School of Nursing Current Student FAQs:

1. Graduation

- **When to apply?** You must apply for graduation the quarter before the quarter that is going to be your last i.e. the quarter before you are taking COMPS. If you do not pass COMPS your graduation application will be forwarded to the following quarter and you will NOT need to reapply for graduation. However, if you re-take COMPS that following quarter and still do not pass, you will need to reapply for graduation. This is also true if you do not attend that following quarter (i.e. students who do not pass COMPS in the Spring and re-take in the Fall because COMPS are not offered in the Summer, have to re-apply)

- **How to apply?** Look for the filing periods listed in the current Schedule of Classes online or check the School of Nursing MSN board ST 4th floor. Once you have identified the application dates, go to enrollment services to pick up the form or get one from the “forms” rack outside the SON advisement office, complete the form and pay the fee at the cashier’s office. After you have paid, bring the application back to SON. Your degree will be awarded at the end of or a few weeks after the quarter you applied for.

- **What happens after I apply?** You will have to go to GRAD FAIR (flyers will be posted around campus and the department) to pick up your tickets (you will receive 5 for free and you will not be able to buy anymore) and pay for your cap/gown and other accessories if you wish. The day of the ceremony will also be posted around campus and the department. Even if you do not end up meeting the requirements for graduation, you will still be able to attend graduation.

- **What if I am a Post Masters Certificate student?** Your form is different from regular MSN students as well as the procedure. You will apply for your certificate during your final quarter after grades have posted. Once you are sure you have completed all requirements, you will go to the SON advisement office to pick up a certificate application and make an appointment with Dr. Washington, your option coordinator, or Dr. Hughes, so one of them may verify that you have completed all the requirements and sign your application. During this appointment, your program sheet, which lists all of the option course requirements, will be updated and signed. You will staple both forms together and take them to the cashier’s office to pay the fee. Once you have both forms signed and you have paid the fee at the cashier’s office, you will turn them in to the SON. You can expect your certificate to be awarded in 7 to 10 business days.

- **When will I receive my actual degree (paper degree)?** You will receive it in the mail within 4 to 6 weeks after your degree is posted online.

- **How do I apply for NP certification?** After you complete COMPS, you will receive a congratulatory letter in the mail with 1 or 2 dates available for a meeting with one of our faculty to complete the paperwork for NP certification.

**NOTE:** Post-Masters students do not need to apply for a second California State NP certification if they are already certified as an NP after receiving the MS degree.
2. **Advancement to Candidacy**

- **What is it?** It is a requirement for all MSN students with the purpose of qualifying you to complete your degree. It is a pre-requisite to enroll for COMPS or thesis/project and must be done BEFORE you apply for graduation.

- **When do you apply?** After you have completed 16 units of your master’s degree program with a minimum B (3.0) GPA and have passed the WPE (or are exempt by CBEST or acceptable alternative), obtain the “Advancement to Candidacy” form from the SON. Complete the form and leave it with the SON. The form will be sent to the Dean’s office to verify the requirements have been met and if so, a letter from the Dean’s office will be mailed to your home and a copy will be submitted to the SON confirming that you have advanced to candidacy.

3. **Changing options**

- **How do I change options?** This is a serious step and requires careful consideration on your part and on the faculty’s part. Remember when you applied to CSULA SON you applied to one option in good faith and committed to a space in that option. Other students may have been denied a space in the option because that space was offered to you. Nevertheless, the SON does allow you one opportunity to make a request to change options. You must obtain the “change of option” form from the SON and prepare a **compelling statement** as to why you would like to change options and why the option you want would be a better fit for you (directions for this are on the form). You must first meet with your current option coordinator and if they sign the form in support of your change, you will meet with your desired option coordinator. Lastly, you will meet with Dr. Washington, she will sign as the Graduate Advisor, and then as the Graduate Chair will take your petition for approval or denial to the graduate committee. If your petition is approved you will be notified by Dr. Washington via letter. You will then make an appointment with Dr. Washington to complete your new program option paperwork. The paperwork will be sent to the Dean’s office to change your option on GET. **REMEMBER:** You will only be able to request a change of option **one time** and you cannot change options if you are on probation.

4. **Course Failures/Probation/Disqualification**

- **What do I do if I fail a course?** Prevention is always the best “nursing care”. If you know that you are having difficulty in a course, immediately meet with the course faculty to develop a plan of action to address weak areas. It is important to be proactive, once you fail a course you are in danger of being placed on probation. Too quickly, this may lead to disqualification. Even if you take other courses (PE or other non-nursing courses that are NOT approved electives) this will not help your GPA. The SON GPA is calculated only using the courses on your program and this is done by the Dean’s office. Since the GPA is sometimes not accurately shown on GET, you will not be aware of your low GPA until you receive a letter of probation from the Dean’s office. It is important to meet with your course faculty member, your advisor/option coordinator often if your GPA is in jeopardy. Your advisor will help you track your progress for meeting the 3.0 GPA requirements. Once on probation, if your GPA does not reach a 3.0 after 16 units of completed coursework in your program, you must see Dr. Washington immediately. Disqualification from the MSN program is in order. However, as stated in the student handbook, you may petition the SON Graduate Committee regarding your disqualification. Dr. Washington will discuss your options with you. Once you receive a disqualification letter in the mail from the Dean’s office, the decision cannot be reversed.
- **What happens if I fail 2 courses?** You must petition the graduate committee in the form of a letter (not email) to continue in the program (refer to student handbook pg 23). The letter must be addressed to Dr. Washington and the graduate committee.

