



*2020-2021*

# GRADUATE CATALOG





# MercyCollege

of Ohio

## **CIVIL RIGHTS/NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

---

Mercy College of Ohio is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination on the bases of race, color, national and ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, religion, pregnancy, genetic information, and any other legally-protected class in admissions and educational programs, services and activities, in accord with applicable federal and state law.

For more information about Mercy College of Ohio policies, compliance and consumer information, please visit: [www.mercycollege.edu/compliance](http://www.mercycollege.edu/compliance)

Any member of the College community who is a witness to or victim of discrimination should immediately notify the Director of Compliance and Risk Management at 419-251-1710, or 2221 Madison Avenue Toledo, OH 43604. The College prohibits retaliation based upon reporting of violations of this policy.

Mercy College of Ohio  
Toledo Campus  
2221 Madison Avenue  
Toledo, Ohio 43604

Mercy College of Ohio  
Youngstown Location  
1044 Belmont Avenue  
Youngstown, Ohio 44501

As amended, November 15, 2020

1. Page 8, Added Master of Physician Assistant Studies Accreditations and Approvals
2. Pages 11-12, Updated conditional/provisional admission information
3. Pages 59-61, Updated graduate student progression
4. Pages 155-160, Added Master of Physician Assistant Studies program
5. Pages 169-176 Added Master of Physician Assistant Studies courses and course descriptions

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>CIVIL RIGHTS/NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>COLLEGE OVERVIEW.....</b>	<b>5</b>
HISTORY .....	5
TOLEDO CAMPUS.....	5
YOUNGSTOWN LOCATION.....	5
MERCY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION.....	5
MERCY COLLEGE OF OHIO SEAL .....	6
MISSION.....	6
VISION .....	6
VALUES .....	6
<b>ACCREDITATION .....</b>	<b>7</b>
INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION .....	7
THE HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION.....	7
STATE AUTHORIZATION.....	7
OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION (FORMERLY THE OHIO BOARD OF REGENTS)	
.....	7
PROGRAM ACCREDITATIONS AND APPROVALS .....	8
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING.....	8
MASTER OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANCE STUDIES .....	8
<b>INTRODUCTION TO GRADUATE STUDIES .....</b>	<b>9</b>
GRADUATE STUDIES MISSION.....	9
GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE .....	9
GRADUATE PROGRAM CATALOG.....	9
GRADUATE ADMISSION.....	10
GRADUATE STUDENT TRANSFER CREDIT .....	12
CIVIL RIGHTS/NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY.....	12
VERIFICATION OF STUDENT IDENTITY POLICY .....	14
<b>FINANCIAL AID .....</b>	<b>17</b>
FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS .....	17
HOW TO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID .....	17
TYPES OF FINANCIAL AID AVAILABLE.....	17
FINANCIAL AID PACKAGING .....	20
FINANCIAL AID - TRANSFER STUDENTS .....	20
RETURN OF TITLE IV AID (R2T4) POLICY.....	20
SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) POLICY .....	24
STUDENT LOAN CODE OF CONDUCT .....	27
<b>ACADEMIC AFFAIRS .....</b>	<b>29</b>
ACADEMIC SERVICES.....	29
DISTANCE EDUCATION AND TEACHING RESOURCES DEPARTMENT .....	29
LIBRARY.....	30

OFFICE OF STUDENT RECORDS .....	30
REGISTRATION AND SCHEDULING.....	31
WITHDRAWAL FROM THE COLLEGE.....	33
ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS .....	33
STUDENT MILITARY LEAVE POLICY.....	36
VOLUNTARY LEAVES OF ABSENCE .....	38
GRADUATE STUDENT GRADING SCALE .....	39
INCOMPLETE GRADE .....	40
GRADE REPORTS.....	40
COURSE GRADE APPEAL .....	40
POSTHUMOUS DEGREE/CERTIFICATE.....	42
TRANSCRIPTS.....	42
ACADEMIC POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES .....	42
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.....	42
ATTENDANCE.....	44
CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR NAME .....	44
CLINICAL COMPLIANCE POLICY .....	44
FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) .....	54
GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRESSION .....	59
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS .....	60
STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT .....	62
CAMPUS VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY .....	72
CAMPUS ASSESSMENT RESPONSE AND EVALUATION (CARE) TEAM POLICY .....	75
CLERY COMPLIANCE POLICY .....	80
DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE/PREVENTION POLICY AND PROGRAM.....	82
EMAIL .....	87
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY .....	87
HAZING POLICY .....	89
PREGNANT STUDENT POLICY .....	92
SERVICE/EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL/PET POLICY .....	93
SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY.....	100
COLLEGE CLOSING/CANCELLATIONS.....	131
EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN (ERP).....	133
<b>GRADUATE PROGRAMS OF STUDY .....</b>	<b>135</b>
MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION.....	135
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS .....	136
CURRICULUM.....	137
*HEALTH ADMINISTRATION PRACTICUM.....	138
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.....	139
MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION: FAST TRACK.....	139
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING: LEADERSHIP TRACK AND EDUCATION TRACK.....	141
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS .....	142
CURRICULUM.....	143

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PRACTICUMS..... 146  
 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS..... 146  
 MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING: FAST TRACK..... 147  
 REGISTERED NURSE TO MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PROGRAM (RN TO MSN)..... 148  
 MASTER OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES..... 155  
 ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS ..... 156  
 CURRICULUM..... 157  
 POST MASTER’S CERTIFICATES..... 160  
 ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS ..... 160  
 POST MASTER’S CERTIFICATE IN NURSING LEADERSHIP ..... 160  
 POST MASTER’S CERTIFICATE IN NURSING EDUCATION ..... 161  
**GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS ..... 162**  
 MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (HCA)..... 162  
 MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING (NUR) ..... 165  
 MASTER OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT (PAS) ..... 169  
**INDEX ..... 177**

## College Overview

---

### HISTORY

Mercy College of Ohio, located in Toledo, Ohio, is a private Catholic institution with a focus on healthcare education. Tracing its heritage to the school of nursing founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1918, Mercy College of Ohio was incorporated in 1992 and grants a Master of Science degree in Nursing and a Master of Health Administration. The College grants Bachelor of Science degrees in Nursing, Biology, Medical Imaging, and Healthcare Administration. The College grants an Associate of Science degree in Health Sciences, and Associate of Applied Science Degrees in Health Information Technology, Nursing, and Radiologic Technology. Credit certificate programs are offered in Community Health Worker, Medical Coding, Ophthalmic Assistant, Paramedic, and Polysomnographic Technology. Non-credit certificates are offered in Phlebotomy and Emergency Medical Technician – Basic. Since 2002, the College has offered an Associate of Applied Science degree in Nursing at its Youngstown, Ohio location.

### TOLEDO CAMPUS

The Toledo campus of Mercy College of Ohio is located at 2221 Madison Avenue. Located on the western tip of Lake Erie, Toledo is known as the “Glass City.” Toledo’s expressway system is linked to the east-west by the Ohio Turnpike and to the north-south by Interstate 75. Toledo is the fourth largest city in Ohio and home to the Toledo Mud Hens baseball team and the Toledo Walleye hockey team.

### YOUNGSTOWN LOCATION

Mercy College of Ohio’s second location is at 1044 Belmont Avenue in Youngstown, Ohio, easily accessible from the Ohio and Pennsylvania Turnpike system and many major interstates. The Cardiac Health Center Building on the corner of Belmont and Park Avenues houses the Youngstown location. The College occupies the second and fourth floors.

### MERCY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The Mercy Alumni Association, founded in 1923, currently serves more than 6,000 living graduates from Mercy School of Nursing and Mercy College of Ohio.

Every graduate that completes a degree or certificate program is considered a member of the Association. There are no annual dues. The Association is organized for charitable, educational, and social purposes to support both the College and alumni. Information about the Association can be found on the College’s website: [www.mercycollege.edu/alumni-friends](http://www.mercycollege.edu/alumni-friends).

## MERCY COLLEGE OF OHIO SEAL

The Mercy College of Ohio seal combines symbols of the traditions of the Sisters of Mercy, healthcare and higher education, all of which reflect the mission of the College.

The Mercy cross is the central symbol representing Christian values embedded in a shield symbolizing a tradition of excellence. The lamp and book signify the pursuit of knowledge and truth with the guiding flame of light. The College motto “Misericordia et Cura,” denotes compassion and caring, and focuses on the values that are vital to the healing ministries.



## MISSION

Mercy College of Ohio, a Catholic institution with a focus on healthcare, educates and inspires students to lead and to serve in the global community.

## VISION

To be the leader in educating individuals committed to intellectual inquiry, social engagement, and lifelong learning.

## VALUES

**Compassion:** Displaying respect, empathy, and a willingness to listen.

**Human Dignity:** Respecting the significance of each individual.

**Excellence:** Pursuing distinction in our professional and personal lives through quality academics and intellectual inquiry.

**Service:** Engaging the College Community to enrich the lives of students through professional and community service.

**Sacredness of Life:** Revering all life through our thoughts, words, and actions.

**Justice:** Acting with integrity, fairness, honesty, and truthfulness.

Mercy College takes great pride in the quality healthcare education it provides to every student. Faculty, staff, and students embrace the spirit, mission, values, and heritage set forth by the foundresses of the College. Graduates are prepared to enter their respective healthcare professions with the knowledge to make a difference – the Mercy difference.

## ACCREDITATION

---

Accreditation ensures stakeholders that an educational institution meets acceptable standards of quality. Through an ongoing process of self-study and external peer review, accreditation affirms that the College and its programs are of the highest standards as recognized by regional, state, and programmatic accreditors. Mercy College of Ohio is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a regional accreditation agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and authorized by the Ohio Department of Higher Education (formerly the Ohio Board of Regents). The College also has several programs of study that are accredited by specialized accrediting agencies.

### INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

#### **The Higher Learning Commission**

230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500  
Chicago, IL 60604-1411  
Phone: 800-621-7440  
Phone: 312-263-0456  
Fax: 312-263-7462  
[hlcommission.org](http://hlcommission.org)

#### **Complaints to the Higher Learning Commission**

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) has established a clear distinction between individual grievances and complaints that appear to involve broad institutional practices. Where a complaint does raise issues regarding the institution's ongoing ability to meet the Criteria of Accreditation, the Commission forwards the complaint to the institution and requests a formal response.

[inquiry@hlcommission.org](mailto:inquiry@hlcommission.org)

HLC complaints webpage: <https://www.hlcommission.org/HLC-Institutions/complaints.html>.

### STATE AUTHORIZATION

#### **Ohio Department of Higher Education (FORMERLY THE OHIO BOARD OF REGENTS)**

25 South Front Street  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Phone: 614-466-6000  
Fax: 614-466-5866  
[ohiohighered.org](http://ohiohighered.org)

#### **Complaints to the Ohio Department of Higher Education**

The Ohio Department of Higher Education is responsible for responding to formal complaints against public, independent non-profit, and proprietary institutions of higher education in Ohio. While the Ohio Department of Higher Education has limited authority over colleges and universities, and cannot offer legal advice or initiate civil court cases, their staff will review submitted complaints and work with student complainants and institutions.

<https://www.ohiohighered.org/students/complaints>



### **Complaints to the Ohio Attorney General**

The Ohio Attorney General reviews general consumer complaints about business, non-profit and public entities. More information is available via the Attorney General's office and website.

Ohio Attorney General  
30 East Broad St., 14th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215  
General: 800-282-0515

<https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Individuals-and-Families/Consumers/File-a-Complaint>

### **PROGRAM ACCREDITATIONS AND APPROVALS**

The following are programmatic or specialized accreditors:

#### **Master of Science in Nursing**

The Master of Science in Nursing Program at Mercy College of Ohio is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education  
655 K Street, NW, Suite 750  
Washington, DC 20001  
Phone: (202) 887-6791  
Fax: (202) 887-8476  
[www.ccneaccreditation.org](http://www.ccneaccreditation.org)

*AMENDMENT START - 11/15/2020*

#### **MASTER OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANCE STUDIES**

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc (ARC-PA) has granted Accreditation-Provisional status to the Mercy College of Ohio Master of Physician Assistant Studies sponsored by Mercy College of Ohio. Accreditation-Provisional is an accreditation status granted when the plans and resource allocation, if fully implemented as planned, of a proposed program that has not yet enrolled students appear to demonstrate the program's ability to meet the ARC-PA Standards or when a program holding Accreditation-Provisional status appears to demonstrate continued progress in complying with the *Standards* as it prepares for the graduation of the first class (cohort) of students. Accreditation-Provisional does not ensure any subsequent accreditation status. It is limited to no more than five years from matriculation of the first class. The program's accreditation history can be viewed on the ARC-PA website at <http://www.arc-pa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Accreditation-History-Mercy-College-OH.pdf>

*AMENDMENT END*

## **INTRODUCTION TO GRADUATE STUDIES**

---

Graduate academic programs build upon the foundation of undergraduate education with a continuing focus on ethical, professional, and intellectual development. Graduate education is designed to enhance both knowledge and expertise in specific academic disciplines and individual areas of professional practice. Emphasis is placed on preparing graduates who think critically and creatively engage in research and scholarship, demonstrate excellence in their discipline, and are socially and ethically responsible. The most visible activity of graduate education is the intellectual interaction of faculty and students involved in learning and devoted to advancing knowledge in their fields. Supporting these endeavors are academic leaders in the College, who are committed to providing an atmosphere in which graduate education and research can flourish.

### **GRADUATE STUDIES MISSION**

Mercy College's graduate programs promote a distinct and collaborative learning environment rooted in the Catholic intellectual tradition. Graduate programs support intellectual inquiry within the specific discipline and prepare students to respond to the ever-changing opportunities and challenges in the profession of healthcare.

### **GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE**

The Graduate Studies Committee is a standing committee of Faculty Assembly. The purpose of the Committee is to initiate, review and recommend graduate policy, curriculum, and program assessment/academic program review to the general faculty for consensus approval. The Committee serves as the advocate for the advancement of graduate education in accordance with the mission, vision, and values of the College.

### **GRADUATE PROGRAM CATALOG**

The graduate program catalog outlines the information, requirements, policies, and procedures specific to Mercy College's graduate programs. Mercy College graduate students are expected to be familiar with the information, requirements, and policies and to abide by them. Failure to do so may impede student progress or may result in disciplinary action and, in some cases, dismissal. In addition to the information provided in the graduate program catalog, students are responsible for knowing and abiding by all Mercy College requirements, policies, and procedures on the College website.

Mercy College website: <https://www.mercycollege.edu/>

Policies: <https://mercycollege.edu/about/compliance-consumer-information>

## OFFICE OF ADMISSION

---

### GRADUATE ADMISSION

Applicants to graduate programs at Mercy College of Ohio are assessed according to academic background, aptitude for graduate-level work, and professional experience. Applicants to graduate programs are required to have access to the internet to complete online coursework.

PLEASE NOTE: Mercy College has not petitioned or received approval from the United States Department of Homeland Security to sponsor international students for F-1, J-1, or M-1 immigration status and cannot issue Form I-20 or other sponsoring documentation. An applicant for admission must be a U.S. Citizen or a U.S. Permanent Resident, possess valid immigration status, or must have permission to be present and attend school in the United States. We require all non-U.S. citizen students to provide proof of immigration status or lawful presence in the United States.

#### **Immigration Status Admission Policy**

Mercy College of Ohio only admits students who are U.S. Citizens, U.S. Permanent Residents, who have valid immigration status, or who otherwise have permission to be present and attend school in the United States. Students who lose their immigration status or lose their permission to remain and attend school in the United States during the course of their studies will no longer be eligible for enrollment in the school and will be dismissed.

Students whose degree or educational program requires licensure in order to practice their profession are responsible for contacting the licensing board in the state(s) in which the student intends to sit for the appropriate licensure exam(s) to determine the requirements for obtaining licensure and whether the student will be able to meet those requirements. Mercy College of Ohio makes no representations regarding any students' ability to sit for the licensure exams or to obtain employment in their chosen field.

Applicants with international transcripts are required to submit their official transcripts to World Education Services (WES) for a course-by-course level evaluation and calculated cumulative grade point average (GPA). Contact WES at [www.wes.org](http://www.wes.org)

**Program Specific Admissions Requirements are listed** in the individual program section of this Catalog including minimum grade-point-average requirements and additional items needed for admission.

#### **Deferring Admission**

Applicants admitted to graduate programs may choose to defer admission for up to one year.

#### **Readmission to a Graduate Program**

Students who have withdrawn from a graduate program of study in good standing are eligible for readmission within one year. Students must submit written requests to the appropriate Program Director requesting readmission. Approval is contingent on space being available within the program and course availability relative to student progress to date.

**ADMISSION DECISIONS**

The Admission Committee for the specific graduate program determines the admission status of all applicants. Admission is not guaranteed.

The following admission decisions are based on the status of the application materials:

**Full Admission**

Applicant has submitted application, all required documents, and any fees required for the Graduate Studies program.

**Conditional Admission**

Applicant is missing one to two required components of the application materials and is admitted conditionally based on the receipt of the missing component(s).

**Special Status Admission**

Applicants who wish to take a graduate level course, but are not admitted to a graduate program, may be admitted as special status students. The graduate program director and the course faculty must approve admission into a course.

*Special Status Students* – Individuals taking classes for their own interest or knowledge or who have already earned a college degree and want to take classes for personal and/or professional development.

**Provisional Admission**

Provisional Admission Status for graduate studies applicants only applies to the Master of Health Administration (MHA) and Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) programs.

Applicants may be granted Provisional Admission Status for the MHA or MSN if either of the following conditions exist:

1. Applicants graduated from a regionally-accredited institution but earned a minimum 2.3 cumulative GPA (on a 4.0 scale) in their baccalaureate degree, which do not meet the required 3.0 cumulative GPA (on a 4.0 scale).
2. Applicants graduated from a nationally-accredited institution with a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA (on a 4.0 scale) in his/her baccalaureate degree.

*AMENDMENT START - 11/15/2020*

**Conditions of Provisional Admission**

Failure to meet any of the conditions below will result in program dismissal.

1. Students are required to earn a grade of a “B” or higher in the first nine (9) credit hours of coursework to be fully admitted to the program. Students who fail to meet this in the middle of a semester will be permitted to finish enrolled coursework.
2. Students are required to follow and successfully complete an Academic Success Plan that includes meeting with:
  - Mercy College of Ohio or *Smarthinking* Writing Tutor 1-2 times each semester

- Program Director/Program Coordinator 1-2 times each semester
- Other services identified to promote student success

*AMENDMENT END*

### **Denied Admission**

Applicants who do not meet the minimum qualifications for acceptance will be denied admission.

### **APPLICATION REVIEW**

Applications to the graduate programs are reviewed on a rolling basis. Applications received less than ten business days prior to the start of each semester may be moved to the next semester, excluding summer.

Upon review of applications and required items, applicants are notified of admission decisions from the appropriate graduate program. Accepted applicants receive additional information such as a sample program of study, and how to schedule advising appointments, register for courses, and access online orientation.

### **GRADUATE STUDENT TRANSFER CREDIT**

Please note the following rules regarding graduate transfer credit:

- A maximum of six semester credit hours can be transferred in accordance with the Mercy College Graduate residency requirement at the discretion of the Program Director.
- Courses considered for transfer must have been taken within 7 years of admission.
- Only graduate-level courses completed with a grade of "B" or 3.00 from a regionally-accredited institution of higher education will be considered for transfer.

### **CIVIL RIGHTS/NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, June 2019*

Mercy College of Ohio has established a Civil Rights/Nondiscrimination policy with the purpose of committing to the practice of nondiscrimination on the bases of race, color, national and ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, religion, pregnancy, genetic information, and any other legally-protected class in admissions and educational programs, services and activities, in accord with applicable federal and state law at Mercy College of Ohio ("the College").

This policy applies to all College employees, students, and third parties conducting business on behalf of the College.

Discrimination occurs when persons are excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, a College program or activity because of their status in a legally-protected class. Discrimination can involve subjecting someone to unwelcome conduct (i.e., harassment). To reflect its commitment to nondiscrimination, the College has adopted the following nondiscrimination statement.

### **Nondiscrimination Statement**

*Mercy College of Ohio is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination on the bases of race, color, national and ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, religion, pregnancy,*

*genetic information, and any other legally-protected class in admissions and educational programs, services and activities, in accord with applicable federal and state law.*

The College will promptly and thoroughly investigate all allegations of discrimination. If an individual is found to have violated the College's nondiscrimination statement, the College will take appropriate action to redress the violation, up to and including dismissal. Any member of the College community who is a witness to or victim of discrimination should immediately notify the Director of Compliance and Risk Management, or any member of the College's administration, faculty, or staff. The College prohibits retaliation based upon reporting of violations of this policy.

**Complaints of discrimination:**

Any person may file a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment in violation of this policy's nondiscrimination statement. Complaints may allege discrimination or harassment carried out by employees, students, or third parties. Complaints should be directed to:

Leslie Erwin  
Director of Compliance and Risk Management  
419-251-1710

Complaints of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual violence, and sexual exploitation/misconduct will be processed pursuant to the procedures contained in the *Sexual Harassment Policy*.

Complaints of disability discrimination, including disability harassment, will be processed pursuant to the procedures below, which constitute the College's Section 504 grievance procedures.

Complaints of all other forms of discrimination and harassment will also be processed pursuant to the procedures set forth below.

**Related policies and procedures:**

Conduct that is of a discriminatory or harassing nature may also implicate other College policies. The following policies and procedures may be relevant to complaints of discrimination and used by the College to address the underlying allegations of misconduct:

- Accessibility Policy
- Hazing Policy
- Student Code of Conduct

Questions about the Accessibility Policy should be directed to the Section 504 Coordinator:

Christine Miller  
Director of Accessibility and Testing Services  
419-251-1784  
christine.miller@mercycollege.edu

Questions about the Hazing Policy or Student Code of Conduct should be directed to:

Marc Adkins  
Vice President of Student Affairs & Dean of Students  
419-251-1512  
marc.adkins@mercycollege.edu

**Outside options for resolution of complaints:**

Complaints of discrimination may be filed with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education at the following address:

Director, Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education  
1350 Euclid Avenue, Suite 325  
Cleveland, OH 44115-1812  
Telephone (216) 522-4970  
FAX: 216-522-2573; TDD: 800-877-8339  
Email: [OCR.Cleveland@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Cleveland@ed.gov)

**VERIFICATION OF STUDENT IDENTITY POLICY**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, June 2018*

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Mercy College of Ohio (“the College”) verifies the identity of all students participating in land-based and distance education, consistent with regulatory and accreditation requirements.

This policy applies to all credit-bearing courses or programs offered by the College, beginning with the application for admission and continuing through to a student’s graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from study.

The College must ensure the student who is enrolled in courses or programs is the same student who participates in and completes and receives the academic credit; therefore, verification of student identity is a standard of admission at the College. It is a required component of the admission process regardless of whether the student participates in land-based or distance education.

In gathering and storing this information regarding student identity, the College complies fully with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This act protects the privacy of student information by requiring, with certain limited exceptions, that the student's consent must be obtained before disclosing any personally identifiable information in the student's education records.

To meet regulatory and accreditation requirements, the College utilizes the following methods of identity verification:

- I. Provide students with a **secure login** and passcode;
- II. Provide for **proctored examinations**; and
- III. Provide **new or other technologies** and practices that are effective in verifying student identification.

**Secure Login and Passcode**

All students (land-based and distance) at the College are provided a User ID for secure access to college systems. Students are responsible for providing complete and true information in any identification verification process. It is against College policy for a user to give someone his or her password or to allow others to use his or her accounts.

In addition, Canvas, the College's learning management system (LMS) utilizes the OAuth2 security protocol and takes appropriate security measures to protect against unauthorized access to or unauthorized alteration, disclosure or destruction of data. These measures include internal reviews of data collection, storage and processing practices and security measures, including appropriate encryption and physical security measures to guard against unauthorized access to systems where personal information is stored: (<https://www.canvaslms.com/policies/privacy>).

### **Proctored Examinations**

Proctored exams provide a point of contact with the student. Students are informed at the time of enrollment that they may be responsible for any costs incurred at the proctor site. Students are required to show proof of identity at all proctored exams.

### **New or Other Technologies**

The College continuously employs new technologies that are effective in verifying the identity of students, while maintaining reasonable and appropriate safeguards to protect student privacy.

### **The process for verification of student identity is as follows:**

- I. In-seat programs
  - a. Admitted students must provide the following at orientation:
    - i. An active driver's license, active state-issued identification card, U.S. Military ID, or U.S. Passport.
    - ii. A photocopy will be placed in the student file as verification of identification, unless it is a U.S. Military ID which will not be photocopied.
- II. Online/At-A-Distance programs
  - a. Students applying for admission must provide the following to the admission officer during the application process:
    - i. A photocopy of his/her active driver's license, active state issued identification card, or U.S. Passport.
    - ii. An additional form of identification to verify identity such as: certificate of birth, U.S. Passport, utility bill in student name at current address, formal work identification badge, active professional state licensure information.
  - b. This information must be mailed to the Office of Admission (Attention: Student Verification) at 2221 Madison Avenue, Toledo, Ohio, 43604. Students may also email their documents to their Admissions Officer. These items will be placed in the file of the prospective student as verification of identification.

### **Secure Login and Passcode**

- I. New land-based students obtain their Username and Student ID through the Office of Student Records at orientation. Online students receive a packet of information with their Username and Student ID.
- II. Students have the option to change their password upon entry into any or all of the three systems that are accessible to them: Empower, Canvas, the online Learning Management System (LMS), and/or Mercy College email. Should the student forget this password, Canvas will issue a password reset link to the email of record.



**Phone Verification of Student Identity**

For students who call the College to conduct student business, identity is verified through a three-step process:

- Students must verify birthdate.
- Students must verify address of record.
- Students must verify Student ID number.

**Proctored Examinations**

- I. Faculty who choose to use proctored exams must complete 518-B Notification of Proctored Exam Form. When an instructor requires a proctored exam, a student can either find an approved proctor (e.g., Locating a Proctor) or take the exam at Mercy College where the instructor will proctor the exam.
  - a. Students taking the exam off-campus are required to complete 518-A Student Request for Proctored Exam Form.
- II. Students are required to show proof of identity with a State-issued Photo ID or Passport for any proctored exam.

**New or Other Technologies**

Methods to verify identity in distance education courses include can include but are not limited to:

- Having students upload a personal photo to their Canvas profile
- Assigning a video presentation for class projects
- Using synchronous methodologies such as a scheduled phone call or the Conference feature in Canvas to meet and discuss course topics with students

## FINANCIAL AID

---

The Office of Financial Aid provides guidance to students seeking assistance to finance their education.

More information is available at <https://mercycollege.edu/admissions/financial-aid>

### FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for federal and/or state financial assistance, students must:

1. Be a U.S. Citizen or permanent resident.
2. Be enrolled in an eligible program and registered for the number of credit hours required by the type of financial aid requested.
3. Make satisfactory academic progress in the enrolled program.
4. Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
5. Not be in default on any federal loan and/or owe a repayment on any federal grant.
6. Be registered with Selective Service, if required.

### HOW TO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID

To be considered for all available forms of financial aid, students must apply for financial aid as early as possible. Students must reapply each year. To be considered for all forms of financial aid, interested students must have a complete financial aid file and have applied for acceptance to the College/program. Required documents usually include, but are not limited to:

- Completed FAFSA,
- Copies of the student's and parent's (if applicable) IRS Tax transcripts and all schedules, if requested for verification,
- Loan master promissory note and entrance counseling, if a student loan is desired,
- Completed scholarship application(s).

All necessary forms must be submitted to the Office of Financial Aid by the required deadlines.

### TYPES OF FINANCIAL AID AVAILABLE

#### Grants

Grants are awarded based on financial need and do not require repayment. Grants that are available for qualified undergraduate students through Mercy College include the Federal Pell Grant, the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), and State of Ohio – approved grant programs.

