

UVM DEPARTMENT OF NURSING GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK



The University of Vermont

COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

2019-2020

Handbook Overview

The Graduate Student handbook has been developed to provide information and guidance.

The Handbook contains policies and procedures related to the graduate nursing program. Additional policies and procedures are described in The University of Vermont Graduate Catalogue, the Cat's Tale, and official publications directed to students in the Department of Nursing, all graduate programs and the Graduate College. Students are held accountable for policies and procedures described in these official publications.

Students will be advised if any changes occur in the graduate program. For general announcements and messages, students should frequently check their UVM email account. Questions regarding policies and procedures should be directed to your advisor or Department Chair.

Disclosure Statement

The Department of Nursing, subject to and consistent with the policies of The University of Vermont, reserves the right to make changes in course offerings and degree requirements as educational and financial considerations require. Students are responsible for staying abreast of current policies.

Note: There is a separate handbook for students in the undergraduate program

Contact Information

Department of Nursing
216 Rowell Building
106 Carrigan Drive
Burlington, VT 05405

Office: 802-656-3830
Fax: 802-656-8306

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Department of Nursing Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Nursing reflects the mission of the University. The University mission, "...is to create and share knowledge. UVM prepares its students to live productive, responsible, and creative lives through a high quality liberal education. As a research university, UVM endorses the intrinsic value of the creation of new knowledge and promotes the application of relevant knowledge to benefit the State of Vermont and society as a whole. As a research university, UVM is distinguished by the comprehensiveness of its academic mission, its range of graduate and undergraduate programs and its commitment to research-based lifelong learning. As a community of scholars, students, both undergraduate and graduate, are involved in the generation of knowledge. As a member of its local and global community, the University has an obligation to share its knowledge, to assist with relevant applications of that knowledge, and to understand and respond to a changing and diverse world" (UVM Catalogue, online at www.uvm.edu/catalogue Graduate Catalogue online <http://catalogue.uvm.edu/graduate/>)

The mission of the Department of Nursing is derived from its philosophy and it reflects the faculty's assessment of current and projected health needs of people everywhere and the role of the nursing profession in meeting these needs. The Department of Nursing's mission is: 1) to prepare qualified individuals for professional and advanced nursing practice, 2) to improve the quality of nursing education and service, and 3) to improve the quality of health and health care.

The Department of Nursing carries out its mission of preparing qualified individuals for professional and advanced nursing practice by offering the following educational programs:

- Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)
- RN-BSN Program
- Accelerated Master's Program (BSN-MS-Clinical Nurse Leader)
- Master of Science in Nursing (Clinical Nurse Leader/CNL)
- Direct Entry Program in Nursing to MS-Clinical Nurse Leader (DCNL)
- Direct Entry Program in Nursing to DNP-Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (DEPN)
- Doctor of Nursing Practice (Primary Care Nurse Practitioner)
- Post Graduate Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP- Primary Care or Executive Nurse Leader)

The Department carries out its mission of improving the quality of nursing education and service through the following activities:

1. Research and scholarly activities which contribute to the development of clinical practice, nursing education, and the further development of the science of nursing;
2. Outreach to the community;
3. Participation in local, state, regional, and national nursing organizations;
4. Provision of consultation to agencies providing nursing care and nursing education.

The Department carries out its mission of improving the quality of health and health care through the following activities:

1. Preparing qualified individuals for nursing practice at entry and graduate levels;
2. Undertaking research and scholarly activities which contribute to the improvement of health care;
3. Participation in the activities of health related organizations;
4. Educating consumers of health care.

Philosophy of the UVM Department of Nursing

Our goal is to enhance the health of a complex pluralistic society through research and the preparation of exemplary practitioners. As a faculty we believe learning, discovery, and engagement are life-long processes. Nursing practice evolves in response to the health needs of a global society and transcends cultural and national boundaries. Health is a dynamic process that involves the interplay of individuals, families, and communities with their environments—economic, social, political, built, and natural—and is filtered through and shaped by health values and beliefs. Health values, in turn, are influenced by personal, spiritual, cultural, and societal beliefs and practices.

