RN-BSN/MSN

2024-2025

W. CARY EDWARDS SCHOOL OF NURSING

RN-BSN/MSN

STUDENT HANDBOOK

BUILDING *Careers* | ADVANCING *Professions* | EMPOWERING *Lives*

Contents

Welcome to the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions at Thomas Edison State University

Welcome to Thomas Edison State University (TESU). The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions has a tried-and-true, out-standing educational program and I am proud to be the Dean. The W. Cary Edwards graduate nursing program has been preparing competent, caring professional nurses for over thirty-five years. Thomas Edison nurses are in demand because, upon graduation, they provide quality care to diverse patients, families, and communities. Together, students and mentors will take this exciting learning journey which will culminate in preparation for licensure and life-long learning.

The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions mentors have years of teaching and practice experience. Mentors have the expertise and skills to prepare graduates for the current healthcare environ-ment that includes technological advancements, evidence-based practice, clinical reasoning competencies, and national and global health initiatives. Professional nurses will be at the forefront of healthcare reform and change. The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions provides a superior education that develops students' leadership skills in order to affect healthcare change and progress.

The journey to becoming a professional nurse is engaging and stocked with interesting knowledge about human health, illness, and environment. Use this handbook as a resource to help navigate the path to becoming a leader in nursing. Please read this handbook to be empowered with the information needed about expectations to ensure a successful journey. Additionally, the advisors, mentors, and myself are also always available to assist you along the way.

Congratulations on being accepted into this outstanding nursing program. The next few years will be a busy, positive, life-altering experience. I am honored to be able to share this wonderful learning journey with each student and will do everything possible to promote successful outcomes.

Sincerely,

Ruth Wittmann-Price, PhD, RN, CNS, CNE, CNEcl, CHSE, ANEF, FAAN
Dean, W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions

W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions

The programs available at the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions at Thomas Edison State University are the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), the post-baccalaureate nursing certificate programs, PMHNP program, and the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP). Three areas of specialty are offered in the MSN degree: Nurse Educator, Nursing Informatics, and Nursing Administration. All programs are offered as online, mentored learning programs where students participate actively as a community of learners through the asynchronous online group discussions integral to each nursing course.

Students in the BSN/MSN degree program must complete all requirements of the BSN degree and be certified for the BSN degree to be eligible for enrollment in the MSN degree program. All graduates of the MSN degree program will receive a certificate in their selected area of specialty upon degree completion in addition to the MSN degree. Students in the DNP program are admitted as a cohort and enroll in 3 credits each term (3-year option) or 6 credits per term (18-month option). DNP students complete 36 credits and a DNP project.

The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions has an enrollment of nearly 900 students from 25 states. The diverse student population reflects minority representation of 33 percent and male representation of 15 percent. The average age of our enrolled nursing students is 38.5. Bringing with them a wide range of experiences, our students are active leaders participating in healthcare transformation.

Mentors for the courses are experienced nurse educators in higher education and leaders from service settings across the country. Select mentors serve as members of the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions Committee to guide the development, implementation, and evaluation of the School's programs.

Mission and Philosophy

The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions accepts and upholds the mission of the University in providing distinctive undergraduate and graduate education for self-directed adults through flexible, high-quality collegiate learning and assessment opportunities. As such, the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions believes that independent and self-directed study in a mentored, environment is the hallmark of the academic programs offered to students by the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions. In this learning environment, the student, as an adult learner, interacts and collaborates with mentors and peers to create and enhance a dialogue within a community of learners. Through this innovative approach to programming, the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions actively shapes the nursing profession by preparing nurses who are intellectually curious, clinically competent, and technologically prepared to assume leadership positions at the forefront of healthcare transformation.

The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions supports the belief that attainment of the bachelor's degree is

essential to the ongoing process of professional nursing education and development. The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree, building on the prior education and experience of the student, prepares graduates to practice nursing in a variety of settings and roles and provides a foundation for graduate study and lifelong learning. The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree prepares graduates to assume leadership roles in a diverse, technologically challenging, and global healthcare environment, and for advanced study and lifelong learning. The post-baccalaureate nursing certificate programs offer opportunities for advanced specialized study to master's-prepared nurses seeking additional opportunities in nursing. The PMHNP degree prepares nurses to care for diverse individuals, families, and communities with psychiatric and mental health needs. The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree prepares nurse leaders to function at the highest level in healthcare organizations. Competencies in organizational leadership, economics and finance, healthcare policy, population-focused care, and technology are emphasized.

Nursing is a dynamic profession that provides an essential service to society. As such, nursing is engaged in multilevel roles and relationships and is accountable to society for its role in improving the health status of the community. Nursing is practiced with respect for human dignity and individual differences. The art and science of nursing requires the ongoing application of specialized knowledge, principles, skills, and values. As a distinct body of knowledge, nursing builds upon theories from various disciplines and works collaboratively with other professions to enhance the health status of individuals, families, groups, and communities.

The client is viewed as an open and dynamic system with unique psychophysiological, spiritual, and sociocultural characteristics. Within this system, the client interacts with the environment and experiences varying states of health. Health is described as a dynamic process fluctuating along a wellness-illness continuum. Nurses assist clients to function and effectively adapt to the environment along that continuum. The environment encompasses numerous factors that affect the development and behavior of clients. These factors have an impact on the client's ability to function and maintain optimal health status. Nurses are responsible for the promotion, maintenance, and restoration of health.