#### Loans

Several different loan options exist. All loans MUST be repaid. Not all loans are based on need. The loan programs available at Mercy College of Ohio are:

- Direct Subsidized Loans (undergraduate only)
- Direct Unsubsidized Loans (undergraduate and graduate)
- Direct PLUS Loans (Parent Loans, credit-based) (undergraduate only)
- Graduate Direct PLUS Loans (graduate only)

- Ohio Nurse Education Assistance Loan Program (NEALP)
- Private Alternative Loans, (credit-based) offered by various lenders

Mercy College also participates in the Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program. *This is available to Toledo campus students only.*

### **Scholarships**

There are many scholarships available from Mercy College. A complete listing of all scholarships is available at <http://www.mercycollege.edu/scholarships> or through the Office of Financial Aid at [financialaid@mercycollege.edu](mailto:financialaid@mercycollege.edu).

### **Other Sources of Financial Aid**

Local service clubs, churches, labor unions, companies, etc. offer grants and scholarships for many college students. Many high school organizations have scholarship programs available. Information is available at high school guidance counselor offices.

### **Veterans Benefits**

Mercy College of Ohio will assist veterans, service members, and qualified family members eligible for Veteran Education Benefits to achieve their goal of a college degree. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) determines eligibility for educational benefits. If eligible, the VA Certifying Official at Mercy College (located in the Office of Financial Aid) will certify education benefits. To apply for VA education benefits, please visit <https://www.va.gov/education/> or call the VA benefits hotline at 1-888-GI-BILL-1 (1-888-442-4551).

Mercy College of Ohio complies with the Veteran Benefits and Transition Act of 2018 and ensures the College will not impose any penalty, including the assessment of late fees, the denial of access to classes, libraries or other institutional facilities, or the requirement that a **Chapter 31** or **Chapter 33** recipient borrow additional funds to cover the individual's inability to meet his or her financial obligations to the institution due to the delayed disbursement of a payment by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. A Covered Individual is any individual who is entitled to educational assistance under Chapter 31, Vocational Rehabilitation, or Chapter 33, Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits. Additionally, this requirement is limited to the portion of funds paid by VA. Mercy College will permit any covered individual to attend or participate in the course of education during the period beginning on the date on which the individual provides to Mercy College a certificate of eligibility for entitlement to educational assistance under Chapter 31 or 33 and ending on the earlier of the following dates:

1. The date on which payment from the VA is made to the institution.
2. Ninety days after the date the institution certified tuition and fees following the receipt of the certificate of eligibility.

In the case a student must take a leave of absence due to being called to active duty, the Student Military Leave Policy will be followed. The Student Military Leave Policy is available at <https://mercycollege.edu/admissions/financial-aid/veterans-benefits> and available in the College Catalog.

Mercy College is approved for the Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program, tuition assistance available for enlisted persons in the State of Ohio. For scholarship consideration, the enlisted student must complete the State of Ohio application by the appropriate deadlines. For further information, please visit <http://ong.ohio.gov/education>. Students must also apply for the Federal Tuition Assistance to be used before the Ohio National Guard Scholarship. Students can apply online at [www.GoArmyEd.com](http://www.GoArmyEd.com). Students can contact the State of Ohio at 1-888-400-6484 for assistance. All scholarship approval letters need to be submitted to the Office of Financial Aid for certification by the VA Certifying Official.

For eligible students who receive funds through the Department of Defense Tuition Assistance Program, Mercy College of Ohio will return any unearned tuition assistance (TA) funds on a proportional basis through at least the sixty (60) percent portion of the period for which funds were provided. In instances when a service member stops attending due to a military service obligation, Mercy College will work with the affected service member to identify solutions that will not result in student debt for the returned portion. Mercy College's schedule for returning unearned TA to the government is as follows:

**5-week Course Withdraw submitted**

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week - 100% return

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 3<sup>rd</sup> week - 10% return 60% of course completed at 3 weeks

**6-week Course Withdraw submitted**

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week - 100% return

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 3<sup>rd</sup> week - 10% return 60% of course completed at 3.6 weeks

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 4<sup>th</sup> week - 0% return

**8-week Course Withdraw submitted**

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week - 100% return

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 3<sup>rd</sup> week - 50% return

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 4<sup>th</sup> week - 25% return

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 5<sup>th</sup> week - 10% return 60% of course completed at 4.8 weeks

**10-week Course Withdraw submitted**

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week - 100% return

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 3<sup>rd</sup> week - 50% return

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 5<sup>th</sup> week - 25% return

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 6<sup>th</sup> week - 10% return 60% of course completed at 6 weeks

**12-week Course Withdraw submitted**

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week - 100% return

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 3<sup>rd</sup> week - 80% return

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 4<sup>th</sup> week - 50% return

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 7<sup>th</sup> week - 25% return 60% of course completed at 7.2 weeks

**16-week Course Withdraw submitted**

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week - 100% return

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 3<sup>rd</sup> week - 80% return

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 5<sup>th</sup> week - 50% return

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 9<sup>th</sup> week - 25% return 60% of course completed at 9 weeks

By Monday at 4:30 pm of the 10<sup>th</sup> week - 0% return

For more information regarding Veteran Benefits, please visit <https://mercycollege.edu/admissions/financial-aid/veterans-benefits> or <https://www.va.gov/education/how-to-apply/>.

### **FINANCIAL AID PACKAGING**

Upon receipt of a student aid report from accepted students, the Office of Financial Aid combines aid from available sources to form a financial aid package. Some students will be offered a combination of aid from different sources. Acceptance of the package, or any source of aid, constitutes a student's commitment to maintaining satisfactory academic progress and notifying the Office of Financial Aid and/or lender of any changes in housing, finances, status at the institution, etc.

### **FINANCIAL AID - TRANSFER STUDENTS**

If the student has financial aid at another institution for the current academic year, the aid may transfer to Mercy College. Please contact the Office of Financial Aid at [financialaid@mercycollege.edu](mailto:financialaid@mercycollege.edu) for assistance.

### **RETURN OF TITLE IV AID (R2T4) POLICY**

**How a withdrawal affects financial aid.** Federal regulations require Title IV financial aid funds to be awarded under the assumption that a student will attend the institution for the entire period in which federal assistance was awarded. When a student withdraws from all courses for any reason, he/she may no longer be eligible for the full amount of Title IV funds that he/she was originally scheduled to receive. The return of funds is based upon the premise that students earn their financial aid in proportion to the amount of time in which they are enrolled. A pro-rated schedule is used to determine the amount of federal student aid funds he/she will have earned at the time of the withdrawal. Once 60% of the semester is completed, a student is considered to have earned all of his/her financial aid and will not be required to return any funds.

Federal law requires schools to calculate how much federal financial aid a student has earned if that student:

- Completely withdraws, or
- Stops attending before completing the semester, or
- Does not complete all modules/sessions (courses that are not scheduled for the entire semester or payment period for which he/she has registered at the time those modules/sessions began). Based on this calculation, Mercy College of Ohio students who receive federal financial aid and do not complete their classes during a semester or term could be responsible for repaying a portion of the aid they received. Students who enroll in courses and do not attend must repay all financial aid disbursed for the semester.

**How a withdrawal affects academics.** The following information will help students understand how a withdrawal potentially affects them academically as well as financially. The financial aid staff members encourage students to read all the information below prior to making a final decision.

- Mercy College of Ohio tuition refund policy is separate from the federal regulations to repay unearned aid. Whether or not a student receives a tuition refund has no bearing on the amount he/she must repay to the federal aid programs.

**How the earned financial aid is calculated.** Students who receive federal financial aid must “earn” the aid they receive by remaining enrolled in classes. The amount of federal financial aid assistance students earn is on a pro-rated basis. Students who withdraw or do not complete all classes for which they are enrolled during a semester may be required to return some of the financial aid awarded.

Institutions are required to determine the percentage of Title IV aid “earned” by the student and to return the unearned portion to the appropriate aid programs. Regulations require schools to perform calculations within 30 days from the date the school determines a student’s complete withdrawal. The school must return the funds within 45 days of the determination of a student’s withdrawal. For example, if a student completes 30% of the payment period, they earn 30% of the aid they were originally scheduled to receive. This means 70% of the scheduled awards remain “unearned” and must be returned to the federal government. Once 60% of the semester is completed, a student is considered to have earned all of his/her financial aid and will not be required to return any federal funds.

The following formula is used to determine the percentage of unearned aid that has to be returned to the federal government:

- The percent earned is equal to the number of calendar days completed up to the withdrawal date, divided by the total number of calendar days in the payment period (less any scheduled breaks that are at least 5 days long).
- The payment period is the entire semester.
- The percent unearned is equal to 100% minus the percent earned.

**For students enrolled in modules (sessions).** A student is considered withdrawn if the student does not fulfill all the days in the payment period that the student was scheduled to complete. Mercy College of Ohio will track enrollment in each session to determine if a student began enrollment in all scheduled courses. If a student officially drops courses in a later module/session while still attending a current module/session, the student is not considered as withdrawn based on not attending the later module/session. However, a recalculation of aid based on a change in enrollment status may still be required.

#### **Steps in the Return of Title IV funds policy**

Mercy College of Ohio will determine:

1. The total amount of Title IV aid disbursed for the semester in which the student withdrew. A student’s Title IV aid is counted as aid disbursed in the calculation if it has been applied to the student’s account on or before the date the student withdrew.
2. The total amount of Title IV aid disbursed plus the Title IV aid that could have been disbursed for the semester in which the student withdrew.
3. If the calculated percentage of Title IV aid was earned as follows: the number of calendar days completed divided by the total number of calendar days in the semester in which the student withdrew. The total number of calendar days in a semester shall exclude any scheduled breaks of more than 5 days.

$$\text{Days Attended} \div \text{Days in Enrollment Period} = \text{Percentage Completed}$$

4. If the calculated percentage completed exceeds 60%, then the student has “earned” all the Title IV aid for the enrollment period.
5. The calculated amount of Title IV aid is earned as follows: The percentage of Title IV aid earned (Step 2) multiplied by the total amount of Title IV aid disbursed or that could have been disbursed for the semester in which the student withdrew.

$$\text{Total Aid Disbursed} \times \text{Percentage Completed} = \text{Earned Aid}$$

6. The Amount of Title IV aid to be disbursed or returned
  - a. If the aid already disbursed equals the earned aid, no further action is required.
  - b. If the aid already disbursed is greater than the earned aid, the difference must be returned to the appropriate Title IV aid program.
  - c.  $\text{Total Disbursed Aid} - \text{Earned Aid} = \text{Unearned Aid to be Returned}$
  - d. If the aid already disbursed is less than the earned aid, then Mercy College of Ohio will calculate a post-withdrawal disbursement.

### **Types of Withdrawals**

For financial aid purposes, there are two types of withdrawals: Official and Unofficial.

**Official** – An official withdrawal from Mercy College of Ohio by the student.

**Unofficial** – Federal financial aid regulations consider a student to be an unofficial withdrawal if the student receives all “F” (failure) grades or a combination of “F” and “W” (withdraw) grades for the term.

**Determination of the Withdrawal Date.** The withdrawal date used in the return calculation of a student’s federal financial aid is the actual date indicated on the Withdrawal/Leave Form and/or the Drop/Withdrawal/Leave Form in EMPOWER ME. If a student stops attending classes without notifying Mercy College of Ohio, the withdrawal date will be the midpoint of the semester or the last date of academic activity determined by Mercy College of Ohio. Additional documentation supporting the last date of academic activity may be provided by the student if he/she verifies a later date of attendance than determined by Mercy College of Ohio.

**Withdrawing prior to completing 60% of a term.** Unless a student completes 60% of the term in which federal aid was disbursed, the student will be required to return all or part of the financial aid disbursed in the term. This applies to students who have officially or unofficially withdrawn.

**When a student fails to begin attendance.** If a student receives financial aid, but never attends classes, Mercy College of Ohio will return all disbursed funds to the respective federal aid programs. If the student owes money to Mercy College of Ohio resulting from the return of federal funds, the student will be billed by the Office of the Bursar. If the student does not pay the funds due to Mercy College of Ohio, a business hold will be placed on the student’s account. This means he/she will not be permitted to register for classes or receive transcripts until the balance is paid.

**Students who do not receive an earned grade in a term.** Financial aid is awarded under the assumption that the student will attend Mercy College of Ohio for the entire term for which federal assistance was disbursed. Mercy College of Ohio is required to have a procedure for determining whether a Title IV recipient who began attendance during a period completed the period or should

be treated as a withdrawal. Students who attended class but failed to meet the academic requirements of the course are awarded a grade of “F”. This is an earned grade. Students who started a course but stopped attending class at some point and were given a grade of an “F” (failure), “W” (withdrawal), “IW” (instructor withdrawal), “WP” (withdrawal passing), or “WF” (withdrawal failing) are considered an “unofficial” withdrawal, and will be reviewed to determine the last date of an academically-related activity or the midpoint of the semester.

**Repayment calculation process.** Once grades are posted for the student who receives either all F’s, or “F” and “W” grades, Mercy College of Ohio will return all unearned aid to the federal aid programs and the student’s billing account will be charged. The Office of the Bursar will mail a bill to the student’s home address. The student is responsible for any balance due.

**Definition of an academic-related activity.** Examples of Mercy College of Ohio academic-related activities include, but are not limited to, physically attending a class where there is an opportunity for direct interaction between the instructor and students.

Proof of participation:

- Exams or quizzes
- Tutorials
- Computer-assisted instruction
- Completion of an academic assignment, paper or project
- Participating in online discussion about academic matters
- Initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject in the course

Documentation not acceptable as proof of participation:

- Student’s self-certification of attendance that is not supported by school documentation
- Participating in academic advising

**Repayment of Federal Aid Programs.** Federal regulations require that the following aid programs be subject to the repayment calculation if the student did not attend 60% of the term in the following order:

1. Unsubsidized Direct Stafford Loan (undergraduate and graduate)
2. Subsidized Direct Stafford Loan (undergraduate)
3. Direct PLUS (Parent) Loan (undergraduate and graduate)
4. Federal Pell Grant (undergraduate)
5. Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG)(undergraduate)

**Overpayment of Federal Grant Funds.** Federal regulations provide that 50% of the unearned amount of all federal grants is protected by the federal calculation. Any federal grant money subject to repayment is returned by Mercy College of Ohio and that amount will be billed to the student’s billing account as a debt to Mercy College of Ohio.

**Additional loan information to consider when withdrawing.** When a student is enrolled less than part-time, the grace period begins. The student’s grace period for loan repayments for Federal Direct Unsubsidized and Subsidized Loans will begin on the day of the withdrawal from the school. If the student is not enrolled part-time for more than 6 months, the loans will go into repayment.



The student must contact the U.S. Department of Education or his/her lender(s) to make payment arrangements. Loans must be repaid by the loan borrower (student/parent) as outlined in the terms of the borrower's promissory note. The student should contact the lender if he/she has questions regarding the grace period or repayment status.

**Repayment of unearned funds and consequences.** Unearned funds are paid to the U.S. Department of Education by Mercy College of Ohio on the student's behalf. The school will return the funds within 45 days of the calculation. If the student owes any money to Mercy College of Ohio resulting from the return of unearned federal financial aid, the student will be billed by Mercy College of Ohio. If the student does not pay the funds, a business hold is placed on the student's account. This means he/she will not be permitted to register for classes or receive transcripts until the balance is paid in full.

School and Student responsibilities for the R2T4 policy & process.

Mercy College of Ohio's responsibilities

1. Provide each student with the information given in this policy
2. Identify students affected by this policy and completing the R2T4 calculation
3. Inform the student of the result of the R2T4 calculation and any balance owed to Mercy College of Ohio as a result of a required return of funds
4. Return any unearned Title IV aid that is due to the Title IV programs and, if applicable, notifying the borrower's holder of federal loan funds of the student's withdrawal date
5. Notify student and/or PLUS borrower of eligibility for a Post-Withdraw Disbursement, if applicable

Student's responsibilities

1. Become familiar with the R2T4 policy and how withdrawing from all courses impacts eligibility for Title IV aid
2. Resolve any outstanding balance owed to Mercy College of Ohio
3. Resolve any repayment to the U.S. Department of Education as a result of an overpayment of Title IV grant funds

**How a withdrawal affects future financial aid eligibility.** Refer to the Mercy College of Ohio Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy to determine how a withdrawal will impact future financial aid eligibility.

Note: The procedures and policies listed above are subject to change without advance notice based on changes to federal laws, federal regulations, or school policies. If changes are made, students must abide by the most current policy. For further guidance on R2T4 policies and procedures please contact the Mercy College of Ohio Office of Financial Aid.

## **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) POLICY**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, June 2018*

Mercy College of Ohio has established this policy to determine continued eligibility for student financial aid in accordance with Federal regulations, which require the College to establish and

implement a policy to measure if a student is making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward a degree or certificate.

This policy applies to all eligible degree and certificate-seeking students.

This policy indicates the standards used to measure SAP at the College for purposes of financial aid eligibility. Funds affected by this policy include all applicable federal, state, and college funds including but not limited to Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Federal Direct Stafford Loans, Federal Direct PLUS (Parent) Loans, Federal Work Study, State Scholarship and Grant programs, all scholarships administered and/or provided by the College.

The College evaluates SAP at the end of each semester for all students and measures progress as follows:

- Qualitative Progress (GPA requirement)
- Quantitative Progress (Time-based progression requirement, including pace of completion and maximum timeframe)

These criteria evaluate the quality and quantity of the academic work a student completes and progress toward completion of his/her academic program. The SAP requirements are minimum standards, and each are outlined in more detail below. Students are encouraged to exceed all the requirements whenever possible.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

#### **Qualitative Progress Requirement**

- Students' cumulative Mercy College of Ohio grade point average (GPA) will be evaluated each semester. For purposes of meeting SAP requirements, undergraduate and certificate students must maintain a GPA of 2.0; graduate students must maintain a GPA of 3.0. Please note individual programs may have stricter GPA requirements for the purpose of progression.

#### **Quantitative Progress Requirement**

- Pace of completion. To be eligible for financial aid, a student is required to complete a minimum of 67% of cumulative attempted credits. The College calculates the pace at which a student is progressing by dividing the total number of hours the student has successfully completed (including transfer credits) by the total number of hours he/she has attempted.

Maximum timeframe. Students must progress through their program to ensure graduation will occur within the specified maximum timeframe. The maximum timeframe for which an undergraduate or graduate student may receive financial assistance may not exceed 150% of the published length of the student's academic program measured in credit hours, whether or not federal aid was received by the student during this time. A student is ineligible for financial aid when it becomes mathematically impossible to complete the program of study within 150% of its published length.

- For example, if the published length of an academic program is 120 credit hours, the maximum timeframe during which the student will be eligible to receive financial aid must not exceed 180\* credit hours. Note: this calculation will include any accepted transfer credit hours and prior learning credits that apply toward the degree.  $*120 \text{ credit hours} \times 150\% = 180 \text{ credit hours.}$

Students not meeting one or both of the SAP requirements outlined above at the end of a semester will be notified of such in writing. Students who fail to meet SAP requirements are initially given a Warning period during which time they may continue being awarded aid (if otherwise eligible). This Warning period is for the next semester in which the student enrolls at the College. Students who do not meet the requirements by the end of the Warning period are denied future financial aid. A student may appeal the termination of financial aid due to exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances may include but are not limited to illness, death of an immediate family member, or traumatic events in the student's life.

### **INCOMPLETE (I) GRADE**

Incomplete grades will be monitored by the Office of Financial Aid, as the final assigned grade can affect GPA and SAP requirements. The Office of Financial Aid follows the guidelines for Incomplete Grades as determined by the Division of Academic Affairs.

### **REPEATED COURSES - QUANTITATIVE**

Students may receive financial aid when repeating a failed course, and once for retaking a passed course. Any courses that are repeated will be used in determining if a student is meeting SAP requirements. Each repetition will count toward the attempted hours; however, only the first passing grade will be counted as completed hours for SAP purposes. Financial aid will not cover the third or any subsequent attempts of a course.

### **PROGRESSION/REPEATING A COURSE - QUALITATIVE**

To progress successfully through the College, a student must obtain at least a "C" grade in all courses taken. A grade of "D" is considered unsatisfactory for progression in the College but is recorded on the transcript and calculated as 1.0 for GPA purposes. A student may retake for credit any course in which a grade of "D" or "F" has been earned. Only the second grade will be computed in the cumulative GPA; however, both grades will appear on the transcript. Although a student may be permitted to repeat a course more than one time, this forgiveness policy does not apply beyond the first repeat attempt for any one course, such that unsatisfactory grades will be used in the calculation of a student's GPA when they occur on a second or subsequent attempt.

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM A COURSE**

Courses from which a student withdraws are considered in "hours attempted" toward the maximum timeframe, including WP (withdraw passing) and WF (withdraw failing) grades, but not as completed hours.

### **TRANSFER CREDITS**

Transfer credit hours that have been accepted by the College toward a current degree are subject to the SAP requirements described in this policy.

### **CHANGES IN MAJOR OR DEGREE**

Students who change their major or degree must submit a plan of study completed by their academic advisor to the Office of Financial Aid. The student is eligible to receive aid for no more than 150% of the credit hours required to complete the new program of study.

### **PURSUIT OF A SECOND DEGREE**

Students who pursue a second degree from the College must submit a plan of study completed by their academic advisor to the Office of Financial Aid. The student is eligible to receive aid for no more than 150% of the credit hours required to complete the second program of study.

Credits earned for a degree already awarded by the College are not included in the 150% calculation for the second degree.

### **ACADEMIC DISMISSAL**

A student who is academically dismissed pursuant to the College's Academic Dismissal policy will be terminated from financial aid eligibility. For additional Academic Dismissal information, see Academic Dismissal in the College Catalog.

### **STUDENT LOAN CODE OF CONDUCT**

Neither Mercy College of Ohio as an institution, nor any individual officer, employee or agent shall enter any revenue-sharing arrangements with any lender.

- Revenue-sharing arrangements include circumstances where an institution recommends a lender or the loan products of a lender who provides or issues a loan in exchange for a fee or provision of material benefits, including revenue or profit sharing, to the institution, or employee or agent of the institution.
- No officer or employee of Mercy College of Ohio who is employed in the Office of Financial Aid or who otherwise has responsibilities with respect to education loans, or an agent who has responsibilities with respect to education loans, or any of their immediate family members, shall solicit or accept any gift from a lender, guarantor, or servicer of education loans.
- For purposes of this prohibition, the term "gift" means any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, or other item having a monetary value of more than a de minimis amount. (The term includes a gift of services, transportation, lodging, or meals, whether provided in kind, by purchase of a ticket, payment in advance, or reimbursement after the expense has been incurred.)
- An officer or employee of Mercy College of Ohio who is employed in the Office of Financial Aid or who otherwise has responsibilities with respect to education loans, or an agent who has responsibilities with respect to education loans, shall not accept from any lender or affiliate of any lender any fee, payment, or other financial benefit (including the opportunity to purchase stock) as compensation for any type of consulting arrangement or other contract to provide services to a lender or on behalf of a lender relating to education loans.

Mercy College of Ohio shall not:

- For any first-time borrower, assign, through award packaging or other methods, the borrower's loan to a particular lender; or
- Refuse to certify, or delay certification of, any loan based on the borrower's selection of a particular lender or guaranty agency.

- Request or accept from any lender any offer of funds to be used for private education loans, including funds for an opportunity pool loan, to students in exchange for the institution providing concessions or promises regarding providing the lender with:
  - A specified number of loans made, insured, or guaranteed under Title IV;
  - A specified loan volume of such loans; or
  - A preferred lender arrangement for such loans.
  - “Opportunity pool loan” means a private education loan made by a lender to a student attending the institution or the family member of such a student that involves a payment, directly or indirectly, by such institution of points, premiums, additional interest or financial support to such lender for the purpose of such lender extending credit to the student or the family (20 U.S.C.A. §1094(e) (5) (B)).
- Request or accept from any lender any assistance with call center staffing or Office of Financial Aid staffing.

Any Mercy College of Ohio employee who is employed in the Office of Financial Aid, or who otherwise has responsibilities with respect to education loans or other student financial aid, and who serves on an advisory board, commission, or group established by a lender, guarantor, or group of lenders or guarantors, shall be prohibited from receiving anything of value from the lender, guarantor, or group of lenders or guarantors, except that the employee may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in serving on such advisory board, commission, or group.

Any and all reimbursement received for any service on advisory boards, commissions or other groups by lenders, servicers or guarantors must be reported annually to the Department of Education by Mercy College of Ohio.

## ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

---

The Division of Academic Affairs at Mercy College of Ohio includes the following areas: Distance Education and Teaching Resources, Library, Office of Student Records, Office of Institutional Research, and all Academic Fields of Study. All areas within Academic Affairs support the mission, vision, and values of Mercy College of Ohio.

### ACADEMIC SERVICES

#### DISTANCE EDUCATION AND TEACHING RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

The Distance Education and Teaching Resources Department at Mercy College of Ohio provides leadership and support to the College community in the development of innovative, engaging, and high-quality learning experiences, on-campus or online. The department strives to promote excellence in teaching through the evaluation of instructional technologies and pedagogies that improve learning outcomes within all types of learning environments.

The department strives to accomplish its goals by:

- Collaborating with academic divisions in the design, development, and evaluation/review of both new and existing online/hybrid courses and programs.
- Educating faculty in innovative teaching strategies based on best practices in distance education.
- Promoting a culture that encourages faculty development, training, and collaboration.
- Making effective use of instructional technologies to develop and deliver engaging content that supports student-centered learning.
- Assisting the Student Success Center by providing online learners with advising, tutoring, writing, counseling, etc., to support student retention efforts through the learning management system, Canvas.
- Supporting the Division of Student Affairs with training and online orientation.

The learning management system (LMS), Canvas, is used to deliver fully online and hybrid courses, and to enhance traditional land-based coursework. All students have access to Canvas and resources on how to use the LMS.

Online classroom instruction is formalized instruction where the instructor presents an educational experience to students, applying any combination of instructional methods. The online, distance education courses require the Internet to deliver instruction either synchronously or asynchronously. However, the use of other media such as video or voice conferencing may be used to supplement the online environment.

System and software requirements can be found on the Mercy College website:

<https://mercycollege.edu/academics/distance-education/system-software-requirements>

Questions regarding distance education or teaching resources should be directed to [distanceeducation@mercycollege.edu](mailto:distanceeducation@mercycollege.edu).

## **LIBRARY**

### **Toledo**

The Mercy College of Ohio Library provides materials and services that support the informational needs of students, faculty, staff, and alumni; promotes information literacy; encourages lifelong learning; and collaborates with faculty to further the academic success of students.

The Library is located near the Madison Avenue entrance and maintains a collection of books, audiovisuals, and print journals that support the programs offered at Mercy College. Computers in the Library provide access to online resources, the Internet, OhioLINK, Mercy College email, and software programs, including Microsoft Word, to help students with their coursework. Rooms/spaces with large tables are available for individual and group study, and a color printer is available.

The Library provides free online resources where students can search academic databases and locate electronic journal articles, e-books, and videos. These resources are available 24 hours, 7 days a week, from on or off-campus and can be accessed through the Library Resource Bookshelf in Canvas and through the Library Proxy Page at [me.opal-libraries.org](http://me.opal-libraries.org). A library barcode number, which allows access to Library resources, is provided to new students the first week of the semester.

Professional librarians and experienced staff are available to assist as needed.

In addition, the Toledo Lucas County Public Library is located at 325 North Michigan Street, Toledo, OH 43604 and is available for student use.

### **Youngstown**

The Mercy College online resources and Toledo library staff are available to Youngstown faculty, staff, and students. A library barcode number, which allows access to Library resources, is provided to new students the first week of the semester.

Students at the Youngstown location are also welcome to use the library located on the second floor of Mercy Health St. Elizabeth Hospital. This library provides materials and services that support the educational, professional, and informational needs of Mercy College students, attending physicians, staff, faculty, and all hospital employees.

In addition, the main branch of the Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County is located at 600 South Raccoon Rd, Youngstown, OH 44515 and is available for student use.

## **OFFICE OF STUDENT RECORDS**

The Office of Student Records conducts itself in accordance with college policy, state law, and federal law.

