



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
School of Nursing  
Faculty of Applied Science

# 2017

## Program Handbook

Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)



Note: This document is best viewed as an electronic reference as it includes links to appropriate policies and web pages related to the content discussed. Links appear in underlined blue type.

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## Program Overview

The MSN program is designed to prepare graduates to function as leaders in a range of roles such as education, advanced practice, policy implementation, health care management, and nursing knowledge development.

The MSN Program is administered and overseen by the School of Nursing; however, all graduate programs are part of the Faculty of Graduate & Post-doctoral studies (G+PS) and students are officially admitted into G+PS-, and it is G+PS that oversees and approves the progression of students until graduation. Please visit the [G+PS Orientation page for newly admitted students](#).

## Program Requirements

The program provides a basis for leadership in professional nursing practice and also creates a foundation for doctoral studies. Students complete a total of 30 credits, comprising core, focus, and elective courses. Student must complete either a thesis (Nursing 599, 9 credits) or a Scholarly Practice Advancement Research project (SPAR) (Nursing 595, 3 credits) as their final project.

## Resources for Academic Support

### MSN Program Advisor & Coordinator

The MSN Program Coordinator is a resource for all MSN students. This faculty member oversees curriculum development, student progression, and policies relating to the MSN Program.

**Program Advisor & Coordinator Faculty Profile:** [Dr. Susan Dahinten](#)

### Provisional Advisors

All students are assigned a provisional advisor, and receive an e-mail with the name of their provisional advisor in May. The provisional advisor provides guidance to MSN students with regards to planning their course of study, and general guidance in getting started on their thesis or SPAR project. (Thus, the provisional advisor does not need to be expert in the student's particular area of interest.) Even though advisor approval is not required for course registration, we recommend that you contact your provisional advisor to discuss your study plan.

### Supervisors

Once students have identified the general topic they wish to pursue and are ready to decide more firmly on which completion project (NURS 599 or NURS 595) they plan to complete, they may identify a supervisor. Typically students connect with supervisors after first or second term.

Link: [List of eligible supervisors for MSN Students](#) (Please select MSN from the drop down menu under "search by supervisor eligibility")

## General Guidelines for Course Selection

The MSN Program provides flexibility for students to set up a course planning trajectory for a total of 30 credits that aligns with their professional and research interests. Students may choose courses beyond 30 credits and they may choose electives outside of nursing (with approval of the Program Coordinator). There are a number of possible foci that provide the foundation for the MSN Program such as Research, Education, Leadership, Policy and Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS). Yet, you can choose courses flexibly between streams and you do not need to declare a particular stream or focus.

