinical Area.....	24
Clothing	24
Liability Insurance.....	24
EVALUATION	25
Exit and Graduate Evaluations.....	25
HEALTH DATA AND IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS.....	25
SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY.....	25
See Samford University Student Handbook.....	25
SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY AND PROCEDURE	25
Professional/Legal Standard.....	25
Statement of Purpose	26
Testing Procedures.....	26
Confidentiality	28
Opportunity to Request a Re-Test.....	29
Student Release Form	29
BACKGROUND CHECKS.....	29
REQUIRED FORMS.....	30
APPENDIX A : Essential Performance Standards of Nursing Students	31
Admission/Progression of Persons with Disabilities to the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing.....	32
APPENDIX B: Required Forms.....	35
Substance Abuse Policy Release Form.....	36
Confidentiality Statement	37
The following attestations are signed electronically by students upon admission:.....	38
Receipt of Student Handbook Form	38
Permission to Provide References	38
Permission to Display/Present Work.....	38
Addendum: College of Health Sciences Academic Integrity Policy	39

Samford University Academic Integrity Policy Governing Graduate & Professional Students in the College of Health Sciences School of Health Professions, School of Nursing, School of Public Health	40
ARTICLE I: PREAMBLE	40
ARTICLE II: SCOPE OF APPLICABILITY	40
ARTICLE III: REPORT OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY TO THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY OFFICER.....	41
ARTICLE IV: GRADUATE ACADEMIC COUNCIL.....	42
ARTICLE V: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS.....	42
ARTICLE VI: PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING REPORTING <i>ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS</i>	44
ARTICLE VII. GRADUATE ACADEMIC COUNCIL PROCEDURES.....	45
ARTICLE VIII: APPEAL OF SANCTIONS	48
ARTICLE IX: CONFIDENTIALITY	48



WELCOME

I would like to extend a warm welcome to you on behalf of the faculty and staff of the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing (MSSON). We are pleased that you are pursuing a graduate degree and are honored that you have selected our program. Since the founding of our school in 1922, the MSSON has prepared outstanding clinicians, nurse leaders, and educators to lead in all sectors of the nursing profession. Please know that our primary focus is to create a positive and motivating learning environment that assists you in achieving your professional goals and developing competencies required for your new roles.

Consistent with the values of Samford University, the faculty have designed curricula that build upon your strengths and prior educational and clinical experiences and promote the provision of caring, competent, and compassionate service to others. We are prepared to guide, support and mentor you as you expand your skills and knowledge.

Again, welcome to the graduate program at the MSSON. We look forward to working with you throughout your journey as a graduate student. I wish you much success in your studies as you advance in our profession.

All the best,

Melondie Carter

Melondie Carter, Ph.D., RN
Ralph W. Beeson Dean and Professor
Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In accordance with applicable federal and state laws, such as Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act and ADA Amendments, the University does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of sex, gender, race, color, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, religion, or any other protected status under federal, state or local law applicable to the University, in its education policies, programs, and activities, in its admissions policies, in employment policies and practices, and all other areas of the University. As a faith-based institution, the University is exempted from certain laws and regulations concerning discrimination.

Inquiries and concerns regarding this policy may be directed to the vice president for business affairs or general counsel, Office of Finance, Business Affairs, & Strategy, 200 Samford Hall, Birmingham, AL 35229, 205-726-4084.

ACCESSIBILITY & ACCOMMODATIONS

Nursing is a practice discipline with cognitive, sensory, affective, and psychomotor performance requirements. Qualified individuals are those who satisfy admission requirements and who can perform essential functions of a nursing program with or without reasonable accommodation or modification.

Students must satisfy the Essential Performance Standards of Nursing Students (Appendix A). If these standards cannot be achieved by the student, either unassisted or with dependable use of assistive devices, the faculty reserves the right to withdraw the student from clinical courses.

Students with disabilities or chronic health conditions who wish to request accommodation under ADA must register with the Office of Accessibility and Accommodations (OAA). Students are responsible for sending the OAA an official notification of their accommodations through the OAA online portal and confirming in advance how accommodations will be applied in courses. Accommodations may not be applied retroactively and should not alter fundamental course outcomes. If you need assistance requesting or using accommodations, please reach out to access@samford.edu or visit www.samford.edu/dr for more information. The office is located in DBH 203. Accommodations will not be implemented until the student has met with faculty to review the accommodation letter.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

A Brief History of Samford University

Samford University is the largest privately supported and fully accredited institution for higher learning in Alabama. Founded by a group of education, economic, and religious leaders, the school was chartered in 1841 and opened its doors on January 3, 1842, in Marion, Alabama as Howard College. It has survived two destructive fires and the partial paralysis of the Civil War and Reconstruction. In 1887 it was relocated to Birmingham, and in 1957 the institution was moved to its present campus. In 1920 Howard College gained membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools - Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The establishment of the Teacher Education Division in 1914 and the Division of Pharmacy in 1927 highlighted the school's continuous growth throughout the years. The historic and renowned Cumberland School of Law, established in 1847 in Lebanon, Tennessee was acquired in 1961. The University now consists of the Howard College of Arts and Sciences, Brock School of Business, Orlean Beeson School of Education, School of the Arts, Beeson School of Divinity, Cumberland School of Law, and the College of Health Sciences which includes Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing (MSSON),

McWhorter School of Pharmacy, School of Health Professions, and School of Public Health. Samford University was founded by Baptists of Alabama, and today maintains a close relationship with the Alabama Baptist State Convention (Southern Baptist Convention). While the university cherishes this relationship and sees its role centered on Christian belief, Samford is open to students of all denominations and faith traditions.

A Brief History of the College of Health Sciences

In 2013, Samford announced the creation of its College of Health Sciences, an ambitious initiative that combined the strengths of Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing, McWhorter School of Pharmacy, the School of Health Professions, and the School of Public Health to provide a revolutionary learning experience for students pursuing careers in health care. The College of Health Sciences embraces today's models for interdisciplinary, collaborative teams of health care professionals by providing students in all four schools opportunities to learn alongside students in other health professions. Graduates are uniquely equipped to succeed in today's health care environment.

A Brief History of the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing

Ida V. Moffett once said, "Before great things are accomplished, someone has to dream a dream." The Birmingham Baptist Association founded the Birmingham Baptist Hospital School of Nursing in 1922 with the goal of educating nurses to meet a desperate need for skilled practitioners. Originally established as a hospital-based diploma program, the school was renamed Ida V. Moffett School of Nursing in 1968 and it was the first program in Alabama to achieve accreditation by the National League for Nursing. In 1973, following a merger agreement with Baptist Health Systems, the nursing program transferred to Samford University and began offering associate and baccalaureate degrees in nursing. Since that time, the school has grown to include master's and doctoral degrees in nursing. While Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing has experienced significant growth and transformation since its foundation, the school's objective remains unchanged: to prepare graduates to provide exceptional, compassionate, patient-centered care. The school focuses on four foundational pillars, all of which are based on the vision and passion of legendary nurse Ida Vines Moffett: academic excellence, compassion, caring and service. It is because of this commitment to both the art and science of nursing that Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing is nationally recognized for the strength of its programs and faculty. Three times in its history, the school has received the prestigious Center of Excellence designation from the National League for Nursing. In 2021 and in 2017, for "creating an environment that promotes the pedagogical expertise of faculty" and in 2005, for "creating environments of learning that promotes innovative student learning and professional development." The school also consistently ranks in the top tier in *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. Since 1922, Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing has continued Mrs. Moffett's legacy of excellence in nursing. Today, thousands of Moffett nurses are impacting the lives of others throughout the United States and around the world.

UNIVERSITY AND SCHOOL OF NURSING ACCREDITATION

Samford University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, masters, educational specialist, and doctorate degrees. Degree-granting institutions also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of Samford University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

The baccalaureate degree program in nursing/master's degree program in nursing/Doctor of Nursing Practice program and post-graduate APRN certificate program at Samford University are accredited by The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 655 K Street NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001, 202-887-6791. In addition, the nurse anesthesia program is accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs (COA), 10275 W. Higgins Rd., Suite 906, Rosemont, IL 60018-5603 phone: 224-275-9130 <http://coacrna.org>. The School of Nursing is also approved by the Alabama Board of Nursing.

MISSION STATEMENT OF SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

The mission of Samford University is to nurture persons in their development of intellect, creativity, faith, and personhood. As a Christian university, the community fosters academic, career, and ethical competency, while encouraging social and civic responsibility, and service to others.

VISION

Anchored in Christian understanding, Samford University will be a diverse community, stressing vigorous learning and personal faith, in the Baptist tradition. Within that commonality, the community will be innovative in teaching, learning and research; sensitive to global issues; aggressive in self-assessment and continuous improvement. Faithful to its mission, Samford will be known and acknowledged worldwide by holding to its core values. The world will be better for it.

The Samford community values lifelong:

- Belief in God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.
- Engagement with the life and teachings of Jesus
- Learning and responsible freedom of inquiry
- Personal empowerment, accountability, and responsibility
- Vocational success and civic engagement
- Spiritual growth and cultivation of physical well-being
- Integrity, honesty, and justice
- Appreciation for diverse cultures and convictions
- Stewardship of all resources
- Service to God, to family, to one another, and to the community.

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE MOFFETT & SANDERS SCHOOL OF NURSING

The mission of the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing is to prepare caring, competent, and compassionate graduates with a commitment to service, scholarship, lifelong learning, and professional practice by providing a quality nursing education in a nurturing Christian environment.

VISION

In response to the evolving demands of the healthcare needs of a global society, the MSSON will be a premier faith-based school of nursing that serves as the standard for nursing education and practice.

VALUES

- Christian Values

- Advocacy
- Caring and Compassion
- Lifelong Learning
- Academic and Practice Excellence
- Professionalism
- Servant Leadership
- Innovation
- Integrity
- Individual Worth

ORGANIZING FRAMEWORK

The organizing framework for the MSSON provides the overall structure for establishing the curriculum and maintaining its internal consistency. Program goals and student objectives provide general statements regarding the expected results for students and faculty. These values, beliefs, and expected results are operationalized through the standards established by the AACN and published in the *Essentials of Baccalaureate Nursing Education*, *the Essentials of Master's Nursing Education*, and *the Essentials of Doctor of Nursing Practice Education*. These documents provide the structural constructs (core knowledge, core skills, and role component) that guide course content, course objectives, and teaching/learning practices within the curriculum. Program quality is maintained through a commitment to continuous quality improvement and is implemented through the Systematic Evaluation Plan (SEP).