The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions employs a teaching-learning process that:

➢ Is based on the principles of adult learning;

➢ Demonstrates effective design, and delivery of educational experiences in varied learning environments;

➢ Provides for collaboration and collegial interaction among mentors, educators, and peers;

➢ Effectively links theory, practice, research, and technology;

➢ Extends its reach to people of diverse ethnic, racial, economic, and gender groups.

Through these beliefs and contributions to the ongoing development of caring, competent, informed, ethical, and accountable nurses, the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions strives to play an influential and positive role in helping to shape the future and the practice of professional nursing.

Purpose and Goals

In keeping with the mission of the University and the commitment to providing high-quality education to address the needs of the greater community, the purpose of the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions is to provide high-quality nursing education programs that meet the needs of the healthcare community and uphold the standards of the nursing profession.

In addressing the needs of the healthcare community the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions recognizes and partners with its community of interest, comprised of both internal and external constituencies. The identified communities of interest are at the national, state, and local levels. External constituencies include local entities, legislators, professional accrediting bodies, and representatives from the professional community such as our partners and clinical affiliates. Internal constituencies include students, alumni, mentors, staff, and the University.

THE GOALS OF THE W. CARY EDWARDS SCHOOL OF NURSING AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS ARE TO:

> Prepare graduates to assume leadership roles in a diverse society and changing healthcare environment;

> Provide nontraditional nursing education programs that meet the needs of adult learners; and

> Provide a foundation for advanced study and lifelong learning.

Accreditation

The baccalaureate degree program in nursing, master's degree program in nursing, and doctor of nursing practice program at Thomas Edison State University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

> **COMMISSION ON COLLEGIATE NURSING EDUCATION (CCNE)**
> 665 K Street NW, Suite 750
> Washington, DC 20001
> 207-867-6791
> *www.ccneaccreditation.org*

The Accelerated Baccalaureate degree program in nursing at Thomas Edison State University is accredited by the New Jersey Board of Nursing.

> **NEW JERSEY BOARD OF NURSING**
> PO Box 45010
> Newark, NJ 07101
> 973-504-6430
> *www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/nur/Pages/default.aspx*

Thomas Edison State University is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

The MSCHE is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

> **MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION**
> 3624 Market Street
> Philadelphia, PA 19104
> 267-284-5000
> *www.msche.org*

RN to BSN and BSN/MSN Degree Programs

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program for RNs is designed for registered nurses who are independent adult learners. Policies are in place that allow for maximum credit transfer, and multiple methods of credit earning and degree completion. The program's unique format enables students to apply up to 12 credits toward the MSN degree*. Students are advised that graduate credits used toward completion of an undergraduate degree program in one institution may or may not be accepted to meet graduate program requirements at another institution.

Students who have applied for the BSN/MSN degree program must meet all BSN degree requirements and have been certified for graduation for that degree prior to the start of the remaining requirements for the MSN degree. Students, who upon application designated the BSN degree only, must submit an application to the MSN degree program prior to starting the remaining requirements for the MSN degree.

12 graduate credits can be applied to the Nursing Administration and Nursing Informatics tracks. Only 9 graduate credits can be applied to the Nursing Education track

BSN Degree Program Outcomes

Upon completion of the BSN degree program, the graduate will be able to:

> Apply nursing and inter-professional knowledge, theory, and evidence facilitate clinical judgement in providing nursing care for diverse patients, families, and communities

> Implement person-centered, nursing care for diverse pa-tients, families, and communities to promote positive health outcomes.

> Analyze approaches to public health and disease management for diverse populations.

> Use evidence to inform clinical judgement to improve healthcare for diverse patients, families, and communities.

> Employ interventions to deliver nursing care to diverse pa-tients, families, and communities that ensure quality and safety.

> Engage with other professionals, team members, diverse patients, families, communities, and other stakeholders to optimize nursing care and health outcomes.

> Use resources appropriately and efficiently to provide safe, quality, and equitable care to diverse patients, families, and populations.

> Employ informatics and healthcare technologies in accord-ance with best practices and professional, regulatory, and ethical standards in providing nursing care to diverse pa-tients, families, and communities.

> Demonstrate a professional nursing identity to effectively care for diverse patients, families, and communities.

> Participate in personal and professional development activi-ties that foster personal health and contribute to a culture of lifelong learning and leadership.

Provisional Admission to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (PBSN)

Provisional Admission to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (PBSN) degree program is open to senior nursing students or graduates of an RN diploma program, or an associate program from a regionally accredited college or university in the United States or graduate nurses awaiting RN licensure. Policies are in place that allow for maximum credit transfer, and multiple methods of credit earning.

Provisionally admitted students are permitted to take up to five courses (15 credits) in the BSN curriculum. Students have access to nursing program advisors who can also assist them in planning transfer credits from their current college to TESU.

Students provisionally admitted will have one year from the date of Provisional Admission to obtain RN licensure. Students will be fully admitted after successful completion of the NCLEX-RN and submission of final transcripts. Provisional BSN students are welcomed into the RN-BSN program.

All courses are completely online and offered in 8-week sessions.