THESIS	NON-THESIS
<p>Focuses on the advancement of nursing knowledge and practice within a variety of specialty areas combining advanced leadership roles with an emphasis on skill development in research. The track offers a range of courses in the foundations of advanced nursing knowledge and practice, evidence and research appraisal, and research design and methodology.</p> <p>Students consolidate their learning through a combination of core, focus and research courses. Students complete the program with a <b>NURS 599</b> Master's Thesis (9 credits).</p>	<p>Has a strong focus on advanced nursing leadership roles in various domains and offers a range of courses in foundations of advanced nursing knowledge and practice, evidence and research appraisal, and selected courses in specialty areas.</p> <p>Students consolidate their learning through core, focus and research, as well as practicum and project options. Students complete the program with a <b>NURS 595</b> Scholarly Practice Advancement Research Project (SPAR Project) (3 credits).</p>
<p>To further meet the MSN Program requirements, student will complete one of the two tracks:</p>	
<p><b>CORE COURSES (Required):</b>  <b>NURS 511</b> Theoretical foundations of nursing practice  <b>NURS 502</b> The ethics and politics of nursing  <b>NURS 552</b> Methods in Nursing Science  <b>NURS 504</b> Research and Evidence-Based Practice</p> <p><i>Students in this track complete 1 additional core course from the following two research method course options:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NURS 549</b> Quantitative methods</li> <li>• <b>NURS 548</b> Qualitative methods</li> </ul>	<p><b>CORE COURSES (Required):</b>  <b>NURS 511</b> Theoretical foundations of nursing practice  <b>NURS 502</b> The ethics and politics of nursing  <b>NURS 552</b> Methods in Nursing Science  <b>NURS 504</b> Research and Evidence-Based Practice</p>
<p><b>MSN Seminars assigned to N599 or N595:</b> Each winter term, the MSN Program hosts a seminar for MSN Students that focuses on various aspects of thesis or SPAR completion. These seminars are facilitated by the Program Coordinator in collaboration with additional faculty presenters. Scheduling information is distributed to students in the Graduate Student e-Newsletter. Participation is strongly encouraged.</p>	
<p>Students complete 2 additional courses (6 credits) at the graduate level (Course Number &gt; 500 at UBC). (Including at least 1 focus course is strongly recommended.)</p> <p><b>COMPLETION PROJECT:</b>  <b>NURS 599</b> Master's Thesis (9 credits)</p>	<p>Students complete 5 additional courses (15 credits) at the graduate level (Course Number &gt; 500 at UBC). (Including at least 1 focus course is strongly recommended.)</p> <p><b>COMPLETION PROJECT:</b>  <b>NURS 595</b> Scholarly Practice Advancement Research Project (SPAR) (3 credits)</p>

It is strongly suggested that students review the information in this guide and plan a sequence of courses taking guidance and direction from their provisional advisor or supervisor.

Please do not rely on past scheduling as an indicator of future scheduling. The Summer Session Schedule (April – August) is usually available by February, and the Winter Session Schedule (September – April) is usually available by April of each year.

MSN students are strongly advised to:

- Complete the four required core courses within the first year of the program.
- Begin planning their completion project (Thesis or SPAR) by the end of the first year of the program.
- In consultation with their supervisor, select the research methods/data analysis course in line with their thesis project, and complete this course within the second year of their program.
- Use a combination of focus and specialized domain courses to complement their core courses.

Students may also supplement their course selections with Directed Studies, Practicum Courses, non-nursing electives, and courses at other universities.

## Registration in NURS 599 MSN Thesis and NURS 595 SPAR

Students are required to maintain registration in NURS 599 (Thesis) or NURS 595 (SPAR) from the beginning of their program—even if they have not yet decided which completion project they will undertake. Students may switch between the two project options prior to completion of their project proposal, with the approval of their supervisor and the MSN Program Coordinator.

Reference: [UBC School of Nursing Thesis or SPAR Planning](#)

Concentration on the completion project normally begins after having completed their four required core courses, but planning for it can, and should, start earlier.

## Types of MSN Course Offerings

Course descriptions and objectives for all courses offered by the School of Nursing are available on the website: [Graduate Programs → Courses](#). Use this list to explore potential course offerings, but keep in mind that not all courses are offered each semester. The course offerings for each term are listed on the website in [Graduate Programs → Course Schedules](#).

MSN Courses can generally be classified into six types, as described below:

### Core Courses

**Core Courses** are required for all MSN students, and we strongly recommend that students complete these within the first year of their program.

- **NURS 502** (3 credits) Ethics & Politics of Nursing
- **NURS 504** (3 credits) Research & Evidence Based Practice
- **NURS 511** (3 credits) Theoretical Foundations of Nursing Practice
- **NURS 552** (3 credits) Methods in Nursing Science (Co-requisite: NURS 511, Recommended co-requisite NURS 504)

### Focus Courses

**Focus Courses** are **typically offered once in an academic year**.

- **NURS 512** (3 credits) Leadership in Nursing
- **NURS 520** (3 credits) Administrative Leadership in Nursing (Co-requisite: NURS 511)
- **NURS 530** (3 credits) Advanced Practice in Nursing (Co-requisite: NURS 511)
- **NURS 540** (3 credits) Educational Processes in Nursing (Co-requisite: NURS 511)
- **NURS 541** (3 credits) Clinical Nursing Education (Prerequisite: NURS 540, Co-requisite: NURS 511)

One focus course is typically taken within the first year of entering the MSN Program, but students can take more than one. Focus courses complement the required courses and provide the foundation for the professional and

research focus of the student. Students are encouraged to discuss these with their Provisional Advisor for incorporation into their course planning trajectory.