Updated 6/2010; reviewed 2014, 2016

Policies

Student Rights and Responsibilities

<http://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/studentcode.pdf>

Academic Integrity

The University of Vermont, Department of Nursing is a learning community. Consistent with its mission, purpose, and values the Department of Nursing seeks to foster within its community, it is expected that academic honesty and integrity guide the actions of all of its members. It is the responsibility of every person in the academic community to ensure that dishonesty is not tolerated. Academic dishonesty (cheating and/or plagiarism) violates the Academic Honesty Policy and may result in an “F” on the work involved or in the course. Cheating not only violates the Academic Honesty Policy, but also may be grounds for probation, suspension, and/or expulsion.

<http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/acadintegrity.pdf>

Additional disciplinary provisions applicable to students are articulated in the University’s Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy and the University’s Discrimination and Harassment Policy.

http://www.uvm.edu/policies/general_html/sexharass.pdf

<https://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/studentharass.pdf>

Grievance Policy

The Graduate College is ultimately responsible for grievances regarding policies and procedures related to graduate education. A grievance properly begins within a student's department by the student sharing a concern with a program director or chair. If this does not resolve the grievance, the student can present the grievance in writing to the Dean of the unit in which the program resides, and after that to the Dean of the Graduate College. Grievances must state clearly the nature of the concern and the basis for appeal, including relevant evidence. The Graduate College Dean, who may seek input from the Graduate College Executive Committee, is the final arbiter of Graduate College regulations. Excluded from the Graduate College appeals process are grievances that contest grades on grounds other than due process: the process to appeal a grade requires students to pursue department or program and School or College channels, is set out in the University Grade Appeal Policy, <http://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/gradeappeals.pdf>

In addition, the Graduate College has an ombudsperson program. The Ombudsperson is responsible for providing independent, informal and impartial assistance to graduate students on matters affecting their graduate education. Ombudsperson contact information is available at: <http://www.uvm.edu/~ombdsman/>

UVM Graduate Students' Frequently Asked Questions

<https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/Graduate%20Student%20University-wide%20FAQs.pdf>

Communications

Email

All students will have an UVM email account. This is the major mode of communication utilized by faculty and staff in the department.

Students are expected to use their UVM email account for **all** UVM correspondence.

Failure to read emails sent from faculty/staff, Nursing Department, Graduate College, CNHS, or UVM does not excuse students from adhering to deadlines, assignments, requests, etc.

Graduate Student Listserv

This is an electronic Listserv for graduate nursing students and is maintained by the graduate program staff. Students are automatically added when they are admitted and removed when they graduate. It is a means for communication among the students and to receive pertinent information. Faculty cannot access this Listserv. Your UVM email is the method of communication between faculty and students.

It is your responsibility to check your UVM email regularly.

Academic Calendar

The Academic Calendar for 2019-2020: <https://www.uvm.edu/registrar/academic-calendars>

The Graduate Program in Nursing

Introduction

The faculty believes that graduate education in nursing is characterized by intellectual inquiry and critical analysis focused on theory, practice, and research in preparation for advanced nursing practice. The faculty strives to provide an environment which responds to individual learning needs.

The graduate program in nursing at The University of Vermont prepares professional nurses to assume leadership roles within the discipline of nursing, to expand nursing knowledge, and to develop expertise in a specialized area of nursing. The master's program provides the foundation for doctoral study and continued professional development.