PBSN Degree Requirements

While in their senior year of nursing school or while awaiting NCLEX results, students maybe begin their RN-BSN with the fol-lowing courses only:

CREDIT DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS

Bachelor of Science in Nursing—Provisional Admission

GENERAL EDUCATION

Intellectual and Practical Skills

> Quantitative Literacy (HPS-2000 Statistics for the Health Professions)	3
> Information Literacy (SOS-1100: Critical Information Literacy)	3

CIVIC AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

> Ethical Leadership (ETH-2300: Ethics in a Digital Age)	3

Professional Nursing Requirements	**UPPER DIVISION**
> NUR-3420: Advancing Nursing Practice	3
> NUR-5160: Advanced Health Assessment	3
TOTAL	**15**

GR: Graduate-level course

BSN Degree Requirements

The BSN degree for RNs requires a minimum of 120 semester hours of credit. Graduates of associate degree programs of nursing may apply up to 90 credits* and RN diploma nursing schools up to 60 credits toward degree requirements based on documentation of their prior nursing program course work and a current unencumbered RN license valid in the United States. Additional credit may be transferred from other earned bachelor's degrees.

CREDIT DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

	Credits
GENERAL EDUCATION	**45**

Intellectual and Practical Skills

> Written Communication (English Composition 1 and 2)	6
> Oral Communication	3
> Quantitative Literacy	3
> Information Literacy (SOS-1100:Fact, Fiction or Fake? Information Literacy)	3

CIVIC AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

> Diversity	3
> Ethical Leadership	3
> Civic Engagement and Awareness	3

KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN CULTURES

> Social Sciences	3
> History	3
> Humanities	3
> Two courses from the categories above	6

SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

> Natural Sciences and Computer Science	6
PROFESSIONAL NURSING REQUIREMENTS	**48**
LOWER DIVISION	**20**
UPPER DIVISION	**28**
> NUR-3420: Advancing Nursing Practice	3
> NUR-4190 Exploring Evidence-Based Practice and Research in Nursing	3
> NUR-4280: Leadership and Management in Nursing	3
> NUR-4430: Public Health Nursing	4
> NUR-4450: Validating Nursing Competence	3
> NUR-5160: Advanced Health Assessment	3 **GR**
> NUR-5290: Health Policy	3 **GR**
> NUR-5310: Nursing Informatics: Concepts and Issues	3 **GR**
> NUR-5820: Financial Management in Nursing Practice	3 **GR**

ELECTIVES	**27**
TOTAL	**120**

GR: Graduate-level course

General Education Requirements

While there are few subjects specified in general education requirements for the BSN degree for RNs, it is expected that all students will choose those subjects with content supportive to the discipline of nursing and subjects that prepare them for continued study upon graduation, in addition to those subjects of personal interest.

Subjects required of all BSN degree students are English composition, anatomy and physiology, statistics, ethics, and microbiology. The anatomy and physiology, and microbiology requirements for RNs are generally satisfied by course work completed in the associate or diploma nursing

program. In general, associate degree and RN diploma nursing graduates will have completed approximately 30 credits of general education upon completion of their basic nursing program. Students may refer to the University's Catalog, available online at *https://tesu.smartcatalogiq.com/en/current/undergraduate-catalog/*

Course advisories or prerequisites are stated where previous knowledge of a subject or completion of other course work is considered essential to success in course completion, or where specific documentation of eligibility for a course is required.

Statistics is required prior to enrollment in NUR-4190: Exploring Evidence-Based Practice and Research in Nursing . HPS-2000: Statistics for the Health Professions is offered every term for BSN students. This course satisfies both the quantitative literacy requirement for the BSN degree program and the statistics requirement for NUR-4190.

While students are not prevented from registering for courses where advisories and/or prerequisites are stated, students cannot access a course if prerequisites are not met for the nursing courses. Prerequisites and/or advisories should be reviewed before registering for any course.

Prior to registration, it is important to make an appointment with a nursing advisor to develop a plan of study in order to complete all general education and nursing requirements. *https://tesu.itfrontdesk.com/apptonline/apptbooking.html?client_code=TESCADVI*

Professional Nursing Requirements

LOWER DIVISION NURSING

The 20-credit lower-division nursing requirement will be satisfied by transfer credit from a regionally accredited associate degree nursing programor by award of credit for diploma nursing course work. Additional lower-division nursing credits are accepted in transfer to fulfill elective credit categories.

UPPER DIVISION NURSING

The 28-credit upper-division nursing requirement may be completed entirely through online courses offered by the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions. Four graduate courses, NUR-5160: Advanced Health Assessment; NUR-5290: Health Policy; NUR-5310: Nursing Informatics: Concepts and Issues; and NUR-5820: Financial Management in Nursing Practice will be completed by all BSN degree students as part of upper-division nursing requirements. The program's unique format enables students to earn up to 12 credits toward the MSN degree as they pursue their BSN degree*.

Students who are interested in using examination, transfer credit or prior learning assessment (PLA) options for the online courses should first consult with their nursing academic advisor. Some upper-division nursing requirements have no prerequisites and may be taken in the student's order of preference. NUR-4430: Public Health Nursing and NUR-4450: Validating Nursing Competence have prerequisites and are to be taken last in the BSN degree program.

Upon completion of all degree requirements and the request for graduation process, the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree will be awarded to those RNs continuing on for the MSN degree as well as those stopping at the BSN degree.

Only 9 credits will transfer into the MSN Nurse Educator area of specialty.

Students in the BSN degree program should allow more study time and preparation for graduate courses and should familiarize themselves with the level of achievement expected of them in order to complete the undergraduate program and the MSN program if continuing on for that degree.

A grade of C or better is required for BSN nursing courses and a minimum GPA of 2.0 is required for graduation. A grade of B or better is required for MSN courses completed during the BSN to earn graduate credit.