### Additional Research Courses

**Additional Research Courses** are also **offered once every calendar year**: One of these, or an equivalent, is required for students enrolled in NURS 599. They are optional for students enrolled in NURS 595.

- **NURS 548** (3 credits) Qualitative Methods & Analysis
- **NURS 549** (3 credits) Quantitative Research Methods and Analytic Strategies in Nursing and Health Sciences

MSN Students normally select the research course(s) based on the methodology for their thesis project. If other methods are required to support their thesis project, students may request to take a substitute course. This will require approval by the Supervisor and MSN Program Coordinator.

### Specialized Domain Courses

**Specialized Domain Courses** are elective nursing courses that are **offered on a rotating schedule**. Not all specialized domain courses are offered every year.

- **NURS 586 A – I** (3 credits each) Specialized Domains in Nursing (see complete course list for details).
- Includes courses on Nursing History Inquiry, Child Development, Informatics, etc.

### Directed Studies

**Directed Studies (NURS 590)** are individualized plans of study arranged between a student and faculty, and documented as a directed study contract. MSN Students are normally eligible for directed study once they have completed the required course work for the MSN program. Preparation for the Thesis or SPAR project is normally done as part of NURS 599 or 595 credits, and does not need to take the form of a Directed Study. In order to register for a Directed Study, send the request to [academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca](mailto:academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca) in an email including your name & student number. Once the MSN Program Coordinator has approved the request, the Student Support Office (SSO) will complete the required paperwork.

### Practicum Courses

**Practicum Courses (NURS 577)** can be completed in particular focus areas. This course allows the student to set up an individualized learning plan with a preceptor under the supervision of a faculty member. For instructions on how to request a directed study practicum course on STS, refer to the [NURS 577 Directed Practicum Guidelines](#).

### Non-nursing Electives at UBC

**Non-nursing electives at UBC:** Students may choose to take a maximum of 6 credits to be counted toward the requirements of the master's degree (these should normally be at the graduate level, with course numbers > 500).

When a student registers for a non-nursing course through the UBC SSC, the Student Tracking System (STS) sends a notification to the Program Coordinator and the student asking the Program Coordinator to approve this course. Once the program coordinator approves the course on the Student Tracking System (STS), both Program Coordinator and student receive notification.

Permission is not required prior to registration; however, approval by the Program Coordinator is necessary to ensure this course will contribute to the student's completion of program requirements.

## Electives Outside of UBC Vancouver

**Electives outside of UBC Vancouver (i.e., at other Universities and UBC Okanagan):** Students may also choose to complete graduate level courses at other universities based on agreements between UBC and other universities (Western Dean's Agreement, UBC/Toronto/McGill Agreement, etc.).

Students may also choose to complete courses through UBC Okanagan; however, the two institutions are considered academically separate. All non-UBC Vancouver electives must be approved by the Program Coordinator.

Reference: [UBC Faculty of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies \(G+PS\) Policy on Transfer Credits & WDA](#)