5. **Health Clearance Data**

- **What form do I use?** You can pick up the form at the SON advisement center and it is soon to be posted on the SON webpage.

- **What are the requirements?** The requirements are listed on the form.

- **Who do I give my paperwork to?** Students who started school before Fall 2012 will be turning all paperwork in to the SON. Students who started school on or after Fall 2012 will be uploading their health data to certifiedprofile.com once they have purchased the immunization tracker package. This package costs $35.00 and stores all of your documents even after you have graduated from the program.

- **Do I turn in copies or originals?** You turn in copies. You must keep the original set with you at all times in case you are asked to present it in any clinical course or to the health care agency. The SON will not provide copies to you or your professor once you have turned in your documents.

**NOTE:** Certified Background will send a card to the SON once you have passed the background check in addition to emailing you the report. The card must be picked up from the administrative office.

- **Will I be alerted when any of my documents need to be updated?** It is the student’s responsibility to keep their health data up to date at all times. When you purchase the tracker, you will be sent alerts but must still be proactive and check your data yourself. If you are submitting your health data to the SON, you will be sent alerts as well but again do not rely on this because by the time it is caught it might be too late for you to remedy the situation.

- **What happens if I let my documents expire?** You will be placed on low priority for clinical placement and if you wait too long you may not be allowed to come to class until you provide the updated documents.

6. **Registering for courses**

- **How do I register for courses?** Register for courses using the GET system.

- **What are the maximum units I can register for?** Graduate students are allowed to register for up to 16 units. Any student wanting to take more than 16 units must complete an “excess unit petition” with the SON which will be sent for approval to the SON Graduate Advisor and College Dean.

- **What if I am interested in taking a 598/498 course?** Pick up the form at SON administration office and make arrangements with the faculty member who will be sponsoring the course.
- **How do I know which section of the course I need to register for?** When you are searching for the course number on the schedule of classes click on it and a screen will open with more details about the course which will have a notes section below. There you will see notes such as “ANP only”. If you register for the wrong section, you will be dropped.

- **Why am I getting an error message when I try to register for courses?** First you need make sure that your tuition payment or financial aid has cleared. Next make sure you are trying to register on your designated registration date. You will find your registration date on the “self service” screen. Also, make sure that you do not have any holds which you will also see on the “self service” screen. Lastly, you may be required to obtain a permit for the course. If you need a permit contact the SON administration office 323-343-4700.

- **How do I register for COMPS?** Make sure COMPS will be offered in the quarter that you plan to take them and register for NURS 596 on GET. If you are only taking COMPS then you must go to the cashier’s office and pay $10 in order to register. If you are taking other courses with COMPS then you do not have to pay the COMP fee because it is included in your tuition. The times/dates/locations of the orientation, help session and exams are posted on the School of Nursing webpage and on the MSN bulletin board. You may also call the department for more information. **NOTE:** you are **not** allowed to take any core courses the same quarter you plan to take COMPS.

7. **Advisement**

- **How do I know who my advisor is?** Option Coordinators/Advisors are posted on the MSN board and updated every quarter if necessary.

- **How do I make an appointment to see my advisor?** All of the advisors provide their schedule at the beginning of every quarter and this advisement schedule is placed in a black binder in the SON advisement center. You may schedule appointments over the phone as well. Students who want to see Dr. Hughes must make an appointment with Griselda Arellanes in the administration office.

- **What if I cannot make any of the times/dates that are available?** Email the advisor to see if other arrangements can be made.

- **How often should I meet with my advisor?** At least once a year and every time there is a change in your program (e.g. need to drop courses or change schedule, leave of absence). Keeping contact is important so your graduation is not delayed.

- **Can I substitute coursework from other universities?** YES with approval however, only a certain percentage of the courses can be substituted.

**TRADITIONAL MSN STUDENTS:** a maximum of 13 units for programs with 45 units or for programs more than 45 units, up to 30% of the total required units.

**POST MASTER STUDENTS:** Only 25% of the total required units may be substituted from other Universities. **NOTE:** You must meet the requirements of the specific option that are listed in the university catalog. Make sure that you have filled out a program planning sheet with the graduate student advisor and your faculty advisor during your first fall quarter. This will make it clear what courses you are required to take.
- **How do I change to project/thesis from COMPS?** You need to make an appointment with Dr. Washington at least 2-3 quarters in advance. When you consider this option, please be sure to carefully read the information in the graduate student handbook (appendix C). You need to make sure you are following the directions carefully. Once you have changed your option to thesis and completed the first course, you cannot switch back to COMPS.

- **What if I feel like I may need special accommodations for particular health and/or mental health issues (i.e. anxiety, ADD etc.)?** The student Health Center offers confidential testing and referrals to the Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD). This office provides many services for students such as; counseling, and test taking assistance services.