Electives

Twenty-four credits of college-level course work or examinations that do not duplicate other credits may be used with no more than 8 credits from physical education activity courses. Credit for nursing course work from an associate degree or diploma nursing program beyond what is used to satisfy lower-division nursing requirements may be used to satisfy the elective requirement. Many RN students in the BSN degree program will have completed the elective requirement upon admission with transfer credit.

RN to BSN/MSN Curriculum

Nursing Course Descriptions

The upper-division nursing requirements for RNs in the BSN degree program are listed below in order of suggested scheduling. Selected nursing courses have prerequisites and advisories, which are noted in course descriptions. Students are responsible for knowing degree requirements, the prerequisites and advisories for the courses needed, and for registering for the selected courses. **Students who schedule courses without satisfying prerequisites will not be able to access the course, possibly incurring financial withdrawal fees.** All upper-division nursing courses in the BSN program are eight weeks in length and are offered six times per year. Students are strongly encouraged to contact their nursing advisor prior to registering and to take two consecutive 8-week courses during each 16-week term or one 8-week course during session 1 or session 2 of each 16-week.

NUR-3420: Advancing Nursing Practice   3 CR

This course creates a foundation for achieving the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) educational outcomes and for transitioning to baccalaureate nursing practice. As such, it provides a broad overview of professional practice and patient outcomes issues including professional practices standards, educational requirements in nursing, evidence-based care, health information technology, and population-focused care. The course applies ethical principles and models of cultural competence to nursing education and practice.

NUR-4190: Exploring Evidence-Based Practice and Research in Nursing   3 CR

This course guides students to apply evidence-based practice (EBP) to nursing by incorporating the research process. Students focus on critical-thinking skills to utilize the best available evidence and integrate ethical principles to develop an evidence-based proposal for a quality improvement or nursing practice change.
Prerequisite: A course equivalent to HPS-2000: Statistics for the Health Professions.

NUR-4280: Leadership and Management in Nursing   3 CR

This course focuses on preparing students for the changing role of the professional nurse through the development of leadership and management skills within the healthcare delivery system. Key theories and concepts related to the role will be explored and applied to nursing practice. Emphasis will be placed on professional accountability, priority setting, decision making, ethics, legal issues, fiscal planning, collaboration, communication, and continuous quality improvement.

NUR-4430: Public Health Nursing   4 CR

The promotion of health and prevention of illness is the focus of the Public Health Nursing course. Theories from public health, nursing, and social science as well as knowledge gained from previous learning set the foundation for students to critically analyze the health of selected populations in a community. Healthy People 2030 serves as a guide for the identification of at-risk groups throughout the lifespan.

Evidence of current unencumbered RN license and malpractice

insurance must be uploaded to the clinical compliance website prior to registration. Contact your nursing advisor for more information.
Advisory: The student needs to contact a nursing adviser for prior approval before registering for the course.
Note: The course requires completion of 48 Practice Experience hours.

NUR-4450: Validating Nursing Competence   3 CR

This course in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing education sequence enables students to validate nurse generalist competency. The course focuses on application of evidence-based best practices, critical thinking, clinical reasoning, and transformative learning. Students must have 100 completed college credits before enrolling in NUR -4450.
Prerequisites: All other requirements for the BSN degree; may take one elective with this; may take NUR-4430 and NUR-4450 when all other nursing and non-nursing courses are complete.
Advisory: Clearance by a nursing advisor is needed to register for this course. Please make an appointment with nursing or email nursing@tesu.edu for clearance to register for this course.

NUR-5160: Advanced Health Assessment (Graduate)   3 CR

This course focuses on the acquisition of advanced health assessment and clinical-reasoning skills. Students apply the diagnostic (clinical) reasoning process to develop a comprehensive plan of care for patients in a variety of settings throughout the lifespan. Emphasis is placed on advanced health assessment skills, health promotion, disease prevention, and risk assessment.

NUR-5290: US Health Policy and Global Health (Graduate)   3 CR

During this course, students will develop an understanding of health policy including legislative processes and the role of the U.S. government in addressing public health at the local, state, and national levels. Students will examine the synergistic relationship between U.S. health policy and global health. Students will explore nursing's influence in health policy advocacy and its impact on outcomes considering social determinants of health. Students will examine factors that facilitate and hinder the nursing workforce across the globe

NUR-5310: Nursing Informatics: Concepts and Issues (Graduate)   3 CR

This course combines nursing science, computer science, information science, and cognitive science to develop, implement, and support automated systems that optimize the delivery of healthcare services. Critical professional nursing and healthcare consumer issues related to nursing informatics and information technology will be explored.

NUR-5820: Financial Management in Nursing Practice (Graduate)   3 CR

This course introduces nursing professionals to healthcare financing issues in diverse settings of nursing practice. Students will explore financial sources, analyze legislation and reimbursement mechanisms, evaluate business plans, and learn to manage budgets. Students will also consider various approaches for analyzing the financial benefit, effectiveness, and utility of clinical initiatives across diverse populations and clinical settings.

Policies and Procedures

All information pertaining to the online nursing courses may be found on the University website at *tesu.edu.*

Course registration begins approximately six weeks prior to the start of classes and continues for three weeks followed by several days of late registration, which requires a late fee. Please note that courses are not posted on the website for a particular term until registration begins. To register online, students must pay by credit card. Confirmation of registration will be sent by the Office of the Registrar by email when the process is complete. Please be sure to properly key in credit card information. A credit card fee will be included in all credit card transactions. All information pertaining to registration is in the University Catalog.