### **Services and Responsibilities Include:**

- Building and posting the schedule of classes with the assistance of academic departments
- Maintaining the College online registration, grade processing, and student class schedule generation program (EMPOWER ME)

- Posting student academic standing (President's List, Deans' List, Honor's List, Academic Probation, and Academic Dismissal) in conjunction with the Vice President of Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty
- Certifying degree completions, posting degrees, and processing diplomas
- Processing Student Change of Address/Name Requests, Undergraduate and Graduate Change of Program of Study once a student is enrolled Enrollment Verification Requests for insurance and student loan purposes, and Credit by Examination requests (<https://mercycollege.edu/academics/student-records/credit-by-examination>).
- Issuing academic transcripts for Mercy College of Ohio (formerly Mercy College of Northwest Ohio), Mercy School of Nursing, St. Vincent School of Nursing, and St. Vincent School of Radiography
- Evaluating transfer credit
- Generating the Academic Calendar (<https://mercycollege.edu/academics/academic-calendar>), add/drop/withdrawal dates, and final exam schedule
- Planning commencement ceremonies
- Enforcing state, federal and institutional policies and procedures such as FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974), and
- Gathering data required by state and federal agencies, as well as, internal institutional data.

### **REGISTRATION AND SCHEDULING**

Each semester the course schedule is available online prior to registration. Information concerning registration is distributed via Mercy College email and posted on the College digital monitors. Fall and summer registration typically begins in March. Spring registration typically begins in November.

Registering for courses can be completed online: <https://mercycollege.edu/empower> or through EMPOWER ME under the MY MERCY link available at the bottom of every page of the website. EMPOWER ME is the online student portal that enables students to access their academic and financial records. For questions concerning the online registration process, students may review EMPOWER ME instructions at <https://mercycollege.edu/academics/student-records/registration-schedule>.

### **ADDING/DROPPING A COURSE**

During the periods when web registration is open, up to and including the first week of classes, students can add or drop courses in their EMPOWER ME account using the "Course Registration" link found under the Student Records tab. Students should refer to the Academic Calendar (<https://mercycollege.edu/academics/academic-calendar>) for specific dates and refund information.

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM A COURSE**

Prior to withdrawing from a course, students should contact the Office of Financial Aid. (See [Return of Title IV](#) in Mercy College Catalog).

Students who elect to withdraw from a course should contact their academic advisor and complete the Drop/Withdrawal/Leave form in EMPOWER ME. Once students have been withdrawn from a course, they cannot be reinstated into the same course and section for that semester.



Student transcripts will indicate a “W” if students complete the process prior to the withdrawal deadline as indicated by the Academic Calendar (<https://mercycollege.edu/academics/academic-calendar>). Any course withdrawal after the published deadline for the current semester will receive a grade of “WP” (withdrawal pass) or “WF” (withdrawal fail) depending on the student’s current grade in the course. A grade of “WP” will not affect GPA; however, a grade of “WF” will be calculated in the GPA. Students are not permitted to withdraw during finals week.

### **ADD/DROP DEADLINES**

Refer to the Academic Calendar (<https://mercycollege.edu/academics/academic-calendar>) for all add/drop deadlines.

Students may add/drop any course through the first week of the semester using Course Registration in EMPOWER ME. After the first week of the semester, all adds must be processed by the Office of Student Records; to drop a course after the first week, students must complete the Drop/Withdrawal/Leave Request in EMPOWER ME.

### **NO SHOW**

If students fail to attend any meeting(s) of a course where they registered prior to the College’s add/drop deadline, a student may be dropped from the course and will not be permitted to re-enroll in that course for the semester or session. Students who are not planning on attending are encouraged to drop courses prior to the end of the add/drop deadline even if they have never attended the course.

### **COURSE LOAD AND ENROLLMENT STATUS**

Student enrollment status is determined using the following table:

	<b>Graduate</b>
Full-Time	6 or more credit hours
Three-Quarter-Time	5 to 5.99 credit hours
Half-Time	3 to 4.99 credit hours
Less-Than-Half-Time	Less than 3 credit hours

### **COURSE OVERLOAD**

In fall and spring semesters graduate students may enroll in a maximum of 12 credit hours.

In summer sessions graduate students may enroll in a maximum of 6 credit hours.

To enroll in more than the maximum number of credit hours, as listed above, students must complete a [Waiver/Substitution Form](#). The academic advisor, in consultation with the Division Dean, determines the number of overload credit hours in which students may enroll.

### **COURSE REPEAT**

Students may repeat one course, one time for credit if they received a grade that was not passing: for graduate students, a grade of “C” or lower is considered not passing. Both grades will appear on the transcript, and only the second grade will be calculated in the cumulative GPA.

**COURSE WAIVER/SUBSTITUTION**

Students may request a course waiver/substitution based on previous coursework or credit for prior learning. More information on course waiver/substitutions and credit for prior learning is available in the [Transfer Credit policy](#). A [Waiver/Substitution Form](#) must be completed and filed with the Office of Student Records to ensure credit may be considered for any of the following situations.

**COURSE WAIVER**

For a course waiver, the academic advisor, in consultation with one or more of the following (program director/division dean/Vice President of Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty), determines whether a student's previous coursework in a particular area is equivalent to a Mercy College course.

**COURSE SUBSTITUTION**

Students must take the following into account when requesting a course substitution:

- Proposed course substitutions must align with another course within the program of study.
- Mercy College residency requirements must be followed.
- A higher-level class may be substituted for a lower-level course requirement (e.g. Calculus for College Algebra).

The academic advisor, in consultation with the program director/division dean, approves course substitutions.

**WITHDRAWAL FROM THE COLLEGE**

To officially withdraw from the College, students must complete the Drop/Withdrawal/Leave form in [EMPOWER ME](#) or the [Drop/Withdrawal/Leave Request form](#). The withdrawal date will be determined by the College as the date students begin the withdrawal process.

Requests for transcripts will not be granted until the withdrawal has been processed and financial obligations have been met.

**ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS**

Administrative appeals are requests by students to the college administration to consider making an exception to policy or procedure due to extraordinary circumstances. Administrative appeals consist primarily of two types of appeals, detailed below, **Administrative Withdrawals and Refund Requests**.

The College is under no obligation to grant an appeal as any appeal is an exception to the policy or standard operating procedures. Circumstances that support an administrative appeal may include, but are not limited to **unexpected/unscheduled**:

- significant illness, injury;
- significant illness, injury, or death of an immediate family member;
- legal matters that require the student to be absent for significant periods during the term;
- change in employment status or increased workload; and
- other significant life events that impacted a student's ability to complete coursework or otherwise meet requirements of the College's policies and procedures.

**Administrative Withdrawal**

An administrative withdrawal is a request to withdraw from coursework after the last day to withdraw and receive a grade of “W” as listed on the Academic Calendar (<https://mercycollege.edu/academics/academic-calendar>). An administrative withdrawal request may be considered in cases when a student can provide evidence of having experienced exceptional circumstances that significantly impaired their ability to complete coursework and prevented withdrawal from courses as described in the Withdrawal from a Course section in the College Catalog.

**A request for administrative withdrawal will not be considered while a grade appeal, program dismissal appeal, or college dismissal appeal is in process.**

Prior to requesting an administrative withdrawal, students will:

- consult with his/her academic advisor, to discuss how this will impact their time of completion
- consult with the office of financial aid, to understand any implications on their financial aid
- review the Course Repeat section in the College Catalog
- review the Student Military Leave Policy (if applicable) in the College Catalog
- review the Leaves section in the College Catalog

To request an administrative withdrawal students must:

- complete the [Administrative Appeal Request Form](#).
- provide a letter that describes the extraordinary circumstances that prevented the student from requesting to withdraw in accordance with the current withdrawal policy. So that the College is able to properly analyze the appeal, it is important that this letter gives accurate details about the circumstances resulting in the appeal, the date(s) of the emergency situation, and an account of how the situation specifically prevented the student from withdrawing in accordance with the current withdrawal policy.
- Provide objective supporting documentation as indicated below.

If students are requesting an administrative withdrawal from some but not all courses, the documentation must provide sufficient and appropriate rationale for the request.

**Refund Request**

Students may request a refund after the refund deadlines listed on the Academic Calendar (<https://mercycollege.edu/academics/academic-calendar>). A refund request may be considered in cases when students can provide evidence of having experienced exceptional circumstances that significantly impaired their ability to complete coursework and prevented withdrawal from courses as described in the Withdrawal from a Course section in the College Catalog.

A request for a refund will not be considered unless students have successfully dropped or withdrawn from the course in question.

To request a refund students must:

- complete the administrative appeal request form.
- provide a letter that describes the extraordinary circumstances that prevented the student from submitting a withdrawal request in the appropriate time to receive a refund. So that the College is able to properly analyze the appeal, it is important that this letter gives

accurate details about the circumstances resulting in the appeal, the date(s) of the emergency situation, and an account of how the situation specifically prevented the student from submitting a withdrawal request in the appropriate time to receive a refund.

- Provide objective supporting documentation as indicated below.

<p><b>Required Documentation</b>  <i>ALL documentation must:</i>                      be objective supporting documentation from a source other than the student, a relative, or friend of the student;                      indicate the event occurred or impacted a student during the term the student is seeking the appeal; and                      include an email address or phone number that will allow verification of the authenticity of the document.</p>	
<b>Circumstance</b>	<b>Required Documentation</b>
<b>Illness or injury to the student</b>	Documentation or a dated letter on letterhead from the attending physician containing: 1) nature of illness/injury; 2) dates; 3) severity of illness; 4) your inability to attend school due to the condition; and 5) the date the physician recommended the student stop attending classes.
<b>Illness, injury, or death of immediate family emergency</b>	Documentation or a dated letter on letterhead from the attending physician or hospital containing the nature of your relative's illness/injury, dates, and severity; or A death certificate or obituary notice.
<b>Legal matters</b>	Documentation or a dated letter on letterhead from a lawyer, court, or other professional/entity indicating the date of legal incident or proceeding that required a student to be absent; or Documentation indicating dates of incarceration; etc.
<b>Change in employment</b>	Documentation or a dated letter on letterhead indicating change in employment status; or Documentation or a dated letter on letterhead from an employer indicating unexpected increase in workload.
<b>Other significant life event</b>	Documentation or a dated letter on letterhead that would prove an unexpected and serious life event occurred that impacted a student's ability to complete coursework or otherwise meet requirements of the College's policies and procedures. An example is an Eviction/Evacuation letter or other documentation proving an unexpected change in residence.

Circumstances Not Sufficient to Support an ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL Include, But Are Not Limited to:

- Dropping courses to avoid low grades
- Dissatisfaction with instructor of course
- Not being aware of add/drop deadlines

- Late payment fees/charges
- Lack of reasonable planning on the part of the student

College representatives from Financial Aid, Bursar, Student Records, Finance, and Academic Affairs may be involved in the review of administrative appeals.

### **STUDENT MILITARY LEAVE POLICY**

From time to time, students who are serving in the National Guard or Armed Forces Reserves may be called to active duty, and the guidelines as outlined in the Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students Act of 2003 will be followed:

#### **Procedures**

1. A student called to active duty or service once enrolled at the College must provide copies of his/her orders. Once this paperwork is received, a withdrawal will be processed for the student.
2. Title IV Student Aid.
  - a. Recipients of student financial assistance under Title IV of the Act who are affected individuals will not be placed in a worse position financially in relation to that financial assistance because of their status as affected individuals;
  - b. Administrative requirements placed on affected individuals who are recipients of student financial assistance are minimized, to the extent possible without impairing the integrity of the student financial assistance programs, to ease the burden on such students and avoid inadvertent, technical violations or defaults;
  - c. The calculation of “annual adjusted family income” and “available income”, as used in the determination of need for student financial assistance under Title IV of the Act for any such affected individual (and the determination of such need for his or her spouse and dependents, if applicable), may be modified to mean the sums received in the first calendar year of the award year for which such determination is made, in order to reflect more accurately the financial condition of such affected individual and his or her family;
  - d. The calculation under section 484B(b) (2) of the Act (20 U.S.C. 1091b(b)(2)) of the amount a student is required to return in the case of an affected individual may be modified so that no overpayment will be required to be returned or repaid if the institution has documented the student’s status as an affected individual in the student’s file and the amount of any overpayment discharged.
3. Tuition Refunds or Credits.
  - a. Mercy College will provide a full refund to students who are affected individuals for that portion of a period of instruction each student was unable to complete, or for which such individual did not receive academic credit, because he/she was called up for active duty or active service; and
  - b. If affected individuals withdraw from a course of study as a result of such active duty or active service, Mercy College will make every effort to minimize deferral of enrollment or reapplication requirements and will provide as much flexibility as possible with administrative deadlines related to the application process.
4. Repeating a Course.

An affected individual enrolled in a nursing program of study who has been away from the College for more than one full academic year may be required to repeat any nursing courses he/she has taken. This may apply to courses in other professional programs as well.

### **Military Tuition Assistance Policy**

In accordance with Change 3, DoDI 1322.25 (July 07, 2014) (Appendix to Enclosure 3, 4, f. (2) (d) (page 42)), Mercy College of Ohio will return any unearned tuition assistance (TA) funds on a proportional basis through at least the 60 percent portion of the period for which the funds were provided. TA funds are earned proportionally during an enrollment period, with unearned funds returned based upon when a student stops attending. Mercy College of Ohio will work with the affected Service member to identify solutions that will not result in a student debt for the returned portion. All TA funds not earned will be returned to the Military Service, not the Service member. Any unearned TA funds will be returned on a weekly basis.

**PLEASE NOTE:** An affected individual will need to comply with revisions in the admission criteria that may have occurred while he/she was on active duty or service.

### **ORC 3345.53 Military leave of absence for student on active duty**

(<http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3345.53>)

As used in this section, "active duty" means full-time duty in the active military service of the United States, including full-time training duty, annual training duty, and active state duty for members of the National Guard.

- (A) Each institution of higher education, as defined in section [3345.011](#) of the Revised Code, shall grant a student a military leave of absence from the institution while the student is serving on active duty, and for one year after the conclusion of that service, if the student is a member of the United States National Guard or other reserve component of the armed forces of the United States, or a member of those armed forces in a retired status, and is called to active duty. The student shall not suffer an academic penalty as a result of the leave of absence.
- (B) If requested by a student granted a military leave of absence pursuant to division (A) of this section not later than one year after the student's release from active duty, the state institution of higher education in which the student is enrolled shall do either of the following, as elected by the student:
- (1) Credit tuition and fee charges toward a subsequent academic term in an amount that is one hundred per cent of what the student paid the institution for the academic term in which the student withdraws;
  - (2) Refund tuition and fees paid for the academic term, provided the student withdraws before the withdraw date established by the institution. The refund shall equal one hundred per cent of the tuition and fee charges the student paid the institution for the academic term. If the student withdraws after the withdraw date established by the institution, the student is ineligible for a refund of tuition and fee charges. For the purposes of this section, the "withdraw date" shall be the same as the date set by the institution for its general student population to withdraw from the institution or a course or class without academic penalty.

(C) If requested by a student granted a military leave of absence pursuant to division (A) of this section not later than one year after the student's release from active duty, the state institution of higher education shall restore the student to the educational status the student had attained prior to being called to active duty without loss of academic credits earned, scholarships or grants awarded, or tuition and other fees paid prior to the commencement of active duty, except as provided in division (B) of this section.

(D) If a state institution of higher education fails to comply with this section, the student may bring an action against the institution to enforce its provisions in the court of claims. The court may award reasonable attorney's fees and expenses if the student prevails in the action.

Effective Date: 05-18-2005

### **VOLUNTARY LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

The College supports the overall success of students, including their physical, social, and emotional well-being. When situations arise that hinder students' abilities to perform academically and/or socially within the campus community, they can request a voluntary leave of absence.

A voluntary leave of absence is intended to increase the opportunity for students to achieve academic success. A voluntary leave of absence may be for employment, medical, or personal reasons, such as serious illness or death in the family or financial difficulties.

Students requesting voluntary leaves of absence are strongly encouraged to investigate the financial implications of taking such a leave by contacting the Office of Financial Aid ([financialaid@mercycollege.edu](mailto:financialaid@mercycollege.edu) or 419-251-1219 and the Bursar ([bursar@mercycollege.edu](mailto:bursar@mercycollege.edu) or 419-251-1726. Students should also review the [Satisfactory Academic Progress policy](#) for leave of absence implications. Mercy College students enrolled in dual degree programs with another institution are also required to follow the applicable procedures for leaves of absences for that institution.

[Military leaves of absence](#) are addressed in the previous section and pregnancy leaves of absence are addressed in the [Pregnant Student Policy](#).

#### **Eligibility**

- Students are in good academic standing at the time of the voluntary leave of absence request.
- Students anticipate an absence of up to three consecutive semesters (may include summer) because the student plans to:
  - withdraw from all courses in their current semester and not register for the following semester
  - OR
  - not register for courses in the following semester (or two) after being enrolled in the current semester
- Withdrawing from all courses according to the Add/Drop/Withdraw process **does not** replace securing a voluntary leave of absence as outlined in this procedure.

The following conditions and steps apply for students requesting a Voluntary Leave of Absence prior to the date the leave is to begin:

- Students must consult with their Academic Advisor, Program Director, and the Director of Career, Professional Development & Retention to develop an Academic Success Plan.
- Students will submit the Academic Success Plan and a Voluntary Leave of Absence form to the appropriate Dean for consideration. The student may also include documentation supporting their request.
- Upon review and approval, the Dean will forward both documents and any supporting materials to the Office of Student Records.
- Students approved for a Voluntary Leave of Absence must satisfy all conditions of the leave as outlined on the Academic Success Plan and Voluntary Leave of Absence form before re-enrolling at the College and must comply with the course sequence and/or any curricular changes at the time. If Voluntary Leave of Absence is three semesters or more, students must notify the College one semester before returning so that orientation can be scheduled and completed.

Additional information regarding voluntary leave of absence:

- A Voluntary Leave of Absence request may be considered under extenuating circumstances when the request is supported by appropriate documentation demonstrating events out of students' control that prohibited an advance request.
- A copy of the Voluntary Leave of Absence form will be provided to the following offices/departments: Admissions, Student Records, Bursar, Financial Aid, Academic Advisor, Academic Dean, Program Director, and Faculty (for currently enrolled students).
- If the request for leave is not approved, and students do not subsequently attend courses for three consecutive semesters, or students do not return from an approved leave of absence, students will be considered readmission applicants.
- An extension of the leave may be granted by the Vice President of Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty.
- For students enrolled in health programs, seats may be limited. Although students are not guaranteed a seat upon their return from a Voluntary Leave of Absence, every effort will be made to provide a program seat based on space availability.

### GRADUATE STUDENT GRADING SCALE

GRADE	PERCENTAGE	QUALITY POINTS
A	90-100	4.0
B	80-89.99	3.0
C	70-79.99	2.0
F	69.99 & below	0
I	Incomplete (No effect on grade point average)	



GRADE	PERCENTAGE	QUALITY POINTS
NG	No Grade reported per instructor at the time grades are due. (No effect on grade point average)	
R	Repeated course (See the below Course Repeat section; No effect on grade point average.)	
SP	Satisfactory Progress (No effect on grade point average)	
W	Withdrawal prior to mid-term (No effect on grade point average)	
WF	Withdrawal failing at or following mid-term	
WP	Withdrawal passing at or following mid-term (No effect on grade point average)	

### INCOMPLETE GRADE

An incomplete grade "I" is a temporary grade which may be given at the instructor's discretion to a student when illness, necessary absence, or other reasons beyond the control of the student prevent completion of course requirements by the end of the academic term. Students may request a grade of incomplete by following the below procedure/guidelines:

1. The instructor recommends to the dean the limit for the length of time to complete the Incomplete. This time may not extend beyond the published end of the following fall, spring, or summer semesters in the Academic Calendar (<https://mercycollege.edu/academics/academic-calendar>).
2. Students must request an Incomplete prior to the last day of the term as listed on the Academic Calendar (<https://mercycollege.edu/academics/academic-calendar>).
3. Students must submit the [Incomplete Grade Request Form](#) to the course faculty. If students do not complete the required work in the agreed upon timeframe, the grade will revert to an "F."

### GRADE REPORTS

Grade reports are available online through the EMPOWER ME link. Grade reports are not available to students with outstanding account balances.

### COURSE GRADE APPEAL

Students may appeal a grade only in cases where they believe:

- the instructor has made an error in calculating a final grade
- the instructor has issued a grade outside of grading procedures outlined in the syllabus

Students disputing a course grade may submit an appeal following the process below. If students do not follow the timeline outlined below the appeal may be denied.

1. Initiate a good faith discussion with the instructor of the course within ten business days following the semester.
  - a. If the good faith discussion resolves the matter with a grade change, the instructor must submit a Change of Grade Form to the Office of Student Records.
  - b. If the discussion does not resolve the matter, the student may initiate step 2 below.

2. Within five business days from the date of the good faith discussion with the instructor, the student must submit the following to the program director (For general education subject areas (ex. English) there is no program director; the student may proceed to step 3):
  - A Course [Grade Appeal Form](#);
  - A written statement indicating the following:
    - Date of good faith discussion with instructor,
    - Reason for further appeal, and
    - Desired outcome;
  - Any documentation supporting claims in the written statement
  - a. The program director or student may request a meeting to discuss the appeal with the parties involved.
  - b. The program director will issue a written decision to the student and instructor.
    - i. If the program director's decision resolves the matter, all documents including a Change of Grade Form if necessary, must be submitted to the Office of Student Records.
    - ii. If the matter is not resolved, the student or instructor may initiate step 3 below.
3. Within ten business days from the date of the program director's decision, the student or instructor must submit the following to the dean<sup>1</sup>:
  - All prior documentation,
  - The written response of the program director,
  - A written statement indicating the reason for disagreement with the prior decision, and
  - Any documentation supporting claims in the written statement
  - a. The dean may request a meeting to discuss the appeal with the parties involved.
  - b. The dean will issue a written decision to the student, instructor, and program director.
    - i. If the dean's decision resolves the matter, all documents including a Change of Grade Form if necessary, must be submitted to the Office of Student Records.
    - ii. If the matter is not resolved, the program director, student, or instructor may initiate step 4 below.
4. Within ten business days from the date of the dean's decision the student must submit the following to the Vice President of Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty:
  - All prior documentation,
  - The written response of the dean,
  - A written statement indicating the reason for disagreement with the prior decision, and
  - Any documentation supporting claims in the written statement
  - a. The Vice President of Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty may request a meeting to discuss the appeal with the parties involved.

---

<sup>1</sup> If the course instructor is the program director or dean to whom the appeal is being submitted, the student may skip to the next step.

- b. The Vice President of Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty will issue a written decision to the dean, student, instructor, and program director. The decision of the Vice President of Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty is final.
- c. The Vice President of Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty's decision and all documents, including a Change of Grade Form if necessary, must be submitted to the Office of Student Records.

The College will make every reasonable effort to complete the appeal process within a reasonable timeframe.

### **POSTHUMOUS DEGREE/CERTIFICATE**

Deceased students may be considered candidates for posthumous degrees/certificates if:

- In good standing at the time of death
- Enrolled in a degree/certificate program at the time of death (unless circumstances prohibited enrollment)
- Completed 75% or more of the degree/certificate requirements

The request to award a posthumous degree/certificate must originate in an academic division by the dean or program director and must be approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty and College President.

The names of students awarded a posthumous degree/certificate will be printed in the commencement program.

The statement "awarded posthumously" will be noted on the student's academic record and transcript, but not on the diploma/certificate.

### **TRANSCRIPTS**

The Mercy College of Ohio transcript is the official record of student academic progress, documenting all course grades, GPA, and degree(s) awarded. Transcripts are issued by the Office of Student Records upon request by students.

Transcripts will not be issued to former or current students who have outstanding financial obligations to the College. "Unofficial" copies of transcripts are not issued by the College but are available through [EMPOWER ME](#).

When requesting transcripts, students must include name, present address, social security number or student id (7-digit number), birth date, maiden name, estimated date of last attendance, signature, and the name and address where transcripts should be sent. Transcripts for Mercy College of Northwest Ohio, St. Vincent School of Nursing, St. Vincent School of Radiography, and Mercy School of Nursing can also be obtained from the Office of Student Records.

There is no transcript fee charged for official or unofficial transcripts.

### **ACADEMIC POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The purpose of education is to advance students' intellectual skills and knowledge and to demonstrate the outcomes of these efforts. An essential and shared value in higher education is

presenting students' own work and properly acknowledging that of others. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, the following:

**Plagiarism** – Submitting all or part of another's work as students' own in an academic exercise, such as an examination, computer file, or written assignment. This includes, but is not limited to, submitting papers written by someone else, such as a family member or friend, or downloading parts of or entire term papers from the internet and then submitting them as students' own work. It also includes use of another's words as students' own, be that paraphrasing or direct quotation, without proper citation.

**Cheating** – Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on an examination or assignment, such as using unauthorized texts or notes or improperly obtaining, or attempting to obtain, copies of an examination or answers to an examination. This also includes sharing or receiving content from exams or quizzes by way of another student.

**Facilitating academic integrity violation** – Helping another to commit an academic integrity violation, such as substitution for an examination, completing an assignment for someone else, or sharing of computer files.

**Fabrication** – Altering or transmitting, without authorization, academic information or records.

**Multiple submissions** – Submitting the same paper/project for credit in multiple classes, without permission of the instructors involved.

### **VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

When a faculty/staff member or other instructor believe that an incident of plagiarism or other violation of academic integrity has occurred, they should:

1. Notify the student of concern related to academic integrity and schedule time within five (5) business days to discuss with the student the reasons for this concern, providing the student with an opportunity to prepare a response.
2. Complete the Academic Integrity Reporting Form and forward to the program director.

Upon receipt of the Academic Integrity Reporting Form, the program director will:

1. Schedule a time to meet and discuss possible outcomes with the student in person or via phone within five (5) business days to ensure the student understands the process.
2. Provide the student with an opportunity to respond in writing within five (5) business days.
3. Consult with the Office of Academic Affairs to determine whether any previous academic integrity allegations or violations are on file.
4. Issue a sanction if a violation has occurred.

### **SANCTIONS FOR VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

During a student's academic career at Mercy College, each academic integrity violation will be reported using the Academic Integrity Reporting Form to the appropriate program director.

The sanctions for academic integrity violations are as follows:

- First incident may include requiring the work to be redone; assigning a failing grade for the assignment; or assigning a failing grade for the course.

- Second incident in the same course will result in a failing grade for the course. Second incident in another course during the same semester will result in a failing grade for that course. A second incident in a subsequent semester will also result in a failing grade for that course.
- Third and final incident of academic integrity violation will result in dismissal from the program/College. The division dean may notify the Office of Student Records to enter the notation “dismissed for academic integrity violation” on the student’s transcript.

All records of violations of academic integrity and sanctions will be kept by the Office of Academic Affairs in a secure file.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATION APPEAL**

Students disputing academic integrity sanctions may appeal according to the following procedure:

1. Students must submit the following to the appropriate division dean:
  - An [Academic Integrity Appeal Form](#) within five (5) business days of the signed program director’s decision
  - A copy of the program director’s decision
  - A written statement of why the student disagrees with the academic integrity violation or proposed sanctions, and
  - Any evidence or material supporting the reasons for disagreement.
  - a. The division dean will review all submitted materials and communicate as necessary with the parties involved.
  - b. The division dean will issue a final written decision (electronic and U.S. mail) based on all submitted evidence or material to the student within five (5) business days from receipt of the appeal.

### **ATTENDANCE**

A student is expected to attend class and clinical experiences if applicable. Attendance policies are located in course syllabi and in the program handbooks if applicable.

### **CHANGE of ADDRESS or NAME**

To change a name, a student must complete a [Change of Address/Name Form](#), and submit this form with a copy of a government-issued document indicating the prior name and updated name to the Office of Student Records.

To change an address, a student may submit the request through EMPOWER ME or submit a Change of Address/Name Form to the Office of Student Records.