MSN PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing offers a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree. The graduate program has the following advanced nursing practice options: Family Nurse Practitioner, Family Nurse Practitioner with Emergency Specialty, and Family and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner. Graduates of the MSN program are prepared to practice in a variety of health care and academic settings.

MSN PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Graduates with an MSN degree from the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing will be prepared to:

1. Integrate interprofessional scientific findings for the continual improvement of nursing care across diverse settings.
2. Demonstrate leadership skills that emphasize ethical and critical decision making, effective working relationships, and a systems perspective to promote high quality and safe patient care.
3. Articulate and apply quality methods, tools, performance measures, and standards within organizations.
4. Apply research outcomes within the practice setting to resolve practice problems, work as a change agent, and disseminate results.
5. Utilize patient-care and communications technologies to deliver, enhance, integrate, and coordinate care.
6. Intervene at the system level by developing and advocating policy to influence health and health care.

7. Demonstrate effective collaborative, communicating, and consulting skills as a leader and as a member of inter-professional teams to manage and coordinate care.
8. Provide evidenced-based clinical prevention and health promotion care and services in a client-centered manner to individuals, families, and populations.
9. Synthesize an advance level of understanding of nursing and relevant sciences to integrate this knowledge for direct or indirect care.

MSN/Nurse Practitioner Curriculum Options:

- ADN/ASN-to-MSN – this entry pathway provides associate of science degree or hospital diploma nurses, who want to earn an MSN degree, an opportunity to enter the program and complete five bridge courses (15 credits) in order to progress in the MSN degree program.
*Admissions to this option have been suspended as of May, 2022.
 - FNP
 - FNP with ENP Specialty
 - FNP and PMHNP (dual focus)
- BSN-to-MSN - this entry pathway to the MSN degree is for students who hold a BSN degree.
 - FNP
 - FNP with ENP Specialty
 - FNP and PMHNP (dual focus) *Admissions to this option have been suspended as of May, 2024.

Details for each of these options can be found in the [Samford University Graduate Catalog](#).

DNP PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) is a terminal degree in nursing. The DNP program fulfills a need within the profession for advanced practice nurses who can provide leadership in the healthcare system of the 21st century. This program prepares graduates to demonstrate competencies, including organizational and systems leadership, advanced clinical skills, the ability to mobilize interprofessional teams, the ability to establish collaborative relationships to solve complex clinical problems, and to initiate policy and programmatic changes. The DNP graduate will be a visionary leader for the practice of nursing and the delivery of health care in all settings.

DNP PROGRAM OUTCOMES

*Applies to students entering the program prior to summer 2024.

At the completion of the DNP program, graduates will be able to:

- 1) Practice at the highest level of nursing by integrating nursing science and the biophysical, psychosocial, analytical, organizational and public health sciences to improve health, nursing and education outcomes;
- 2) Integrate advanced critical reasoning and judgment in the management of complex clinical situations and systems;
- 3) Assimilate ethical principles, personal beliefs, and Christian values to provide a framework for advanced nursing practice;
- 4) Engage in scholarship and analytical methods for evidence-based practice to effect optimal outcomes;
- 5) Apply information systems and technology for the provision and/or transformation of health care delivery and nursing practice.
- 6) Participate in interprofessional collaboration for the improvement of individual and population

health outcomes;

- 7) Advocate change in health care practice through policy development, implementation, and evaluation.

GRADUATE PROGRAM OUTCOMES

*Applies to students entering the program in the summer 2024 and beyond.

At the completion of the DNP program, graduates will be able to:

- 1) Integrate knowledge and evidence from nursing and other sciences into advanced specialty nursing practice.
- 2) Design evidence-based person-centered care within multiple contexts across the health continuum.
- 3) Formulate strategies to improve equitable population health outcomes among diverse populations.
- 4) Engage through scholarship and analytical methods for evidence-based practice to effect optimal health outcomes.
- 5) Facilitate quality of care and culture of safety at individual and system levels.
- 6) Collaborate, building on core nursing and interprofessional values, to optimize integrated team-based care.
- 7) Coordinate innovative system-based solutions to address complex health problems for diverse individuals and populations across settings.
- 8) Incorporate information systems and technologies for the provision and/or transformation of healthcare delivery and nursing practice.
- 9) Model nursing's unique professional identity and ethical behaviors across roles, relationships, and settings.
- 10) Participate in activities and self-reflection that promote well-being, resilience and leadership in self and others.

DNP CURRICULUM MODEL

There are different entry pathways to begin coursework leading to the DNP degree, including the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) to DNP, and the Post-Master's DNP. The BSN to DNP entry pathway is for students who hold a BSN degree. The Post-Master's DNP entry pathway to the DNP degree is designed for nurses who hold an MSN degree or higher. In order to earn the DNP degree, all students complete DNP Core Courses, two DNP project courses, and specialty courses specific to their selected concentration. Regardless of the entry pathway, all graduates will demonstrate the competencies identified by AACN for graduate learners.

BSN to DNP-Nurse Anesthesia

Graduates of the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree in the Department of Nurse Anesthesia are knowledgeable and skillful entry-level anesthetists; able to provide safe, comprehensive, culturally competent, ethical, professional care and to serve constituencies within metropolitan, urban, and rural communities.

*See Nurse Anesthesia Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Student Handbook.

BSN to DNP - Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) and FNP with Emergency Nurse Practitioner specialty

The BSN to DNP (FNP and FNP with ENP) concentrations prepare advanced practice nurses to deliver

health care to individuals and families throughout their lives. The curriculum for the BSN to DNP nurse practitioner concentrations was established to comply with the AACN *Essentials*, the National Task Force (NTF), and the National APRN Consensus Model.

Post-Master's DNP

The Post-Master's DNP entry pathway to the DNP degree has the following foci of specialization from which students may select:

- Nursing Administration
- Advanced Practice Nursing
 - *Note: as of spring/summer 2024, the Nursing Administration and Advanced Practice Nursing options are revised to offer admissions to a Nurse Leader concentration. Students have the option to add nurse educator courses to the Nurse Leader program if they desire. Teach-out plans are offered to existing students as needed.*
- Family Nurse Practitioner
- Emergency Nurse Practitioner
- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

The Post-Master's DNP pathway to the DNP degree is established to comply with AACN's *Essentials*. Each foci of specialization also complies with guidelines and standards specific to the specialization.

Practicum - The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) **requires a minimum of 1000 hours of supervised clinical practice for the DNP degree**. Up to a total of 500 clinical practice hours earned in an MSN program can be brought to the Post-Master's DNP degree program. All DNP degree candidates must document a minimum of 1000 post baccalaureate hours of supervised advanced clinical practice in a chosen clinical specialty area (American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN] DNP Essentials). Those with MSN degrees or postgraduate certificate in a clinical specialty area may apply up to 500 hours of advanced nursing practicum. MSN Educator (education only) practicum hours do not meet AACN guidelines and cannot be used toward the required 1000 hours. Practicum hours applied toward the DNP degree must be approved by the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing Academic Advisor. The maximum number of hours any student may apply toward the DNP practicum hours is 500.

DNP Project

The DNP degree program culminates in the successful completion of a DNP Project. This project should begin in the early stages of the program and continue throughout the program. This scholarly project aims to improve clinical practice, is planned in collaboration with a DNP Project Team and must be a significant, evidence-based contribution to existing nursing knowledge and be suitable for dissemination. Through this scholarly project, students are intended to demonstrate syntheses of scientific knowledge in their specialty practice area and contribute to existing nursing knowledge. The DNP Project proposal is written in NURG 760-DNP Project I and completed in NURG 761-DNP Project II.

POST GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

The Post Graduate Certificate (PGC) is available for the following nurse practitioner options:

- Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)
- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP)
- Emergency Nurse Practitioner (ENP)

Eligibility to sit for national nurse practitioner certification examination

Nurse Practitioner certification exams are available through both the American Nurses' Credentialing Center (ANCC) or the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board (AANPCB). Students successfully completing the requirements within each Nurse Practitioner option will have fulfilled the educational requirements for national certification examination eligibility as follows:

Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) - students completing the MSN, DNP, or PGC options in FNP will be eligible to apply for the ANCC FNP exam and/or the AANPBC FNP exam.

ANCC: <https://www.nursingworld.org/our-certifications/family-nurse-practitioner/>

AANPBC: <https://www.aanpcert.org/index>

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) - students completing the MSN, DNP, or PGC options in PMHNP will be eligible to apply for the ANCC PMHNP exam.

ANCC: <https://www.nursingworld.org/our-certifications/psychiatric-mental-health-nurse-practitioner/>

Emergency Nurse Practitioner (ENP) - students completing the MSN, DNP, or PGC options in ENP will be eligible to apply for the AANPBC ENP exam. *Note: the ENP exam is only offered to those already certified as FNP's. See options for eligibility criteria on the AANPCB ENP certification webpage.

AANPBC: <https://www.aanpcert.org/index>

FULL TIME VS. PART TIME STATUS

For financial aid purposes, students must register for a minimum of six semester hours in fall and spring to be considered full-time. Three semester hours is full time for summer term. Students who enroll in fewer than six hours spring or fall, or three hours in the summer will be considered part-time. If a student is unenrolled for more than one semester, that student will be considered inactive. If a student should choose to withdraw from the program, the student must request a leave of absence in writing by contacting the Office of Graduate Student Services.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

These policies apply to all graduate nursing students.

