



**2024**

**UBC Nursing**  
MSN  
Program Handbook

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## Land Acknowledgment

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, occupied and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəyəm First Nation. The land it is situated on has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people who, for millennia, have passed on in their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site (Retrieved <http://aboriginal.ubc.ca/community-youth/musqueam-and-ubc/>). The UBC School of Nursing acknowledges Canada's colonial history that persists today and honours present relationships with Musqueam Peoples and their land to show respect to the Musqueam Nation and to signal our commitment to truth, reconciliation, Indigenous human rights and ending Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination.

To learn more about the Musqueam people, land and culture, go to <http://www.musqueam.bc.ca/our-story>) ʔəy tə šxʷqʷeləwən ct k♦s səyem stəxʷs tə xʷməθkʷəyəm ʔiʔ tə ʔa təməxʷs.

## Course Planning

The MSN Program for the first two terms of the program are set through the offering of core required courses. All courses are offered using various delivery modes (e.g., in-person, virtual, hybrid) and there may be more than one section of an MSN course being offered in one term. Whenever possible, students can self-select course sections that best fit their schedules and/or learning needs.

The four core required courses are:

- **NURS 511:** Theoretical Foundations of Nursing Practice
- **NURS 504:** Research and Evidence-Based Practice
- **NURS 502:** The Ethics and Politics of Nursing
- **NURS 552:** Methods in Nursing Science

After completing the core courses, there are an array of other MSN courses that students can take in specific areas, such as: clinical education, research, health promotion, research methods, advanced practice nursing, health policy, and nursing leadership (See Table 1).

## MSN Scholarly Practice Advancement Project (NURS 595) or Thesis (NURS 599)

The MSN culminates in either a 9-credit Thesis or a 3-credit Scholarly Practice Advancement project. For description of these 2 options see: <https://nursing.ubc.ca/graduate/msn/thesis-or-scholarly-practice-advancement-research-project-spar-planning>

Students are required to declare a thesis or SPAR for their culminating work by the end of Year 1 and can *discuss these options and seek decision-making support from the MSN Coordinator*. The pathways for thesis or SPAR are described in Table 2.

## Tuition, MSN Registration and Thesis/SPAR Registration

Students are required to be continuously registered throughout the program. This means tuition payments do not reflect the number of courses students are registered in per term. Students may register for any number of courses per term and will pay the same tuition fee. Students are required to maintain registration in NURS 599 (Thesis) or NURS 595 (SPAR) from the beginning of their program.

**Table 1: MSNSchedule**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Year: Registered for SPAR (NURS 595) or THESIS (NURS 599)</b>		
<i>Winter 1 (Fall)</i>	<i>Winter 2</i>	<i>Summer</i>
<b>NURS 504 &amp; NURS 511 (6 credits)</b> Classes are either: Morning (9am – 12pm) Afternoon (1pm – 4pm)	<b>NURS 502 &amp; NURS 552 (6 credits)</b> Classes are either: Morning (9am – 12pm) Afternoon (1pm – 4pm)	<b>Student-selected courses (6 credits)</b> NURS 540 or NURS 512 *Grad e-newsletter will announcement when schedule available
<b>2nd Year: SPAR &amp; Thesis Pathways</b>		
<i>Winter 1 SPAR</i>	<i>Winter 2 SPAR</i>	<i>Summer</i>
<b>Student-selected courses Recommend 2 courses (6 credits)</b>	<b>Student-selected courses, NURS 595: SPAR (3 credits) <u>Possible completion</u> (30 credits total) at the end of this term</b>	
<i>Winter 1 THESIS</i>	<i>Winter 2 THESIS</i>	<i>Summer THESIS</i>
<b>NURS 548 and/or NURS 549 (3 credits each; 1 of these required for Thesis)</b> Classes on same day: 9am – 12pm, 1pm – 4pm	<b>NURS 599: THESIS (9 credits)</b>	<b>NURS 599: THESIS (9 credits)</b>