## How to Register for Transfer Credit Courses at Other Institutions

- Identify an appropriate course, and obtain a course description from the institution offering the course. This may include the course syllabus or contact information for course instructor/department.
- Send the request to [academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca](mailto:academic.support@nursing.ubc.ca) in an email including your name & student number. Once the MSN Program Coordinator has approved the request, the Student Support Office (SSO) will complete the required paperwork with the student & submit to G+PS
- G+PS must request the registration from the institution offering the course to ensure the student is not charged additional tuition fees, and the credits are approved to be transferred back to UBC.
- Once G+PS has completed the registration, they will directly notify the student.
- Once the student has completed the course they are required to order 2 copies of their official transcripts from the institution offering the course to the following departments:
  - One copy to G+PS: Attn: NURS SAS Clerk, 170-6371 Crescent Road, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z2
- One copy to the School of Nursing: Graduate Administrative Assistant, 2211 Wesbrook Mall, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 2B5
- Once the transcripts have been processed by G+PS, they will email the student directly, and add the transfer credits to the students UBC Academic Record

### An important note on timelines:

We request that students submit requests to complete a course at an external institution at least **2 months prior to the start of the course**. Approval by G+PS usually takes 4 – 6 weeks minimum. Making the request 2 months in advance gives the MSN Program Coordinator adequate time to review the request, and the SSO adequate time to complete the appropriate paper work.

**Having Transfer Credits Approved by G+PS upon Completion of Coursework:** In general it takes **4 – 8 weeks** from the time of receipt of official transcripts at G+PS to have transfer credits approved & added to the students UBC Academic Record. Please be mindful of this when nearing graduation.

## MSN Timetables

**Current MSN Timetables** which list the courses offered each semester are available on the School of Nursing Website: [Graduate Programs → Course Schedules](#)

Normally, timetables are available one academic session ahead:

- Summer Session (May - August) is usually available in January / February
- Winter Session (September - April) is usually available in April / May

### Student Support Office (T248 in School of Nursing)

For non-academic advising, and guidance navigating UBC and the School of Nursing, MSN Students are encouraged to contact the [Student Support Office](#) for assistance.

The Student Support 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).

The Graduate Support Team is also reachable via phone (604-822-7473) or email [student.services@nursing.ubc.ca](mailto:student.services@nursing.ubc.ca).

## Get Involved: Graduate Student Nurses Association (GSNA):

The GSNA is the official departmental organization representing the collective interests of graduate students in the School of Nursing. The GSNA executive is elected by the student body and may be comprised of MSN, MN and PhD students.

**GSNA Blog:** <http://blogs.ubc.ca/gsna/> **Contact the GSNA:** [gsna@nursing.ubc.ca](mailto:gsna@nursing.ubc.ca)

## Awards & Financial Aid Information for Graduate Students:

As UBC Students, students in the School of Nursing have access to a wealth of resources with regards to student awards and financial aid. If you have questions about your tuition, your student account, or information on funding and awards opportunities for all students (graduate and undergraduate) please contact the Enrolment Services Professionals at Brock Hall.

Reference: [How to Contact Enrolment Services at Brock Hall](#)

Reference: [School of Nursing Website – Graduate Student Financial Resources](#)

[School of Nursing Website – Graduate Awards, Scholarships & Competitions](#)

[School of Nursing Website – Emergency Financial Assistance](#)

Every student enrolled in a master's program is required to maintain continuous registration by paying tuition installments according to Schedules A or B, plus authorized student fees. Tuition installments are based on total program cost for the projected length of the program, and not based on credits per term. Fees, including tuition, program, course, special, and student society fees, are approved by the [Board of Governors](#) following consultation with students and are subject to change. Please refer to fee listed in the [Master's Degree Programs](#), UBC Academic Calendar.

## Graduate Tuition Fee Schedules

1. All master's programs have a fee assessed for **each term** in which On-leave status is taken.
2. If a degree program is not completed by a set number of instalments or a minimum program fee, the assessments will then switch to a Continuing fee. The Schedule A Continuing fee is assessed after instalment 6. The Schedule B Continuing fee is assessed after instalment 9.
3. If a master's degree is not awarded within a period of five years from the initial registration, a student may be granted an extension with permission from the Faculty of Graduate Studies, but will be charged additional fees.