Progression Policies

In order to progress in the MSN or DNP program in the MSSON, the student must:

- Have a completed Health Data Record (with all required immunizations) upon admission and as required by clinical facilities.
- Carry health insurance while enrolled at Samford. **Students in the MSSON are required to provide proof of current personal health insurance coverage.** Each semester, students in the MSSON are automatically enrolled in the University sponsored student health insurance plan unless the student has waived coverage. There is a charge for this coverage. To have the charge removed from the student's Samford account, a nursing student must provide proof of insurance by completing the insurance waiver. Students who already have comparable health

insurance coverage **can waive out of the University sponsored plan** and will receive instructions on how to do this **approximately a month before their start date and each fall semester thereafter**. **If students do not waive out of the school-provided plan, they will be enrolled automatically, and the premium charged to their student account.** For additional information you can contact the OneStop at 205-726-2905.

- Provide current documentation of Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification including hands-on skills training.
- Adhere to the Code of Ethical/Professional Conduct as specified in the *Samford University Catalog*.
- Students must possess a current unencumbered RN Nursing License in the state of practice and in the state of all clinical rotations. It is the student's responsibility to notify the MSSON of any encumbrance that is placed on any license.
- Students in clinical outside of Alabama enrolled in any of our distance-accessible programs should become familiar with their state's regulations governing distance accessible programs. Students who plan to conduct Samford's distance education/clinical in a state other than Alabama, should contact their state's Board of Nursing and Department of Education for specific rules and regulations pertaining to students enrolled in out-of-state programs. **Clinical rotation requests may be denied based on state rules and regulations.**
- Maintain any required certifications. Example: Students in the Post master's DNP/ENP and/or ENP certificate program must maintain national FNP certification.
- Submit to background check and random drug testing. Note: students may be required to complete additional background check, drug testing, and fingerprinting per clinical facility requirements at student's expense.
- Make a grade of "B" or better in each required or prescribed course in the graduate nursing program. NOTE: a grade of "C", "D", or "F" constitutes a failure in any prescribed or required course in the graduate nursing program.
- Maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA and may not earn a grade below B in any course to progress in the curriculum. A student who receives a grade below a "B" in any required or prescribed course or whose cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0 will be placed on academic probation and are required to repeat any nursing course in which a grade received was below a "B" and receive a grade of "B" or better.
- Students can enroll in the same nursing course no more than twice.
- A failure of the same course twice or failure of two separate courses constitutes dismissal from the program.
- Students admitted under the conditional admission policy must complete the first nine (9) credits of the required graduate nursing courses at Samford University with a grade of 'B' or better in each course attempted.
- A grade of Incomplete (INC) makes the student ineligible to progress to the next course without permission from the program coordinator or graduate nursing associate dean. (See the current *Samford University Graduate Catalog*, "Grading System Guidelines and Policies".)

Students who fail to successfully complete a required nursing course within one calendar year of the academic probation notification will be dismissed from the program.

Students must be aware that matters of plagiarism, unethical, unprofessional, or unsafe conduct may result in immediate dismissal from the MSSON.

Students who need more than four years to complete the program may petition the MSSON graduate

program to request an additional year for completion (a total of five years for completion).

Grading Scale

The faculty of the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing approve the following grading scale:

91-100	A
89-90	B+
82-88	B
80-81	C+
75-79	C
70-74	D
0-69	F
Clinical Failure	F

Online Attendance and Participation

Students who are registered in online courses are expected to complete all required coursework, including lectures, questions, and assignments, electronically. Students are expected to participate in all class discussions or as directed by the instructor. In the event of extenuating circumstances, students should notify the instructor prior to any due date and make arrangements for any make-up work. Failure to do so may affect the course grade. Online class attendance will be assessed by completion of all course assignments by the published due date and time. Students are responsible for retrieving electronic messages from both their Samford University Bulldog e-mail and the learning management system. It is expected that students will respond to all messages within 48 hours.

Students who do not log into a course by the drop/add deadline and who do not contact the faculty member or director of graduate programs with an adequate explanation of their failure to participate will be administratively withdrawn from the course. The drop/add deadline is usually the Friday following a Monday start of term.

After initial participation as demonstrated by a course login, submitted assignment, or peer or faculty interaction, a student who fails to participate for 21 consecutive days will receive a grade of Failure Due to Absences or FA. It is possible that a student's 21-day period of non-participation will end after the last day to withdraw without academic penalty and thus the student will be forced to accept a grade of FA. For the purpose of determining the [tuition refund amount following withdrawal or suspension](#), the last date on which a student logged into the learning management system will be deemed the last date of class attendance.

Grading Policies

If a student has concerns or questions regarding an examination or assignment, the student must request an appointment with the course coordinator in writing within seven (7) days of posting of the examination or assignment grade.

Nursing is a practice discipline. Regardless of a student's numerical grades on examinations and other written course work, it is possible for a student to fail the course as a result of unsafe/unsatisfactory clinical practice and/or unsafe/unsatisfactory therapeutic intervention (interactions). The student who fails clinically will receive a grade of F regardless of the grades received in the didactic portion of the course. Once the clinical failure of the course has occurred and been identified, the student must

immediately leave the clinical area. The student will not be allowed to return to a clinical practice setting for the remainder of the semester. The decision to withdraw and the process of withdrawal from any course is the responsibility of the student. See the current ***Samford University Graduate Catalog*** for more information on course withdrawal. If a student has already failed a course clinically prior to the date to withdraw without academic penalty and the student chooses to withdraw, the grade received will be WF.

Nurse Practitioner students refer to the Clinical Standing/Clinical Probation/Progression Policy located in the *NP Clinical Manual* for further details regarding clinical grading information. All NP students must read and adhere to the policies located in the *NP Clinical Manual (See Nurse Practitioner Homeroom in Canvas)*.

Students entering the program without previous APRN academic preparation may need additional courses or independent studies added to their plan of study to ensure 1000 clinical hours post BSN.

A student who withdraws, changes to audit status, or fails a nursing course can only re-enroll in the course dropped, audited, or failed the following semester if the course is being offered and if space is available. Permission to re-enroll will be based on progression and dismissal policies. Students repeating a course must repeat all didactic and clinical requirements within the semester they are re-enrolled.

Pass/Fail Grading Policy

Courses graded as PASS/FAIL require students to achieve criteria as outlined in the course syllabus.

Withdrawal Policy

The decision to withdraw and the process of withdrawal from any course is the responsibility of the student. A student desiring to withdraw from the University must contact their program coordinator/director/chair or associate dean prior to contacting Graduate Student Services.

For a course withdrawal, please contact course faculty. The refund policy can be found in the ***Samford University Graduate Catalog***.

Readmission Policy

A student who has been dismissed from the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing graduate program may apply through the office of Graduate Student Services for readmission after an intervening period of no less than one semester. The appropriate graduate admission committee will consider such requests for readmission on presentation of substantial evidence of a responsible and successful period of work or study during the intervening period. There is no guarantee, however, that a student will be readmitted. The decision regarding readmission rests with the Dean and is based upon the faculty's evaluation of the likelihood of the applicant's successful performance in graduate coursework. If readmission is granted, a returning student who earns a non-passing grade in any required or prescribed course or whose GPA falls below 3.0 will be dismissed with no additional opportunity for readmission.

Formal Complaint

Formal complaint is defined as a student's grievance about his/her perceived treatment/interaction with a member of the university community or a service offered at the university. To file a formal complaint, proceed to <https://www.samford.edu/departments/student-support/>, then go to "Student Complaint Process" section.

Grade Appeals

An initial grade may be challenged by a student before the last day of classes of the next full semester. Summer term grades must be appealed by the end of fall term. All petitions must be made first in writing to the instructor, chair, and dean. If each of these three in turn denies the appeal, the student may submit a written appeal to the university registrar. The registrar will convene a subcommittee of the Faculty Academic Affairs Committee who will weigh the appeal. The results of this subcommittee's decision are final. See the "Grade Appeals" section of the Samford University Student Handbook at <http://www.samford.edu/files/Student-Handbook.pdf>.

Academic Integrity

Students, upon enrollment, enter into voluntary association with Samford University. They must be willing to observe high standards of intellectual integrity; they must respect knowledge and practice academic honesty. Those who cheat on an examination or class assignment are not only academically dishonest, but also completely deficient in the scholarly maturity necessary to college study. Those detected in dishonesty are subject to severe punishment. The more dependence on cheating, the more inevitable becomes ultimate failure, often accompanied by public disgrace. Any act to obtain an unfair academic advantage is considered dishonest. An academic integrity violation is defined as the act of lying, cheating or stealing academic information to gain academic advantage for oneself or another. Students who commit an academic integrity violation will be charged as such and will be subject to the consequences of the violation as deemed by the faculty. *See Addendum. Samford University Academic Integrity Policy Governing Graduate & Professional Students in the College of Health Sciences School of Health Professionals, School of Nursing, School of Public Health.*

Professional Conduct Policy

Samford students and future advanced practice nurses are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and uphold high standards of honesty and ethical behavior in study and clinical practice. Samford University considers cheating an example of deficiency "in the scholarly maturity necessary for college study" (***Samford University Graduate Catalog***). Unethical or unprofessional behavior in the clinical setting demonstrates the lack of integrity needed for advanced practice nursing.

When a faculty member determines a student's behavior reflects decision making resulting in unsafe or unethical nursing practice, lack of adherence to established policies and procedures, and/or unprofessional conduct, the MSSON faculty reserves the right to immediately assign a course grade of "F" and the student will be administratively withdrawn from the course at that point. Administrative withdrawal prohibits the student from further attendance and/or participation in class or clinical. Such behaviors may include, but are not limited to:

- Committing fraud or deceit while enrolled in the MSSON, including falsifying, plagiarizing, or in a negligent manner making incorrect entries on records or any other written work.
- Committing a HIPAA violation including engaging in activities that breach client confidentiality, such as unauthorized access to clients' charts, photocopying documents from the clients' chart, verbally communicating with unauthorized individuals, and communicating to others about client information in public places.
- Participating in disorderly conduct or breach of the peace, such as obstruction or disruption of teaching, physical or verbal abuse, or detention of any person while engaged in any MSSON activity. This includes unprofessional and/or inappropriate communication with faculty, staff, clients, or peers.