**Table 2: Thesis and SPAR Pathways**

Thesis Pathway (NURS 599) (9 credits)	SPAR Pathway (NURS 595) (3 credits)
A Thesis can is a research or inquiry project. This includes philosophical and historical studies, as well as qualitative and quantitative research projects.	The SPAR is a scholarly project within nursing and can focus on policy, ethics, clinical education, nursing leadership, clinical pathways, quality improvement, etc.)
<p>All MSN students take <u>the same four core courses</u> during the first two terms of the program.</p> <p><b>Winter 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N504 (Research and Evidence-Based Practice) (3 credits)</li> <li>• N511 (Theoretical Foundations of Nursing Practice) (3 credits)</li> </ul> <p><b>Winter 2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N502 (The Ethics and Politics of Nursing) (3credits)</li> <li>• N552 (Methods in Nursing Science with a statistics refresher module) (3 credits)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Thesis students</b> must take <u>one</u> additional research course, either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N548 (Qualitative Methods) (3 credits)</li> <li>or</li> <li>• N549 (Quantitative Methods) (3 credits)</li> </ul> <p>One course is required; however, depending on the thesis design, students may elect to take both courses</p>	<p><b>SPAR students</b> may take one or both of the additional research courses as electives; however, they are not required for a SPAR</p>
<p><b>The Thesis pathway</b> requires 6 student-selected course credits in addition to the 12 core course credits, an additional research course (3 credits) and their thesis (9 credits) to complete the 30-credit program.</p>	<p><b>SPAR students</b> need 15 student-selected course credits in addition to the 12 core courses credits and their SPAR (3 credits) to complete the 30-credit program.</p>
<p><b>The thesis committee</b> has three members. The supervisor must be a member of Graduate + Post-doctoral Studies (G+PS). Other committee members may be non-nursing faculty, faculty from other universities, or UBC School of Nursing adjunct faculty.</p> <p><a href="#">Add 2024 thesis guidelines here</a></p>	<p><b>The SPAR committee</b> has two members. The supervisor must be a member of G+PS. The other committee member is a faculty member or UBC School of Nursing adjunct faculty member with expertise in the SPAR topic area.</p>
<p>As of Sept, 2024, thesis completion requires the <i>graded written document</i> (out of 100) and a <i>final presentation</i> to the committee or one open to the SON faculty and students.</p>	<p>For additional information about the SPAR:</p> <p><a href="#">See SPAR guidelines for details</a></p>
<p><b>The thesis</b> must be submitted to the UBC digital library repository (UBC Circle) after being graded and approved by the student’s thesis committee.</p>	<p><b>The SPAR</b> does not need to be submitted to UBC Circle. Students may voluntarily do so, if they desire their own URL link for their SPAR.</p>

## General Guidelines for Program Planning and Thesis or SPAR Supervision

The MSN Coordinator and Student Services staff will be available to assist with program-related planning during the first two terms of the program. During Term 1, students are invited:

- Read faculty profiles on the School of Nursing website to see who may align with Thesis or SPAR interests/topics. The [UBC School of Nursing website](#) has faculty profiles that describe their areas of expertise and G+PS membership status
- During or nearing the end of Term 2, contact faculty by email to invite a conversation to discuss their potential to supervise a SPAR or Thesis.
- In your email, introduce yourself, share your reasons for pursuing the MSN, the plan to do a Thesis or SPAR and some general points about potential areas of interest for the Thesis or SPAR.
- Remember, UBC Nursing faculty welcome the chance to discuss students' topics for theses or SPARs and anticipate receiving such emails as part of our role on facilitating MSN students' scholarship!

The MSN Coordinator and course instructors are also able to consult with students to make recommendations for faculty supervisors. Once a faculty member has agreed to be a student's supervisor for a SPAR or thesis, the student submits **this information to the STS system.** The agreed-upon supervisor can help guide the student for course selections and with successful completion of program requirements for a SPAR or thesis.

### **Confirming Thesis or SPAR Supervisors**

Once a faculty member has confirmed to serve as supervisor, the student notifies the MSN program by emailing: [academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca](mailto:academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca) with their name, student number, and "**Supervisor Notification**" in the subject line.

- In the body of the email include the name, phone number, and email of your supervisor.
- Similarly, the names and contact information of thesis/SPAR committee members should also be emailed to [academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca](mailto:academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca) with your name, student number, and "**Committee Member Notification**" in the subject line. Supervisors will help students identify committee members for a SPAR or thesis.

### **Student-Directed Electives**

There are 2 options for student-directed electives: the Directed Practicum (NURS 577) and Directed Studies (NURS 590). Both of these options require a faculty mentor who oversees and supports the course.

#### ***Directed Practicum (NURS 577)***

Student taking the Directed Practicum (N577) spends 90-120 hours focused on a specific domain of nursing related to the thesis or SPAR topic where a practicum experience would be beneficial (e.g., education, policy, practice, professional practice, ethics, policy, public health, research, etc.). This course provides the student the opportunity to create an individualized learning plan in collaboration with an academic faculty member or adjunct nursing faculty who act as leader-mentors for N577. A practicum contract is developed between the faculty supervisor, a leader-mentor and the student. Click [here](#) for NURS 577 Guidelines.

### ***Directed Studies (NURS 590)***

Directed Studies are individualized plans of study arranged between a student and faculty member. Students are encouraged to consider this course once they have completed the 4 core courses. Students and the faculty member discuss and collaborate to create a NURS 590 contract. Directed Studies can be focused literature reviews on a topic of interest to a student or applied project work, a clinical quality improvement initiative or provide the opportunity for diving more deeply into specific research methodology. The NURS 590 study topic may complement the SPAR or thesis topic, but it cannot be part of a SPAR or thesis (e.g., the literature background for a thesis). As an example, a student, a community care nurse, may do a SPAR scoping review on the latest evidence related to food security for adults in residential care settings.