Reference: [UBC Academic Calendar – Research Based Master’s Program Graduate Tuition Fees](#) [UBC Faculty of Graduate Studies – Graduate Tuition Fees](#)

## Full-Time & Part Time Student Status

**At UBC, student status is separate from the pace at which a student chooses to pursue their studies.** Master's students are normally considered Full-time Status and are assessed tuition fees according to Schedule.

### Schedule A (Full-Time Status)

MSN Students assessed fees according to Schedule A can choose to pursue studies at a full-time or part-time pace. Students wishing to pursue their studies at a part-time pace are not required to switch to Schedule B (Part-time Status).

- MSN Program **Full time Pace** = 2 – 3 courses per term + thesis or SPAR(NURS 599 or NURS 595)\*
  - MSN Program **Part time Pace** = 1 – 2 courses per term + thesis or SPAR (NURS 599 or NURS 595)\*
- \*Reduced course (only 1 course per term) is available with Program Coordinator Approval.

Schedule A students are eligible for graduate scholarships and fellowships. Normally, teaching assistantships (TAs) and research assistantships (RAs) are limited to full-time students.

### Schedule B (Part-Time Status)

Schedule B fee assessment has several disadvantages for the student which includes:

- Not being eligible to receive interest-free status government loans, University fellowships or scholarships;
- Not being eligible for teaching assistantships, research assistantships, student housing, or assigned desk space at the University; and
- The five-year maximum time allowed for the Master’s program also applies to Schedule B students.

All MSN Students requesting to switch from Schedule A to Schedule B assessments must do so in consultation with, and with approval from, the MSN Program Advisor & Coordinator. This switch must occur prior to the first time tuition is assessed by the university.

Reference: [Faculty of Graduate Studies - Full Time / Part Time Student Status](#)

## Appendix A: Student Course Planning Worksheet

Student Course Planning Worksheet	Semester I plan to take this course	Completed (Y/N)	Semester Completed
<b>Required Core Courses</b>			
<b>NURS 502</b> (3 credits) Ethics and Politics of Nursing			
<b>NURS 504</b> (3 credits) Research and Evidence Based Practice			
<b>NURS 511</b> (3 credits) Theoretical Foundations of Nursing Practice			
<b>NURS 552</b> (3 credits) Methods in Nursing Science			
Registration in NURS 599 or NURS 595 is required for every semester enrolled in the MSN Program			
<b>Additional Courses</b> – Students may select from all research, focus, and specialized domain courses based on their individual study plan			
<b>Research Courses</b>			
<b>NURS 548</b> (3 credits) Qualitative Research Methods			
<b>NURS 549</b> (3 credits) Quantitative Research Methods			
<b>Focus Courses</b>			
<b>NURS 512</b> (3 credits) Leadership in Nursing			
<b>NURS 520</b> (3 credits) Admin Leadership			
<b>NURS 540</b> (3 credits) Educational Processes			
<b>NURS 541</b> (3 credits) Clinical Nursing Education			
<b>NURS 506</b> (3 credits) Health Promotion			
<b>NURS 530</b> (3 credits) Advanced Clinical Practice			
<b>NURS 560</b> (3 credits) Health Policy			
<b>Specialized Domain Courses</b> - these courses are offered on a rotating bases, usually once every two years			
<b>NURS 586A</b> History of Nursing and Health Care			
<b>NURS 586B</b> Curriculum Development in Nursing			
<b>NURS 586C</b> Healthy Infant and Child Development			
<b>NURS 586M</b> Multidisciplinary Perspective in Adolescent Health			
<b>NURS 586V</b> Violence in Families: Advanced Understandings and Responses			
<b>NURS 586I</b> Health Informatics			
<b>Directed Studies</b>			
<b>NURS 590</b> (3-6 credits) Directed Studies in Nursing			
<b>Practicum Courses</b>			
<b>NURS 577A</b> (3 credits) Graduate Practicum in Nursing (CNS)			
<b>NURS 577B</b> (3 credits) Graduate Practicum in Nursing (Education)			
<b>Elective Courses</b> (Needs Approval)			