- Negligently or willfully implementing nursing care in a manner that fails to meet generally accepted standards for the students' level of preparation, such as recommendation for or administration of inappropriate or dangerous medication or performance of procedures without supervision or outside the scope of practice.
- Negligently or willfully violating any rule, regulation, or policy of the MSSON such as unexcused clinical absence or excessive unexcused clinical tardiness.
- Exhibiting a physical, mental, or emotional behavior which renders the student unable to provide nursing care with appropriate skill and safety in accordance with course objectives and clinical facility policies and procedures.
- Negligently or willingly acting in a manner inconsistent with the health or safety of others.

VALUE VIOLATIONS

An academic integrity value violation is defined as the act of lying, cheating or stealing academic information to gain academic advantage for oneself or another. As a Samford University student, one is expected neither to commit nor assist another in committing an academic integrity value violation. Additionally, it is the student's responsibility to report observed academic integrity violations. Violations of the Academic Integrity Values Statement include but are not limited to:

Taking Information

1. Copying graded homework
2. Working together on a take-home test or homework when specifically prohibited by the professor
3. Looking at another student's paper during an exam
4. Looking at your notes when prohibited
5. Acquiring a term paper written by someone else
6. Taking an exam out of the classroom when prohibited
7. Removing resource material from the University Library without authorization

Tendering Information

1. Giving your work to another to be copied
2. Giving someone answers to exam questions during the exam
3. After taking an exam, informing a person of questions that appeared on the exam
4. Giving or selling a term paper or class work to another student

Plagiarism

1. Copying homework answers from your text and handing them in for a grade
2. Quoting text or other works on an exam, term paper or homework without citing the source
3. Submitting another's paper/project as your own
4. Taking a paper from an organization's files and handing it in as your own

Conspiracy

1. Planning with one or more students to commit a violation of the Academic Integrity Values Statement
2. Giving your term paper/project to another student who you know will plagiarize

Misrepresentation

1. Having another person do your computer program, course project or lab experiment

2. Lying to a professor to increase your grade

ACCESS TO CANVAS COURSES

Students will have access to their current CANVAS courses when the course coordinator makes the course available at the beginning of the semester. During the semester, students may access any files available to them and download for their use in meeting the course objectives and for future reference. Access to each CANVAS course is limited following course completion.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Technology is an essential and integral aspect of an online course. The student must have a laptop computer and a stable connection to the internet. A high-speed internet connection is preferred. The student will need access to Word, PowerPoint, and an Excel software program. Microsoft Office 365 is available for free download to all current students. This can be downloaded from the Technology Services website, listed below. As online lectures contain audio, the student will additionally need the capability to access the audio through speakers or headphones. A webcam and microphone are also required.

The *Technology Service Help Desk* is available 24/7 by phone at (205) 726-2662 or email at support@samford.edu. The most recent information concerning computer requirements, training, access, hardware, and software options is available at <http://www.samford.edu/departments/technology-services/> under TechResources on the right-hand side.

FORMAT FOR WRITING PAPERS

The MSSON Faculty uses the current *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

INDEPENDENT STUDY PROSPECTUS

Independent study should be discussed with the faculty advisor and a written contract completed in advance of enrollment. Students registering for an independent study must submit an Independent Study Contract to the faculty member overseeing the independent study for their signature.

REGISTRATION

The Director of Graduate Student Services is responsible for coordination of the registration process for graduate nursing students. Each student will receive an email via their Samford email account indicating registration completion for the next term.

SCHEDULE ADJUSTMENT

Students should notify the appropriate Program Chair/Coordinator as soon as possible if there is a problem that might involve an interruption in attendance.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Awards are given each year to honor students who have excelled in the areas of caring, academic excellence, leadership, and service to others in the University, churches, the local and world community, and the nursing profession.

TRANSFER OF GRADUATE CREDIT

Graduate nursing students are permitted to transfer a maximum of twelve hours of graduate credit from an accredited college or university. To do so, students should complete a course substitution form (***See Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing Graduate Student Services webpage***) and attach a copy of the syllabus. Transfer credits will be evaluated by the graduate faculty and Associate Dean of the Graduate Program for applicability to the graduate program.

GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT

Commencement Exercises are held at the end of the fall semester and at the end of the spring semester. A student is required to meet all requirements for graduation as set forth in The Graduate Nursing Student Handbook and ***The Samford University Graduate Catalog*** in effect at the time of entrance into the program, assuming there is no interruption in enrollment of a year or more. Later changes in the requirements for graduation are not applicable to students who proceed without interruption through their chosen program of studies.

It is the MSSON'S responsibility to notify Student Records of the candidates for graduation each term. The candidate will then receive information regarding graduation via email. It is the responsibility of the graduate nursing student to see that all requirements for graduation are met.

CAMPUS SERVICES AND INFORMATION

Electronic Mail

Every Samford student is assigned an email account. Students are required to read their Samford and Canvas email daily. The School does not use personal email accounts to communicate with enrolled students.

Samford Campus Portal

Students are encouraged to take advantage of all the services offered through the campus portal. By clicking on the Banner icon, students may obtain important information such as: transcripts, grades, class schedules, and financial aid information.

Books and Supplies

All books and supplies are available online or at the Samford University Bookstore located on the first floor of the University Center. Used books are sometimes available. Students can view a list of required textbooks and materials prior to each term at <https://www.bkstr.com/samfordstore>. (Also check hours and days of operation)

Campus Safety

The Department of Campus Safety is staffed 24 hours a day, providing immediate availability for emergency response, performance of security patrols, monitoring of persons on campus, lockouts, dead batteries, and providing other services to the campus community. Campus Safety may be reached at (205) 726-2020.

Inclement Weather Policy

RAVE is Samford's emergency notification system. Any campus closing related to weather or safety situations are communicated via email and text message.

How You'll be Notified of an Emergency

RAVE is the primary method of communication used by Samford University during a campus emergency. If you have not registered for *RAVE* alerts. Please use the link provided below and go to the My Contact Information box on your Portal homepage to update your *RAVE* Emergency Alert Information. <https://connect.samford.edu/group/mycampus/student> Samford University utilizes *Samford Alert* for desktop, laptop, tablet, and mobile devices to provide students with information, procedures, and links about what to do in the event of a variety of emergency situations that could occur on our campus. If you do not already have the *Samford Alert* app on your mobile device, laptop, desktop or tablet, please click on this link <https://connect.samford.edu/group/mycampus/student> and go to the *In Case of Emergency* box on your Portal homepage for instructions on downloading the App. Once you have downloaded the App, please take time to review the information provided, it is important that you know what to do in the case of a campus emergency.

Smoking Policy

Refer to [Samford University Handbook](#).

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records. The rights of the FERPA heretofore assigned to parents are now transferred to their college students. These rights are:

1. Eligible students have the right to inspect and review all of the student's educational records maintained by the school. The student must contact the dean of academic services and registrar's office to make an appointment to view their academic record.
2. Eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school refuses to change the records, the eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still refuses the correction, the eligible student has the right to place a statement in the records commenting on the contested information in the records.
3. Generally, Samford University must have written permission from the eligible student before releasing any information from a student's record. However, the law allows schools to disclose records, without consent, to the following parties: school employees who have a need to know, other schools to which a student is transferring, parents when a student over 18 is still a dependent, certain studies for the school, accrediting organizations, individuals who have obtained court orders or subpoenas, persons who need to know in cases of health and safety

emergencies, state and local authorities to whom disclosure is required by state laws adopted before November 19, 1974.

Schools may also disclose, without consent, "directory type" information, such as a student's name, address, e-mail address, and telephone number. Samford University has designated the following as directory information: student name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, enrollment status, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, honors, degrees and awards received, most recent previous school attended, and photograph. *An eligible student who does not wish for this information to be released without prior written consent must notify in writing the Office of the Registrar by the last day to Drop/Add without financial penalty in a semester or term.*

Student Rights and Responsibilities

All graduate nursing students are expected to comply with the behavioral expectations and values as stated in the ***Samford University Student Handbook***. Some stated policies may not apply to graduate nursing students, non-resident students, i.e., issues related to residence halls, notification of parents etc. However, the Values Violation Process does apply to students in the Graduate Nursing Students Program.

Student Conduct

Students in the MSSON must adhere to the standards of conduct specified in the current Samford University Student Handbook (<https://www.samford.edu/files/Student-Handbook.pdf>) as well as to certain standards of behavior appropriate for all health professionals. The information contained in the handbook can be accessed online. Students shall comply with legal, moral, and legislative standards, which determine acceptable behavior of the registered nurse. Noncompliance may be cause for suspension/dismissal from the MSSON.

Library

Samford offers a wealth of library resources featuring extensive print and electronic collections, as well as multimedia resources that include microfilm, music scores, and audio and video recordings. The online catalog and other full-text electronic resources are available to students 24/7 via the Internet. Other libraries in the Birmingham area cooperate with Samford on a reciprocal basis, increasing the variety of resources directly available to the Samford community. The Samford University Library is the primary library for all students, faculty, and staff. In addition to books, eBooks, periodicals, unique collections, and full-text electronic resources, the library houses a large government documents collection - serving as an official repository. Individualized and group instruction in the use of library resources is provided on a regular basis by librarians. A Computer laboratory, computer classroom, individual and group study rooms, multimedia viewing and listening rooms, meeting rooms with advanced presentation and conferencing capabilities, and a lounge area are available for use.

For more information about the library, see the Library Web page at <http://library.samford.edu/> and for more information about specific library resources just for nursing students see the Nursing Research Guide at <http://samford.libguides.com/nursing>. For assistance with any research endeavors, just **ASK US!** <http://samford.libanswers.com/index.php>.

Mailing Address/Name Changes

Students must notify Samford should their address and/or name change. In the event that a student does not change their address, important information may not be received. Changes are the student's responsibility and should be made via the Samford Portal. Change of name requires legal documentation and must be completed by the Financial Aid Office. It is also the student's responsibility to notify the MSSON Graduate office of any changes. Students relocating to a different state are responsible for notifying their program coordinator/director and to ensure that all rules and regulations related to clinical and distance education programs are met.

Parking

Vehicles must display a Samford University parking decal if parked on campus. Decals may be obtained for a nominal fee from transportation services located on main campus. You can also obtain a decal online through Samford's web site at <https://www.samford.edu/departments/transportation/registration>.