While there may be more than one section of a course available and students may choose the section and course mentor, the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions reserves the right to reassign students to a different section as needed to provide an optimal learning experience for all students. Every effort will be made to accommodate course selections made during the regular registration periods, adding sections and/or seats if necessary.*

To facilitate communication, students must maintain a current email address on file with the Office of the Registrar throughout their enrollment. A Student Data Change Form is available at *tesu.edu/studentforms*.

Computer requirements and capability needed to be successful in the online courses are listed above and on the website.

At minimum, students should be able to send and receive email, including attachments. Selected courses require access to, and a familiarity with, presentation and spreadsheet software.

Students may not change course sections once the course has opened.

Assessment of learning in the nursing courses will include reading assignments, the student's contribution to the asynchronous online group discussions, written assignments, and presentations. All assignments related to the nursing online courses will be submitted online.

Textbooks and other course materials may be obtained from the University's recommended textbook service, Barnes and Noble: *https://bncvirtual.com/tesu* or any other vendor. To insure ordering the correct textbooks and other course materials, students must obtain textbook information for the term during which they plan to take the course as requirements for course materials may change. Students should also be sure they have confirmation of course registration before purchasing course materials.

Nursing courses require the student to participate substantively in the online discussions a minimum of three times a week on three different days throughout the week. The nursing course online discussions are designed to be highly interactive discussions where ideas can be shared and feedback provided, and where a community of learners is developed. To accomplish this goal, all students need to participate actively in the discussions and respond thoughtfully to the posted discussion question and the responses of other students.

Grading rubrics are posted in each course. The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions grading policies are stated in this Handbook and in the online University Catalog along with grading policies listed there that pertain to all students. For nursing courses to apply to program requirements, the student must achieve a C or better on upper-division nursing requirements in the BSN degree program and a B or better for all requirements in the graduate nursing courses.

Grading policies for graduate nursing courses pertain to all students in those courses regardless of the student's program level. All course assignments must be submitted on or before the last day of the course unless a course extension —*tesu.edu/extension* — has been submitted and approved by the mentor. Course extensions must be approved by the mentor and submitted by the student to the Office of the Registrar seven days prior to the last day of the course. Please refer to the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions policies for information on repeating the nursing courses.

The nursing course mentors will be available the first day of the course. The mentor is responsible for all aspects of the course including interaction with students during online group discussions, feedback on the student's academic progress, and the grading of assignments. All issues and concerns related to program requirements, course registration, program materials, etc., should be referred to the appropriate University or W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions rather than the course mentor.

All RN students in the BSN degree program must have documentation of current RN licensure and malpractice insurance on file prior to registering for NUR-4430: Public Health Nursing. All prerequisites and course advisories are the responsibility of the student and must be met prior to the student being given access to these and selected other courses that have advisories.

Students who wish to use credit earning methods other than the online nursing courses offered by the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions should consult with the nursing program advisor prior to scheduling the exam, transfer course, or prior learning assessment (PLA) course to insure the credit will meet degree requirements as anticipated. Policies on acceptance of credit earned elsewhere or prior to enrollment are included in the section on Policies in this Handbook.

The policies stated here apply to students enrolling in the RN to BSN and BSN/M degree program with degree requirements effective July 1, 2023, and students enrolling in the graduate nursing certificate programs with requirements effective July 1, 2023.

RN to BSN/MSN applicants to the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions may pursue the BSN degree only, or both the BSN degree and the MSN degree by selecting the BSN/MSN option on the online application. For students enrolled in the BSN/M, up to 12 graduate nursing credits included in BSN degree requirements may be applied to MSN degree requirements. A grade of B or higher must be earned in graduate nursing courses completed during the BSN program to be applied to the MSN degree requirements. Graduate credits that were earned more than seven years prior to the student's enrollment date in the MSN program may not be applied to the MSN degree. The student will continue on to complete remaining MSN degree requirements upon BSN degree completion without additional admission requirements. The undergraduate nursing per credit tuition charge will pertain to the required graduate nursing courses while the student is enrolled in the BSN degree. RNs with a BSN degree may apply for the MSN degree. RNs with a master's in nursing in another area of specialty may enroll in a graduate nursing certificate program.

Admissions

> Admission to all RN to BSN and BSN/M programs offered by the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions is rolling.

> Provisional Admission to the RN to BSN and BSN/M programs is open to senior nursing students or graduates of an RN diploma program of nursing, or a regionally accredited college or university in the United States with an associate degree In nursing awaiting RN licensure. Students provisionally admitted to the program may enroll in NUR-3420, HPS-2000, ETH-2300, or SOS-1100, and NUR-5160.

> Provisionally admitted students will have one year from the date of Provisional Admission to obtain RN licensure. Failure to do so within that time, will result in removal from the program.

> Full Admission to the RN-BSN and RN-BSN/MSN programs requires the applicant to be a graduate of an RN diploma program of nursing, or a regionally accredited college or university in the United States or recognized foreign institution with an associate degree in nursing. A current and valid unencumbered RN license, recognized in the United States, must be submitted for full admission to the program.

Admissions Process

All RN-BSN/MSN applicants to the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions must:

> Submit the completed online application with fee, which is nonrefundable, including documentation of current RN licensure. Applicants licensed in a state that does not have online verification must submit a notarized copy of their current license — without restrictions, valid in the United States, to the Office of Admissions and Enrollment Services.