Master of Science End of Program Competencies

At the completion of the MS program, graduates will:

- Incorporate values of social justice to address health care disparities and bridge cultural barriers to improve quality outcomes
- Demonstrate knowledge of the health care system including sites of care, delivery models, payment models, and roles of health care professionals
- Assume a leadership role of an interprofessional health care team with a focus on delivering patient-centered care and evaluation of quality and cost-effectiveness
- Design care based on outcome analysis and evidence to promote safe, timely, effective, and equitable patient-centered care
- Facilitate practice change based on best available evidence that results in quality, safety, and fiscally responsible outcomes
- Evaluate the efficiency and utility of evidence-based care and outcomes
- Implement use of technology to coordinate patient care within, across care settings and among health care providers
- Participate in the design, delivery, and evaluation of disease prevention, health promotion, and end-of-life care services that are patient-centered and culturally appropriate
- Demonstrate effective communication, collaboration, and interpersonal relationships with members of the care delivery team across the continuum of care
- Advocate for policies that promote social change and wellness, improve outcomes, and reduce costs

Approved DON 10/19/15; Reviewed 5/2016

Please note that the MS End of Program competencies are currently under review to align with the AACN MS Essentials (specific to CNL role) 9/2019

Doctor of Nursing Practice End of Program Competencies

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

1. Use conceptual and analytical skills in evaluating the links among factors that affect health.
2. Demonstrate leadership in the development and implementation of institutional, local, state, federal, and/or international health policy.
3. Evaluate care delivery models and/or strategies using concepts related to population health, and its cultural and socioeconomic dimensions.
4. Employ collaborative and leadership skills to create change in healthcare and complex healthcare delivery systems.
5. Ensure accountability for quality of health care and safety for populations with whom they work.
6. Demonstrate proficiency in the use of information systems/technology resources to implement quality improvement/ assurance initiatives and support practice and administrative decision-making.
7. Develop and evaluate nursing practice approaches integrating nursing and the foundational sciences based on theories from nursing and other disciplines.
8. Demonstrate proficiency in the generation, application, and evaluation of knowledge.
9. Demonstrate advanced levels of clinical judgment, systems thinking and accountability in designing, delivering, and evaluating evidence-based care to improve health outcomes.
10. Advocate for social justice, equity, and ethics within all healthcare arenas.

Approved by Graduate Education Committee 5/12/11, Reviewed 5/2016

Academic Advisement and Advising Resources

Upon admission each student is assigned a faculty advisor to assist in program planning. An advisor may be changed at the discretion of the chair, the faculty member or the student. Requests for change of advisor should be made to the Graduate Program Assistant, who will facilitate the request with the Graduate Program Director.

Advisement is the responsibility of both the student and faculty. Students are encouraged to initiate a meeting with their advisor each semester to discuss progression and graduation requirements, changes in courses and for guidance in elective course selection as needed. In addition, students can seek advice from their advisors regarding personal issues/stressors that are negatively impacting course work. Advisors are available either during scheduled office hours or by appointment throughout the academic year to discuss issues or questions advisees may have.

Student Accessibility Services:

https://www.uvm.edu/academicsuccess/student_accessibility_services

Additional advising resources are described in the most current UVM Online Catalogue, online at:

<http://www.uvm.edu/academics/>

Classroom Code of Conduct

Faculty and students will at all times conduct themselves in a manner that serves to maintain, promote, and enhance the high quality academic environment befitting The University of Vermont. To this end, it is expected that all members of the learning community will adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Faculty and students will attend all regularly scheduled classes (campus and online), except for those occasions warranting an excused absence under the policy detailed in the catalogue (e.g., religious, athletic and medical).
2. Students and faculty will arrive prepared for class and on time, and they will remain in class until the class is dismissed.
3. Faculty and students will treat all members of the learning community with respect. Toward this end they will promote academic discourse and the free exchange of ideas by listening with civil attention to comments made by all individuals.
4. Students and faculty will maintain an appropriate academic climate by refraining from all actions which disrupt the learning environment (e.g., making noise, cell phones ringing, ostentatiously not paying attention, and leaving and re-entering the classroom inappropriately).