University Health Services

Conveniently located on the ground floor of the Dwight M. and Lucille S. Beeson Alumni Center, University Health Services includes an on-site CLIA-certified lab and x-ray. The Clinic provides primary medical care services, including acute care for illness and injuries, health maintenance and management of stable, chronic conditions.

Accommodations Process

Samford University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Office of Accessibility and Accommodations manages accommodations for students with disabilities. After admission to Samford, students who are entitled to accommodations under the ADA must contact the Office of Accessibility and Accommodations with recent, appropriate documentation of their disability. Reasonable accommodations are determined using this documentation and through talking with the student. Accommodations are communicated to the faculty by letter and must come from the Office of Accessibility and Accommodations. Faculty will grant reasonable accommodations only upon written notification from the Office of Accessibility and Accommodations Contact information: The Office of Accessibility and Accommodations, access@samford.edu, 205-726-4892.

Inquiries and concerns regarding this discrimination policy may be directed to the Assistant Vice President and General Counsel, Office of Business Affairs, 200 Samford Hall, Birmingham, AL 35229, (205)726-4172. This notice is available in alternative formats upon request.

FINANCIAL SERVICES (One Stop)

Website: www.samford.edu/departments/financial-services

Email: Onestop@samford.edu

Phone: 205-726-2905

STUDENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF SCHOOL OF NURSING COMMITTEES

Graduate Nursing Students have the opportunity to provide perspectives and assist in shaping policies

through membership on MSSON committees as designated. Faculty committees will have student representation as appropriate. Invitations will be extended to both undergraduate and graduate students to participate as non-voting members of the Academic Affairs and Student Life committees. Students shall serve one year, with an option for reappointment for an additional year. Online students may participate in committee work via video conferencing.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WITH CAMPUS CHARTERS

Sigma Theta Tau International

The Gamma Eta Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International is an honor society for nursing students and nurses. The organization is dedicated to promoting high professional standards. Invitations to membership occur in the Fall and Spring semesters and chapter inductions are held.

Phi Kappa Phi

Recognizes and encourages superior scholarship in all academic disciplines.

Omicron Delta Kappa

Recognizes that leadership of exceptional quality and versatility in college should be acknowledged, that representatives in all phases of college life should cooperate in worthwhile endeavors, and that outstanding students, faculty, and administrators should meet on a basis of mutual interest, understanding, and helpfulness.

INFORMATION PERTAINING TO CLINICAL SITES

Policies of Agencies

Graduate Nursing Students are expected to become familiar with and adhere to the policies of each agency or institution used for learning experiences.

Behavior in the Clinical Area

The faculty member has the right to dismiss a student from the clinical setting if there is behavior indicating the student may not be capable of providing safe care to assigned client/clients.

Clothing

Name badges, appropriate professional attire, and a lab coat (if appropriate) must be worn whenever in the clinical facility and College of Health Sciences. Name badges should include the Samford University logo, the student's name, graduate nursing student, specific track, and Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing.

Liability Insurance

Personal liability insurance for clinical practice is required for all graduate nursing students. Samford University has coverage for liability arising from the rendering or failure to render professional medical services. Faculty and students are covered while working for Samford within the scope of their duties as faculty or as currently enrolled students. The policy is on a "claims made" form that means any claims must occur and be recorded while the policy is in force. If the coverage is discontinued, the University may arrange an extended reporting endorsement.

EVALUATION

Formal evaluation forms are available online near the end of each course to all graduate nursing students. The purposes of these evaluations are to foster student contributions to the planning and revising of curriculum and to indicate areas of change that would enhance the learning environment. These evaluations provide a mechanism for direct communication with administration regarding the curriculum. After completion, evaluations are submitted online. Input from these evaluations make it possible for the faculty to document changes that are requested by students.

Additionally, faculty responsible for a course may administer informal course evaluations. Students are encouraged to thoughtfully complete these forms. The course faculty utilize student input in the ongoing development and refinement of courses.

Exit and Graduate Evaluations

Prior to graduation, students will receive an Exit Evaluation Survey. Students will be asked to evaluate their program of study and their achievement of the goals and competencies. A year after graduation, a follow-up survey will be sent to graduates and their employers. Survey results will provide insight to perspectives about the programs of study and graduates' knowledge and skills obtained during the educational experience.

HEALTH DATA AND IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Graduate nursing students in the MSSON are responsible for maintaining health requirements. Ensure that each Program Participant has a physical examination, proof of immunity or documentation of the following vaccinations: measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, and hepatitis B. In addition, the Program Participant is required to provide documentation of tuberculin testing and documentation of influenza vaccination. Upon the request of the Facility, the University agrees to require the Program Participants to furnish the Facility with any documentation required by the Facility evidencing that the Program Participant is in compliance with the University's immunization requirements.

Before registration each semester, the student is responsible for updating all required health information through the end of the term.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

See Samford University Student Handbook.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Professional/Legal Standard

The Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing recognizes its responsibility to provide a healthy environment within which students may learn and prepare themselves to become members of the nursing profession. The School is committed to protecting the safety, health, and welfare of its faculty, staff, and students and people who come in contact with its faculty, staff, and students during scheduled learning experiences. The MSSON strictly prohibits the illicit use, possession, sale, conveyance, distribution and manufacture of illegal drugs, intoxicants, or controlled substances in any amount or in any manner and the abuse of non-prescription and prescription drugs.

Any nurse or nursing student who tests non-negative for illegal, controlled or abuse-potential substances and who cannot produce a valid and current prescription for the drug is at risk of being in violation of the Nurse Practice Act and State Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations.

Furthermore, any nurse or nursing student who is aware that another nurse or nursing student has violated a provision of the Nurse Practice Act is obligated to report that nurse to the Board of Nursing. A failure to do so in and of itself is a violation of the Nurse Practice Act and the State Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations. Similar professional expectations apply to nursing students. Any nursing student who is aware that another nursing student is using or is in possession of illegal drugs, intoxicants, or controlled substances is obligated to report this information to an MSSON faculty member.

Statement of Purpose

The intent of the Substance Abuse Policy is twofold: to identify students who are chemically impaired and help them to return to a competent and sage level of practice. Emphasis is on deterrence, education, and reintegration. All aspects of the policy are conducted in good faith and with compassion, dignity, and confidentiality.

The Substance Abuse Policy and Procedure of the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing, Samford University is found in its entirety in this handbook. An abbreviated statement is included in the [Samford University Catalog](#).

Testing Procedures

When. The Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing requires the student to submit to drug testing under any or all of the following circumstances:

- Random testing as required by the clinical sites of the MSSON
- For cause (see Testing for Cause Statement); and
- Part of a substance abuse recovery program.

Failure to comply. Failure to comply with random drug testing at the specified time without administrative permission will result in suspension from clinical attendance until testing is complete.

Cost. The cost for random screening is included in the student's safety fee. The student who is screened for cause will be responsible for paying the cost for the urine drug screen at the time the test is administered.

Facility. The Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing utilizes a compliance vendor for collection of specimens and screening. Screening will be performed utilizing the vendor's laboratory policies.

Sample Collection. The collection techniques will adhere to the guidelines in accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation 49 CFR Part 40 following chain of custody protocol. The compliance vendor will collect urine samples on a schedule determined by the dean of the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing. The process and procedure for sample collection will adhere to the contract

Substances. Substance-related disorders are listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fifth edition, (DSM-V). Substances of abuse are grouped into ten classes: alcohol, amphetamines or similarly acting sympathomimetics, caffeine, cannabis, cocaine, hallucinogens, inhalants, nicotine, opioids, phencyclidine (PCP) or similarly acting arylcyclohexylamines and sedatives, hypnotics, or anxiolytics and other or unknown substances. Testing may include any of these drug categories. The School of Nursing shall have the authority to change the panel of tests without notice to include other substances as suggested by local and national reports or circumstances.

Non-negative Results. If a non-negative result is obtained, the student will have the opportunity to request that the original sample be retested. All non-negative results will be forwarded to the Medical Review Officer (MRO) who will contact the student. After review by the (MRO), non-negative results will then be reported to the appropriate associate dean and or department chair. Any student whose urine sample has a non-negative result will be unable to progress in the nursing program.

Screening for Cause. Any nursing student suspected of abuse related to the use of drugs, including but not limited to alcohol, may be subjected to testing. The decision to drug test for cause will be drawn

from those facts in light of the experience of the observers and may be based on, but not limited to:

- Observable phenomena such as direct observation of drug use and/or physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of a drug.
- Erratic behavior, slurred speech, staggered gait, flushed face, dilated/pinpoint pupils, wide mood swings, absenteeism, tardiness, and deterioration of work performance.
- A report of drug use provided by reliable and credible sources which have been independently corroborated.
- Information that a student has caused or contributed to an accident that resulted in injury requiring treatment by a licensed health care professional.
- Evidence of involvement in the use, possession, sale, solicitation or transfer of drugs while on a clinical site premise.
- Conviction by a court, or being found guilty of a drug, alcohol or controlled substance in another legitimate jurisdiction.

Screening for cause will be conducted using the following procedure:

1. The faculty member or designated preceptor will have another health care provider confirm the suspicious behavior.
2. The student will be asked to leave the area and go with a faculty member or individual designated by the faculty and a witness to discuss the situation in a location ensuring privacy and confidentiality. The discussion will be documented, and the decision to drug screen will be made after conferring with a department chair, associate dean, and/or dean.
3. If warranted, the student will submit appropriate laboratory specimens in accordance with the Substance Abuse Policy and clinical site policies.
4. The student will be suspended from all clinical activities until the case has been reviewed by the appropriate personnel designated by the dean of the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing.
5. If the lab test is negative for substances classified in the current Diagnostic and/or Clinical Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, the student will be allowed to return to clinical activities without penalty. Arrangements to make up missed work must be initiated by the student on the first day back to class or clinical (whichever comes first). If any part of the lab test is non-negative for substances classified in the current Diagnostic and/or Clinical Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, the student is in violation of the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing Substance Abuse Policy and the Samford University Drug and Alcohol Policy. As provided in this policy in the section entitled, "Non-negative Drug Screen, Sanctions, Treatment, Referral, Re-application, Opportunity for a Re-Test", violations will result in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions up to and including expulsion of the student ([Samford University Student Handbook](#)). Confidentiality will be maintained. Failure to comply with "for cause" drug screening will result in immediate administrative withdrawal and a course grade of "F".