> Have official transcripts for all college-level credit and examination score reports sent to the University's Office of the Registrar.

> Submit official transcripts from the school of nursing awarding the diploma (if a graduate of an RN diploma school of nursing, including foreign diploma schools of nursing) to the University's Office of the Registrar.

> Follow University procedure for evaluation of credit if a graduate of a foreign collegiate program of nursing.

Enrollment

> Nursing students are considered "enrolled" when they have been accepted into the nursing program and have registered for and begun their first course. The date of enrollment is defined as the 10th day of class for the first semester they start taking courses as a matriculated student. This status may change if the student becomes inactive or takes a leave of absence.

> Students are strongly encouraged to enroll in at least one course every session/term to increase their chances of successful program completion.

> Acceptance of admission into the MSN degree program for students selecting the RN-BSN/MSN option on application will be in effect following certification for graduation from the BSN degree.

> An Academic Evaluation will be provided online for students accepted into the nursing program.

> Enrollment will remain in effect as long as students earn a minimum of 3 credits at the University that apply to their degree or certi· icate program in each 12-month period.

Reenrollment

Inactive students will need to complete and submit the online application found at *tesu.edu/apply*. If a student's state does not have an online validation process for the RN license, the student must resubmit a notarized copy of their RN license to Thomas Edison State University, Office of Admissions and Enrollment Services. In order for the reenrollment to be processes, the University must validate the student's RN license.

Note: Reenrollment will place student into the newest curriculum, which may affect course requirements. Please contact a nursing advisor to re-enroll.

Nonenrolled RNs

Nonenrolled RNs who wish to try an online nursing course may take two courses prior to enrollment with prior approval of the School. Students must be enrolled in a nursing program at the end of the second nursing course.

Academic Standing: Undergraduate Grading System

Undergraduate courses — and other graded undergraduate learning assessments — are graded based on the following scale.

Letter Grade	Quality Points	Numerical Equivalents
A	4.0	93-100
A-	3.7	90-92
B+	3.3	88-89
B	3.0	83-87
B-	2.7	80-82
C+	2.3	78-79
C	2.0	73-77
C-	1.7	70-72
D	1.0	60-69
F	0	Below 60
I	Incomplete (temporary grade)	*N/A*
IF	0	Below 60
ZF	0	0
		(Academic Integrity Violation)

Academic Standing: Graduate Grading System

Graduate courses — and other graded graduate learning assessments — are graded based on the following scale.

Letter Grade	Quality Points	Numerical Equivalents
A	4.0	93-100
A-	3.7	90-92
B+	3.3	88-89
B	3.0	83-87
C	2.0	73-82
F	0	Below 73
I	Incomplete (temporary grade)	
IF	0	Below 73
CR	N/A	None
ZF	0	0
		(Academic Integrity Violation)

Note: Nongraded credit assessed at the B level and above will be counted toward doctoral degree requirements in accordance with University and appropriate School policies.

Academic Integrity

A detailed statement of what constitutes academic dishonesty and plagiarism is included in every course. Students agree to abide by this statement. Academic dishonesty will result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal from the University.

The University is committed to helping students understand the seriousness of plagiarism, which is defined as the use of the work and ideas of others without proper citation. Students who submit course materials or examination responses that are found to be plagiarized are subject to discipline under the Academic Code of Conduct policy.

Students with any history of academic integrity violations are not eligible for any award or honor.

> Academic Code of Conduct: *https://tesu.smartcatalogiq.com/ current/undergraduate-catalog/university-policies-and- procedures/university-wide-policies/academic-code-of-conduct/*

Plagiarism

Acts of both intentional and unintentional plagiarism violate the Academic Code of Conduct. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the University Academic Code of Conduct, Policy, Violations and the Disciplinary Process detailed in the University catalog.

*Please note that the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions does not permit rewrites of any assignments.

Final Grade Appeals

All students in the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions will follow University policies on final grade appeals as outlined in the online University Catalog. Final grade appeals can only be submitted only after a course ends.

> Academic Appeals: *https://tesu.smartcatalogiq.com/en/ current/undergraduate-catalog/university-policies-and- procedures/university-wide-policies/appeals-and-waivers/*

Degree/Certificate Program Requirements

> Students may complete selected degree requirements by course, exam, or prior learning assessment (PLA).

> Rewriting or resubmission of assignments is not permitted.

> No assignments may be submitted after the last day of the course without an approved extension.

> Students are governed by the policies and procedures in effect on their course start date. Students making satisfactory progress may apply for one 8-week extension per course. In order to apply for an extension, students must submit the Request for Extension form to the course mentor for certification *no later than seven calendar days* prior to the initial end date of the class.

> Three discussion posts on three different days is the minimum required for participation in each discussion forum.

> Online nursing courses required for completion of the nursing degree or certificate programs are open only to RNs.

> Credits taken elsewhere or by any method other than by Thomas Edison State University online nursing course must be approved by the academic advisor for nursing prior to earning the credit to determine that the credit will meet program requirements.

BSN

> Upper-division nursing credits earned more than 10 years prior to the student's enrollment date may not be applied to upper-division nursing requirements in the BSN degree program.

> Courses transferred into the BSN program to meet upper-division nursing credit requirements must have been completed at a regionally accredited college or university, and a school of nursing accredited by a national nursing accrediting body, or recognized foreign institution to be considered for acceptance.

> Students enrolled in the BSN degree program will be governed by University policies in regard to general education credit requirements.