### **CLINICAL COMPLIANCE POLICY**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, March 2020*

Mercy College of Ohio (“the College”) is committed to the health, safety, and well-being of all patients cared for by its students, as well as the health, safety, and well-being of the students who participate in its programs and represent the College in clinical agencies. On January 1, 2004, the Joint Commission updated regulations for hospitals, home health agencies, clinics, and other healthcare providers to gain or maintain accreditation status. One of the regulations requires all

persons working at the facility – including employees, volunteers, and students – to have a criminal background check. Other requirements such as drug screens, verification of immunizations/titers/testing/health history and Basic Life Support (BLS) certification may be necessary pursuant to agreements with a clinical agency. Guidelines for required immunizations/titers and tuberculosis (TB) screenings, as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), are for the safety of patients, students, faculty, staff, and the public.

This policy applies to all College students who participate in clinical/practicum/field experiences with an affiliated clinical agency (“Clinical Agency”).

To meet Joint Commission or other Clinical Agency requirements, the College requires all students entering a College program which includes a clinical component, practicum, or field experience (hereinafter referred to as “College Health Program”) to undergo a criminal background check and drug screen. Students in College Health Programs must also provide verification of required immunizations/titers/testing/health history and BLS certification as outlined in Appendix A. The results of a background check and drug screen, as well as the ability to provide documentation of immunizations/titers/testing/health history and/or BLS certification, can impact a student’s ability to participate in a College Health Program, and/or become licensed, credentialed or employed in a particular state.

It is the responsibility of all students to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with College requirements for maintaining an environment free from threat to person, property, efficiency or reputation because of illegal use, sale, transfer, or possession of alcohol or dangerous drugs as defined by Section 2925.01 of the Ohio Revised Code and United States Code 21, Section 811 and 844. Students must also abide by the College’s *Drug and Alcohol Abuse/Prevention Policy*.

Affiliation agreements between a Clinical Agency and the College outline legal/contractual requirements, including criminal background check, drug screen, and verification of Health History and/or BLS certification.

### **I. Required Background Check, Drug Screen, Immunizations/Titers/Testing/Health History and Basic Life Support (BLS) Verification**

All students who have been accepted into a designated College Health Program are required to successfully complete a criminal background check (including fingerprint screen) and drug screen through the vendor designated by the Office of Compliance and Risk Management (“Vendor”) and submit satisfactory immunizations/titers/testing/health history verification from a medical provider (collectively, the “Health Program Assessments”). Previously conducted criminal background checks, drug screens, and/or immunizations/titers/testing/health history verifications unrelated to the College Health Program are not acceptable for purposes of this policy. The College Health Programs also abide by the requirements of each specific Clinical Agency, which periodically may require updated Health Program Assessments. Students may not be permitted to participate in their designated program if: a) the criminal background check includes findings of the following: any felony or misdemeanor criminal convictions, arrests, charges, pending charges or probation/diversion (not including minor traffic violations), b) confirmed positive drug screen

results, c) the immunizations/titers/testing/health history and/or BLS requirements are not satisfactorily met.

### **New Students**

Students are responsible for the costs and activities associated with meeting all clinical requirements and completing the Health Program Assessment process. Students retain access to their account information after graduating from the College Health Program.

### **Students Who Have Failed a Course**

Students who have failed a course will not be required to order a new Vendor account *if*:

- They have been continuously enrolled at the College (an official Leave of Absence is not considered continuous enrollment).

*However,*

- Students may be required by the Clinical Agency to complete updated Health Program Assessments.

### **Students Who Have Been Absent from the Health Program but Return Within Three Semesters**

Students re-entering a health program within three semesters will not be required to order a new Vendor account but must ensure compliance prior to returning to classes and clinical participation.

- Students whose vendor accounts have been archived should contact the vendor or Clinical Compliance Coordinator to have the account unarchived.
- Any incomplete or overdue requirements must be completed.
- Students may be required to complete updated Health Program Assessments (communicated by program administrator).

### **Students Returning After an Absence of Less than Three Semesters**

Students re-entering a College Health Program after an absence of less than three semesters will not be required to order a new Vendor account *if*:

- They have been continuously enrolled at the College (an official Leave of Absence is not considered continuous enrollment);
- Original Health Program Assessments were all completed less than one year earlier;

### **Students Returning After Three Semesters**

Students who return to a College Health Program after three semesters are required to order a new Vendor account to meet all current requirements, including completion of new Health Program Assessments.

### **Students Who Withdraw and/or Change Programs**

Students who begin a College Health Program and subsequently withdraw may be allowed to transfer their Vendor account upon acceptance into the new College Health Program *if*:

- Original Health Program Assessments were all completed less than one year earlier;

## **II. Drug Screens**

It is the policy of the College to prohibit the purchase, possession, use or abuse, sale, distribution, or manufacture of any controlled substance on campus, on any College property, or on the premises of student's clinical assignment. Students are responsible for complying with the College's *Drug and*

*Alcohol Abuse/Prevention Policy*; failure to comply with the policy may result in immediate dismissal.

The College recognizes chemical dependency as a major health problem and as a health, safety, and security concern. As part of a prevention program, all incoming students are required to participate in substance abuse training during orientation and again annually in an online training module.

### **Readmission after Dismissal due to a Positive Drug Screen**

If a student is dismissed from the College after a positive drug screen, the student may apply for readmission to the College according to the readmission guidelines outlined in the College Catalog. If readmitted, the student must agree to random drug testing. Students who wish to be readmitted to the College must comply with all program changes and catalog revisions at the time readmission is requested. An additional positive drug screen will result in dismissal from the College with no opportunity for readmission.

### **III. Additional Health Program Assessments**

In most circumstances, Health Program Assessments are only performed after a student has been accepted into a College Health Program (or is ready to begin the clinical/practicum/field experience portion of their program). However, some Clinical Agencies require current results from the student prior to clinical placement at that site.

The cost of any additional testing, updated criminal background checks or medical visits is the responsibility of the student. Criminal background check and drug screen must be coordinated through the contracted Vendor.

### **Reasonable Suspicion Drug Screening**

Students who are performing in a clinical setting in an unsafe manner, and/or whose behaviors are suspect, may be subject to an assessment by a healthcare provider and may be asked to submit to an immediate drug screening. For purposes of this policy an assessment may include, but is not limited to, a drug/alcohol screen, medical or mental assessment, and/or rehabilitation. Action and/or pattern of behaviors that may warrant an assessment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Sudden changes in work performance;
- Violation of safety policies;
- Repeatedly not following work direction;
- Disorientation;
- Personality changes;
- Behavior problems;
- Drowsiness;
- Slurred speech;
- Glassy or bloodshot eyes;
- Suspicious odors;
- Frequent absences;
- Incoherent communication or inexplicable behavior;
- Possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia;
- Observation of drug use;



- A report of drug use provided by a reliable and credible source; or
- A self-report of a drug-related arrest, charge, or conviction.

#### **IV. Student Duty to Self-Report**

Students are asked on their application for admission to indicate whether they have been convicted of child or dependent adult abuse; whether they have been convicted of a crime in this state or any other; whether they are currently incarcerated; or if they have been excluded from or served with notice of exclusion from any governmental programs, *i.e.* Medicare, Medicaid, financial aid, student loan default. Students are then asked to explain any “yes” answers.

Students are informed during the admission process that a past felony or misdemeanor may disqualify them from entering a Clinical Agency setting, testing for licensure, or being hired by potential employers in a healthcare profession. It is the responsibility of the student to check with the program administrator, the licensing/credentialing organization and/or state prior to application into the College Health Program.

Failure to disclose or providing material misrepresentation of information to any application question, including questions about any criminal conviction, arrest, charge, pending charge or probation/diversion, may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the College.

Students currently enrolled in a College Health Program have an ongoing duty to report any arrests, charges, or convictions that occur after they are enrolled in the College Health Program. The student must notify the program administrator of the College Health Program in which he/she is enrolled as soon as is reasonably possible - and no later than five (5) calendar days (in accordance with the *Drug and Alcohol Abuse/Prevention Policy*) - after the incident occurs.

#### **V. Immunizations/Titers/Testing/Health History and/or BLS Certification**

Students must complete all required immunizations/titers, including TB testing, as outlined in program clinical requirements found in Appendix A, and complete and submit a satisfactory Health Screening form from a qualified medical provider. Students must provide documentation of immunizations/titers/TB testing/health history, and/or BLS certification in their accounts with the College’s designated third-party Vendor.

#### **VI. Requests for waiver/exemption/extension**

Student may request a waiver/exemption or extension for immunization requirements with the Clinical Compliance Coordinator.

Even if a waiver/exemption or extension request is received by the Clinical Compliance Coordinator, clinical placement is not guaranteed. Approval of such requests is subject to each clinical site’s policies and/or guidelines established in the Clinical Agency Agreement.

#### **VII. Placement at Clinical Agencies**

Acceptance into a College Health Program despite negative information on a background check or drug screen, or submission of a waiver/exemption from a required immunization does not guarantee placement at a Clinical Agency. For a student already placed at a Clinical Agency site, subsequent criminal history may result in the Clinical Agency prohibiting the student from

continuing in the clinical experience. If a student is unable to participate in a clinical experience as required for a program of study, student will not be able to progress and will be dismissed from the College Health Program in which student is enrolled.

When a student who has negative information on a criminal background check self-reports subsequent criminal history and attempts to be placed at a specific Clinical Agency site or wishes to continue at student's current site, the appropriate personnel at the Clinical Agency site evaluate the information and surrounding circumstances. Clinical Agency site personnel have sole discretion to determine whether the student can participate in a clinical experience at the Clinical Agency site or continue with the current placement. The College makes no final decisions regarding student acceptability for a Clinical Agency site or the ability of the student to continue with a current placement based on the results of a criminal background check or in a self-report of new criminal activity as required above.

College faculty and staff will not provide advice on a student's ability to obtain licensure, credentialing or employment notwithstanding an adverse criminal background check, and students should not rely on any general information provided by College personnel in that regard. It is the responsibility of students to check with the licensing/credentialing board and/or state in which they want to practice to determine if they are able to sit for exams; however, some states may not advise about the inability of students to sit for exams until the students are prepared to do so.

Failure to provide documentation of required immunizations/titers, testing, health history and/or BLS certification may prevent Clinical Agency site placement, which may prevent College Health Program progression or completion.

#### **VIII. Sharing Information Concerning Health Program Assessments**

Information concerning Health Program Assessments is initially shared with the student and appropriate College personnel. College Health Program administrators or designees are responsible for monitoring students' accounts. Findings may require further action, and students will be notified of such by the program administrator and/or the Vendor. Students are responsible for monitoring their account for such notifications.

In order to share information concerning Health Program Assessments with Clinical Agencies, students must sign 530-A *Student Consent*. Without confirmation all Health Program Assessments and clinical requirements were obtained, and results are acceptable to the assigned Clinical Agency, placement in a clinical setting is unlikely. Non-placement will result in dismissal from the College Health Program.

#### **Confidentiality**

Results of a student's Health Program Assessments are not kept as part of the student's educational file. The results are protected on the Vendor's website and are accessible only by the student, the Vendor, and authorized College personnel as long as the College is contracted with the Vendor. Students have access to their online records with the Vendor while they are enrolled and post-graduation, even if the College is no longer contracted with the Vendor. All ancillary materials collected from the students regarding review of criminal background checks or drug screen

investigations will be maintained as confidential and stored in a secure fashion by the Office of the Clinical Compliance Coordinator.

The procedures associated with the Clinical Compliance policy are as follows.

### **Required Background Checks, Drug Screens, and Health History**

- The Clinical Compliance Coordinator establishes instructions for ordering Vendor accounts and communicates the due date for each College Health Program. Instructions for completing the background check and drug screen are provided by the Vendor. Students are responsible for ordering an online account, scheduling, and completing the Health Program Assessments in a timely fashion, so results can be returned to the Vendor or College prior to the due date established by the College Health Program. **Students will not be permitted to participate in their designated College Health Program if they have not cleared the background check and drug screen and satisfactorily completed the Health History verification by the College Health Program's due date**, unless an extension is granted by the program administrator, i.e., in the instance of late admittance to the College Health Program.
- Background check and drug screen results are returned directly to the student's account, where they are available to both the student and authorized College personnel. Health History verifications are uploaded by the student into their online account. Additional documents related to background check findings, positive drug screens, reasonable suspicion drug test results, etc. will be uploaded by the clinical coordinator or program administrator to the administrator portal of the student account.
- Students aware of findings which may show up on the background check or drug screen should be prepared to discuss with his/her program administrator whether findings may impact participation in clinical rotation, licensing or credentialing.

### **Findings on Criminal Background Checks**

1. Students disputing background check results must contact the Vendor to initiate an investigation. Status of the dispute will be communicated to the program administrator.
2. Findings on a student's background check require the following actions:
  - a. If student has findings on the BCI&I (Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation) or the Background Check Summary Report:
    - i. Student may be asked to request additional official documents.
    - ii. Student may be asked to provide detailed, legibly written (or typed) explanation of the recorded information.
    - iii. Student must schedule a face-to-face meeting with the program administrator (a student enrolled only in distance education classes can participate in a conference call with the program administrator).
  - b. If student has findings on the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) fingerprint results, the RAP (Record of Arrests and Prosecutions) sheet will be included with FBI report.
    - i. Student must prepare a detailed, legibly written (or typed) explanation of the recorded information.
    - ii. Student must schedule a face-to-face meeting with the program administrator (a student enrolled only in distance education classes can participate in a conference call with the program administrator)

3. At the face-to-face meeting or conference call, the program administrator reviews the information to assess whether the findings will potentially affect clinical placement or licensure/credentialing. The information will be reviewed, and a final decision rendered based on the following:
  - Seriousness, circumstances, and frequency of the offense(s);
  - The relationship between the duties to be performed as part of the College Health Program and the offense(s);
  - The length of time that has passed since the offense(s);
  - Evidence of successful rehabilitation;
  - The accuracy of the information provided by the student; and
  - The guidelines established by the clinical affiliation agreement.

The program administrator:

1. Reviews RAP sheet with the student, student's written explanation of the events, and any other documentation provided by the student, such as police reports, certified court records, and other information that is pertinent to the case.
2. Program administrator and student complete and sign 530-D *Criminal Background Findings*.
  - i. If there are no issues that will affect the student's Clinical Agency placement, as determined by the program administrator and/or Dean:
    1. Student signs 530-F *Student Waiver - Criminal Background/Drug Screen* to continue the clinical experience.
    2. Program administrator uploads the signed 530-F *Student Waiver - Criminal Background/Drug Screen*, completed 530-D *Criminal Background Findings*, and student's detailed written explanation to the student's Vendor account.
  - ii. If the issue(s) would affect the student's Clinical Agency placement and/or constitute an automatic bar from licensure or credentialing, according to the Ohio Board of Nursing:
    1. Based on an assessment of all information available, program administrator and/or Dean advises the student that he/she WILL NOT be allowed to continue with the clinical experience.
    2. Program administrator and student complete and sign 530-D *Criminal Background Findings*.
    3. Program administrator uploads the completed 530-D *Criminal Background Findings*, student's detailed written explanation and any other documentation provided by the student to the student's Vendor account.
4. If the student wishes to dispute the decision of the program administrator and/or Dean, the student must submit a request for appeal in writing to the Vice President Academic Affairs ("VPAA") within five (5) business days of the determination. A written decision will be provided to the student within five (5) days of the appeal submission. The decision of the VPAA is final and not subject to appeal.

5. If a student has signed a waiver to continue in the College Health Program but a finding is found from a subsequent report received after the waiver was signed:
  - a. Program administrator determines whether there is new information that affects the student's clinical placement.
  - b. If the new finding appears on the FBI/BCI results, the student must provide additional documentation if requested.
  - c. If new findings are the same as that which was previously discussed with the student:
    - i. Program administrator communicates this with the student.
    - ii. Program administrator provides an electronic notation in student's Vendor account stating that the findings are the same and that no further action is required.
    - iii. Program administrator uploads any new documentation to student's Vendor account.
  - d. If the findings are different from the previously reviewed charges:
    - i. The process outlined previously in Findings on Criminal Background Checks should be repeated.

### **IX. Drug Screens**

1. The Vendor conducts a 10-panel drug screen checking for amphetamine [methamphetamine], barbiturates, benzodiazepine, cocaine, marijuana, methadone, methaqualone, opiates [codeine, morphine], phencyclidine, and propoxyphene.
2. If drug screen results are returned as "dilute negative" or "dilute positive," the student will be told that he/she must order a new drug screen and provide another sample. Results of the second test are considered final. If student declines to take a required retest because of a dilute specimen, the action will be considered a "refusal to be tested" and treated the same as a confirmed and positive result.
3. The program administrator monitors student accounts for drug screen finding alerts.
4. All positive test results are automatically sent to the Medical Review Officer (MRO) contracted by the Vendor.
  - a. If the student tests positive for a drug for which there could be a legitimate prescription, the MRO contacts the student for that prescription and validates the information. If prescription information is validated, the MRO will update the test results to show a negative drug screen.
  - b. If prescription information cannot be validated, the drug test results will show a positive drug screen.
  - c. If the MRO is unable to reach the student, a notation will be made on the student's drug screen and notification will be sent to the program administrator.
    - i. The program administrator emails the student and advises that the MRO must be provided with any additional prescription information immediately. If the drug screen results remain unchanged after seven days, the drug screen test results will be considered positive.

- ii. If the results are changed to a negative drug screen, no additional action is required.
- iii. If results are changed to a verified positive drug screen, the program administrator:
  1. Notifies the student of the positive drug screen and sets up a face-to-face meeting (or conference call for online students).
    - a. The drug screen results and the rules set forth by the specific College Health Program’s accrediting or credentialing agency determine whether there are immediate consequences.
    - b. The student is informed he/she has the right to initiate a formal dispute of the findings (as outlined in the following section Disputing Drug Screen Finding).
    - c. Student signs 530-E *Drug Screen Findings*.
    - d. Program administrator consults with the Dean, VPAA, and Vice President Student Affairs/Dean of Students (“VPSA”) to determine additional steps for student.
    - e. If allowed to continue, 530-F *Student Waiver – Criminal Background/Drug Screen* must be signed.
      - i. Permission to continue in the College Health Program does not guarantee participation in required clinical experiences or licensure in certain states.
      - ii. If the student is currently attending classes:
        1. Student will be suspended from participating in the clinical experience until the drug screen is fully reviewed by the program administrator, VPAA, and VPSA.
        2. Student may be allowed to continue attending class instruction until the drug screen issue is resolved.
    - f. Disciplinary action according to the College’s *Drug and Alcohol Abuse/Prevention Policy and Program* will be determined by the VPSA/Dean of Students.
  2. Program administrator documents all communication with the student, including what additional steps (random drug testing, etc.) are required.
  3. Program administrator uploads all documentation and completed forms to student’s Vendor account.

### **Disputing Drug Screen Findings**

Students wishing to dispute the drug screen results must initiate a formal dispute within five (5) business days of notification by the program administrator. Student must contact program administrator to initiate a re-test of the original specimen. The drug screen re-test package code will be provided to the student by the program administrator or by the Vendor. Cost of the new

drug screen package is paid by the student. Vendor will coordinate testing of the same specimen sample at a different lab. If the result is overturned, the Vendor will refund the cost of the new drug screen package to the student.

### **X. Additional Required Background Checks and Drug Screens**

#### **Reasonable Suspicion**

If a faculty or staff member at the College feels that a “reasonable suspicion” drug/alcohol screen is required consistent with College policy, the faculty or staff member should:

- a. Contact the program administrator, Program Director, Dean and/or (in the event of occurrence at a clinical site) another medical healthcare professional to observe the student.
- b. Remove the student from the clinical or classroom setting.
- c. Advise the student there is concern for student and/or patient safety.
- d. Advise the student that he/she will be required to submit to a screening within 24 hours.
- e. Advise the student that he/she will not be allowed to attend clinicals until proof of a negative drug/alcohol screen has been verified by the program administrator (student will be given the opportunity to make up lost clinicals if the drug/alcohol screen report is negative).
- f. Advise the student that he/she will be allowed to continue attending classroom instruction only until the drug/alcohol screen result has been received and reviewed for further action.

Student must provide results of alcohol or drug screen to the program administrator, who will upload the results to the student’s Vendor account.

Failure to participate in an assessment at the request of a College faculty or staff member will result in the assessment being considered a violation of the College’s *Drug and Alcohol Abuse/Prevention Policy* and grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the College.

If results are positive, the student will be immediately suspended from the College by VPSA/Dean of Students and subject to the policies and procedures outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. The student is encouraged to contact the Director of Counseling for an assessment appointment with possible referral to a drug and/or alcohol counseling program.

### **X. Sharing Information Concerning Criminal Background Checks, Drug Screens, and Health History**

1. Students are required to complete and sign 530-A *Student Consent* permitting the College to discuss results with Clinical Agencies. This is in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
2. If a student refuses to provide this consent, the College will not be able to inform the Clinical Agency of results, which may prevent the student from participation in clinical experiences.

#### **CLINICAL LIABILITY INSURANCE**

Mercy College students who are enrolled in a health program are required to have clinical liability insurance. The cost of the liability insurance is included in the matriculation fee, and these students are enrolled in clinical liability insurance coverage by the Clinical Compliance Coordinator at the College. Questions regarding clinical liability insurance may be directed to the Clinical Compliance Coordinator and/or the Office of Compliance and Risk Management.

#### **FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

*Approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, March 2018, Technical Revision, April 2018*

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) is a federal privacy law affording students certain rights related to the release of and access to their education records. The Office of Student Records ensures compliance with FERPA at Mercy College of Ohio (“the College”), and this office should be contacted with any questions or concerns about this policy, including any questions about FERPA rights or to request clarification or further information:

Office of Student Records, 419-251-8989, [registrar@mercycollege.edu](mailto:registrar@mercycollege.edu)

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the privacy and protection of student files.

FERPA applies to enrolled students, not students who have applied but never enrolled. All College employees are responsible for knowing and abiding by this policy.

FERPA affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. The definition of “education records” is any record maintained by the College that is directly related to a student and includes, but is not limited to, grades, transcripts, and disciplinary files. Education records can exist in any medium, including hardcopy, typed, or electronic. However, there are some exclusions from the definition of education records, including:

1. Records kept in the sole possession of the maker, that are used only as a personal memory aid, and are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a temporary substitute for the maker of the record;
2. Records of the College’s law enforcement unit that are created by it for law enforcement purposes and maintained by it;
3. Records relating to an individual who is employed by the College (except if the individual is a student employed as a result of his or her status as a student) that are made and maintained in the normal course of business, relate exclusively to the individual in that individual’s capacity as an employee and are not available for any other purpose;
4. Records on a student 18 years of age or older made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in his or her professional capacity or assisting in a paraprofessional capacity so long as the records are made, maintained or used only in connection with treatment of the student and are disclosed only to individuals providing treatment;
5. Records created or received by the College after the student is no longer in attendance and are not directly related to the individual’s attendance as a student.

Beginning with the first day of the student’s first term at the College, students have the following rights under FERPA:

1. **The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the date the College receives a request for access.** A student should submit to the Office of Student Records, a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The College’s Office of Student Records will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. The College reserves the right to have a school official present during a student’s review of his/her education records. The right of inspection and review includes the right to access and an explanation of the record. It does not include the right to a copy of the education record



except in limited circumstances when failure to provide a copy would effectively prevent the student from inspecting and reviewing the record (e.g., the student lives outside of a reasonable commuting distance from the College). Students have the right to inspect their education records regardless of their financial status with the College. However, the College is not required to release an official transcript if the student has a past due account. If the College official to whom the request was submitted does not maintain the records, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed. At the postsecondary level, parents have no inherent rights to inspect or review their son or daughter's education records. This right is limited solely to the student. A student's education records may be released to parents only if they have been given a written release by the student or if an exception to FERPA's general rule against nonconsensual disclosure applies (such as in the case of a health and safety emergency or in order to comply with a lawfully issued subpoena). This right of inspection and access does not extend to the financial records of a student's parents. Also, certain restrictions apply to a student's access to confidential letters and confidential statements of recommendation placed in a student's education records.

2. **The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.** A student who wishes to ask the College to amend a record should write the College official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the College decides not to amend the record as requested, the College will notify the student in writing of the decision and the student's right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Students are permitted to include explanatory comments with the record(s) they believe should have been amended, but the College decided not to modify. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing. Requesting an amendment to an education record is not the proper avenue for challenging course grades. Students challenging a grade must complete Form 510-C Application for Academic Appeal located in the College's Office of Student Records.
3. **The right to provide written consent before the College discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.** The College discloses education records without a student's prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosures without consent. *See* 34 CFR § 99.31. A school official is a person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the College has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using College employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing

his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for the College.

4. **The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the College to comply with the requirements of FERPA.** The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
 U.S. Department of Education  
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
 Washington, DC 20202-5901

**Public Notification of Directory Information**

At its discretion, the College may provide “directory information” in accordance with FERPA. Directory Information is defined as that information which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Designated directory information at the College includes the following:

- student’s name
- address
- telephone listing
- electronic mail address
- photographs
- date and place of birth
- field(s) of study
- dates of attendance
- class
- enrollment status (e.g. undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time)
- degrees, honors, and awards received
- participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- the most recent educational agency or institution attended.

Students may block public disclosure of directory information (all or in part) by notifying the Office of Student Records in writing by using Form 510-B Request to Opt Out of Directory Information.

Students should carefully consider the consequences of a decision to withhold directory information. For example, the names of students who have restricted their directory information will not appear in the commencement program or other College publications. Also, employers, potential employers, credit card companies, loan agencies, scholarship committees, and the like will be informed that the College has no information available about the student’s attendance at the College if these entities were to request directory information that has been restricted. A non-disclosure block will prevent the College from releasing any or all “directory information;” thus, any further requests for such information from non-institutional persons or organizations will be refused.

The College will honor requests to withhold directory information but cannot assume responsibility to contact students for subsequent permission to release this information. Regardless of the effects,

the College assumes no liability as a result of honoring students' instructions that such information be withheld.

Although the initial request may be filed at any time, requests for non-disclosure will be honored by the College until removed, in writing, by the student. *Please note: a student cannot opt out of the disclosure of his/her name or email address in the classroom environment.*

As a private institution, the College is not governed by the Ohio statutes that allow release of additional types of information to employees, employers, and applicants.

For additional information concerning FERPA, please visit:

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/index.html>

### **FERPA Procedure**

1. The entire FERPA policy is available in the Office of Student Records for review.
2. Students may opt out of the release of directory information by completing Form 510-B Request to Opt Out of Directory Information. This form is then filed in the student's permanent file and noted in the student database system. Students may indicate student account access to a parent, spouse, or other individual on the Form 510-B Request to Opt Out of Directory Information.
3. Students will be notified at the beginning of each semester regarding their FERPA rights through the Public Notification of Directory Information via the College's Website, Inside Mercy, and/or by email.
4. All College sanctioned employees (full and part-time faculty, staff, administration, student workers) and those working on behalf of the college in clinical, internship or practicum experiences are required to sign and adhere to Form 510-D Code of Responsibility and Confidentiality of Data, which is signed at the time the employee is hired, and filed in their permanent files. In addition, each new employee receives FERPA training materials from the Office of Student Records. FERPA training occurs annually for employees via college-wide presentation and/or the submission of FERPA training materials in the weekly Mercy College faculty and staff newsletter or other appropriate means of communication.
5. Faculty completing a letter of recommendation for a student must have the student complete Form 510-A Letter of Recommendation Release prior to completing the letter.
6. Institutions requesting information will be given directory information upon request, unless the student has requested that no directory information should be released.

Any concerns or questions regarding release of student information should be directed to the Office of Student Records.

### **HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

The College requires all students entering programs which include a clinical component, practicum, or field experience (health program) to comply with specific health requirements, such as documentation of positive titers, vaccinations other health requirements. Students may request waivers or extensions of vaccinations and other health requirements, which may be approved or denied by clinical facilities. If waivers/extensions are denied, it will prevent placement in clinical experiences and progression in the academic program. The College will make a reasonable attempt

to find alternate clinical placements for students seeking waivers or extensions of vaccinations, but it is at the discretion of clinical sites whether students are permitted to participate in clinical experiences. The requirements may vary depending on the program of study and the clinical agency. Students in such programs can find information on criminal background checks, drug screens, and health requirements at (<https://www.mercycollege.edu/background>). Current information is maintained on the College website and is subject to change. Students are responsible for all costs associated with criminal background checks, drug screens, and health requirements. Students who do not meet listed health requirements may not be able to fulfill the clinical, practicum, or field experience requirements and complete their program of study.