Note-Taking Policy

On November 10, 1999, the Faculty Senate adopted the following motion to be effective spring semester 2000: “The taking of notes during a scheduled class of a scheduled University of Vermont course for the purpose of selling the notes or other commercial purpose is prohibited without the express written permission of the professor(s) who teach the course.”

Overview of the Curriculum for the Graduate Program

The Master of Science degree for all Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL students) or the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree is awarded upon successful completion of requirements through full or part-time study. The major components of the graduate curriculum are designated as core courses, track courses, elective courses, and a project. Track courses focus on either primary care delivery (AGNP/FNP) or patient care coordination (MS CNL). Elective courses may be non-nursing or nursing graduate courses.

The comprehensive examination is a University requirement. The oral examination provides the student the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the core content of the program. See page 14

MS- Clinical Nurse Leader students will complete a CNL Project in which they develop and implement a project in a health care related setting. See page 14

DNP- Primary Care and Executive Nurse Leader students will complete a DNP Project in which they develop and implement a project in a health care related setting. See page 14

Many of the graduate nursing courses have both a theoretical and a laboratory or practicum component. Credit allocation for class, laboratory, and practicum components of courses is defined as: One credit is equivalent to: 1 class hour/week; 2 laboratory hours/ week; 120 practicum hours/ semester. *Ratio applies to the NP and CNL practicum courses.*

Links to Graduate Program Curriculum

Master of Science (MS): Clinical Nurse Leader:

https://www.uvm.edu/cnhs/nursing/master_science_nursing_clinical_nurse_leader

Accelerated Master of Science: MS-Clinical Nurse Leader

http://www.uvm.edu/cnhs/nursing/accelerated_master_science_nursing_clinical_nurse_leader

Direct Entry Program in Nursing: MS- Clinical Nurse Leader

Direct Entry Program in Nursing: Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) AGNP/ FNP:

http://www.uvm.edu/cnhs/nursing/direct_entry_program_nursing

DNP: Adult- Gerontology Nurse Practitioner (AGNP):

https://www.uvm.edu/cnhs/nursing/doctor_nursing_practice

DNP: Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP): https://www.uvm.edu/cnhs/nursing/doctor_nursing_practice

Postgraduate DNP: http://www.uvm.edu/cnhs/nursing/post_masters_doctor_nursing_practice

APA Format Guidelines

The American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines are used for the preparation of all papers required for GRNS courses unless otherwise specified by the professor. Students should purchase the current edition of *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.)*. Washington, DC, at the beginning of their graduate studies for use throughout the program of study.

Practicum Experiences

The majority of the nurse practitioner track courses (AGNP and FNP) have both a theoretical and practicum component. These practicum experiences may be located throughout the state of Vermont or in other select states at student request. Students are expected to have at least one rotation at a rural site outside of Chittenden County. As well, it should be noted that some practicum experiences may occur during the evening hours or weekends. Inherent in practicum experiences is the risk of exposure to infectious diseases. Students should maintain at a minimum, standard precautions in all settings to minimize the likelihood of occurrence. Satisfactory completion of practicum objectives is required prior to progression in the program.

Practicum/ clinical experiences are also a required component of the Clinical Nurse Leader program. The practicum hours for the CNL program relates to the required CNL Project.

Student Clinical Mandatories

As a CNHS graduate student, you are required to complete the CNHS Pre-Clinical Mandatories, prior to first clinical course. Students must keep these requirements current throughout their program. Since each clinical site has different requirements, it is essential to be compliant with this process. As a graduate student, it is your responsibility to ensure that you are up to date with all pre-clinical requirements (example: making sure that your CPR certification is current). Aside from being required before clinical experiences, the CNHS Mandatories keep you healthy and safe for your future profession.

Complete details on CNHS Mandatories are online at: http://www.uvm.edu/cnhs/clinical_mandatories

The immunization and serology work takes time. You may need a booster and you may need to re-titer. Allow yourself ample time to complete this process and schedule your health care provider appointments by planning ahead.