In order to register for NURS 590, a completed contract must be approved by the MSN Coordinator. Once approved, the student sends a copy of the contract to Student Services ([academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca](mailto:academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca)) so the contract is added to the student's file. Student Services completes registration for NURS 590. Click [here](#) for NURS 590 Guidelines

### **Non-MSN Electives**

MSN students may take up to 6 credits of non-MSN electives. Beyond the MSN program courses, other electives can include non-nursing courses from other faculties such as the School of Population and Public Health, Psychology, Sociology, Centre for Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Social Justice (Arts), etc. Elective courses at the 500 level are encouraged, and they often require 300-400 level courses as pre-requisites. Students may take the ***pre-requisite and the 500-level course as 6 elective credits once they are approved by MSN Coordinator and course instructor. Please email [academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca](mailto:academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca) to proceed with this process.***

Courses that students have selected include:

- **EPSE 596:** Educational and Counselling Psychology, and Special Education- Correlational Designs and Analysis in Educational Research
- **SOCI 503:** Sociology- Qualitative Research Design and Techniques
- **SPPH 538:** School of Population and Public Health- Application of Ethical Theories in the Practice of Public
- **SPPH 581N:** School of Population and Public Health- Knowledge Translation in Population and Public Health

### **Non-UBC Vancouver Electives**

Students may also choose to complete graduate-level courses at other universities based on agreements between UBC and these universities (Western Dean's Agreement, UBC/Toronto/McGill Agreement, UBC Okanagan). Please see the required paperwork and process for transfer credits below.

**NOTE:** UBC Okanagan is considered academically separate from UBC Vancouver. All non-UBC Vancouver electives must be approved by the MSN Advisor.

## [Western Deans Agreement](#)

### [Credit Transfer](#)

We request that students submit requests to complete a course at an external institution at least 4 months prior to the start of the course.

### **Leave of Absence**

Students must remain continuously registered until the degree is completed, except for periods of time when the student is away on an approved leave of absence. Failure to register for two consecutive terms may result in mandatory withdrawal. Continuous registration includes the summer term.

A graduate student who finds it necessary to interrupt their studies for parental, health, personal, professional, employment, or academic reasons, as outlined in policy V-302.2, may apply for a leave of absence. For step-by-step instructions on starting a leave of absence request, go to:

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/managing-your-program/leave-absence>

### **The MSN Coordinator**

The MSN Coordinator is an academic faculty member with advising expertise who works closely with Student Services and G+PS. The current faculty member in this role is Dr. Helen Brown ([helen.brown@ubc.ca](mailto:helen.brown@ubc.ca))

### **Student Services Office**

The Student Services Office should be students' first point of contact for questions about the Handbook and the MSN program. The Student Services Office (SSO) is located in T248 in the UBC School of Nursing (Koerner Pavilion, UBC Hospital). It is open regular School of Nursing business hours (8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday – Friday).

### **Academic Requests**

The SSO can assist with any of the following requests (among others):

- requesting a leave of absence
- adding a supervisor/chair and committee members for thesis or SPAR
- requesting to complete a transfer course (Western Deans' Agreement or other)
- requesting to complete a directed study or practicum (i.e. N590, N577A)
- requesting an extension to your program end date

For detailed instructions, please visit [Academic Request Instructions](#)

Please email [academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca](mailto:academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca)

### **Awards, Scholarships & Competitions**

MSN students have access to a variety of scholarship competitions & awards. Postings can be found on [our website](#).



## **Enrolment Services Advisors**

(Tuition, Payments, Fees & Student Loans)

Graduate students at UBC's Vancouver campus who have questions about tuition, payments, fees, student loans, and need-based funding should connect with an Enrolment Services Advisor ([ESA](#)).

## **Graduate Student in Nursing Association (GSNA)**

**GSNA** is the official departmental organization representing the collective interests of graduate students in the School of Nursing. GSNA executive is elected by the student body and may be comprised of MSN, MN-NP and PhD students. To learn more about GSNA, please email [gsna@nursing.ubc.ca](mailto:gsna@nursing.ubc.ca).

## **Graduate Student Society (GSS)**

GSS is run by and for the 10,000 graduate students at UBC Vancouver. GSS promotes and protects GSS members' academic, social and cultural interests. To learn more about GSS, please visit the [GSS website](#)

## **Student Spaces**

MSN students have access to 3 dedicated student learning spaces:

- T252 Nurses' Lounge
- T295 Student Computer Lab
- T293A Student Conference Room

All spaces are available to School of Nursing students with key card access 24/7. You can get your key card [here](#)