Please see the program administrator with questions regarding documentation for health records, including titer and vaccination requirements.

*AMENDMENT START - 11/15/2020*

## **GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRESSION**

### **GOOD STANDING**

#### **Master of Science in Nursing, Master of Health Administration, Post Master's Certificates**

In the online graduate programs (MS Nursing, MHA, Nursing Certificates), students are expected to earn a minimum of a "B" grade in all attempted graduate degree courses. A grade lower than a "B" is not considered passing, can only be earned in a graduate program one time, and must be repeated to improve the grade.

At the end of each semester, students must have earned a cumulative GPA of at least a 3.0 to be considered in "Good Standing" and allowed to progress in the graduate degree program.

#### **Master of Physician Assistant Studies**

In the Master of Physician Assistant Studies program, students are expected to earn a minimum of a "C" grade in all attempted graduate degree courses.

Physician assistant students must have earned a cumulative grade point average of at least a 2.8 and passed all curriculum components to be considered in "Good Standing" and allowed to progress in the graduate degree program.

### **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

#### **Master of Science in Nursing, Master of Health Administration, Post Master's Certificates**

Students will be placed on academic probation when:

1. The cumulative GPA in all graduate work attempted falls below a 3.0.
2. Students fail to comply with academic requirements or regulations as outlined in the program of study.

As long as students remain on academic probation, the graduate program director may impose restrictions on enrollment. Students who fail to meet the requirements for progression in the graduate program may be academically dismissed, at which time the graduate program director will send an academic dismissal notification.

#### **Removal from Academic Probation**

Students will be removed from academic probation when the cumulative GPA in all graduate coursework attempted at Mercy College is 3.0 or higher and when all other academic requirements have been met.

### **Master of Physician Assistant Studies**

Should students in the MPAS program not in good standing be allowed to progress in the program, they will be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation are required to petition the Academic Performance and Progression Committee (APPC) to identify issues that affected their performance and suggest methods to overcome those issues. Students in the MPAS program must formally acknowledge the APPC remediation plan including due dates and methods to evaluate successful remediation. Such students must successfully remediate the material to the satisfaction of the APPC, which includes formal remediation of the course or supervised clinical practice experience (SCPE). For removal from probation, students must not only demonstrate successful remediation of the course/SCPE material (per the remediation policy below) but also show improvement in academic performance in the next semester. Specifics regarding benchmarks for improvement are under the jurisdiction of the APPC. Students unsuccessful in meeting the criteria for removal from academic probation are subject to dismissal from the MPAS Program.

### Removal from Academic Probation

Students will be removed from Academic Probation when the cumulative grade point average in all entry into the profession graduate coursework attempted at Mercy College is 2.8 or higher and when all other academic requirements or regulations have been met. The APPC will notify students of removal from academic probation.

### **ACADEMIC DISMISSAL**

#### **Master of Science in Nursing, Master of Health Administration, Post Master's Certificates**

Students will be academically dismissed for failure to maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA or any of the following reasons:

- Second "F" is earned in a course in the graduate program
- Second withdrawal from a single graduate course

#### **Master of Physician Assistant Studies**

The MPAS Program's Academic Performance and Progression Committee (APPC) may dismiss students in the MPAS program for failure to pass a class, failure to meet progression criteria, failure to clear academic probation at the end of a semester, for unprofessional behavior, or for two or more episodes of academic probation during the course of study.

### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

The following general guidelines for graduation apply to candidates for graduate degrees. Any additional requirements are specified in the section which describes a particular program.

1. Students must complete all program requirements for the degree, as outlined in the catalog when the students initially enroll.
2. Students must have a cumulative GPA of:
  - a. 3.0 for students in the Master of Science in Nursing, Master of Health Administration, or Post Master's Certificates.

- b. 2.8 for students in the Master of Physician Assistant Studies
- 3. Students must submit a [Graduation Application](#) to their Academic Advisor for review and signature. Completed forms must be submitted by students or the Academic Advisor to the Office of Student Records one semester prior to graduation. (Refer to Academic Calendar (<https://mercycollege.edu/academics/academic-calendar>) for due date.)

*AMENDMENT END*

## STUDENT AFFAIRS POLICIES

Current and detailed information on policies applying to students can be found on the Mercy College compliance webpage at <https://mercycollege.edu/about/compliance-consumer-information>.

### STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of the Student Code of Conduct at Mercy College of Ohio is to provide an environment conducive to student learning guided by the Values of the College on the Toledo campus and at the Youngstown location as well as the online environment. The Values are as follows:

- Compassion
- Excellence
- Human Dignity
- Justice
- Sacredness of Life
- Service

Student learning takes place in the following formats:

- Classroom (face-to-face)
- Online (Distance Education)
- Hybrid (Combination of face-to-face and online)
- Laboratories (Assessment labs, skills labs, science labs, etc.)
- Clinical Settings
- Student Activities (both on and off-campus)

Students who are admitted to and participate in the learning environment at Mercy College of Ohio must conduct themselves with the highest level of professional and ethical behavior regardless of the setting.

Professional and Ethical Conduct means that students will demonstrate the following:

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Responsibility
- Accountability
- Confidentiality
- Respect for others
- Compliance with college policies and procedures
- Safe care for all clients and/or patients
- Willingness to seek assistance as needed for learning and/or care of clients/patients.

In cases where students engage in questionable or inappropriate conduct, the student(s) is/are subject to disciplinary action. Examples of inappropriate conduct include, but are not limited to the following:

- Criminal violation of local, state, and/or federal laws, including copyright laws.
- Violation of college policies and procedures as outlined in the college catalog and program handbooks.

- Knowingly furnishing false academic or personal information to college faculty, staff, or administration; forgery; or tampering with college documents, records, and identification cards with the intent to deceive or commit fraud.
- Misuse of fire safety equipment, including sending a false fire alarm and/or tampering with fire extinguishers or other safety equipment; tampering with plumbing and lighting fixtures outside of normal use; and inappropriate usage of library materials and/or any other private property on the campus.
- Actual or attempted violation of the computer use policy, computer security, and/or tampering with computer software equipment.
- Possession or use of unauthorized weapons (such as firearms, knives, bows, and arrows, and martial arts weaponry), explosives (including fireworks), and dangerous chemicals.
- Use, possession, or distribution of illegal and controlled substances (such as marijuana and cocaine), and violation of state laws and college policies governing the use, possession, and distribution of alcoholic beverages.
- Involvement in acts of disorderly conduct, which includes, but is not limited to: (i) any conduct which materially and substantially disrupts the education process, College operations, and/or related activities; and (ii) any conduct which aids, abets, or procures another person to materially and substantially disrupt the education process, College operations, and/or related activities.
- Unprofessional behavior in the classroom, online environment, clinical settings or on- or off-campus activities.
- Violation of the Hazing Policy, or other serious forms of physical or mental harassment, abuse, threats, or intimidation, racial harassment, or action, which intentionally subjects another person to public ridicule.
- Unauthorized entry to college facilities and/or possession of keys or duplicate keys.
- Gambling on any supervised properties of the college.
- Disruption of the learning environment.
- Conduct that threatens or endangers the health and/or safety of the college community.
- Bullying or cyber bullying.
- Violation of the Tobacco/Smoking Policy.
- Breach of client/patient confidentiality.
- Unsafe clinical practices.
- Failure to comply with directions of College officials acting in the performance of their duties.
- Failure to cooperate in the Student Discipline Procedure outlined below.

The College reserves the right to address other inappropriate behavior by students if it does not clearly fall within the identified standards of conduct above.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE**

When there is an alleged violation of the Student Code of Conduct, the procedures outlined below will be followed. Depending on the severity of the inappropriate conduct, Mercy College of Ohio reserves the right to begin the disciplinary process at any of the steps listed below. If deemed necessary at the discretion of the College, the procedures may be adjusted to facilitate a fair and timely resolution in a particular situation.

Faculty and/or staff who are notified of possible student misconduct or who observe a student engaging in inappropriate behavior will discuss the behavior/misconduct with the student



privately. A [Concern and Complaint form](#) documenting the matter will be forwarded to the Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee, for possible investigation.

### **Step 1: Verbal Warning**

If the investigation findings conclude that a verbal warning is warranted, a report using the [College Disciplinary Form](#) will be completed and kept in a confidential student disciplinary file in the office of the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students, or designee.

### **Step 2: Written Warning**

If the student misconduct from Step 1 continues or if there are additional violations of the Student Code of Conduct, the student misconduct will be reported to the Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee, using the Concern and Complaint form. In the event of academic misconduct, the matter will be referred to the Program Director and Division Dean. If investigation findings conclude that a written warning is warranted, the Program Director/Division Dean/VPSA or designee will meet with the student and prepare a written warning using the College Disciplinary Form. An action plan that includes present and future consequences of continued inappropriate behavior/misconduct will be written and the student may be referred to additional College personnel (accessibility services, counseling center, and student success center just to name a few). A copy of the written warning and written action plan will be placed in the student's confidential disciplinary file.

### **Step 3: Suspension, Dismissal, Expulsion, and Other**

#### **DEFINITIONS**

**Temporary Suspension:** Students are suspended from all college classes and activities and not permitted to be on College property or assigned clinical sites for the period of time during which an investigation is being conducted or the discipline is occurring.

**Suspension:** A student can be suspended from all college classes and activities and not permitted to be on College property or assigned clinical sites for a specified period due to an infraction of the Student Code of Conduct.

**Dismissal:** A student dismissed from a program or the college may be permitted to return to the college through the Readmission Policy to the College for Academic/Non-Academic Dismissal as outlined in the College Catalog.

**Non-Academic Dismissal/Grading:** If a student is dismissed for non-academic reasons, the student will be dropped or withdrawn from their courses based on the add/drop deadline or withdrawal deadline policy depending on the date of the dismissal, see Academic Calendar (<https://mercycollege.edu/academics/academic-calendar>) for add/drop deadlines. If the student is dismissed prior to the add/drop deadline, they will be dropped from all courses. If the student is dismissed after the add/drop deadline but during the withdrawal period, they will be withdrawn from all courses and receive a grade of "W". If the student is dismissed after the withdrawal period, they will be withdrawn from all courses and receives grades of "WP" or "WF" depending upon the student's grade at the time of the dismissal.

**Expulsion:** A student expelled from the college is not permitted to return to the college through the readmission process. Disciplinary action may continue for events that occurred prior to a student's expulsion from the College.

Serious or illegal misconduct will begin at Step 3 of the discipline process. Students who have serious or illegal violations of the misconduct policy will be reported to the Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee using the [Concern and Complaint form](#). Students may be temporarily suspended pending investigation of the alleged serious or illegal misconduct. For illegal misconduct, the College will make a report to the appropriate legal authority.

For those students who have a serious or illegal misconduct violation, the Division Dean or Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee, will render a decision based on the findings of his/her investigation. The Division Dean or the Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee, will complete and sign the College Disciplinary Form that will be placed in the student's permanent file. This form will outline the misconduct violation, findings of the investigation, discipline imposed, and written action plan (if applicable). The student will be provided with written notification of the findings, the discipline imposed along with a written action plan (if applicable). Since time for investigations varies, every effort will be made to notify the student within a reasonable timeframe.

Students who have continued inappropriate conduct from Step 2 will progress to Step 3, and such conduct should be reported to the Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee, using the [Concern and Complaint form](#). If the matter is academic, it will be referred to the Program Director and Division Dean. The VPSA/designee or Program Director/Division Dean will review the written action plan that was developed in Step 2 and activate the consequences identified as part of that written action plan. The Program Director/Division Dean or Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee, will document his/her discussion and activation of consequences on the [College Disciplinary Form](#) for those students.

Within ten business days of meeting with the Division Dean or the Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee, students will be notified in writing of the discipline to be imposed by the Division Dean or Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee. The [College Disciplinary Form](#) will be signed by the Division Dean or Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee, and placed in the student's permanent file.

Appeal of Step 3 Decision: The student may appeal the findings or imposed consequences at Step 3 as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct Appeal Procedure.

### **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT APPEALS PROCEDURE**

The Student Code of Conduct Appeals Procedure is conducted by a committee that hears student code of conduct appeals that progress from Step 3. This committee is appointed by the Vice President of Student Affairs. The committee is a non-biased group of individuals and serves on an ad hoc basis. The committee is comprised of the following five individuals:

- Division Dean from a division outside the student's program of study.
- Three full-time or part-time faculty members (no adjunct faculty members will be included): one from Health Sciences, one from Nursing, and one from Arts and Sciences.
- One staff member.

The Committee only hears appeals that progress from Step 3 of the disciplinary process. Steps 1 and 2 are not appealable.

Students disputing the findings or discipline issued at Step 3 may secure the [Student Code of Conduct Appeals Form](#) from the College website and file the appeal with the Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee, no later than five business days after the student's receipt of the final decision or written action plan as set forth in the Student Discipline Procedure. If an appeal is not filed in the designated timeframe, the appeal will not be further considered, and the prior decision will stand.

**Step 1:** Upon receipt of a student appeal that is filed in the designated timeframe, the Vice President of Student Affairs or his/her designee will organize the ad hoc committee of five individuals within five business days. At times, the five business days may have to be extended depending on the circumstances. The Vice President of Student Affairs will inform all parties of the student appeal and the Division Dean from outside the student's program of study will call and chair the meeting of three faculty members and one staff member (all five members of the committee are voting). The student and any other party who was part of the original disciplinary procedure will attend the meeting to present relevant information.

**Step 2:** The Dean who serves as chair presides over the meeting where all relevant materials are reviewed, and relevant information is presented by the student and other party.

**Step 3:** The Dean will provide written notification of the committee's decision, determined by voting, within five business days to all parties including the committee members. Written notification may extend beyond five business days if circumstances warrant the extension. The decision of the committee will be final and binding.

**Step 4:** The Dean will place a copy of the signed and dated written decision in the separate appeal file that is maintained in the office of or the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students.

## **ACCESSIBILITY/ADA/504 POLICY**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, June 2019*

To provide for equal access, Mercy College of Ohio is committed to making individuals with disabilities full participants in its programs, services and activities through compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

All College representatives, including faculty, staff, and students are responsible for the implementation of this policy and adherence to the principles of equal access.

It is the policy of Mercy College of Ohio (the "College") that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination in any program, service or activity offered by the College. Specifically, the College does not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment or in its admission, recruitment, academics, research, financial aid, counseling, employment assistance, and/or any other service, facility, or privilege available to students or potential students. Further, the College does not screen out, exclude, expel, limit, or otherwise discriminate against an

individual seeking admission as a student, or an individual enrolled as a student, based on disability. As such, individuals with disabilities have a right to request reasonable accommodations.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Disability:** The United States' Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines "disability" as "having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities." In addition, the ADA protects individuals from discrimination if they have a record of such impairments or if they are regarded as having such impairments. Additional protections are provided through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

**Reasonable Accommodations:** Reasonable accommodations include modifications to policy, procedure, or practice and the provision of auxiliary aids and services that are designed to provide equal access to programs and services for qualified individuals with disabilities. Accommodations are reasonable when they do not pose a direct threat to health, safety, or quality of care; when they do not fundamentally alter the nature of a program or service; and when they do not represent an undue financial or administrative burden.

### **Requests for Reasonable Accommodation:**

**Employees:** Requests for reasonable accommodation are governed by the Mercy Health Accommodations Policy (HRMH081). Employees must direct requests for reasonable accommodation to the Mercy Health Human Resources Department.

**Students:** Requests for reasonable accommodation are handled by the Office of Accessibility and Testing Services pursuant to the Procedures set forth below.

### **Academic Honesty & Integrity**

Reasonable accommodations provided to students may relate to the administration of testing, examinations, or other coursework. Students provided with such accommodations must continue to adhere to the College's academic honesty & integrity policy and to the College's Student Code of Conduct. Failure to adhere to the academic honesty & integrity policy and the standards of conduct may result in corrective action.

### **Section 504 Coordinator:**

The College has designated the following individual as its Section 504 Coordinator. The Section 504 Coordinator has responsibility for coordinating the College's efforts to comply with the requirements of Section 504 and its implementing regulations.

Christine Miller  
Director of Accessibility and Testing Services  
2221 Madison Avenue  
Toledo, OH 43604  
419-251-1784  
Christine.Miller1@mercycollege.edu

### **Grievance Procedure:**

Any person may file a grievance alleging discrimination or harassment on the basis of disability by filing a complaint pursuant to the Civil Rights/Nondiscrimination Policy. The grievance process

applies to all individuals regardless of whether the individual has requested accommodations. Grievances may allege disability discrimination, including disability harassment, carried out by employees, students, or third parties.

A copy of the Civil Rights/Nondiscrimination Policy and its related procedures is available online at <https://mercycollege.edu/documents/civil-rights-nondiscrimination-policy>.

The following procedures govern the reasonable accommodation process for students.

Students must provide appropriate documentation to the Office of Accessibility and Testing Services for the College to fully determine eligibility for services and evaluate requests for accommodations or auxiliary aids.

Students should be aware that accommodations granted by the College in no way guarantee that the same accommodations will be granted at other institutions, testing centers, or licensing agencies. Students are solely responsible for pursuing accommodations at other institutions, testing centers, or licensing agencies. The Office of Accessibility and Testing Services may assist in the process at the student's request.

### **Initiating Consideration for Accommodation**

Students who are seeking assistance from the Office of Accessibility and Testing Services are responsible for:

- a) Contacting the Office of Accessibility and Testing Services. Students bear the responsibility for disclosure of a disability and the request for services. Such disclosure and request for services must be done by the student directly unless the nature of the student's disability precludes direct contact.
- b) Providing complete, adequate, and current documentation from an appropriately qualified professional regarding the disability and the need for accommodations (see Essential Elements of Disability Documentation below.) Students are responsible for costs associated with obtaining the appropriate documentation.
- c) Notifying the College of accommodation requests prior to the beginning of the semester for which the accommodation is sought. While accommodation requests can be made and will be considered at any time, the documentation and approval process takes time. Please note that granted accommodations are not effective retroactively, and a student will not be able to retake exams or redo assignments that were completed before an accommodation was approved.

### **Essential Elements of Disability Documentation**

1. **The credentials of the evaluator(s).** Documentation should be provided by a licensed or otherwise properly credentialed professional who has undergone appropriate and comprehensive training, has relevant experience, and has no personal relationship with the individual being evaluated. A good match between the credentials of the individual making the diagnosis and the condition being reported is expected (e.g., an orthopedic limitation might be documented by a physician, but not a licensed psychologist).

2. **A diagnostic statement identifying the disability.** Documentation should include a clear diagnostic statement that describes how the condition was diagnosed, provide information on the functional impact, and detail the typical progression or prognosis of the condition. When appropriate, documentation should include diagnostic codes from the Diagnostic Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM) or the International Classification of Diseases (ICD).
3. **A description of the diagnostic methodology used.** As appropriate, documentation should include a description of the diagnostic criteria, evaluation methods, procedures, tests and dates of administration, as well as a clinical narrative, observation, and specific results. Where appropriate to the nature of the disability, having both summary data and specific test scores (with the norming population identified) within the report is recommended. Diagnostic methods that are congruent with the particular disability and current professional practices in the field are recommended.
4. **A description of the current functional limitations.** Information on how the disabling condition(s) currently impacts the individual provides useful information for both verifying a disability and identifying possible accommodations. Documentation should be thorough enough to demonstrate whether and how a major life activity is substantially limited by providing a clear sense of the severity, frequency, and pervasiveness of the condition(s). A combination of the results of formal evaluation procedures, clinical narrative, and the individual's self-report will be reviewed. While recent documentation is recommended in most circumstances, discretion will be used in accepting older documentation of conditions that are permanent or non-varying. Likewise, changing conditions and/or changes in how the condition impacts the individual may warrant more frequent updates to provide an accurate picture. The need for recent documentation depends on the facts and circumstances of the individual's condition.
5. **A description of the expected progression of stability of the disability.** Information on the cyclical or episodic nature of the disability and known or suspected environmental triggers to episodes provides opportunities to anticipate and plan for varying functional impacts. If the condition is not stable, information on interventions for exacerbations and recommended timelines for re-evaluation are most helpful.
6. **A description of current and past accommodations, services and/or medications.** Documentation should include a description of both current and past medications, auxiliary aids, assistive devices, support services, and accommodations, including their effectiveness (and side effects) in ameliorating functional impacts of the disability.
7. **Recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or collateral support services.** Recommended accommodations and strategies should be logically related to functional limitations; if connections are not obvious, a clear explanation of their relationship can be useful in decision making. Mercy College has no obligation to provide or adopt recommendations made by outside entities.

High school special education evaluations, Summary of Performance (SOP) or Individual Educational Program (IEP) documentation, while helpful, may not provide adequate information to

document a disability. In addition, references to academic weaknesses/learning differences/test anxiety alone may not substantiate a learning disability diagnosis.

### **Specific Disability Documentation**

**Learning Disabilities:** Psycho-educational assessment conducted by the diagnosing licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, or other appropriately credentialed professional specializing in learning disabilities.

**Psycho-educational Testing:** The comprehensive psycho-educational test battery should include intelligence/ability testing and educational/achievement testing. A full diagnostic report, including all standard test scores as well as subtest scores and the evaluator's narrative is recommended. Assessments should be normed for adults, i.e. WAIS-III rather than WISC-III.

**Attention Deficit Disorder:** Psychological/Psycho-educational assessment conducted by the diagnosing licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, or other appropriately credentialed professional.

**Psychological Disabilities:** Psychological assessment conducted by the diagnosing licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, or other appropriately credentialed professional.

**Speech and Hearing:** Full report of assessments conducted by the diagnosing licensed speech/hearing specialist, audiologist, or other appropriately credentialed professional.

**Visual:** Full report of assessments conducted by the diagnosing licensed ophthalmologist, optometrist, or other appropriately credentialed professional.

**Mobility:** Evidence of substantial limitation in upper and/or lower extremity mobility. As appropriate, this may or may not include full report of assessments conducted by the diagnosing licensed medical doctor/physician or other appropriately credentialed professional.

### **Review of Documentation and the Determination of Accommodation**

1. **All documentation will be reviewed on an individual, case-by-case basis.** This calls for an individualized inquiry, examining the impact of a disability on the individual and within the specific context of the request for accommodations. There is no list of covered disabilities or accepted diagnostic criteria.
2. **Determination of accommodations is an interactive process.** The Director of Accessibility and Testing Services may contact the evaluator, as necessary and with the student's permission, for clarification of any information (tests results, conclusions, recommendations, etc.) contained in the documentation. An interview with the student will be conducted to inquire about the disability, understand its impacts and identify appropriate accommodations. At the conclusion of the interactive process, the institution will determine accommodations as appropriate.
3. **Documentation of a specific disability does not translate directly into specific accommodations.** Reasonable accommodations are individually determined and based on the functional impact of the condition and its likely interaction with the environment. As such, accommodations may vary from individual to individual with the "same" disability diagnosis and from environment to environment for the same individual.

**Process of Approved Accommodations**

Once an accommodation has been granted, students are provided with a letter of accommodation from the Office of Accessibility and Testing Services each semester to notify their instructors as they deem appropriate. Students with accommodations are responsible to speak with each of their instructors about their accommodation needs.

Students with accommodations can submit their testing schedule to the Testing Center at the beginning of each semester if their tests will be proctored in the Testing Center. Students who have received accommodations may request modifications to those accommodations at any time.

**Appeal Procedure**

A student who has been denied a requested accommodation or otherwise disagrees with an accommodation decision may file an appeal. The student is encouraged, but not required, to first discuss his or her concern with the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students. A conversation may resolve a disagreement quickly.

The student should complete the Student Appeal and Grievance Form available on the Office of Accessibility and Testing Services website. Individuals needing assistance may fill out the form in the Office of Accessibility and Testing Services with staff assistance.

Appeals should be filed promptly and no later than 10 business days after receiving an accommodation decision. Appeals submitted after this deadline will not be accepted absent a showing of good cause. Time-sensitive requests should be made as far in advance as possible. Although the College tries to expedite urgent matters, requests made fewer than 10 business days in advance of a deadline typically do not allow for adequate time for review.

**Informal Review:** Upon receipt of an appeal, the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students will try to resolve the disagreement informally with the student and the Office of Accessibility and Testing Services. If informal resolution is not possible or the student requests to proceed through the formal appeals process, the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students will refer the matter to the Office of Compliance and Risk Management.

**Formal Appeals Process:** The Director of Compliance and Risk Management will review the formal appeal request and determine whether an investigation is necessary. If any material facts are in dispute, an investigation will be initiated within 5 business days of receipt of the appeal request from the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students. The investigation will involve meeting with the student and may also involve meeting with Office of Accessibility and Testing Services staff, faculty members, or other staff members with relevant information. During the investigation, all parties to the appeal will be permitted to present witnesses and other relevant evidence. The Director of Compliance and Risk Management will present written findings of fact from the investigation to the President, who will decide whether any changes to the original decision are warranted. The President will issue a written determination regarding the appeal to the student and Office of Accessibility and Testing Services. Unless an extension is necessary for good cause, this determination will be provided within 5 business days of receiving the findings from the Director of Compliance and Risk Management. If the President decides that additional or



different accommodation(s) should be approved, an updated accommodation letter will be issued to the student. If the President upholds the initial accommodation determination, the matter will be closed. The President's decision is final and not subject to appeal. Every effort will be made to complete the appeal process within 30 days of the initial request for appeal.

The College does not tolerate retaliation against any individual who participates in the appeal process. Allegations of retaliation should be referred to the Director of Compliance and Risk Management.

## **CAMPUS VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, March 2020*

The purpose of this policy is to provide the students, faculty, staff and visitors ("Community") of Mercy College of Ohio ("College") with a safe and secure environment to work, study, and live. The College Community should be able to pursue their education, work, and other activities in a safe, non-threatening environment. College safety and security is based on the ability to set forth guidelines and have a plan with response options in the event of an act of campus violence. Safety and prevention of violence is **everyone's** responsibility. The College complies with the Higher Education Opportunity act, which includes Campus Safety and Security (PL 110-315).

This policy covers all persons on College property or at College-sponsored functions, such as off-campus learning or education in a clinical or practical setting, or performing any actions having direct impact on the College Community.

**Violence:** In its commitment to safety and security for the Community, the College treats all actual, real, or alleged threats of violence as serious concerns, which are addressed immediately. Conduct that threatens the health and/or safety of any person, or creates a reasonable fear that such a result will occur, including but not limited to: acts of violence, threats of violence, possession of weapon(s) on college-controlled property, without proper written authorization, threatening behavior, and/or reckless disregard for the health or safety of any person are not acceptable conduct and will not be tolerated. Violation of this policy and/or the Student Code of Conduct and or the Bon Secours Mercy Health Code of Conduct for employees will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or termination from the College.

**Responsibility:** The entire College Community shares the responsibility for a safe and secure campus. Knowledge of violent acts or threats planned or carried out are to be reported to supervisors or other appropriate campus administration immediately.

**Campus Violence Prevention Committee:** The Mercy College Campus Violence Prevention Committee (CVPC) is charged with implementing the Mercy College of Ohio Emergency Response Plan (ERP) and coordinating campus-wide violence prevention education, programs and services that are designed to create a campus culture and climate of safety, respect and emotional support.

**Campus Assessment Response and Evaluation (CARE) Team:** The Campus Assessment Response and Evaluation (CARE) Team at Mercy College of Ohio ("College") reinforces the College's efforts to provide the students, faculty, staff, and visitors ("Community") with a safe environment to work,

study, and live. As a subset of the Campus Violence Prevention Committee (CVPC), the CARE Team assists with the prevention and intervention in incidents where members of the campus community are experiencing distress or engaging in harmful or disruptive behaviors, as well as supports individuals impacted by such incidents. The goal and of the CARE Team is to: gather information about students of concern; assess information about each case brought before the CARE Team; define and coordinate plan/response; implement a response to a perceived or threat; and monitor the disposition of the case (Derived from the Higher Educational Mental Health Alliance (HEMHA) Project, Balancing Safety and Support on Campus: A Guide for Campus Teams – <https://www.jedfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/campus-teams-balancing-safety-support-campus-jed-guide.pdf>. The CARE Team acts as a mechanism for improved coordination and communication across the campus and/or system and makes recommendations in accordance with existing college policies.