Updated 7/2018; 8/2019

Confidentiality

All clients have a right to confidentiality regarding their health status and their interactions within the health care system. Students must engage in professionally responsible communication in practicum and classroom settings. When presenting cases or using an example from your practicum experience to express a concept, you are to maintain the confidentiality of your clients and not disclose any identifying information. This applies to patient information in written and verbal formats.

Health Insurance

The University does not pay medical costs resulting from injury during practicum rotations or other curricular activity unless this injury is due to negligence of the University. All nursing students should carry their own health insurance.

Student Attire

Graduate students should be cognizant of the fact that they are representing the nursing profession and The University of Vermont Department of Nursing while engaging in practicum experiences. With this in mind, students are expected to present a professional appearance and demeanor. A UVM name tag indicating your student role is to be worn in all clinical, practicum, and laboratory settings. Students' names are given to the UVM Bookstore and name tags are ordered and secured for each student.

Purpose: The following dress code is required for all students to meet standards for professional appearance, reduction of infection, and promotion of safety. Variations in the following guidelines are at the discretion of the faculty. Faculty may stipulate more specific expectations based on the setting. Failure to comply with the dress code may result in an unexcused absence from clinical experiences.

1. All clinical experiences require the following dress code expectations:
 - a. Students are expected to be neat, clean with well-groomed personal hygiene and appearance.
 - b. Clothing is clean, pressed, fits properly and loosely, in good repair (no frays, rips, or holes).
 - c. UVM name tag (or agency ID) worn on upper chest.
 - d. Neutral colored hosiery/socks.
 - e. Tattoos are covered/ not visible.
 - f. Jewelry is simple and kept to a minimum for your safety and patient safety. No chains, necklaces, wrist bands, bracelets. Visible body piercings, except for ear lobes with small posts, are not permitted.
 - g. Hair is neat and clean. Long hair is pulled back and secured when providing direct patient care. Hair will be a color that occurs naturally. For example, hair colors such as pink, purple, blue and green are not permitted.
 - h. Facial hair is clean, well-groomed. Mustaches and beards are neatly trimmed or clean shaven.
 - i. Fingernails are clean and neatly manicured. Use of artificial nails, nail decorations or nail polish are not allowed due to infection risk.
 - j. Colognes, perfumes or scented hand lotions are not used due to client allergies, sensitivities and possible adverse reactions.
 - k. Clothing does not reveal cleavage, midriff, shoulders, or undergarments.
 - l. Head coverings may be worn for religious or medical reasons.

2. Pre-Clinical Preparation: When the student arrives at a clinical agency to retrieve their assignment, the student will introduce themselves to a client, or begin to collect pertinent data, the student will wear:
 - a. Business casual attire
 - i. Business casual includes below the knee or longer dresses and skirts, slacks, blouses, shirt tucked into pants with a belt (if belt loops are present), and sweaters. Shoes are soft soled, low heeled (limited to one inch) with closed heel and toe worn with hosiery/socks.
 - ii. Business casual does NOT include: denim or jean-like pants, tank tops, tube tops, sleeveless shirts, shorts, jeans, miniskirts, sweat pants, hooded garments, t-shirts with logos, tight fitting clothing, or low necklines.
 - b. A clean white lab coat with the UVM logo on the left sleeve
 - c. UVM name tag (or agency ID badge) clearly displayed

3. Clinical experiences requiring scrubs: When providing direct patient care, the student will wear:
 - a. Wine colored or green scrubs (according to program) with UVM patch sewn on left sleeve
 - b. A plain (no logos or designs) long-sleeved T shirt may be worn underneath the scrub top.
 - c. White lab coat, "scrub type" jacket or neutral colored sweater may be worn over the scrub top (for your safety no hoodies).
 - d. Closed toe and closed heel, solid colored white or black shoes (no colored stripes, eyelets, or logos).