Confidentiality

All screening information, interviews, reports, statements, and results specifically related to the individual are confidential. Drug screening results will be sent to the appropriate associate dean and or department chair in the School of Nursing. Records will be maintained electronically in a secured location. While the issues of screening are confidential within the University community, the information regarding substance abuse pursuant to the appropriate Board of Nursing requirements, must be shared with that Board of Nursing when the graduate applies for a license. The information may be shared with a parent or legal guardian as provided in the following paragraph:

Pursuant to the Family Educational Responsibility and Privacy Act (20 USC 1232g) Samford University may disclose, to a parent or legal guardian of a student, information regarding any violation of a Federal, State or local law, or of any rule or policy of the institution, governing the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance, regardless of whether that information is contained in the student's education records, if (A) the student is under the age of 21; and (B) the institution determines that the student has committed a disciplinary violation with respect to such use or abuse.

Non-Negative Drug Screen and Opportunity for a Re-Test

1. Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing:

In order to assure patient safety at clinical sites, a non-negative drug screen will be considered evidence of drug use/abuse by the student. A non-negative drug screen of any substance, including but not limited to the following, will result in immediate dismissal from the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing: alcohol, amphetamines or similarly acting sympathomimetics, cannabis (marijuana metabolites), cocaine, hallucinogens, inhalants, opioids (methadone, codeine, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, morphine, oxycodone, propoxyphene), phencyclidine (PCP) or similarly acting arylcyclohexylamines and sedatives, hypnotics, or anxiolytics (methaqualone, barbiturates, benzodiazepines) and other and unknown substances. Action taken under the Drug and Alcohol Policy will be independent of action taken, if any, through the Student Conduct process. Dismissal from the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing is not automatically a dismissal from Samford University. The student will be ineligible to receive a letter of good standing from the dean of the nursing program

2. Samford University:

Violations of the Samford University Alcohol and Drug Policy will result in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions up to and including expulsion of the student, as printed in the Samford University Student Handbook). Results of a non-negative drug screen will be referred by the dean of nursing to the Office of Student Conduct. Action taken through the Student Conduct process will be independent of action taken, if any, under the Substance Abuse Policy of the MSSON.

Opportunity to Request a Re-Test

If a drug screen result is non-negative, the student may request a re-screen of the original urine sample. A student who desires to have the original sample re-screened must file a written request with the dean of the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing within three (3) business days following notification of a positive drug screen result. The student will be responsible for all costs of the re-screen. If the re-screen is negative the student will be reinstated.

Student Release Form

As a condition of progression, each student will sign the “Substance Abuse Policy Release Form” (included in this Handbook) agreeing to adhere to the terms and conditions of the Substance Abuse Policy and Procedure.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

The School of Nursing institutes background checks on all nursing students. Students selected for admission to the School of Nursing are admitted pending the results of a background check. Each student is required to have a background check, and submit to, as requested, any additional checks once enrolled in the nursing program. The School of Nursing must certify to all clinical agencies where students practice that each student has had an acceptable background check. Students are required to follow the procedures established by the School of Nursing. Students are responsible for all costs required to obtain the background check.

Students must report any arrests or legal convictions that occur prior to or during their nursing education. Reportable examples include, but are not limited to, misdemeanors, felonies, sexual offender convictions or governmental sanctions. The school of Nursing reserves the right to release

information regarding the student's criminal history to appropriate clinical agency representatives. If a student is deemed ineligible for clinical placement in any contracted clinical agency of the School of Nursing, the student will receive a course failure and dismissal from the nursing program. Failure to report arrests or legal convictions will result in dismissal from the School of Nursing. A student's admission may be withdrawn or the student may be dismissed from the School of Nursing due to findings from the background check. Students dismissed will be considered for readmission on a case-by-case basis depending on the particular situation.

REQUIRED FORMS

Forms requiring a student signature are supplied in Appendix B and include: *Substance Abuse Policy Release Form, Confidentiality Statement, Receipt of Student Handbook Form, Permission to Provide References, and Permission to Display/Present Work.*

APPENDIX A : Essential Performance Standards of Nursing Students

Admission/Progression of Persons with Disabilities to the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing

Students with disabilities are considered for acceptance to the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing (MSSON) based on their ability to meet the objectives of the program and to perform required activities.

MSSON ADA Awareness Statement

MSSON endorses the university commitment to students with disabilities. MSSON will provide accessible programs, services, and activities and reasonable accommodations for any student with a disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

Nursing is a practice discipline with cognitive, sensory, affective, and psychomotor performance requirements. Qualified individuals are those who satisfy admission requirements and who can perform essential functions of a nursing program with or without reasonable accommodation or modification.

Students must satisfy the Essential Performance Standards of nursing students.

To be eligible for program accommodation, students must self-identify to the Office of Disability Resources (DR), who will determine eligibility for services. Once eligibility for accommodations are determined by DR, it is the students' responsibility to request appropriate accommodations. If these standards cannot be achieved by the student, either unassisted or with dependable use of assistive devices, the faculty RESERVES the right to withdraw the student from clinical courses.

Clinical Practicum/Lab Course Standards		
Issue	Standard	Some Examples of Necessary Activities (not all-inclusive)
Critical Thinking	Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment	Identify cause/effect relationships in clinical situations, develop nursing care plans, ability to make safe judgments when planning and implementing all psychomotor nursing prescriptions
Interpersonal	Interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups from diverse backgrounds	Establish rapport with patients and colleagues; negotiate interpersonal conflict; respect differences in clients; respect the cultural diversity of clients and co-workers
Communication	Communication abilities (hearing, speaking, reading, and writing) sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and written form	Explain treatment procedures, initiate health teaching, document and interpret nursing actions and patient responses.

Issue	Standard	Some Examples of Necessary Activities (not all-inclusive)
Mobility	Physical abilities sufficient to move from room to room and maneuver in small spaces	Move around in patients' rooms, work spaces, and treatment areas; administer CPR, assist in ambulation, have sufficient mobility and stamina to function over an 8-12 hour period in a hospital setting (twist, bend stoop/squat, move quickly, climb, walk).
Motor Skills	Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective nursing care	Calibrate and properly use equipment (blood pressure cuffs and syringes); position, lift, and transfer patients; ability to lift up to 50 pounds; obtain and process specimens; insert catheter; administer injections; use a computer; twist or squeeze with fingers; stand and maintain balance; reach and bend; move within confined spaces
Physical Strength and Endurance	Physical stamina sufficient to perform full range of required client care activities for entire length of work role	Sustain repetitive movements; maintain physical tolerance; lift; push and pull; support 25 pounds; move heavy objects weighing 10-50 pounds; defend self against combative client; carry equipment; use upper body strength
Emotional Stability	Able to assume responsibility and accountability for own actions	Establish therapeutic boundaries; provide client with emotional support; adapt to stress; deal with the unexpected; perform multiple responsibilities concurrently; handle strong emotion
Hearing	Auditory ability sufficient for observation and assessment necessary in nursing care	Hear verbal exchanges among health care personnel and patients, monitors alarms, emergency signals, auscultatory sounds, cries for help; ability to hear in situations when not able to see lips of speaker; ability to hear sounds of a normal or faint volume level
Visual	Visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment necessary in nursing care	Able to read handwritten documents (chart data); able to see small calibrations on syringes; sphygmomanometer, thermometers; observe patient responses to interventions and/or health problems; ability to detect subtle color changes
Tactile	Tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment	Perform palpation; functions of physical examination and/or those related to therapeutic intervention, e.g., pulse, body parts, temperature of skin or fluids

Distance-Accessible Course Standards		
Issue	Standard	Some Examples of Necessary Activities (not all-inclusive)
Critical Thinking	Critical Thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment	Synthesize reading assignments, able to write course assignments
Interpersonal	Interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds	Interact with classmates and course instructors on course related subjects; able to work with other students on a group project
Communication	Communication abilities (hearing, speaking, reading, and writing) sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and written form	Communicate with faculty and other students via e-mail and electronic threaded discussions
Motor Skills	Physical abilities sufficient to use a computer	Complete written assignments and examinations by typing on the computer
Hearing	Auditory ability sufficient to complete class assignments	Listen to online audiovisual presentations
Visual	Visual ability sufficient to participate in course activities	Complete reading assignments and watch audiovisual presentations

NOTE: It is important for nursing students to have a realistic view of the demanding curriculum before deciding to pursue the degree. Students are encouraged to contact the School of Nursing if there are questions about his/her abilities to function in the clinical settings.

_____ I meet all Performance Standards required by the School of Nursing.

_____ I do not/_____ am not sure that I meet all Performance Standards required by the School of Nursing. I understand that I must meet with the Associate Dean for the Graduate Program to discuss/clarify before I am allowed to progress in the School of Nursing.

All information I have provided is complete and accurate.

Student Signature

Date

Printed Name

APPENDIX B: Required Forms

Substance Abuse Policy Release Form

I, _____, have read the Substance Abuse Policy of the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing, Samford University, and agree as a student in the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing to comply with all aspects of the policy as written including urine screening.

I agree that First Advantage, the MSSON contracted compliance company, is authorized by me to provide the results of this test to the Dean of Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing for use in enforcing the Substance Abuse Policy and Procedure.

I agree to indemnify and hold First Advantage and its directors, officers, employees and agents harmless from and against any and all liabilities or judgments arising out of any claim related to 1) compliance of Samford University with federal and state law and 2) Samford University's interpretation, use and confidentiality of the test results, except if First Advantage is found to have acted negligently with respect to such matters.

I agree to indemnify and hold Samford University and its trustees, officers, employees and agents harmless from and against any and all liabilities or judgments arising out of any claim related to 1) compliance of First Advantage with federal and state law and 2) First Advantage's interpretation, use and confidentiality of the test results.

I further understand, acknowledge and agree that my failure to adhere to the conditions specified in this policy will result in my dismissal from the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing. Furthermore, I agree to abide by the provisions for determining dismissal and to follow the conditions of re-acceptance as outlined.