> Students enrolled in the BSN degree program must earn a grade of C (73) or better in the nursing courses for the credit to be accepted toward the degree.

> Students enrolled in the BSN degree program must achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of C (2.0) or better to graduate.

> Students enrolled in the BSN degree program will be governed by academic policies for graduate nursing courses while enrolled in the graduate nursing courses required for the BSN degree.

> Students enrolled in the BSN degree program may repeat each BSN nursing course, one time each. While in the BSN program, MSN-level courses in which a student receives a grade of W will apply to this policy and be considered a course attempt. See MSN policy regarding MSN courses taken in the BSN program.

Updated Credentials for Selected Courses

> Evidence of current and valid unencumbered RN license and malpractice insurance is required at the time the student registers for NUR-4430: Public Health Nursing, in the BSN degree program. Students will be required to provide information to a vendor selected by the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions.

Graduation

Thomas Edison State University degrees are conferred four times a year, September, December, March, and June, as published in the online University Catalog. A letter verifying degree completion will be provided from the Office of the Registrar prior to degree conferral. Requests for transcripts must be in writing and must be accompanied by the fee. The University holds one Commencement ceremony each fall. All graduates must be certified by the September graduation date to be considered graduates for the academic year and to be named in the Commencement Program for that ceremony.

> All students in the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions degree programs will submit the Request for Graduation Form with fee according to University guidelines.

> All students in the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions degree programs must have completed all degree requirements, have achieved the established GPA, and have satisfied all financial obligations to be eligible for graduation.

Candidates for the BSN degree must:

> Achieve a cumulative grade point average of C or better in the BSN degree program;

> Achieve a grade equivalent of C or better in nursing requirements of the BSN;

> Maintain a current unencumbered RN license, valid in the United States (RN students);

> Submit a completed Request for Graduation Form through Online Student Services, located on the University website at *tesu.edu* with fee to the Office of Student Financial Accounts according to deadlines established by the Office of the Registrar;

> Have all transcripts and test reports submitted to the Office of the Registrar according to deadlines established by the Office of the Registrar; and

> Have satisfied all outstanding financial obligations with the University

Awards and Honors

BSN degree graduates are eligible for the Arnold Fletcher Award, which is given by the University for exceptional achievement in independent learning. All graduates are considered for the award at the time they are reviewed for graduation.

RN graduates of the BSN and MSN degree programs are also eligible for the Regina Sanchez-Porter Award, which is given by the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions for high academic achievement combined with outstanding service to the profession and community. Information on submitting nominating materials for the Sanchez-Porter Award is available at the School of Nursing and Health Professions website.

The Upsilon Rho chapter of the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society was chartered in 2008. Eligibility for the chapter for students in the BSN degree program includes a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better and upper 35 percent in class rank.   Graduates of the School may apply under Nurse Leader criteria. Eligible candidates will be inducted at an annual ceremony.   Additional information on the Upsilon Rho chapter is located at: *tesu.edu/nursing.*

The Lambda Tau Chapter of Alpha Sigma Lambda National Honor Society for nontraditional students was established at Thomas Edison State University in 1996. All bachelor's degree candidates for graduation are reviewed for eligibility for the honor society. Induction takes place at the annual Commencement ceremonies. Information on the honor society is included in the online University Catalog.

The University has established the President's List and President's Award honor programs to officially acknowledge academic excellence among enrolled students. The distinctions are the highest academic honor that TESU bestows and allows President Dr. Merodie A. Hancock to personally acknowledge and celebrate student achievement with the entire University community.

Visit *tesu.edu/academics/achievements.*

Graduates of the BSN degree programs may also order a Thomas Edison State University nursing pin. Information on obtaining the pin is provided by the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions at the time of degree completion.

Students with any history of academic integrity violations are not eligible for any award or honors.

Complaints

The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions student complaint policies are congruent with the University complaint policies and procedures. Students are directed to the online University Catalog for information.

> Complaints: *tesu.edu/academics/catalog/student-complaint-policies-and-procedures*

Professional and Personal Conduct

Students must follow all policies and procedures detailed in this Handbook as well as the Thomas Edison State University Academic and Nonacademic Code of Conduct Polices:

> Academic Code of Conduct: *tesu.edu/academics/catalog/academic-code-of-conduct*

> Nonacademic Code of Conduct: *tesu.edu/academics/catalog/nonacademic-code-of-conduct*

The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions adheres to the ANA's Position Statement on Incivility, Bullying, and Workplace Violence and believes that adherence to the Code of Ethics is noni-negotiable. All nurses and nursing students have an obligation to uphold an adhere to its ethical precepts.

Policy Against Discrimination and Harassment

The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions is in compliance with University policy against discrimination and harassment. Please see the online University Catalog for more information at *tesu.edu/catalog*.

Reporting Data Change

Students must immediately notify the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions of any change of address, telephone number, email address, or change of name, by emailing *nursing@tesu.edu*. Additionally, students must notify the University by completing the Student Data Change Form found at *tesu.edu/current-students/studentforms*.

Confidentiality of Student Records

The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions is in compliance with University policy with respect to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Please see the online University Catalog for more information at *tesu.edu/catalog*.

System Requirements

Nursing students are advised to have computer capability compatible with the technology specified for the Thomas Edison State University's online courses, access to presentation software, and, for selected MSN courses, access to spreadsheet software, a microphone, and a webcam. Thomas Edison State University's stsytem requirements can be found at: *https://tesu.smartcatalogiq.com/current/undergraduate-catalog/methods-of-learning-and-earning-credit/about-online-courses/system-requirements/*

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:

Internet Connection (required):
High-speed connection is recommended. Speeds below 10 Mbps may cause slower loading times for video-heavy courses.