4. Clinical experiences not requiring scrubs (such as Psychiatric, Public Health and Community Settings):
 - a. Business casual attire as defined in item 2a)
 - b. Coordinating hosiery
 - c. Low heeled, soft sole, closed toe and closed heel shoes or sneakers.

DON approved 12/2017

Resources:

- Definition of business casual vs professional attire: <https://purduecco.wordpress.com/2014/04/18/dress-to-impress-business-casual-vs-professional/>
- This study at Geisinger Medical Center reviews dress code policy from both consumer and HCP perspectives for the sake of professional appearance, safety, and connection with clients. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4820072/>
- EBP to support nursing dress code. It addresses bare below the elbows and best laundering practices. <http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ANAMarketplace/ANAPeriodicals/OJIN/TableofContents/Vol-21-2016/No1-Jan-2016/Quality-Patient-Experience-Nursing-Dress-Code-Policies.html>
- Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital Dress Code http://mentalhealth.vermont.gov/sites/dmh/files/documents/VPCH/PP/Dress_Code.pdf

Candidacy Requirements

Acceptance to candidacy for the degree is granted to those students who have met all pre-requisites for the graduate degree program and all of the Department of Nursing requirements for candidacy. Under most circumstances, meeting the requirements for admission will allow advancement to candidacy. Students who appear to be marginal in meeting admission requirements may be required to complete selected course work before acceptance as a degree candidate.

Graduation Requirements

The minimum requirements for the graduate programs are successful completion of:

- Core, track, and elective courses
- Comprehensive Examination
- CNL Project, or DNP Project

UVM Graduate College Time limits for Graduate Degree Completion:

Master's Degree – Five years from matriculation

Doctoral Degree – Nine years from matriculation

APRN Certificate - 5 years from matriculation (all courses)

All courses applied towards the degree must be taken within 7 years for master's degrees, 9 years for doctorates. Individual departments may set deadlines within these time limits.

Department of Nursing Graduate Grading Policy

1. Students are expected to earn a final grade of B or better in graduate courses. If a student earns two grades of B- or any grade lower than a B-, it is grounds for dismissal.
2. Students are required to earn a satisfactory grade in clinical. An unsatisfactory grade in a clinical course is grounds for dismissal.

Department of Nursing Graduate Completion Policy

1. In order to graduate, all program requirements must be met within one academic semester of completion of final practicum.

UVM Graduate College

<http://www.uvm.edu/~gradcoll/>

Please refer to the Graduate College for important information on different policies applicable to Graduate Students including (but not limited to) grading policy, leaves of absence and rights and responsibilities of graduate students.

Comprehensive Examination

Master of Science Degree – Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL)

The Comprehensive Examination is conducted by two faculty in the Department of Nursing who are not on the student's project committee. The examination is designed to allow the student to demonstrate analysis and synthesis of knowledge gained through the program. Students will take the examination after the project proposal is completed and approved and the majority of the core courses have been completed. The comprehensive exam must be completed prior to the final track courses and practicums. Students will orally present their CNL project proposal, clearly articulating, synthesizing, and applying all of the relevant MS Essentials, the CNL competencies, and core content addressed throughout the program of study as they relate to their CNL Project.

The Comprehensive Examination is rated on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. The examination is presented orally. The student is expected to develop an outline and a list of references which they may refer to during their presentation. The presentation is done without slides or reading from notes. The outline and references are filed in the student's file upon completion of the examination.

In the event that the student does not achieve a satisfactory on the oral comprehensive exam, one opportunity to provide written evidence of satisfactory achievement of the goal of the comprehensive examination will be allowed. The written document will be due within two weeks from the comprehensive examination date.

Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree- Primary Care NP (FNP, AGNP) & Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree-Executive Nurse Leader (DNP)

The comprehensive examination is conducted by two faculty in the Department of Nursing who are not on the student's project committee. The examination is designed to allow the student to demonstrate analysis and synthesis of knowledge gained through the program. Students will take the examination after the project proposal is completed and approved and the majority of the core courses have been successfully completed. The comprehensive exam must be completed prior to the final track courses and practicums. Students will orally present their DNP project proposal, clearly articulating, synthesizing, and applying all of the relevant DNP Essentials and the NP competencies and core content addressed throughout the program of study as they relate to their DNP Project.

The comprehensive examination is rated on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. The examination is presented orally. The student is expected to develop an outline and a list of references which they may refer to during their presentation. The presentation is done without slides or reading from notes. The outline and references are filed in the student's file upon completion of the examination.

In the event that the student does not achieve a satisfactory on the oral comprehensive exam, one opportunity to provide written evidence of satisfactory achievement of the goal of the comprehensive examination will be allowed. The written document will be due within two weeks from the comprehensive examination date.

¹Analysis emphasized the breakdown of information into its constituent parts and the detection of relationships of those parts.

²Synthesis refers to the process of working with elements or parts from many sources and combining them in such a way so as to form a product not clearly there before.

University, CNHS, and Department of Nursing Governance Organizations

There are multiple opportunities for student participation in the governance of the University, the College, and the Department of Nursing. Students may also join the Student Nurse Association and may qualify for Kappa Tau, the UVM Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau, the International Nursing Honor Society. Students are strongly encouraged to consider these opportunities and actively participate in this aspect of University life.

In the Department of Nursing, the following committees and organizations seek graduate student participation:

Committee/Organization	Purpose	Membership	Meetings
Graduate Education Committee Kappa Tau Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society	Functions as a working group to oversee and make recommendations to the Faculty Organization who are members of the Graduate Faculty in the Graduate College to refine, implement, and evaluate the graduate curriculum. The purposes of Kappa Tau are to recognize superior achievement and development of leadership qualities, foster high professional standards, encourage creative work, and strengthen commitment to the ideals and purposes of the profession.	Five elected faculty members, student representation from the graduate program, and other invited persons with liaison responsibilities. Graduate nursing students are required to have completed ¼ of the program of study. Students in graduate programs are required to achieve a 3.5 GPA on a four-point scale or its equivalent.	Monthly during the academic year. Kappa Tau activities occur throughout the semester and are open to all.

Scholarly and Professional Recognition

Honors Day

Honors Day is held each spring to recognize students for excellence in scholarship, leadership, clinical excellence and community service. Information on specific criteria and the nomination process for the following awards can be obtained from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Office of Student Services, Rowell 106.

Kappa Tau Chapter, Sigma Theta Tau International: Graduate Student Award

Awarded to a student in the master's program who demonstrates high professional and academic standards. The recipient is selected by graduate faculty.

Kappa Tau Chapter, Sigma Theta Tau International: Graduate Student Project Award

Awarded to a graduate nursing student for excellence in his/her project. This student is selected by members of Kappa Tau.

Kappa Tau Chapter, Sigma Theta Tau International: Graduate Student Thesis Award

Awarded to a graduate nursing student for excellence in his/her thesis.

Vermont Organization of Nurse Leaders

Award for outstanding leadership is presented to the student graduating from the graduate program who, in the opinion of the faculty, best exemplifies achievements in scholarship, scholarly productivity and leadership for nursing.

UVM Medical Center Award for Innovation in Nursing Practice

Award was established in 1998 by the nurse administrators at UVMMC to recognize a graduate student who demonstrates innovation in practice in any setting; and a breakthrough initiative in patient care or patient education, or care coordination across the continuum.

Vermont State Nurses' Association Award

Awarded to a graduate student, who in the opinion of the faculty, best demonstrates outstanding clinical practice.

Special Recognition Awards

Awards may be given to graduating graduate students who demonstrate outstanding achievement in academics, significant University involvement and/or significant community service involvement.