I acknowledge that under the Family Education Responsibility and Privacy Act, 20 USC Section 1232g, Samford University may disclose, to a parent or legal guardian of a student, information regarding any violation of any Federal, State or local law, or of any rule or policy of the institution, governing the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance, regardless of whether that information is contained in the student's education record, if (A) the student is under the age of 21; and (B) the institution determines that the student has committed a disciplinary violation with respect to such use or possession. I agree that a non-negative drug screen will be considered a determination by Samford University that I have committed a disciplinary violation with respect to such use or possession and if I am under the age of 21 years Samford University may disclose such information to my parent(s) or legal guardian.

I represent and certify that as of the date of my execution of this document I am _____ years of age. Failure to comply with random drug screening at the specified time without administrative permission will result in suspension from clinical attendance until testing is complete. Failure to comply with "for cause" drug screening will result in immediate administrative withdrawal and a course grade of "F".

Student printed name

Student signature

Date

Witness

Date

Draft 3-18-02 JHW/jhw; Modified by Bill Mathews 4-9-02; Finalized 4-17-02 Revised 8/1/07 JSM; Revised 8/2024

Substance Abuse Policy and Procedure

Modified from: Burris, R. 2002. Arkansas Tech University. SREB Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing (CCEN).

Confidentiality Statement

Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing
Samford University

I hereby agree to hold in confidence any information that I am made aware of pertaining to patients and/or their families during all of my clinical experiences while I am a student in the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing. I recognize that patient records and patient interviews are confidential and private and that I will share information only with those authorized to have the information as necessary to care for the patient/family. I will not disclose any information to any unauthorized person or permit any person to examine or make copies of any report or document prepared by me, coming into my possession or to which I have access. I will not use patient names or other identifying information on assignments that I submit to fulfill course requirements. I further agree never to use any information for my advantage or personal gain.

I realize that the unauthorized disclosure of information by me may violate state or federal laws, and that unauthorized release of information may result in my dismissal from school and legal action against me. I have read this agreement, understand it, and agree to abide by it.

Please print name

Signature

Date

Witness

**The following attestations are signed electronically by students upon admission:
Receipt of Student Handbook Form**

I, (please print) _____, am aware the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing Student Handbook is online and acknowledge responsibility for reviewing the contents contained therein. I will clarify with my advisor, any part(s) I do not understand. I further understand that failure to follow these rules and regulations contained in the handbook may result in various consequences, according to the infraction.

Student's Signature _____ Date: _____

Permission to Provide References

I, (please print) _____, realize that in the future, references will be requested by potential employers. I give permission to the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing administration and/or faculty to provide the requested information. A copy will also be directed to the Student File.

Student's Signature _____

Permission to Display/Present Work

I, (please print) _____, hereby give the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing permission to display and/or present examples of my work as part of a program review process by accrediting or approving organizations and their designated personnel.

Student's Signature _____ Date: _____

Addendum: College of Health Sciences Academic Integrity Policy

Samford University Academic Integrity Policy Governing Graduate & Professional Students in the College of Health Sciences School of Health Professions, School of Nursing, School of Public Health

The School of Pharmacy will follow the current *Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct* outlined in the School of Pharmacy's Student Handbook (pg. 28) for any allegation of an academic integrity violation related to courses within the School of Pharmacy.

Pharmacy students enrolled in courses in the Schools of Health Professions, Nursing or Public Health will be held to the Academic Integrity Policy governing graduate and professional students in the College of Health Sciences.

Effective Date: October 1, 2019

ARTICLE I: PREAMBLE

A degree from Samford University is evidence of achievement in scholarship and citizenship. Activities and attitudes should be consistent with high academic standards and Christian commitment and should be in keeping with the philosophy and mission of the University. At Samford, academic integrity is expected of every community member in all endeavors and includes a commitment to honesty, fairness, trustworthiness, and respect.

The University Statement on Academic Dishonesty is as follows: students, upon enrollment, enter into a voluntary association with Samford University. They must be willing to observe high standards of intellectual integrity, respect knowledge, and practice academic honesty. Those who cheat on an examination or class assignment are not only academically dishonest, but also are deficient in the scholarly maturity necessary for college study. Those who engage in academic dishonesty are subject to severe punishment. Any act to obtain an unfair academic advantage like the acts described in Article VIII is considered dishonest.

ARTICLE II: SCOPE OF APPLICABILITY

2.1 General Applicability

Articles I through III of this policy apply to students enrolled in the following graduate programs at Samford University: Master of Science in Nursing, Doctor of Nursing Practice, Master of Athletic Training, Master of Science in Speech Language Pathology, Doctor of Physical Therapy, Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies, Doctor of Audiology, Dietetic Internship, Master of Healthcare Administration, Master of Health Informatics and Analytics, Master of Public Health, Master of Science in Nutrition, Master of Social Work, and Doctor of Public Health. Articles IV-IX apply to students enrolled in any of those listed graduate programs that are not governed by a school-specific academic integrity policy that has been approved by the Provost and the General Counsel of Samford University.

2.2 Approval of School-Specific Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures

Specific schools and colleges of Samford University may adopt their own school-specific academic integrity policies and procedures. After August 1, 2021, no school-specific policy may be used unless it was previously approved by the Provost and General Counsel of Samford University. In order to obtain approval of a school-specific policy, the dean of the school must submit a written copy of the proposed policy to the provost of the university and the general counsel. The general counsel shall approve or disapprove the policy within 60 days of receipt. If the general counsel disapproves the policy, he or she shall communicate to the dean the reasons for the policy's disapproval. If they wish, a school and dean may revise a disapproved policy (perhaps in consultation with the general counsel) and resubmit it.

2.3 Applicability of Various Academic Integrity Policies

In determining which of various academic integrity policies governs an academic integrity violation, all allegations of academic integrity violations shall be governed by the policy that applies in the school or program in whose course or activity the alleged violation occurred.

ARTICLE III: REPORT OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY TO THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY OFFICER

3.1 Academic Integrity Officer

The University Registrar or his designee shall serve as the Academic Integrity Officer (AIO).

3.2 Report of Academic Integrity Violations to the AIO by Faculty

All final determinations of an academic integrity violation by a student in a graduate or professional program must be reported to the AIO as follows:

- (a) By Faculty.** Any faculty member (including faculty in schools that have an approved school-specific academic integrity policy) who finally determines that a student committed an academic integrity violation (as defined by the applicable academic integrity policy) and who adjusts any grade based on the violation must report the violation to the AIO.
- (b) By School-Specific Academic Dishonesty Hearing Bodies.** If the hearing body or other entity authorized by an approved school-specific academic integrity policy finally determines that a student committed an academic integrity violation (as defined by the applicable policy), the entity must report the violation to the AIO.
- (c) By the Graduate Academic Council.** If pursuant to this policy the Graduate Academic Council determines that a student committed an academic integrity violation, the GAC must report the violation to the AIO.
- (d) Nature of the Report to the AIO.** A report of academic dishonesty to the AIO pursuant to this section shall (i) identify the student who committed the violation and the school and academic program in which the violation occurred, and (ii) briefly describe the violation.

3.3 Repository of Academic Violation Reports

The AIO shall create a repository to maintain reports of academic integrity violations submitted pursuant to this section and identify instances in which a student is found guilty of multiple academic integrity violations.

ARTICLE IV: GRADUATE ACADEMIC COUNCIL

4.1 Composition

The Graduate Academic Council (GAC) shall be composed of one (1) faculty member from each of the university's schools that have graduate/professional degree programs (*Howard College of Arts & Sciences, Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing, Brock School of Business, Orlean Beason School of Education, McWhorter School of Pharmacy, School of Public Health, School of Health Professions and School of the Arts*) and the University Library and one student from each school.

Faculty members must be full-time faculty with at least three years of instructional or library experience at Samford University. Each student member must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher at the time of the appointment and during service. The student members shall be appointed annually by the deans of the participating schools. Faculty members shall be appointed for three-year terms by their respective deans.

A chairperson shall be selected each year by the faculty members of the Graduate Academic Council. The same person may be elected chairperson in multiple and back-to-back years.

4.2 Jurisdiction

The GAC shall have exclusive jurisdiction to decide all academic integrity matters brought before it pursuant to the procedures set forth in section 6.1 of this policy.

4.3 Duties

The GAC shall have the following duties:

- (a) Conduct investigations and hold hearings pursuant to the procedures set forth in this policy to determine whether an accused student committed an academic integrity violation.
- (b) Impose sanctions on students who it finds to be guilty of repeated or severe academic integrity violations.
- (c) Communicate its decisions as set forth in these policies.

ARTICLE V: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS

5.1 Definition of Academic Integrity Violations

Academic Integrity Violations are acts of academic misconduct. The term academic integrity violation includes, but is not limited to, the following acts:

- (a) Offering for course credit as one's own work, in whole or in part, the work of another.

- (b) Plagiarism, that is, incorporating into one's work and submitting to others (either for course credit or some other university sanctioned purpose) passages taken either word for word or in substance from a work of another, unless the student credits the original author and identifies the original author's work with appropriate quotation marks, footnotes, or other appropriate written explanation.
- (c) Offering one's work for course credit or other university sanctioned purpose work that one previously offered for course credit in another course or other university sanctioned activity, unless one secures permission to do so prior to submission from the instructor in whose course the work is being offered or the person in charge of the activity.
- (d) Obtaining an unauthorized copy of a test or assignment in advance of its scheduled administration.
- (e) Taking an examination (or other evaluative instrument, exercise, or competition) for another student or knowingly permitting another person to take an examination (or other evaluative instrument, exercise, or competition) for oneself.
- (f) Giving, receiving, or obtaining information pertaining to an examination (or other evaluative instrument, exercise, or competition) during an examination or exercise period, unless such action is authorized by the instructor giving the examination or the person in charge of the exercise or competition.
- (g) Divulging the contents of an essay or objective examination or other evaluative exercise or competition to a student who has not taken the exam or engaged in the exercise or competition.
- (h) Taking, keeping, misplacing, or tampering with the property of Samford University, a faculty member, or another student, if one knows or should reasonably know that one would, by such conduct, obtain an unfair academic advantage. This section is intended to include, but not be limited to, material in a university library.
- (i) Failing to follow the instructions of a professor in completing an assignment or examination or of a person or entity in charge of an exercise or competition, if one knows or should reasonably know that one would, by such conduct, obtain an unfair academic advantage.
- (j) Witnessing conduct which one knows or should reasonably know is dishonorable and failing to report it.
- (k) Altering or falsifying academic or student record documents such as transcripts,

change of grade forms, University excuses, and add/drop forms.