**Reporting On Campus:** All students, employees, and visitors need to be alert to the possibility of violence on campus. As part of the College Community, all individuals are responsible for reporting violence or any conduct that violates this policy that they experience or witness.

The College Community should address emergencies by calling 911 or by contacting Mercy Protective Services on the Toledo campus (419-251-4444) or Mercy Youngstown Police Department at the Youngstown location (330-480-3288). Violence or threats against self or others should not be ignored or disregarded. If experiencing or observing an immediate threat or violent situation, local law enforcement is to be alerted as soon as possible. Delayed reporting may unnecessarily allow the behavior to continue, cause harm, or jeopardize the investigation due to the passage of time, fading memories or departure of witnesses.

The A.L.I.C.E. response utilizes five steps to increase chances of survival during a surprise act of violence on campus. This does not follow a set of required actions. Survival is paramount in this situation. It may be appropriate to use only one or two parts or all parts of the ALICE response plan. This is dependent upon the situation at hand. In this type of incident, perception is the reality and individuals will decide what appropriate action to take; dealing with known information and disregarding unknown information:

1. **Alert-Announcement** of the onset of the emergency can be anything.
  - a. Gunfire
  - b. Witness
  - c. Phone alert
2. **Lockdown**-This is a semi-secure starting point from which to make a survival decision. Internal lockdown should occur immediately by all who decide not to evacuate.
  - a. Secure the room
  - b. Lock the door
  - c. Cover any window in the door, if possible
  - d. Tie down the door, if possible.
  - e. Barricade the door with anything available
  - f. Look for alternate escape routes
  - g. Call 911

- h. Pull the fire alarm if necessary
  - i. Move out of the doorway in case gunfire comes through
  - j. Silence or place cell phone on vibrate
  - k. Once the room is secured, do not open the door for anyone. Police will enter the room when the situation is over.
  - l. Gather weapons (coffee cups, chairs, books, etc.) and mentally prepare to defend yourself or others
  - m. Put yourself in a position to surprise the active shooter should they enter the room
  - n. If you are in lockdown for a long period of time, give consideration to issues such as bathroom use, keeping people calm, etc.
  - o. Be prepared to provide first aid  
External lockdown-Exterior campus lockdown will be determined by law enforcement based on the circumstances of the incident.
3. **Inform-** Use any means necessary to pass on real time information.
    - a. Can be derived from 911 calls
    - b. Give in plain language
    - c. Tell who you are
    - d. Explain **what** is happening, **where** it is happening/where you are in relation to the action, and **how** it is happening (gunfire, stabbing, etc.)
  4. **Counter-** This is the use of simple, proactive techniques should students and/or staff be confronted by the aggressor(s); counter techniques interrupt the violent actions of the suspect.
    - a. Anything can be a weapon
    - b. Throwing things at the aggressor's head to disrupt their aim
    - c. Create as much noise as possible
    - d. Attack in a group (swarm)
    - e. Grab the aggressor's limbs, head-taking him/her to the ground
    - f. Fight dirty-bite, kick, scratch, gouge eyes, etc.
    - g. If you gain control of the aggressor, call 911 and tell the police your location and listen to their commands when officers arrive on the scene
  5. **Evacuate-**Remove yourself from the danger zone as quickly as possible
    - a. Decide if you can safely evacuate
    - b. Run in a zigzag pattern as fast as you can
    - c. Do not stop running until you are far away from the area
    - d. Bring something to throw in case you would encounter the aggressor(s)
    - e. Break out windows and attempt to quickly clear glass from the frame
    - f. Do not attempt to drive from the area

Protective Orders/Restraining Orders Issued by a Court: Members of the College Community who have an Order of Protection should provide a copy of the order to the Vice-President of Student Affairs and/or Title IX Coordinator/Deputy Title IX Coordinator who will notify Mercy Protective Services/Mercy Youngstown Police .

**Non-Emergency Concerns:** Members of the College Community are encouraged to report other behavior that is unusual or threatening even if it is not perceived as an immediate, dangerous, or imminent risk. To report concerns that do not pose an immediate threat, a Concern and Complaint Form should be completed. The Vice-President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students should be contacted. The Concern and Complaint Form can be found online (<https://mercycollege.edu/student-affairs/concern-complaint>).

## **CAMPUS ASSESSMENT RESPONSE AND EVALUATION (CARE) TEAM POLICY**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, March 2019*

The Campus Assessment Response and Evaluation (CARE) Team at Mercy College of Ohio (“College”) reinforces the College’s efforts to provide the students, faculty, staff, and visitors (“Community”) with a safe and secure environment to work, study, and live.

As a subset of the Campus Violence Prevention Committee (CVPC), the CARE Team assists with prevention and intervention in incidents where members of the College community are experiencing distress or engaging in harmful or disruptive behaviors, as well as supports individuals impacted by such incidents. The goal and mission of the CARE Team, is to: gather information about students of concern; assess information about each case brought before the CARE Team; define and coordinate plan/response; implement a response to a perceived or real threat; and monitor the disposition of the case (Derived from the Higher Educational Mental Health Alliance (HEMHA) Project, Balancing Safety and Support on Campus: A Guide for Campus Teams-<https://www.jedfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/campus-teams-balancing-safety-support-campus-jed-guide.pdf>). The CARE Team acts as a mechanism for improved coordination and communication across the campus and/or system and makes recommendations in accordance with existing college policies.

*\*Note: None of the information in this policy replaces faculty classroom management, disciplinary processes (either student conduct or Human Resources), campus emergency response protocols, or Campus Security responses to incidents.*

The CARE Team at Mercy College promotes the success, health, and safety of individuals within the community through identifying and responding to individuals whose behaviors may be troubling with the intention to provide assistance and intervention to prevent incidents from occurring. The role of the CARE Team is to: understand threats/concerns; evaluate legitimacy of concerns; identify motivations for violence; assess likelihood of physical harm to self and/or others; develop strategies for risk reduction; guide implementation of strategies, re-evaluate threat; and evaluate the needs of the community (as outlined by Deisinger & Randazzo, 2010; Best Practices in Campus Threat Assessment & Management).

**Definition of Threat:** Threat is the expression of intent to cause physical or mental harm to self and/or others. An expression constitutes a threat without regard to whether the party communicating the threat has the present ability to carry it out, and without regard to whether the expression is contingent, conditional, or future.

**Members of the CARE Team:**

1. Assistant Dean of Student Life (Co-Chair)
2. Assistant Dean of Student Success (Co-Chair)
3. Director of Accessibility and Testing Services
4. Campus Safety representative
5. Faculty representative
6. Deputy Title IX Coordinator (Youngstown location)

\*Other individuals may be included as needed, such as, but not limited to: academic advisors, legal counsel, Director of Diversity and Inclusion, Director of Career, Professional Development, and Retention, Human Resources, etc.

All members of the CARE Team will participate in training upon initial participation and at regular intervals thereafter in areas such as best practices for assessment teams, legal issues (including disability law protections), risk management, documentation, and any other topics to ensure that the team functions effectively.

Members of the campus community should report any behavior that is questionable, suspicious, or inappropriate, which may be presented through an individual's appearance, spoken or written words, or specific actions. Examples of such "red flag" behaviors include:

- Behaviors that regularly interfere with classroom environment or management
- Notable change in academic performance, including repeated absences
- Notable change in behavior or appearance
- Impairment of thoughts, verbally or in writing
- Extreme disorganization or erratic performance
- Overly aggressive behaviors toward others
- Poor decision making and coping skills
- Continuing to pursue options that do not reasonably exist after being instructed to cease
- Inappropriate or strange behavior that is significantly outside the boundaries of socially acceptable behavior
- Low frustration tolerance
- Overreaction to circumstances
- Lack of resiliency
- Writing and comments endorsing violence; unusual interest in violence
- Indirect or direct threats in writings or verbalizations
- Lack of empathy and concern for others; inability to care
- Anger management problems
- Threats to others
- Appearance of being overly nervous, tense, or tearful
- Expression of suicidal thoughts or feelings of hopelessness.

It is the responsibility of the CARE Team to provide education to the campus community about its role and responsibility to report "red flag" behaviors, what to report, where to report, how reports will be handled, and regular reminders of the process.

**Receiving Information**

All members of the campus community are encouraged to report behaviors or incidents that are concerning to the CARE Team by using the Concern and Complaint form, available online

(<https://mercycollege.edu/student-affairs/concern-complaint>). Upon receiving a report, the CARE Team will follow up to assess and intervene, if needed. However, in the event of an emergency that requires immediate intervention, call 911. Non-emergency law enforcement reports can be made to Mercy Protective Services in Toledo (419-251-4444) or Mercy Health Police – Youngstown (330-480-3288).

### **Assessment and Intervention**

Upon receiving a report, the Co-Chairs of the CARE Team will ensure that all members of the CARE Team receive the information. The CARE Team will meet to assess the incident through gathering information, evaluating the risk to the community, identifying and implementing the appropriate intervention(s), and determining follow-up as appropriate.

### **Gathering Information**

The CARE Team may gather information from several sources, such as:

- Review of student’s academic and disciplinary history
- Review of available medical information, including diagnoses and treatment history
- Local law enforcement or legal/criminal background check
- Previous colleges, if student has transferred
- Interviews with all parties involved, including targets of inappropriate/concerning behaviors
- Interview with the person alleged to have displayed inappropriate/concerning behavior
- Assessment by counselor/mental health professional
- Online search of the student’s name, and the name(s) of anyone the student may have threatened, harassed, pursued, or scared

### **Level of Risk**

Based on the information gathered, the CARE Team will utilize the following scale to determine the level of the risk that the incident/behavior poses to the campus community. Levels of Risk are based on the National Behavioral Intervention Team Association’s (NaBITA) Threat Assessment Tool: <https://nabita.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/2014-NaBITA-Threat-Assessment-Tool.pdf>

**Mild Risk:** Includes some disruptive or concerning behaviors, the individual may or may not show signs of distress, depressed, withdrawn, lack of trust, argumentative, or not interested in the perspective of others. At this risk level, there is no serious threat to the student of concern or the campus community. Any concerns can generally be resolved through consultation with the CARE Team and addressed between the parties involved.

**Moderate/Elevated Risk:** Behaviors that may indicate a moderate risk include repeated disruptive behavior, behaviors involving more than one-person, challenging authority, destructive or vandalizing behaviors, alcohol or drug misuse/abuse, eating disorders, self-injurious behavior, vague threats, inconsistent threats, or suicidal thoughts.

**Severe/Extreme Risk:** May include seriously disruptive incident(s), repeated derogatory statements to others, erratic behavior, suicidal thoughts with plans or intent, aggression, or threatening others.

**Possible Interventions**

- Referral to college and/or community resources
- Voluntary withdrawal from classes – based on discussions with a counselor or member of CARE Team, the student may choose to temporarily take time away from the College, according to applicable College leave policies and procedures.
- Referral to disciplinary process
- Removal from campus housing
- Mandatory direct threat/safety assessment – the student may be required to participate in an individualized direct threat assessment to determine if the student may safely continue as a member of the College community and for assistance in gaining access to treatment, if needed. The assessment may result in an interim suspension and/or involuntary withdrawal. Conditions may be imposed as part of a suspension or withdrawal that the student must fulfill prior to readmission.
- Criminal charges

**Direct Threat / Safety Assessment**

In cases in which the College receives a report of concerning behavior that poses a risk to the health and safety of the College community and its members, the CARE Team will engage to determine the nature of the risk and any measures that can be taken to manage the risk. The CARE Team will make these determinations as the result of an individualized assessment.

The purpose of the assessment is to determine the level of risk the student poses to the health and safety of the College community and to inform decisions about the student's future participation in the College's programs. The CARE Team will not take or recommend adverse action against a student whose conduct is considered to pose a significant risk to the College community before conducting an individualized assessment.

The CARE Team will make an individualized assessment, based on reasonable judgment that relies on current medical knowledge or on the best available objective evidence, to ascertain: the nature, duration, and severity of the risk; the probability that the potential injury will actually occur; and whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices or procedures or, where applicable, the provision of auxiliary aids and services, will mitigate the risk. The CARE Team undertakes this assessment to ensure compliance with the direct threat regulatory provisions and to ensure that students with disabilities are not subjected to adverse action on the basis of unfounded fear, prejudice and stereotypes.

The CARE Team may recommend to the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students or other appropriate administrator that the College impose interim restrictions upon students up to and including an interim suspension. Interim restrictions may be imposed if the CARE Team believes that such interim restrictions are advisable to protect the College community or to ensure safety and maintenance of order of the College pending further assessment of the student.

**Assessment**

The CARE Team will notify the student of the direct threat inquiry in writing and will invite the student to provide documents or other information related to the team's assessment. If the student

does not provide documents or other information, the CARE Team will proceed with the documents or information the CARE Team has available.

The CARE Team will convene and will consider what health and safety concerns the student's behavior raises and whether the risks associated with those concerns can be managed by modifications, support measures, or accommodations. The team may consider the imposition of a behavioral contact, if appropriate, that may include, among other things, consultations with health care professionals or restrictions on participation in College operations.

As part of the team's review, the student may be required to undergo an assessment with a health professional designated by the College within a specified period of time. The purpose of the assessment is to ascertain whether the student poses an immediate and direct threat to health and safety. At this assessment, the student will be asked to sign a release of information to allow the health professional conducting the assessment to communicate with the student's treating physician or mental health professional (if applicable) to allow for a comprehensive evaluation of whether the student poses such a direct threat. If the student chooses not to sign the release, the health professional will proceed with the assessment based on the information available to him/her. The student's parents/guardians may also be notified of the decision to require a health assessment.

If the team determines the student poses health or safety risk to the College community and that the risk cannot be mitigated by reasonable modifications of policies, practices or procedures or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, the CARE Team will make the necessary referrals for action regarding the student.

### **Appeal**

A student may appeal a decision made by the CARE Team to the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students within three business days of the decision. The Vice President will review the student's written appeal, review all available documents and information from the CARE Team, and render a decision in a timely manner. The CARE Team will not participate in the deliberation or decision regarding the student's appeal.

### **Return requirements**

Following a determination that an individual poses a risk to the health and safety of the College community necessitating a voluntary or involuntary leave or withdrawal, the College may require as a precondition to a student's return that the student provide documentation that the student has taken steps to mitigate the previous behavior. The College may request records from the student and request permission to speak to a treating professional. The records and information that will be requested and required are determined on a case by case basis depending on what information is necessary to determine whether the student is able to return and fulfill the fundamental requirements of the College's programs.

### **Follow-up**

Upon implementation of interventions, the CARE Team will determine a plan for follow-up monitoring of the student. This may include checking with faculty and staff regarding behaviors.



Additionally, the student may be required to have periodic meetings with a counselor or a member of CARE Team.

### **Documentation and Recordkeeping**

The CARE Team will track cases and document discussions and action. The documentation generated from the CARE Team will be kept in a secure electronic database system or kept in paper form in a locked file cabinet in the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students' office.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, March 2020*

The purpose of this policy is to educate the College community of their rights and responsibilities regarding confidential information. This policy applies to students, faculty, staff, and any other party who has authorized access to Mercy College of Ohio ("the College") information including vendors and agents associated with the College.

- I. The College is the owner of the confidential information it collects. The College reserves the right to deny access to those who fail to use such information in accordance with this policy. Users must adhere to all applicable laws such as HIPAA and FERPA and to all College policies.
- II. The College expects all users to meet the highest standards of ethics and responsibility.
- III. The College is committed to protecting the privacy of its students, alumni, parents, faculty, and staff. Students, faculty, staff, and anyone else authorized to use college confidential information are responsible for reading, understanding and complying with this Confidentiality Policy.
- IV. The College strives to educate the College community in responsible use and will respond when violations are pointed out. Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Director of Compliance and Risk Management, Vice President of Student Affairs or the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
- V. Students who are found in violation of this policy will be subject to the Student Code of Conduct.
- VI. Faculty and staff who are found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **CLERY COMPLIANCE POLICY**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, September 2018*

Institutions of higher education participating in federal financial aid programs are required to comply with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and the Campus Crime Statistics Act of 1998 (20 USC § 1092(f)), or the "Clery Act." The Clery Act is enforced by the United States Department of Education ("ED").

In order to comply with the Clery Act, Mercy College of Ohio ("the College") takes the following steps.

- Tracks crime statistics for incidents reported to have occurred on campus, on public property immediately adjacent to, or running through the campus, and at certain non-campus buildings or property.

- By October 1 each year, publishes an Annual Security Report (“ASR”) for each campus containing security-related statements of policy, procedure and programming, as well as crime statistics for the past three calendar years.
- Submits crime statistics to ED via its online survey each fall.
- Issues timely warnings when a reported crime presents an ongoing danger to the College community.
- Devises an emergency response, notification and testing policy.
- Retains documentation of the College’s Clery compliance efforts.

Because the College’s campuses also have security departments (as that term is defined by the Clery Act and related guidance published by ED), the College also has and maintains a daily crime log that is available to members of the College community and the public upon request.

### **Preparing the Annual Security Reports (ASR)**

Separate ASRs are prepared for the Toledo campus and Youngstown location. The reports are prepared by the Director of Compliance and Risk Management and the Deputy Title IX Coordinator (Youngstown), in collaboration with the Vice President of Student Affairs or his/her designee. The reports are prepared in cooperation with campus security/police officials including Mercy Protective Services - Toledo Campus and Mercy Health Youngstown Police Department. *The Handbook for Campus Safety and Security Reporting* is ED’s key guidance document related to the Clery Act, and the current version is available at:

<https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/handbook.pdf>. This document is reviewed and utilized in preparing the ASRs.

### **Availability of the Annual Security Reports (ASR)**

ASRs are updated annually and published on the College website on or before October 1 each year. The campus community is notified of the availability of the reports by email and newsletter when the reports are published.

### **Reporting of Criminal Offenses**

To report a crime, call 911 (emergencies) or campus police/security (emergencies and non-emergencies).

Mercy Protective Services – Toledo Campus 419-251-4444  
 Mercy Health Police – Youngstown 330-480-3288

The following sections regarding Emergency Notification and Evacuation and Timely Warnings are also included in the ASRs and expanded upon in the College’s Emergency Response Plan, which is available on the College website at <https://mercycollege.edu/student-affairs/campus-safety>

### **Emergency Notification and Evacuation Policy**

*Emergency Notification Policy.* The College will, without delay, and taking into account the safety of the community, determine the content of the notification and initiate the notification system, unless issuing a notification will, in the professional judgment of responsible authorities, compromise efforts to assist the victim or to contain, respond to or otherwise mitigate the emergency.

Confirmation. Determination of an emergency or dangerous situation will be made by any or all of the following:

1. Mercy Health police/security
2. National Incident Management System (NIMS) campus incident management team (Mercy Healthcare Campus, Mercy St. Vincent Medical Center, or St. Elizabeth Health Center).
3. President or his/her designees

Notification. The President, his/her designee and any advisory staff will determine if the situation affects the entire campus or a segment of campus, and whether the entire campus or only a segment should be notified. This will be based on geography, impact on operations, and safety. The situation will be assessed continually.

Content/initiation of notification. The content of the notification will be developed with input from campus security/police/NIMS team, the President (or designee), as well as any advisory staff. Notification will be made through applicable and multiple means, if necessary, including email, text message, TV/radio message, phone message, alarms, PA announcements, and signage.

Persons responsible for carrying out the actions described above include:

Campus police/security/NIMS team President or designee, and Vice-Presidents Director of Communication

### **Emergency Drills, Testing, and Evacuation Procedures.**

Annual testing. On an annual basis, the institution will test its emergency response and evacuation procedures. Each test will be documented with a description of the exercise, the date, start/end time, and whether the test was announced or unannounced.

Annual notification. Emergency response and evacuation procedures will be publicized in conjunction with at least one test per calendar year.

### **Timely Warnings**

In the event of crimes, either on or off-campus, that in the judgment of the head of security (Mercy Protective Services, Director of Emergency Management-Toledo Campus or Mercy Health Youngstown-Chief of Police), or his/her designee constitute an ongoing or continuing threat, a campus wide “timely warning” will be issued. In the event a warning is needed, the Director or Chief, or his/her designee, shall provide the Vice- President of Student Affairs or his/her designee with the specifics of the case for the purposes of drafting the timely warning notice. The warning will be issued through the RAVE Emergency Alert system to students, faculty, and staff. Depending on the particular circumstances of the crime, especially in situations that could pose an immediate threat to the community and individuals, notices may be posted around campus, as well.

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE/PREVENTION POLICY AND PROGRAM**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, March 2018, Technical Revision February 2019*

Mercy College has an ethical and professional duty to students, employees, patients, and to the community to provide an environment that maintains high standards of safety, health, and efficiency. The use, sale, transfer or possession of controlled substances or alcohol by students creates a potential for harm. This policy provides guidelines to deal with actual or potential

situations in a systematic manner. An agreement to abide by this policy is a condition of enrollment at Mercy College.

It is the responsibility of all students to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with College requirements for maintaining an environment free from threat to person, property, efficiency or reputation because of illegal use, sale, transfer, or possession of alcohol or dangerous drugs as defined by Section 2925.01 of the Ohio Revised Code and United States Code 21, Section 811 and 844.

1. The use, sale, transfer or possession of controlled substances, alcohol or dangerous drugs, as defined by Section 2925.01 of the Ohio Revised Code during working hours, on clinical assignment or any Mercy organization property is forbidden and are grounds for disciplinary action including dismissal from the College. The presence of controlled substances and/or alcohol in a student's physical system during working hours or while the student is on clinical assignment is grounds for dismissal from the College.
2. The illegal use, sale, transfer or possession of controlled or illegal substances off college property or clinical sites constitutes grounds for dismissal from the College.
3. Law enforcement may be notified of illegal sale, use, transfer or possession of controlled or illegal substances required by Section 2921.22, Ohio Revised Code, which states in part, "No person knowing that a felony is being committed shall knowingly fail to report such information to law enforcement authorities."
4. Mercy College may take any disciplinary action deemed appropriate for violation of this policy. Violation of this policy may result in dismissal from Mercy College.
5. Mercy College is under no financial obligation to assist any student who violates this policy. However, efforts would be made to assist and guide the student in initiating appropriate referral and rehabilitation.
6. Mercy College will permit the legal use of medication or drugs prescribed by a licensed practitioner if such usage does not adversely affect the student or others. Mercy College reserves the right to define "adversely affect," and it will do so in consideration of the health and safety of the student and others. The College may, at its discretion and upon consideration of the specific circumstances, take all necessary action (which may include disability accommodation or a range of discipline, as appropriate to those circumstances) when a student is deemed to be adversely affected by the use of legally prescribed medications.
7. In cases in which the faculty or staff member reasonably suspect violations of this policy, these individuals may request a drug screen. The same drug screening protocol outlined in the College's "Criminal Background Check/Drug Screen Policy and Procedures for Clinical Students" will be utilized. A student's failure to comply with a request to undergo a drug screen sampling or refusal to sign a consent authorizing testing will result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from the College.
8. Students must notify the College of any criminal drug statute conviction (this includes misdemeanor or felony) within five (5) days after the conviction. Mercy College will

notify any appropriate government agency entitled to notice within ten (10) days of receiving notice of a conviction.

### **Legal Sanctions Related to Drugs and Alcohol**

#### *Federal Law*

Federal law prohibits, among other things, the manufacturing, distributing, selling and possession of controlled substances as outlined in 21 United States Code, Sections 801 through 971. Depending on the amount, first offense maximum penalties for trafficking marijuana range from up to five years' imprisonment and a fine of up to \$250,000 to imprisonment for life and a fine of \$4 million. Depending on the amount, first offense maximum penalties for trafficking other controlled substances (e.g., methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, cocaine base, PCP, LSD, fentanyl and fentanyl analogue) range from five years to life imprisonment and fines range from \$2 to \$4 million. First offense penalties and sanctions for the illegal possession of small amounts of controlled substances, including marijuana, range from up to one year in prison or a fine of at least \$1,000. Penalties are more severe for subsequent offenses.

Convictions for federal drug offenses can also result in the loss of eligibility for federal financial aid.

#### *Ohio State Law (Alcohol)*

Ohio's laws related to the use of alcohol include, but are not limited to, the following:

Ohio Revised Code ("O.R.C.") Section 4301.63 provides that no person under the age of 21 years shall purchase beer or intoxicating liquor. The penalty for a violation may include a fine of not less than \$25, but no more than \$100 may be imposed. The court may order that the fine be paid by the performance of public work at a reasonable hourly rate established by the court and shall designate the time within which the public work shall be completed.

- O.R.C. Section 4301.631 provides that no underage person can purchase low alcohol beverages, that no person may furnish low alcohol beverages to an underage person, and that no person shall allow underage persons to consume low alcohol beverages on his or her property. Punishments for violating O.R.C. Section 4301.631 range from fines of \$25 to \$250 and imprisonment up to 30 days.
- O.R.C. Section 4301.633 provides that no person shall knowingly furnish any false information as to the name, age, or other identification of any person under 21 years of age for the purpose of obtaining beer or intoxicating liquor for a person under 21 years of age, by purchase or as a gift. Violation of this law is a misdemeanor of the first degree. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for not more than 6 months and a \$1,000 fine.
- O.R.C. Section 4301.634 provides that no person under the age of 21 years shall knowingly show or give false information concerning his name, age, or other identification for the purpose of purchasing or otherwise obtaining beer or intoxicating liquor in any place in this state where beer or intoxicating liquor is sold under a permit issued by the department of liquor control. Violation of this law is a misdemeanor of the first degree. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for not more than 6 months and a \$1,000 fine.
- O.R.C. Section 4301.64 prohibits the consumption of any beer or intoxicating liquor in a motor vehicle. Violation of this law is a misdemeanor of the fourth degree. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for not more than 30 days and a \$250 fine.
- O.R.C. Section 4301.69(A) prohibits selling beer or intoxicating liquor to a person under the age of 21 years or buying it for or furnishing it to such a person. Violation of this law is

a misdemeanor. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for not more than 6 months and a fine of not less than \$500 and no more than \$1,000.

- O.R.C. Section 4301.69(E) provides that no underage person shall knowingly possess or consume any beer or intoxicating liquor, in any public or private place, unless he is accompanied by a parent, spouse, or legal guardian, who is not an underage person, or unless the beer or intoxicating liquor is given for medical or religious purposes. Violation of this law is a misdemeanor of the first degree. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for not more than 6 months and a \$1,000 fine.
- O.R.C. Section 4511.19 prohibits any person from driving a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol and/or any drug of abuse. Violation of this law is a misdemeanor of the first degree. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for not more than 6 months and a \$1,075 fine, in addition to license suspension and attendance and satisfactory completion of a treatment or education program. Penalties for repeat offenders can result in up to 5 years in prison and an increase in fines.

#### Ohio State Law (Drugs)

Ohio's laws related to the illegal use of drugs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- O.R.C. Section 2925.03 provides that no person shall knowingly "traffic" in controlled or illicit substances, including marijuana. Trafficking includes selling, offering to sell, delivering, distributing, preparing, cultivating, and manufacturing of controlled substances. The penalty is mandatory fines ranging from \$100 to \$20,000, depending on the offense and drug involved, and mandatory jail sentences ranging from 6 months to 10 years.
- O.R.C. Section 2925.11 provides that no person shall knowingly obtain, possess, or use a controlled substance. Drug abuse offenses involving amounts of marijuana less than 100 grams carries a penalty of not more than \$150. Possessing larger amounts of marijuana will result in more severe penalties up to a mandatory jail term of not more than 8 years and a fine of up to \$15,000. Drug abuse offenses involving other drugs may result in jail terms of up to 11 years and fines of \$20,000.
- O.R.C. Section 2925.12 provides that no person shall make obtain, possess, or use drug abuse instruments. A first offense can carry a jail term of up to 90 days and fines of \$750, plus driver's license suspension for a period of six months to five years.
- O.R.C. Section 2925.14 provides that no person shall knowingly use, possess with purpose to use, sell, manufacture or advertise drug paraphernalia. Depending upon the facts, the penalty is imprisonment up to 6 months and fines up to \$1,000.
- O.R.C. Section 2925.31 provides, except for lawful research, clinical, medical, dental, or veterinary purposes, no person with intent to induce intoxication or similar effect, shall obtain, possess, or use a harmful intoxicant. The penalty is fines up to \$1,000 and 6 months in jail, plus driver's license suspension for a period of six months to five years.
- O.R.C. Section 2925.37 provides that no person shall knowingly possess, make, sell, or deliver counterfeit controlled substances. Depending upon the facts, the penalty can be up to 180 days in jail and a \$1,000 fine, and result in a driver's license suspension for a period of six months to five years. Aggravating circumstances can also cause the offense to become a felony of the fourth degree with prison terms between 6-18 months and a fine up to \$5,000.