OPERATING SYSTEM:

Windows or macOS recommended
Linux and ChromeOS may have limited functionality for some of our technology and media tools.

BROWSER:

Firefox or Chrome recommended
Edge and Safari may have limited functionality for some of our technology and media tools.

OTHER SOFTWARE:

All students receive a Thomas Edison State University email   account that provides free access to G Suite for Education
(Google).

Some course tools may require browser plugins or other software to be installed. More information is provided in those courses.

PERIPHERALS FOR VIDEO RELATED ACTIVITIES:

Webcam and microphone required. This includes those built into devices. Headphones with built-in microphone recommended.

Some courses may require additional hardware. Details on these will be included in those specific courses.

Note: Operating systems, browsers, plugins, and other software should be kept up-to-date for security purposes and to ensure proper functionality.

Student Services and Resources

Advisement Services

All programs offered by the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions are designed for adult independent learners who want flexible scheduling and options for program completion and who can take responsibility for their program planning and degree completion. Courses are mentored rather than taught, and students are expected to familiarize themselves with the computer requirements for online courses, the University and School website, publications, and program materials as well as their individual program requirements. The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions strongly encourages all students to utilize advisement services in planning their degree program progression.

Because most students live a distance from the University, advisement appointments are available by telephone, virtually, or in person.

Student Accessibility Services

Thomas Edison State University adheres to the mandates of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Therefore, the University provides reasonable accommodations for otherwise qualified students who disclose and verify a disability to the University. The Center for Disability Services provides assistance to students who wish to discuss reasonable accommodations for verifiable disabilities. Students are responsible for identifying themselves to the ADA coordinator at 609-984-1141, ext. 3415. The TTY number for hearing-impaired students is 609-341-3109. Application and information is available at *tesu.edu* or email *ada@tesu.edu*.

Library and Educational Services and Resources

The New Jersey State Library, which is an affiliate of the University, offers Thomas Edison State University students access to many resources for study. The Library may be contacted through the University website at: *tesu.edu/current-students*.

Additional educational resources may be accessed through the University website at *tesu.edu* and at sites identified for students in the online nursing courses. Information on library services is provided with enrollment materials and found online at *njstatelib.org/research_library/services_for/ thomas_edison_state_university/.*

Registration for a library card is required for access to the electronic database. Students are also encouraged to take advantage of college and public libraries in their communities as well as those in the workplace. Through their interaction online in the nursing courses as well as access to the moderated discussion board for all enrolled students on the University website, students may inquire and share information about additional learning resources.

Technical Support

Technical support is available during business hours by calling 609-777-5680 or emailing *enrolled@tesu.edu*. If you need a temporary password reset after hours, visit Online Student

Services (OSS) and click "What's My Password" in the lower right hand corner of the page.

Financial Aid

Information on financial aid may be obtained by contacting the Office of Admissions and Enrollment Services at 609-777-5680, the Office of Financial Aid at 609-633-9658, via email at *finaid@tesu.edu* or online at *tesu.edu*. Information on scholarships and other financial aid opportunities for RNs may be posted on the University website at *tesu.edu/nursing* when appropriate.

Students on financial aid should familiarize themselves with the recommended course sequence and prerequisites to make the best use of financial aid awarded and progress toward degree completion.

Communications and Publications

Students are encouraged to read Alumni and Student eNewsletter, Invention and other communications mailed and emailed from the University as well as the information available on the University website at: *tesu.edu*. Information from these sources highlight new courses and programs, policy and schedule changes, mentors, University staff, alumni and students, and events and activities at the University. Information and updates specific to nursing courses and the program may be communicated to students via mass mailings or email. It is important that a current email address and phone number are provided on applications to the University and updated as necessary.

Directory for Enrolled Students

W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and Health Professions

Phone: 609-633-6460
Fax: 609-292-8279
Email: *nursing@tesu.edu*

Office of Admissions and Enrollment

Phone: 609-777-5680
Option 1 for enrolled students
Option 2 for prospective inquiries, press 2 for nursing
Monday — Friday, 8:30 a.m. — 4:30 p.m., ET
Email: *admissions@tesu.edu*

Academic Advisement for Enrolled Students

Phone: 609-777-5680
Monday — Friday, 8:30 a.m. — 4:30 p.m., ET
Fax: 609-292-8279 (nursing)
Schedule an appointment: *tesu.edu/appointment*

Office of Student Financial Accounts and Operations

Phone: 609-777-5680
Fax: 609-984-4066
Email: *studentaccts@tesu.edu*

Office of Financial Aid

Phone: 609-777-5680
Fax: 609-633-6489
Email: *finaid@tesu.edu*

Office of the Registrar
Course registrations
Requesting official transcripts
Receipt of transcripts
Applying for graduation

Phone: 609-984-1180
Fax: 609-777-0477
Email: *registrar@tesu.edu*
Web: *tesu.edu/about/registrar*

Center for Disability Services
Information and assistance with accommodations for students with special needs

Phone: 609-984-1141, ext. 3415
TTY: 609-341-3109 (for hearing impaired students) **Fax:** 609-943-5232
Email: *ada@tesu.edu*

Technical Support

Phone: 609-777-5680
Email: *enrolled@tesu.edu*