- (l) Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on an examination, assignment, project, or other academic assignment.
- (m) Making a false report of academic dishonesty.
- (n) Fabricating, falsifying, or misrepresenting data, results, analyses, or other studies, presenting the results of research or studies not actually performed, or manipulating or altering data to achieve a desired result, including the failure to report or suppressing conflicting or unwanted data.
- (o) Violating a Code of Conduct applicable to a program in which the student is enrolled that relates to academic integrity.
- (p) Violation of HIPPA Rules.
- (q) Falsifying clinical records (Case numbers, hours practice, etc.) and clinical evaluations.

ARTICLE VI: PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING REPORTING *ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS*

6.1 Faculty Actions Based on a Suspected Academic Integrity Violation

If a faculty member believes that a student committed an academic integrity violation in a course or activity for which the faculty member is responsible, the faculty member shall follow the following procedures:

(a) Meeting with the Student. The faculty member must meet with the student within 15 university working days after discovering the alleged violation. Based on the situation, the faculty member should consider having a witness at the meeting with the student. The faculty member should seek in the meeting to determine whether the student admits or denies the alleged violation. At some point in the discussion, the faculty member must describe the alleged violation and ask if the student committed it. Once a faculty member has charged a student with an academic integrity violation, the student may not withdraw from or change status in the course until the matter is resolved.

(b) Consultation and Advice. The faculty member is encouraged to consult with his or her department chair and or dean and may disclose information necessary for the chair and/or dean to provide guidance as a school official with a legitimate educational interest. The faculty member may also consult with colleagues about the suspected academic integrity violation. All such communications shall comply with FERPA. Faculty members may also consult with the AIO regarding a suspected violation.

(c) Student Admission of Violation. If the student admits the academic integrity violation, the faculty member shall adjust the student's grade on the assignment or in the course as the faculty member deems appropriate. The faculty may also submit the matter to the AIO and request that the GAC review the matter to consider sanctions beyond a grade adjustment due to the seriousness of the violation. In that event, the faculty member shall prepare a report to the AIO describing the violation and related circumstances.

(d) Faculty Determination of No Violation. If, after further review, the faculty member is satisfied that no academic integrity violation occurred, then the allegations are dismissed, no report shall be filed, and the matter is closed.

(e) Student Contests Violation. If after further review the faculty member determines that an academic integrity violation occurred, but the student denies violation, then the faculty member shall adjust the student's grade on the assignment or in the course as the member the faculty member deems appropriate. The faculty member shall in that event prepare a report that (i) states he or she found an academic integrity violation, (ii) describes the violation, and (iii) describes the grade sanction, if any, that he or she imposed. The faculty member shall provide a copy of the report to both the student and the AIO. If the student wishes to contest the faculty member's determination or the grade sanction imposed, the student may file an appeal with the AIO pursuant to section 7.1 of this policy stating why the student believes the faculty member's determination or sanction is inappropriate. The student may not withdraw from the course during this process and should continue to attend the course and complete all necessary assignments.

6.2 Reports of Alleged Academic Integrity Violations by Other Members of the University Community.

Any member of the Samford community who suspects that a graduate or professional student has committed an academic integrity violation shall report the allegation to the faculty member in whose course the alleged violation occurred. If the alleged violation did not occur in a course, the allegation shall be reported to the AIO.

ARTICLE VII. GRADUATE ACADEMIC COUNCIL PROCEDURES

7.1 AIO Referrals to the Graduate Academic Council

Within five (5) business days of receiving a report or allegation of an alleged academic integrity violation, the AIO shall in the following instances refer the matter to the chairperson of the GAC:

- (a) When a student files an appeal of a faculty member's determination of an academic integrity violation or the grade sanction imposed based on the violation.
- (b) When a faculty member requests GAC review of an academic integrity violation pursuant to section 6.1(c) for consideration of sanctions beyond a grade adjustment due to the

seriousness of the violation.

- (c) When the AIO determines that an alleged academic integrity violation would be the student's second or subsequent violation.
- (d) When another member of the Samford community reports an alleged academic integrity violation pursuant to section 6.2 that did not occur in a course.

7.2 Referrals Reviewed by the Chairperson of the GAC

Within ten (10) business days after the AIO refers an alleged academic integrity violation to the GAC chairperson, the chairperson shall review the allegation, report, and any other material submitted and determine if there are reasonable grounds to believe that an academic violation occurred. If the chairperson determines such grounds do not exist, the chairperson shall report to the AIO within those ten (10) days that the allegations are dismissed. The chairperson may request assistance from legal counsel and other university departments as appropriate.

7.3 Assembling a GAC Hearing Panel

(a) Composition. Within 10 business days after the AIO refers an alleged academic integrity violation to the GAC chairperson, the shall appoint a Hearing Panel. The Hearing Panel shall consist of three faculty and two student members of the GAC selected by the chairperson. In selecting the faculty members of the hearing panel, the chairperson shall give preference to appointing the GAC representative from the school in whose program the alleged violation occurred. The Hearing Panel shall by majority vote select one of its faculty members to serve as its presiding member who shall assure the panel proceeds in a manner that is timely and consistent with these procedures.

(b) Recusal. A member of the Hearing Panel shall recuse himself or herself if he or she believes that he or she cannot decide the matter before the panel based on the evidence or without bias or prejudice. The Hearing Panel may, by majority vote, recuse one of its members from sitting on a hearing if that recusal would best serve the interests of the university.

(c) Notice to Student. If the GAC chairperson determines that reasonable grounds exist to believe an academic violation occurred, then the chairperson shall within five (5) business days notify the student alleged to have committed the violation that GAC proceedings are being instituted to address the allegation. The notification shall be in writing and shall describe the specific violations alleged.

7.4 Hearing Panel Proceedings

(a) Initial Panel Deliberation. The Hearing Panel must convene (this may occur face to face, WebEx or other electronic means) and begin deliberations within fourteen (14) days after their

appointment. The panel shall at that time review the allegations and all material submitted to the AIO and the GAC chairperson. The Hearing Panel may by majority vote decide to dismiss the allegation, investigate further, or proceed to a hearing of the matter.

(b) Investigation. If the Hearing Panel believes further investigation is needed, it may interview any member of the Samford community who may have knowledge of relevant facts or request any materials that relate to the alleged violation.

(c) Scheduling a Hearing. If after completing any needed investigation, the Hearing Panel does not decide to dismiss the allegation, it shall schedule a hearing of the matter. The hearing must be held within 20 days after the Hearing Panel was appointed.

(d) Notice of Hearing. The panel must provide written notice of the hearing to the accused student no less than ten (10) days before the hearing. The notice must set forth:

- (i) the date, time, and place of the hearing;
- (ii) the specific violations alleged;
- (iii) the names of all witnesses whom the panel consulted or on whose statements the panel has relied; and
- (iv) a list (and copies when available) of all materials relating to the violation on which the panel relied; and
- (v) a copy of this policy and any related written procedures.

(e) Hearing. At the hearing, the Hearing Panel may hear the testimony of any witnesses and consider any documents it deems relevant to the allegation. The accused student has the right to be present at the hearing, to act as his or her own counsel, to be assisted by a member of the Samford community of his or her choice, to obtain copies of all testimony or reports relied upon by the Hearing Panel; to ask questions of all witnesses who testify at the hearing; and to present evidence in his or her defense.

(e) Panel Deliberations. After the hearing concludes, the Hearing Panel shall deliberate and determine (i) whether the student committed academic integrity violations; and (ii) what sanctions, if any, should be imposed.

(f) Sanctions. The Hearing Panel may impose the following sanctions:

- (1) Official reprimand that will be made part of the student's record;
- (2) Removal of awards or honors received by the student as a result of the violation;
- (3) A requirement that the student engage in community service, educational classes, or other appropriate activity;
- (4) Probation (a period in which the student is restricted from participating in all or designated co-curricular or other activities).
- (5) Suspension (termination of student status at the university for a specified period);
- (6) Expulsion (termination of student status at the university for an indefinite period or permanently).

(g) Notice of Decision. Within five (5) business days, the chairperson of the Hearing Panel shall communicate its decision in writing to the AIO who will provide a copy of the decision to the accused student, the affected faculty member, and-in the case of a violation-the dean(s) of the appropriate school(s).

(h) Panel Requests for Assistance. The Hearing Panel may at any point during its work request assistance from legal counsel as appropriate. It may also confer with the AIO regarding consistency of decisions and sanctions.

ARTICLE VIII: APPEAL OF SANCTIONS

8.1 Grade Appeals.

Any grade adjustment made pursuant to these policies may be appealed through the grade appeals process otherwise applicable in the school.

8.2 Appeal of Non-Grade Sanctions.

If a student disputes the sanction(s) imposed by the GAC, he or she may appeal the sanction decision in writing to the AIO within five university working days of the date he or she receives notice of the Hearing Panel decision. The AIO (in discussion with the Provost and Executive Vice President) may review the record of the hearing and the student's academic and disciplinary records, and based upon this review, decide to:

1. Allow the sanction(s) to stand.
2. Modify the sanction(s) or impose a different sanction(s).
3. Suspend the sanction(s).

For issues regarding the same academic integrity incident, the AIO and Provost will consider a grade appeal and an appeal of the University Academic Council's decision on additional sanctions at the same time. The decision of the AIO and Provost as to the appropriateness of the sanction(s) is final.

ARTICLE IX: CONFIDENTIALITY

9.1 Confidentiality.

The proceedings of the Graduate Academic Council and Hearing Panel are confidential and are subject to the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and its implementing regulations.

Approval for Schools of Nursing, Health Professions and Public Health: August 2019; Final Edits: 9/4/2019
Effective date: October 1, 2019

**Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing
Samford University
800 Lakeshore Drive
Birmingham, AL 35229
www.samford.edu/nursing**