#### Local Law

The cities of Toledo and Youngstown enforce all of the state criminal statutes cited above and may provide for additional sanctions for illegal alcohol and drug use.

**Awareness Program**

Any student who wishes counseling or help with substance abuse should contact the Director of Counseling, Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students, or Vice President of Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty, for assistance with referral. Since the College does not currently have professional rehabilitation services, referrals will generally be to outside agencies or programs. The student will be responsible for the cost of the programs if not covered by medical insurance.

Examples of available agencies or programs in the Toledo area are:

Arrowhead Behavioral Health	(419) 891-9333
Lutheran Social Services	(419) 243-9178
Fresh Attitude, Inc.	(419) 244-4081
Glenbeigh	(419) 536-4000
Philio New Concepts	(419) 531-5544
Rescue Mental Health Services	(419) 255-9585
Racing for Recovery	(419) 824-8462
Unison Behavioral Health Group	(419) 242-9577
Zepf Center	(419) 841-7701

Examples of available agencies or programs in the Youngstown area are:

Alcoholics Anonymous	(330) 270-3000
Gateway Rehab	(800) 228-8287
Meridian Community Care	(330) 797-0070
New Day Recovery	(330) 953-3300
Adult & Teen Challenge Ohio Valley	(330) 743-9030

**Health Risks**

There is a vast array of health risks associated with chronic drug and alcohol use including but not limited to:

- Depression
- Liver and kidney disease
- Psychosis and impaired thinking
- Heart attack
- Seizures
- Strokes
- High blood pressure
- Violent outbursts
- Paranoia
- Anxiety
- Increased risk of birth defects and developmental issues during and after pregnancy.

For more information about the health risks associated with chemical dependency please see [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov).

**Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention**

In accordance with FSA requirements from the 1989 Amendments to the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986 and 1988 (Public Law 101-226), Mercy College must make a good faith

effort on a continuing basis to maintain a drug-free environment for its faculty, staff and students. The Division of Student Affairs at Mercy College of Ohio is responsible for providing campus programming in support of an Alcohol and Drug Free Environment. The Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students is responsible for conducting a biennial review of such programming.

## **EMAIL**

All Mercy College students are required to have a College email account. Email accounts are assigned to students when admitted, including network username, email address and password. Email accounts will be used to send important correspondence from the College. Email accounts should be checked daily. All email is the property of Mercy College. Email accounts have 2GB of storage space, so it is important to delete unwanted messages. Students should check the Sent box and the Deleted box, also. Mercy College email cannot be bulk forwarded to another email address, but individual emails may be forwarded as needed. To enhance email security, students are required to install the Symantec VIP 2 Factor Authentication App on their personal phones or tablet devices as part of the login process for email accounts.

Passwords expire every 90 days for security protection. Students can change their email passwords at any time via the link provided on the Mercy College website under the [IT Help](#) page. If a password is forgotten, contact the Service-Desk at 1-800-498-1408.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, June 2018*

The purpose of this policy is to outline the use of Mercy College of Ohio's ("College") computer resources accessed by students for educational and research purposes. The intention is to keep restrictions on individual use to a minimum. It is essential that users observe reasonable standards of behavior regarding the use of the computing facilities and services. The College reserves the right to access all information on the College's computers, equipment, and network without prior notice.

- I. Students who are, as part of their study and/or work (paid, volunteer or contract), required to or involved with use of the College's computers ("users") must agree to abide by the standards of this policy to use these resources, which prohibits the following:
  - A. Any attempt to modify or damage computer equipment;
  - B. Tampering of computer and/or network resources or engaging in any activity to interfere with normal operations of computers, network, and facilities;
  - C. Improper use of computer equipment including, but not limited to:
    1. Connecting personal or unapproved equipment to any college-owned computer or to the network;
    2. Installing personal software, including non-academic games, on college-owned computer;
    3. Installing college software on equipment that is personally owned;
    4. Recreational game playing;
    5. Knowingly using any system to produce system failure or degrade performance



(e.g., creating or propagating viruses, overloading network with excessive data, instituting or promulgating chain letters, or instigating unauthorized mass posting of any types).

- D. Using an ID belonging to another individual or sharing user IDs and passwords with other users or any other person;
  - E. Making unauthorized copies of licensed software and illegally using copyrighted software and materials;
  - F. Using computer resources for private purposes including for-profit endeavors or illegal purposes and, in a manner, inconsistent with the College's license agreements;
  - G. Unauthorized reading, use of, or deletion of private files or email belonging to another user. This includes accessing or intentionally destroying college software;
  - H. Engaging in the unauthorized duplication, alteration or destruction of data, programs, or software;
  - I. Communicating any credit card number or other financial account number, or any social security number with/without the permission of the owner;
  - J. Circumventing or subverting any system or network security measures;
  - K. Posting of obscene materials; this activity is unlawful, and users are specifically cautioned against linking to sites that contain such materials, even if the site has other useful content;
  - L. Use of College email should adhere to the same standards of conduct as any other form of mail. The use of distasteful, inflammatory, harassing, or otherwise unacceptable comments is prohibited. The College may engage in monitoring of email messages or other electronic files created by students, faculty, and staff. Users are asked to delete unnecessary emails on a regular basis.
- II. Students that are as part of their study and/or work, (paid, volunteer or contract), required to or involved with use of the College's computers will attest to their understanding of this policy at orientation.
- III. Each user is responsible for any misuse of the Information System perpetrated using the user's account or network access. Therefore, the user must take steps to ensure that others do not gain unauthorized access to Information Systems through the user's account. It is never appropriate to print, store online, or give personal passwords to others. Should tech support require the sharing of an individual's password, it is the user's responsibility to ensure the password is changed upon completion of support services. This requirement also includes the sharing of passwords with supervisors and managers.
- IV. Users are responsible for taking reasonable precautions to ensure that they do not introduce viruses into the network. Users must scan files and downloads for viruses and other destructive programs before storing or installing them on a workstation or other computer system. This includes laptops and home machines that access the network remotely. Users are required to protect any personal computer that connects to the network with an anti-virus software package, specifically the package site-licensed by Mercy Health. The anti-virus software operated on Mercy Health-supplied workstations is configured for automatic updates to the software and virus definitions on a weekly basis, e-mail scanning, automated disk scanning, and on access scanning where possible. Interruption or overriding any of these

settings is strictly prohibited without prior authorization from Information System management or staff.

- V. There is no expectation of privacy in the Mercy College e-mail system, computer equipment, network, or other informational technology resources. The following actions are specifically NOT allowed on the Mercy College e-mail system:
- Knowingly sending or forwarding any type of malicious code such as Viruses, Worms, Trojan Horses, Malware, etc.
  - Sending numerous copies of the same or substantially similar messages or sending very large messages or files to a recipient with the intent to disrupt a server or account. The propagation of chain letters is similarly prohibited, whether the recipient wishes to receive such mailings. The College is not responsible for the forwarding of e-mail sent to any account that has been suspended or terminated. Such e-mail will be returned to sender, ignored, or deleted.

## **HAZING POLICY**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, June 2018*

Mercy College of Ohio (“the College”) is committed to providing an environment of well-being, learning, and accountability for its members.

“Hazing” is the act or coercing of another, including the person being hazed, to do any act of initiation into any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person.

The College Hazing Policy is grounded in three standards and applies to both individuals and groups:

- (1) Compliance with governing law and College policies;
- (2) Respect for the College community, through the prevention/zero tolerance of hazing;
- (3) Accountability for reporting hazing.

This policy informs students of their individual and community responsibilities regarding hazing, and the College's response to Hazing Policy violations. The policy refers to College students whether they are on or off campus.

The Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students (VPSA) has primary responsibility for enforcement of this policy. The VPSA/Dean of Students and/or his/her designee will impose or modify sanctions for violations of this policy, as they deem appropriate in their sole discretion.

Any student who participates in hazing is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.

It is also a violation of policy for an administrator, staff, or faculty member to permit the hazing of any person. College employees who observe or otherwise become aware of hazing (1) must make a reasonable attempt to prevent it and (2) must immediately report the situation to the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students. When determining whether this policy has been violated, the College will consider whether the employee knew or reasonably should have known of the hazing and failed to take appropriate action.

## MINORS ON CAMPUS POLICY

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, March 2018*

Minors visit Mercy College of Ohio (the “College”) for a variety of reasons. They may visit as prospective students, as participants on field trips, to attend camps, and for other occasions. Whatever the reason for their presence, all College employees are to be particularly vigilant regarding their safety and security. With that in mind, the College has created policies aimed at protecting children who are involved with the community.

This policy applies to all minors, as defined below, who are on College property or are otherwise participating in College-sponsored programs and activities.

Faculty, staff and students are also subject to the Mercy Health Abuse and Neglect: Child, Elder, Domestic and Sexual Policy (Number: MHP-ADM-1004).

### I. Definitions

1. “Child abuse or neglect” is when a child has suffered or faces a substantial threat of suffering any physical or mental injury that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect, including that of a sexual nature.
2. “Minors” are persons under the age of eighteen (18) who are not enrolled or accepted for enrollment at Mercy College of Ohio as a student. The term “minor” and “child” are used interchangeably in this policy.

### II. Reporting Suspected Abuse or Neglect

1. Consistent with Ohio law, it is the College’s policy that any employee who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a minor has been subjected to abuse or neglect, may be subjected to abuse or neglect, or faces a threat of abuse or neglect shall immediately make a report as described in Procedure 176, Section I. For purposes of this paragraph, “reasonable cause” does not require that the individual making the observation conduct an investigation prior to making the report of his or her “reasonable” suspicion that a minor has been abused or neglected or is at risk of it.
2. The College will make every reasonable effort to conduct its investigation of reported child abuse or neglect in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the person making the report. However, it may be necessary to disclose details in the course of an investigation or when required by law.
3. Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent non-employees, such as students and visitors, from making a report if they have reasonable cause to suspect that child abuse or neglect has occurred or may occur.

### III. Supervision of Minors on Campus

1. No minors are to be left alone or unsupervised on college property: this includes, but is not limited to classrooms, offices, skills labs, science labs, student lounges, waiting areas, etc. It is the responsibility of anyone who brings minors to campus to ensure supervision of that minor. If a minor has been left unattended, this should be reported as described in Procedure 176, Section II.

### IV. Minors in the Workplace or Classroom

1. As discussed in this section, in certain circumstances, it may be appropriate for faculty, staff, and students to bring their minor children to the workplace or classroom. In such situations, the goal should be to foster respect for the needs of all parties impacted by the presence of the minor children. Employees and supervisors must consider issues of safety, confidentiality, disruption of operations, disruption of services, disruption to other employees, appropriateness and liability posed by the presence of the minor children in the workplace. Faculty, staff, and students:
  - a. May occasionally bring minors to the workplace for brief visits, specific campus events, situational convenience, or family emergencies. These should be occasional and not in the place of regular childcare.
  - b. Must obtain prior approval from their workplace supervisor or classroom instructor before bringing a minor to the workplace or classroom.
  - c. Accept full responsibility for the minor's safety and supervision, and for any damage to property or injury to persons that is caused by the minor's presence.
  - d. Accept responsibility for monitoring the minor's behavior to prevent interruptions to College business or instruction.
2. Minors are not allowed in high-risk or hazardous areas as defined by the supervisor or instructor. These areas may include mechanical rooms, food preparation areas, areas with heavy equipment, College vehicles, or laboratories or other specialized hazardous areas.
3. At all times, the College reserves the right to not allow a minor to attend work or class with a faculty member, staff member, or student.

### **Procedures for Reporting**

- I. Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect
  - a. An external report should be made to one of the following:
    - i. Ohio's Child Abuse Reporting Hotline at 1-855-OH-CHILD (1- 855-642-4453)
    - ii. Toledo Resources
      1. Lucas County Children Services Agency  
Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline: 419-213-CARE (419-213-2273)  
In person report: 705 Adam St., Toledo, OH 43604  
Hours: 8:00-5:00, Mon-Fri
      2. Toledo Police Department  
Emergency: 911  
Non-emergency: 419-245-3246
    - iii. Youngstown Resources
      1. Mahoning County Children Services Agency  
Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline: 330-941-8888  
In person report: 222 W. Federal St., 4th Floor, Youngstown, OH 44503  
Hours: 8:30-4:30, Mon-Fri
      2. Youngstown Police Department  
Emergency: 911  
Non-emergency: 330-742-8926

- b. To the extent possible, the report made pursuant to subsection a, above, should include the following information:
    - i. The names and address(es) of the child and the child’s parents or the person or persons having custody of the child.
    - ii. The child’s age.
    - iii. The nature and extent of the child’s injuries, abuse, or neglect (or the threat thereof) that is known or reasonably suspected or believed to have occurred, including any evidence of previous injuries, abuse, or neglect.
    - iv. Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury, abuse, or neglect (or the threat thereof) that is known or reasonably suspected or believed to have occurred.
  - c. After the report has been made pursuant to subsection a, above, the reporter should promptly provide relevant information to the following college official: Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students at (419) 251-1512.
- II. Reporting Unattended Minors on Campus
- a. If it believed that a minor is unattended on campus for any reason, this should be reported immediately to the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students at 419-251-1512.

## **PREGNANT STUDENT POLICY**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, March 2020*

The purpose of this policy is to address the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, a federal law prohibiting sex discrimination in federally-funded education programs and activities. Mercy College of Ohio prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, which can include pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, in its educational programs and activities. This policy establishes guidelines and associated procedures for the protection and equal treatment of pregnant individuals or persons with pregnancy-related conditions at Mercy College.

This policy applies to all aspects of Mercy College of Ohio’s programs, including, but not limited to, admissions, financial assistance, educational programs and activities, extra-curricular activities, hiring, leave policies, employment policies, and health insurance coverage.

### I. Policy Statement

- 1. A student who is pregnant is strongly encouraged to notify the College as soon as possible. By doing so, the student and College personnel can collaborate and develop an appropriate plan for the continuation of the student’s education in light of the unique nature of the College’s health sciences programs and their clinical requirements. Pre-planning can also help with particular challenges a student may face while pregnant or when recovering from childbirth (e.g., missed classes, make-up work, etc.). However, the choice to declare a pregnancy is voluntary, and a student is not required to disclose this information to the College.

### II. Voluntary Disclosure and Options

1. If a student voluntarily decides to disclose a pregnancy to the College, the student should contact the Title IX Coordinator/Deputy Title IX Coordinator. Once this disclosure occurs, the student will have several options, as described below.
  - a. Continue at the College
    - (1) If a student decides to continue in their program and desires to have any adjustments to their academic program due to the pregnancy, the student and the Title IX Coordinator/Deputy Title IX Coordinator, along with the Director of Accessibility Services as needed, will discuss any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary to continue in the program.
    - (2) While reasonable adjustments will be made in appropriate circumstances, nothing in this policy requires modification of the essential elements of any academic program.
    - (3) Adjustments that have been agreed upon, if any, will be documented and signed by both the student and the Title IX Coordinator/Deputy Title IX Coordinator.
  - b. Request a leave of absence
    - (1) A student may desire to take a leave of absence due to pregnancy, and the Title IX Coordinator/Deputy Title IX Coordinator is available to discuss this option with the student.
    - (2) A leave of absence due to pregnancy may be for various amounts of time depending on a student's particular circumstances. Such a leave may be extended if deemed medically necessary by the student's doctor.
    - (3) Due to the structure of the College's health sciences programs, the timing and/or length of a student's leave of absence may result in the student being required to re-take or finish course(s) in a future term.
    - (4) If taking a leave of absence due to a pregnancy, an Education Plan will be discussed and signed by the student and the Title IX Coordinator/Deputy Title IX Coordinator.
  - c. Withdraw from the College
    - (1) The student may, in their sole discretion, determine that they must withdraw from the College for an indefinite period of time or permanently due to pregnancy. Normal College withdrawal procedures, and readmission procedures (if applicable), apply.

### III. Questions or Concerns

1. A student who has questions about this policy or who is concerned about its implementation, should contact the Title IX Coordinator/Deputy Title IX Coordinator.

### **SERVICE/EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL/PET POLICY**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, March 2019*

In accordance of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 supports the use of service animals and emotional support animals on campus by individuals with disabilities. This policy provides guidelines for the presence of service animals, emotional support animals, and pets on Mercy College ("College") property. It is designed to fulfill

the College's mission statement and meet the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

This policy applies to all College-controlled properties.

The College categorizes animals into three classifications: service animals, emotional support animals, and pets. Guidelines regarding each of these classifications are outlined below.

### **Service Animals**

A service animal is any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not considered service animals.

Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or tasks performed must be directly related to the individual's disability. The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition. The College may permit the use of a miniature horse on the same basis as a service animal in some situations; such requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Individuals with disabilities can bring their service animal into all College facilities where members of the public, program participants, clients, customers, patrons, or invitees are allowed. No prior approval is necessary. A service animal can be excluded from certain areas of College facilities if its presence would fundamentally alter the nature of a program or activity, be disruptive, or interfere with legitimate safety requirements (e.g. a surgery or burn unit in a hospital in which a sterile field is required).

### **Emotional support animals**

Emotional support animals (ESAs) are companion animals that provide therapeutic benefit, such as alleviating or mitigating the symptoms of a person's disability. Unlike service animals, ESAs are not trained to perform work or tasks and they can include animals other than dogs and miniature horses. Students who wish to bring an ESA to campus as an exception to the "no pet" provisions of this policy must request an accommodation through the Office of Accessibility Services pursuant to the Procedures outlined below. While accommodation requests will be accepted and considered at any time, requests should be filed at least 90 days before the student intends to bring the animal to campus in order to ensure timely consideration. An ESA will not be allowed until formal approval has been received.

### **Handler/Owner Definitions**

A "handler" is a person with a disability that a service animal assists or a personal care attendant who handles the animal for a person with a disability. An "owner" is a student or employee who has an approved ESA on campus.

**Inquiries Regarding Service Animals**

In general, members of the College community should not ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability. However, as permitted by the ADA, if it is not obvious that the animal is required because of a disability, the handler may be asked:

1. Is the animal required because of a disability?
2. What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

Faculty, staff or students cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical or training documentation, or ask that the service animal demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task. Community members should not make inquiries about a service animal when it is readily apparent that an animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability (e.g., if the dog is observed guiding an individual who is blind or has low vision, pulling a person's wheelchair, or providing assistance with stability or balance to an individual with an observable mobility disability).

**Employee Requests**

Employees with a disability who wish to (1) utilize a service animal as a reasonable accommodation in an office or other areas of campus buildings not open to the general public, or (2) utilize an ESA on campus must submit the request to Human Resources at least 30 days before the animal is needed. Please refer to Mercy Health Regional Policy Accommodation of Service Animals.

**Requirements for the College Community**

Members of the College community are required to abide by the following practices:

1. Do not touch or pet a service or emotional support animal unless invited to do so.
2. Do not feed a service or emotional support animal.
3. Do not deliberately startle a service or emotional support animal.
4. Do not separate or attempt to separate a handler/owner from his or her service or emotional support animal.

**Pets**

For reasons of sanitation, noise, and potential health problems, pets (including hamsters, aquatic frogs, fish, turtles, etc.) are strictly prohibited in all campus facilities. All prohibited pets must be removed from campus property immediately or the owner may face a fine and/or disciplinary action. All pets brought onto campus outdoor spaces must be leashed, not left unattended, and all waste must be picked up.

**Removal of Service Animals or Disapproval/Removal of ESAs**

The College may remove a service animal or disapprove/remove an ESA in certain situations. Such decisions are made on a case-by-case basis in accordance with applicable laws. The following general standards reflect reasons why an animal may be removed or disapproved:

1. The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. For example, the animal displays vicious behavior towards others or has a serious illness.
2. The animal causes or would cause substantial physical damage to the property of others.
3. The animal poses an undue financial and/or administrative burden.
4. The animal would fundamentally alter the nature of the College's educational operations.



5. The animal is out of control and the handler/owner does not take effective action to control it. If the out of control behavior happens repeatedly, the handler/owner may be prohibited from bringing the animal into College facilities until the handler/owner can demonstrate that he/she has taken significant steps to mitigate the behavior.
6. The animal is not housebroken.
7. The handler/owner does not abide by his/her responsibilities under this policy.

When an animal has been properly removed pursuant to this policy, the College will work with the handler/owner to determine reasonable alternative opportunities to participate in the College's services, programs, and activities without having the animal on the premises.

### **Responsibilities of Handlers/Owners**

**Laws, Ordinances, and Policies:** Handlers/owners are responsible for complying with all state laws and local animal ordinances. The cities of Toledo and Youngstown require all dogs to be licensed and registered. Dogs must wear license tags at all times. The City of Toledo also mandates that every female dog in heat shall be confined in a building or secured enclosure in such a manner that such female dog cannot come into contact with another animal, except for planned breeding.

**Proper Identification:** All animals are subject to local licensing and registration requirements.

**Health and Vaccination:** Animals must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. All vaccinations must be current. These animals must wear a rabies vaccination tag, and in the case of ESAs, vaccination documentation must be provided to the Office of Accessibility Services

**Caring for the Animal:** The cost of care, arrangements and responsibilities for the well-being of the animal are the sole responsibility of the handler/owner at all times. The College will accept no responsibility for the care of any animal covered by this policy.

- A. Animals must be kept clean and well groomed. College facilities such as sinks, bathrooms, and the like may not be used for this purpose.
- B. Animals cannot be left unattended. Animals cannot be confined to a vehicle, tethered or abandoned at any time.
- C. Animals must be well cared for at all times. Any evidence of mistreatment, abuse, or neglect may result in immediate removal of the animal and/or disciplinary action. If animal abuse is suspected, it will be directly reported to Mercy Protective Services, the Director of Student Life, and/or Lucas County Animal Services. Any costs incurred during the removal of the animal will be billed to its handler/owner.
- D. Owners of an ESA must provide the Office of Accessibility Services and the Office of Student Life with contact information for an alternate caregiver. This information will be used in case of an emergency, or if the person is unable or unwilling to provide adequate care for the animal.

**Keeping the Animal Under Control:** The animal should be fully controlled by the handler/owner, including responding to voice and/or hand commands (if this can reasonably be expected of the type of animal at issue). If an animal is found loose or unattended, the animal is subject to immediate removal.

**Being Responsible for Damage Caused by the Animal:** Handlers/owners are personally responsible for any damage caused by their animals and must take appropriate precautions to prevent property damage. The handler/owner will be required to pay for any damages caused by the animal.

**Being Responsible for Waste:** Cleaning up after the animal is the sole responsibility of the handler/owner and it must be done immediately. Waste must be bagged and discarded in designated outdoor receptacles. No waste may be flushed down toilets or discarded in interior waste bins. In the event that the handler/owner is not physically able to clean up after the animal, it is then the responsibility of the handler/owner to hire someone capable of cleaning up after the animal.

**Leash Requirements:** Service animals should be on a leash at all times, unless the handler is unable to use a leash due to a disability or the use of the leash would interfere with the animal's ability to perform its duties. In that case, the handler must be able to control the service animal by other effective means such as voice controls or signals. ESAs must be on a leash or in a crate or carrier at all times.

**Observing Good Animal Etiquette:** To the greatest extent possible, the handler/owner should ensure that the animal does not display behaviors or make noises that are disruptive or frightening to others, unless it is part of the service being provided to the handler (e.g., barking to alert the handler of danger). The animal must possess friendly and sociable characteristics.

**Limitations on Liability:** The College is not responsible for the loss, damage to, or death of a service or emotional support animal.

**Other Conditions and Restrictions:** In response to a particular situation, the College reserves the right to impose other reasonable conditions or restrictions on the use of service animals and ESAs as necessary to ensure the health, safety, and reasonable enjoyment of College programs and activities by others.

### **Conflicting Disabilities**

Mercy College is aware that persons at the College may have a condition or disability that may precipitate an allergic reaction to the service animal or ESA. Persons who have asthma/allergy/medical issues because of the animal should take their concerns to the Office of Accessibility Services. Action will be taken to consider the needs of both persons to resolve the problem as efficiently and effectively as possible.

### **Grievance Procedures**

If the decision is made to deny a request for or remove an animal covered by this policy, the affected individual may file a formal written grievance with the Office of Accessibility Services.

### **Reasonable Modifications to this Policy**

Individuals wishing to request a modification or exception to this policy as a reasonable accommodation should contact the Office of Accessibility Services.

### **Policy Questions**

Questions or concerns related to this policy should be addressed to the following:

Office of Accessibility Services  
2221 Madison Avenue, Toledo, OH 43604  
[ADA504@mercycollege.edu](mailto:ADA504@mercycollege.edu)  
Phone: 419-251-1784  
Fax: 419-251-1746

**Requesting Accommodation for an Emotional Support Animal**

A student requesting the assistance of an emotional support animal must first provide verification to the Office of Accessibility Services that she or he has a qualifying disability and that the animal is needed to fully participate in the College's educational programs and activities. The student's health care provider, who is familiar with the professional literature concerning the assistive and/or therapeutic benefits of assistance animals for people with disabilities, must submit a signed letter on professional letterhead, expressing the following:

1. A current diagnostic statement that identifies the student's disability, including date of initial and most current diagnosis, any evaluations/testing that support the diagnosis, and a description of the functional limitation of the disability;
2. The provider's opinion that the condition qualifies as a disability under federal law, including the major life activities which are substantially limited by the disability;
3. Any additional rationale or statement the College may reasonably need to understand the basis for the professional opinion;
4. The provider must give her/his professional opinion of how the student's documented disability relates to the necessity of the animal's presence on campus; and
5. The provider's description of the relationship between the disability and the relief the animal provides.

Examples of a "healthcare provider" may be a therapist/counselor, psychologist, psychiatrist, primary care doctor, or nurse. However, other healthcare providers may be qualified to provide documentation for the student's disability and need for an emotional support animal.

In addition to the above documentation from a healthcare provider, the student must provide the following documentation before approval will be granted to utilize an ESA on campus:

1. Record of License & Registration in Toledo, OH or Youngstown, OH (for canines only)
2. Record of up-to-date Vaccinations
3. Record of current Veterinarian Clean Bill of Health
4. Signed Form 505A- Statement of Acknowledgement of the Emotional Support/Service Animal/Pet Policy
5. Completed form of Identification of Emotional Support and Service Animal and Emergency Contact/Alternate Caregiver of Animal
6. A clear photograph of the animal

The required documentation may be mailed, scanned/emailed, faxed, or delivered in person to the Office of Accessibility Services. Contact information is as follows:

Attention: Director of Accessibility Services

2221 Madison Avenue

Toledo, Ohio 43604

Phone: 419-251-1784

Fax: 419-251-1746

Office of Accessibility Services (Youngstown)

1044 Belmont Ave.

Youngstown, OH 44501

Phone: 330-480-2874

Fax: 330-480-3724

Email: [ADA504@mercycollege.edu](mailto:ADA504@mercycollege.edu)

The Office of Accessibility Services will review documentation and, if determined that a qualifying disability exists, the Director of Accessibility Services shall meet with the student requesting approval for the ESA. This policy will be carefully reviewed with the student at that time and an interactive dialogue will take place to determine whether or not the animal is a reasonable accommodation, considering alternative accommodations and the impact of the animal on campus.

**The Director of Accessibility Services reserves the right to request additional clinical information from the professional who provided the initial letter of recommendation for the emotional support animal.**

If the accommodation of an emotional support animal cannot be granted, the College will make every reasonable effort to find ways to assist the student in her/his academic progress.

All questions and inquiries should be directed to the Mercy College Office of Accessibility Services at 419-251-1784.

## **COMMUNICATION AND THE USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Mercy College communicates with students in a variety of ways, and students are expected to take an active role in reading and responding to College communication in a timely manner. College communication is provided in the following ways:

- Email
- Mercy College Website and News Blog
- Student Weekly News: Inside Mercy College (*delivered by email*)
- Bulletin Boards throughout campus
- Building intercom announcements
- Digital Monitors
- RAVE Alerts

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

*(formerly TITLE IX, VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CAMPUS SAVE POLICY)*

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, August 2020*

Mercy College of Ohio does not discriminate on the basis of sex, gender, or sexual orientation in its educational programs and activities. Mercy College is committed to building and preserving a community in which its members can learn, work, live, and conduct business together free from all forms of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment.

Consistent with the College's Non-Discrimination Notice and the U.S. Department of Education's implementing regulations for Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX") (see 34 C.F.R. § 106 et seq.), the College prohibits Sexual Harassment that occurs within its Education Programs and Activities.

As further defined herein, Sexual Harassment includes Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment, Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking.

This policy applies to Sexual Harassment that occurs within the College's Education Programs and Activities and that is committed by an administrator, faculty member, staff, student, contractor, guest, or other member of the College community. Other forms of sex discrimination are addressed by the College's Civil Rights/Nondiscrimination Policy.

This policy does not apply to Sexual Harassment that occurs off-campus, in a private setting, and outside the scope of the College's Education Programs and Activities; such Sexual Misconduct may be prohibited by the College's Civil Rights/Nondiscrimination Policy, the Student Code of Conduct if committed by a student, or the Bon Secours Mercy Health Non- Harassment/Non-Discrimination and Corrective Action policies if committed by a faculty member, or a staff or administrative employee.

Consistent with the U.S. Department of Education's implementing regulations for Title IX, this policy does not apply to Sexual Harassment that occurs outside the geographic boundaries of the United States, even if the Sexual Harassment occurs in the College's Education Programs and Activities. Sexual Harassment that occurs outside the geographic boundaries of the United States is governed by the College's Civil Rights/Nondiscrimination Policy, the Student Code of Conduct if committed by a student, or the Bon Secours Mercy Health Non- Harassment/Non-Discrimination and Corrective Action policies if committed by a faculty member, or a staff or administrative employee.

This policy also addresses the requirements of the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act, or Campus SaVE Act, a 2013 amendment to the federal Jeanne Clery Act. The SaVE Act addresses sexual violence in the form of sexual assault, as well as the crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

Mercy College of Ohio encourages victims of sexual assault and violence to talk to the Title IX Coordinator, Deputy Title IX Coordinator or counselor at the institution about what happened, so victims can get the support they need.

All Mercy College employees are required to report knowledge of Sexual Harassment to the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator, except employees bound by confidentiality (professional counselors and clergy).

### **Minors**

Students under the age of 18 may enroll full or part-time at Mercy College of Ohio. In addition to having students who are minors enrolled, Mercy College hosts minors as guests and as participants in a variety of programs. In accordance with Mercy College of Ohio Policy 176 -Minors on Campus and as well as Ohio law, any employee who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a minor has been subjected to abuse or neglect, may be subjected to abuse or neglect, or faces a threat of abuse or neglect shall immediately make a report to the appropriate officials (please refer to Mercy College Policy 176 for options). In certain instances, mental health professionals, counselors, clergy and law enforcement are imposed to report certain crimes involving minors, and abuse, to appropriate officials as well. Further, all employees must report suspected violations of this policy, whether the Complainant or the Respondent is a minor, to the Title IX Coordinator/Deputy Title IX Coordinator. Clery Act reporting of offenses for statistical purposes occurs whether victims are minors or adults.

Mercy College will notify parents/guardians of minor students/guests/participants of any possible child abuse or neglect, as well as any possible violation of this policy, whether the minor is the Complainant or Respondent.

### **Title IX Coordinator/Deputy Title IX Coordinator**

#### **Title IX Coordinator**

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for the prompt response to reports of Sexual Harassment, as well as training, education, communication, and administration of grievance procedures for handling formal complaints alleging violations of this policy. In the absence of the Title IX Coordinator, the Deputy Title IX Coordinator will assume all responsibility for compliance relative to Title IX.

#### **Deputy Title IX Coordinator**

The Deputy Title IX Coordinator is responsible for implementing and monitoring policy compliance at Youngstown. This includes working with the Title IX Coordinator for training, education, communication, and administration of grievance procedures for handling complaints alleging violations of the policy at Youngstown. The Deputy Coordinator is responsible for informing the Title IX Coordinator of alleged violations and procedures to address these violations at Youngstown. In the absence of the Deputy Title IX Coordinator at Youngstown, the Title IX Coordinator will assume all responsibility for compliance relative to Title IX.

### **Definitions**

#### **Complainant**

An individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute Sexual Harassment.

#### **Consent**

Consent must be informed, voluntary, and mutual, and can be withdrawn at any time. There is no consent where there is force, expressed or implied, or when coercion, intimidation, threats or

duress is used. Whether a person has taken advantage of a position of influence over another person may be a factor in determining consent. Silence or absence of resistance does not imply ongoing future consent with that person or consent to that same sexual activity with another person. Past consent does not imply future consent.

If a person is mentally or physically incapacitated or impaired so that such person cannot understand the fact, nature, or extent of the sexual situation, there is no consent; this includes impairment or incapacitation due to alcohol or drug consumption that meets this standard or being asleep or unconscious.

### **Dating Violence**

Dating violence is defined as violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim, and where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:

- The length of the relationship,
- The type of relationship, and
- The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

### **Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence is defined as felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of Ohio, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of Ohio.

### **Education Programs and Activities**

Education Programs and Activities refers to all the operations of the College, including, but not limited to, in-person and online educational instruction, employment, research activities, extracurricular activities, dining services, and community engagement and outreach programs. The term applies to all activity that occurs on campus or on other property owned or occupied by the College. It also includes off-campus locations, events, or circumstances over which the College exercises substantial control over the Respondent and the context in which the Sexual Harassment occurs, including Sexual Harassment occurring in any building owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by the College.

### **Formal Complaint**

A document filed by a Complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging Sexual Harassment against a Respondent and requesting that the College investigate the allegation of Sexual Harassment in accordance with this policy. At the time of filing a Formal Complaint, a Complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the College's education programs and activities. A "document filed by a Complainant" means a document or electronic submission (such as an email) that contains the Complainant's physical or electronic signature or otherwise indicates that the Complainant is the person filing the Complaint.

**Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment**

“Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment” is unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person access to the College’s education programs and activities. This may include conduct of a nonsexual nature that is based on an individual’s actual or perceived sex, including conduct based on gender identity, gender expression, and nonconformity with gender stereotypes.

**Incapacitation**

Incapacitation is defined as the lack of physical or mental ability to make informed, rational judgments. Examples of incapacitation include unconsciousness, sleep, and blackouts.

**Intimidation**

Unlawful act of intentionally coercing or frightening someone to do (or to not do) something against his or her will.

**Preponderance of the Evidence**

To find an individual in violation of sexual misconduct only a preponderance of evidence standard needs to exist. This means it is “more likely than not” that the violation occurred and is less strict than “proof beyond a reasonable doubt”. The evidence does not have to be “clear and convincing”.

**Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment**

“Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment” occurs when an employee of the College conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the College on an individual’s participation in unwelcome sexual contact.

**Respondent**

An individual who has been alleged to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute Sexual Harassment.

**Retaliation**

Retaliation is intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX and its implementing regulations or because an individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this policy.

**Sexual Assault**

“Sexual Assault” includes the sex offenses of Rape, Sodomy, Sexual Assault with an Object, Fondling, Incest, and Statutory Rape.<sup>2</sup>

- “Rape” is the carnal knowledge of a person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity. There is “carnal

---

<sup>2</sup> The College’s definition of “Sexual Assault” is mandated by federal regulations implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Those regulations require the College to adopt a definition of “Sexual Assault” that incorporates various forcible and non-forcible sex crimes as defined by the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reporting System. See 34 C.F.R. § 106.30(a).



knowledge” if there is the slightest penetration of the vagina or penis by the sexual organ of the other person. Attempted Rape is included.

- “Sodomy” is oral or anal sexual intercourse with another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.
- “Sexual Assault with an Object” is using an object or instrument to unlawfully penetrate, however slightly, the genital or anal opening of the body of another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity. An “object” or “instrument” is anything used by the offender other than the offender’s genitalia.
- “Fondling” is the touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.
- “Incest” is sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by Ohio law.
- “Statutory Rape” is sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent as defined by Ohio law.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is conduct on the basis of sex that constitutes Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment, Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, or Stalking.

### **Stalking**

Stalking is engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to: fear for their safety or the safety of others; or suffer substantial emotional distress.

### **Supportive Measures**

Non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered, as appropriate, and reasonably available, and without fee or charge, that are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the College’s Education Programs and Activities without unreasonably burdening another party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties implicated by a report or the College’s education environment, or to deter Sexual Harassment. Examples of Supportive measures include: counseling, extensions of academic or other deadlines, course-related adjustments, modifications to work or class schedules, campus escort services, changes in work or housing locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of campus, and other similar measures. Supportive Measures may also include mutual restrictions on contact between the parties implicated by a report.

### **Remedies**

Administrators, faculty members, staff, students, contractors, guests, and other members of the College community who commit Sexual Harassment are subject to the full range of College discipline including verbal warning; written warning; temporary suspension, suspension, dismissal; expulsion for students; written warning; final written warning; termination; performance improvement plan (PIP); or administrative leave for employees; mandatory training, coaching, or

counseling; mandatory monitoring; physical restriction from College property; cancellation of contracts; and any combination of the same.

The College will provide persons who have experienced Sexual Harassment ongoing remedies as reasonably necessary to restore or preserve access to the College's education programs and activities.

### **Reporting Procedures and Protocol**

The College's primary concern is the safety of its campus community and members. The use of alcohol or drugs never makes the victim at fault for Sexual Harassment. Moreover, victims should not be deterred from reporting incidents of Sexual Harassment.

Although there is no specific time limit for reporting a suspected violation of this policy, a student or employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to conduct that violates this policy is encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator and/or Deputy Title IX Coordinator as promptly as possible.

Any person may report Sexual Harassment to the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. Reports may be made in person, by regular mail, telephone, electronic mail, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. In-person reports must be made during normal business hours, but reports can be made by regular mail, telephone, or electronic mail at any time, including outside normal business hours.

The names and contact information for the Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Title IX Coordinator are:

#### *Title IX Coordinator- Toledo*

Leslie Erwin  
Director of Compliance and Risk Management  
Title IX Coordinator  
2221 Madison Avenue  
Toledo, Ohio 43604  
419-251-1710  
titleIX@mercycollege.edu

#### *Deputy Title IX Coordinator – Youngstown*

Elizabeth Cardwell  
1044 Belmont Avenue  
Youngstown, Ohio 44501  
330-480-2170  
Elizabeth.Cardwell@mercycollege.edu

See below for detailed information on these processes.

### **Employee Reporting Obligations**

All Mercy College employees are required to report knowledge of Sexual Harassment to the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator, except employees bound by confidentiality (professional counselors and clergy). This should occur within twenty-four hours.

Ohio law requires all employees with knowledge of a felony to report it to law enforcement. All college personnel shall report conduct prohibited by the College's Civil Rights/Nondiscrimination Policy (109) and this Sexual Harassment grievance procedure to the Title IX Coordinator.

### **Preliminary Assessment**

Upon receipt of a report of Sexual Harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will conduct a preliminary assessment to determine:

- Whether the conduct, as reported, falls or could fall within the scope of the policy; and
- Whether the conduct, as reported, constitutes or could constitute Sexual Harassment.

If the Title IX Coordinator determines that the conduct reported could not fall within the scope of the policy, and/or could not constitute Sexual Harassment, even if investigated, the Title Coordinator will close the matter and may notify the reporting party if doing so is consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"). The Title IX Coordinator may refer the report to other College offices, as appropriate.

If the Title IX Coordinator determines that the conduct reported could fall within the scope of the policy, and/or could constitute Sexual Harassment, if investigated, the Title IX Coordinator will proceed to contact the Complainant.

As part of the preliminary assessment, the Title IX Coordinator may take investigative steps to determine the identity of the Complainant, if such identity is not apparent from the report.

### **Contacting the Complainant**

If a report is not closed as a result of the preliminary assessment and the Complainant's identity is known, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly contact the Complainant to discuss the availability of Supportive Measures; to discuss and consider the Complainant's wishes with respect to such Supportive Measures; to inform the Complainant of the availability of such Supportive Measures with or without filing a Formal Complaint; and to explain the process for filing and pursuing a Formal Complaint.

All victims of sexual assault will also be provided with information and options regarding:

- Hospital, medical, nurse forensic examiner availability;
- Seeking personal counseling and advocacy;
- Preserving evidence;
- Making a complaint to local law enforcement and/or Public Safety;
- Calling 911 as needed; and
- Victim's rights and College responsibilities regarding judicial non-contact, restraining, protective orders, changing living arrangements, and federal student aid options.

### **Supportive Measures**

If a report is not closed as a result of the preliminary assessment, the College will offer and make available Supportive Measures to the Complainant regardless of whether the Complainant elects to file a Formal Complaint.

Contemporaneously with the Respondent being notified of a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will notify the Respondent of the availability of Supportive Measures for the Respondent, and the College will offer and make available Supportive Measures to the Respondent

in the same manner in which it offers and makes them available to the Complainant. The College will also offer and make available Supportive Measures to the Respondent prior to the Respondent being notified of a Formal Complaint, if the Respondent requests such measures.

The College will maintain the confidentiality of Supportive Measures provided to either a Complainant or Respondent, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality does not impair the College's ability to provide the Supportive Measures in question.

The Title IX Coordinator and/or Deputy Title IX Coordinator will communicate with each party throughout the investigation to ensure supportive measures remain necessary and effective. Failure to comply with the terms of any supportive measures that have been implemented may constitute a separate violation of this policy.

Supportive Measures may be available whether or not the Complainant chooses to report the sexual violence or assault to Public Safety/Protective Services or local law enforcement. The Title IX Coordinator and/or Deputy Title IX Coordinator remain available to assist individuals and provide reasonable remedies throughout the reporting, investigative and adjudicatory processes, and thereafter.

#### **Emergency Removal and Administrative Leave**

At any time after receiving a report of Sexual Harassment, the Title IX Coordinator may, after consultation with appropriate College officials, remove a student Respondent from the College's education programs and activities on an temporary basis if an individualized safety and risk analysis determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of Sexual Harassment justifies removal. In the event the Title IX Coordinator imposes an interim removal, the Title IX Coordinator must offer to meet with the Respondent within twenty-four hours and provide the Respondent an opportunity to challenge the emergency removal. Such meeting may, at the sole discretion of the Title IX Coordinator, include other College officials.

In the case of a Respondent who is a non-student employee (administrator, faculty, or staff), and in its discretion, the College may place the Respondent on administrative leave at any time after receiving a report of Sexual Harassment, including during the pendency of the investigation and adjudication process specified below.

For all other Respondents, including independent contractors and guests, the College retains broad discretion to prohibit such persons from entering onto its campus and other properties at any time, and for any reason, whether after receiving a report of Sexual Harassment or otherwise.

#### **Formal Complaint**

A Complainant may file a Formal Complaint with the Title IX Coordinator requesting that the College investigate and adjudicate a report of Sexual Harassment in accordance with these procedures. Provided, however, that at the time the Complainant submits a Formal Complaint, the Complainant must be participating in, or attempting to participate in, one or more of the College's education programs or activities.

A Complainant may file a Formal Complaint with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by regular mail, or by email using the contact information specified above. No person may submit a Formal Complaint on the Complainant's behalf.

A Formal Complaint should contain the dates and times of the alleged misconduct. The names of persons involved, including potential witnesses, should also be included. The Formal Complaint should outline what occurred in as much detail as possible and the redress that is being sought. Finally, the contact information for the Complainant should be included.

In any case, including a case where a Complainant elects not to file a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator may file a Formal Complaint on behalf of the College if doing so is not clearly unreasonable. Such action will normally be taken in limited circumstances involving serious or repeated conduct or where the alleged perpetrator may pose a continuing threat to the College Community.

If the Complainant or the Title IX Coordinator files a Formal Complaint, then the College will commence an investigation and proceed to adjudicate the matter as specified below. In all cases where a Formal Complaint is filed, the Complainant will be treated as a party, irrespective of the party's level of participation. In a case where the Title IX Coordinator files a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will not act as a Complainant or otherwise as a party for purposes of the investigation and adjudication processes.

#### **Consolidation of Formal Complaints**

The College may consolidate Formal Complaints where the allegations of Sexual Harassment arise out of the same facts or circumstances. Where the investigation and adjudication process involve more than one Complainant or more than one Respondent, references in this policy to the singular "party," "Complainant," or "Respondent" include the plural, as applicable. A Formal Complaint of Retaliation may be consolidated with a Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment.

#### **Dismissal Prior to Commencement of Investigation**

In a case where the Complainant files a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will evaluate the Formal Complaint and must dismiss it if the Title IX Coordinator determines:

- The conduct alleged in the Formal Complaint would not constitute Sexual Harassment, even if proved; or
- The conduct alleged in the Formal Complaint falls outside the scope of the policy (i.e., because the alleged conduct did not occur in the College's Education Programs and Activities and/or the alleged conduct occurred outside the geographic boundaries of the United States).

In the event the Title IX Coordinator determines the Formal Complaint should be dismissed, the Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice of dismissal to the parties and advise them of their right to appeal. The dismissal is a final determination unless modified or overturned on appeal. The Title IX Coordinator may refer the subject matter of the Formal Complaint to other College offices or procedures, as appropriate.

**Notice of Formal Complaint**

Within five (5) business days of the Title IX Coordinator receiving a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will transmit a written notice to the Complainant and Respondent that includes:

- A physical copy of this policy or a hyperlink to this policy;
- Sufficient details known at the time so that the parties may prepare for an initial interview with the investigator, to include the identities of the parties involved in the incident (if known), the conduct allegedly constituting Sexual Harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident (if known);
- A statement that the Respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged Sexual Harassment and that a determination of responsibility will not be made until the conclusion of the adjudication and any appeal;
- Notifying the Complainant and Respondent of their right to be accompanied by an advisor of their choice;
- Notifying the Complainant and Respondent of their right to inspect and review evidence;
- Notifying the Complainant and Respondent of the College's prohibitions on retaliation and false statements; and
- Information about resources that are available on campus and in the community.

Should the College elect, at any point, to investigate allegations that are materially beyond the scope of the initial written notice, the College will provide a supplemental written notice describing the additional allegations to be investigated.

**Criminal Reporting Procedures**

Reporting to Public Safety and/or the local police is an option at any time following a sexual violence or assault incident. If the victim chooses not to report to the police immediately, he/she can still make the report at a later time. However, with the passage of time, the ability to gather evidence to assist with criminal prosecution may be limited. Depending on the circumstances, the police may be able to obtain a criminal restraining order on the victim's behalf.

**Amnesty for Reporting**

To encourage reporting on the part of students, victims of Sexual Harassment will not be charged with alcohol, drug and most other policy violations related to their efforts to seek assistance.

**Prohibition against Retaliation**

No individual involved in a report or formal complaint alleging a violation of this policy or participating in the investigation or adjudication of such a complaint shall be subject to Retaliation.

Any report or Formal Complaint of Retaliation will be processed under this policy in the same manner as a report or Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment, as the case may be. The College retains discretion to consolidate a Formal Complaint of Retaliation with a Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment for investigation and/or adjudication purposes if the two Formal Complaints share a common nexus.

Any acts of retaliation, as defined in this policy, shall be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal for students and termination for faculty and staff.

### **Health/Counseling/Clergy**

The individual may choose to seek advice and assistance from physicians, psychotherapists, professional counselors, clergy, sexual assault and domestic violence counselors and advocates, including individuals who work or volunteer for them.

### **Civil Lawsuits**

The Complainant may choose to file a civil lawsuit against the Respondent, whether or not criminal charges have been filed. A civil lawsuit provides the Complainant the opportunity to recover actual damages, which may include compensation for medical expenses, lost wages, pain, suffering, and emotional distress.

### **Protective Orders**

The Complainant may choose to obtain a protective or restraining order. Restraining orders must be obtained from a court in the jurisdiction where the incident occurred. Restraining orders can protect victims who have experienced or are reasonably in fear of sexual violence or assault, including domestic violence, dating violence or stalking. The Title IX Coordinator/ Deputy Title IX Coordinator can offer assistance with obtaining a protective or restraining order.

### **Clergy Act**

The College is obligated to report any incidents of sexual violence or assault on its annual crime statistics under the Clergy Act. The College, under this Act, is also obligated to issue a timely warning when an incident of sexual violence or assault has occurred.

### **Non-Reporting**

The individual is strongly encouraged to report any incident of sexual violence or assault to the police and/or the College's Title IX Coordinator/Deputy Title IX Coordinator so that steps may be taken to protect the College community. However, non-reporting is also an option.

### **Investigation Procedures and Protocol**

#### **Commencement and Timing**

After the written notice of Formal Complaint is transmitted to the parties, the Title IX Coordinator or an investigator selected by the Title IX Coordinator ("investigating officer") will undertake an investigation to gather evidence relevant to the alleged misconduct, including inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. The investigating officer will conduct interviews with the Complainant, Respondent, and witnesses. The investigating officer will also collect any non- testimonial evidence including, physical and electronic and will preserve evidence in a manner that protects the quality of the evidence. The burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination in the adjudication lies with the College and not with the parties.

The investigation will culminate in a written investigation report that will be submitted to the adjudicator during the hearing process. Although the length of each investigation may vary depending on the totality of the circumstances, the College strives to complete each investigation within sixty (60) calendar days of the transmittal of the written notice of Formal Complaint.

During an investigation, the investigating officer may receive counsel from College administrators or other parties as needed.

### **Equal Opportunity**

The College will conduct a prompt, fair, and thorough investigation of all Formal Complaints. During the investigation and any related adjudication, the Complainant and Respondent shall have equal rights, including:

- Respect, dignity, and sensitivity throughout the process.
- An equal opportunity for the parties to be interviewed, to present witnesses (including fact and expert witnesses), and to present other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
- Similar and timely access to all information considered by the investigating officer.
- Equal opportunity to review any statements or evidence provided by the other party.
- Equal access to review and comment upon any other information independently developed by the investigating officer. This includes the right to review the investigation report and provide comments on it, if desired, before a hearing.
- The right to receive written notice in advance of any meetings or hearings so that they have sufficient time to prepare for meaningful participation.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the investigator retains discretion to limit the number of witness interviews the investigator conducts if the investigator finds that testimony would be unreasonably cumulative, if the witnesses are offered solely as character references and do not have information relevant to the allegations at issue, or if the witnesses are offered to render testimony that is categorically inadmissible, such as testimony concerning sexual history of the Complainant. The investigator will not restrict the ability of the parties to gather and present relevant evidence on their own.

The investigation is a party's opportunity to present testimonial and other evidence that the party believes is relevant to resolution of the allegations in the Formal Complaint. The investigating office may require the production of information by the parties by a certain date in order to facilitate a timely resolution. A party that is aware of and has a reasonable opportunity to present particular evidence and/or identify particular witnesses during the investigation, and elects not to, will be prohibited from introducing any such evidence during the adjudication absent a showing of mistake, inadvertence, surprise, or excusable neglect.

### **Documentation of Investigation**

The investigator will take reasonable steps to ensure the investigation is documented. Interviews of the parties and witnesses may be documented by the investigator's notes, audio recorded, video recorded, or transcribed. The particular method utilized to record the interviews of parties and witnesses will be determined by the investigator in the investigator's sole discretion, although whatever method is chosen shall be used consistently throughout a particular investigation.

### **Access to the Evidence**

At the conclusion of the evidence-gathering phase of the investigation, but prior to the completion of the investigation report, the Investigating Officer will transmit to each party and their advisor, in either electronic or hard copy form, all evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in the Formal Complaint, including evidence the College may choose not to rely on at any hearing and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence whether obtained from a party or some other source. Thereafter, the parties will have ten (10) business days in



which to submit to the investigator a written response, which the investigator will consider prior to completing the investigation report.

The parties and their advisors are permitted to review the evidence solely for the purposes of this grievance process and may not photograph or disseminate the evidence to the public.

### **Investigation Report**

After the period for the parties to provide any written response to the evidence, the investigator will complete a written investigation report that fairly summarizes the various steps taken during the investigation, summarizes the relevant evidence collected, lists material facts on which the parties agree, and lists material facts on which the parties do not agree. When the investigation report is complete, the investigator will transmit a copy to the Title IX Coordinator. The investigator will also transmit the investigation report to each party and their advisor, in either electronic or hard copy form.

### **Pending Criminal Investigation**

Mercy College of Ohio will comply with law enforcement requests for cooperation when appropriate. Such cooperation may require the College to temporarily suspend the fact-finding aspect of the Title IX investigation while the law enforcement agency is in the process of gathering evidence. The criminal investigation, however, does not relieve the College of its responsibilities under Title IX. The College will promptly resume its investigation as soon as notified by the law enforcement agency that it has completed the evidence gathering process of its investigation. The parameters of what information may or may not be shared with law enforcement are outlined in Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with local law enforcement.

### **Advisor of Choice**

Both the Complainant and Respondent may ask a support person/advisor to accompany him or her at all stages of the process. The advisor may be, but is not required to be, an attorney.

Except for the questioning of witnesses during the hearing, the advisor will play a passive role and is not permitted to communicate on behalf of a party, insist that communication flow through the advisor, or communicate with the College about the matter without the party being included in the communication. The support person/advisor must agree to maintain the confidentiality of the process.

In the event a party's advisor of choice engages in material violation of the parameters specified in these procedures, the College may preclude the advisor from further participation, in which case the party may select a new advisor of their choice.

In the event a party is not able to secure an advisor to attend the hearing and requests the College to provide an advisor, the College will provide the party an advisor, without fee or charge, who will conduct questioning on behalf of the party at the hearing. The College will have sole discretion to select the advisor it provides. The advisor the College provides may be, but is not required to be, an attorney.

The College is not required to provide a party with an advisor in any circumstance except where the party does not have an advisor present at the hearing specified in these procedures and requests that the College provide an advisor.

### **Grievance/Adjudication Procedures**

#### **Hearing Officer**

Upon receipt of the investigation report, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly appoint a hearing officer who will oversee the hearing process and render a determination of responsibility for the allegations in the Formal Complaint, at the conclusion of the hearing process. The Title IX Coordinator will see that the hearing officer is provided a copy of the investigation report and a copy of all evidence transmitted to the parties by the investigator.

#### **Hearing Notice and Response to Investigation Report**

After the hearing officer is appointed by the Title IX Coordinator, the hearing officer will promptly transmit written notice to the parties notifying the parties of the hearing officer's appointment; setting a deadline for the parties to submit any written response to the investigation report; setting a date for the pre-hearing conference; setting a date and time for the hearing; and providing a copy of the College's Hearing Procedures. Neither the pre-hearing conference, nor the hearing itself, may be held any earlier than ten (10) business days from the date of transmittal of the written hearing notice.

A party's written response to the investigation report must include:

- To the extent the party disagrees with the investigation report, any argument or commentary regarding such disagreement;
- Any argument that evidence should be categorically excluded from consideration at the hearing based on privilege, relevancy, the prohibition on the use of sexual history, or for any other reason;
- A list of any witnesses that the party contends should be requested to attend the hearing pursuant to an attendance notice issued by the hearing officer;
- A list of any witnesses that the party intends to bring to the hearing without an attendance notice issued by the hearing officer;
- Any objection that the party has to the College's Hearing Procedures;
- Any request that the parties be separated physically during the pre-hearing conference and/or hearing;
- Any other accommodations that the party seeks with respect to the pre-hearing conference and/or hearing;
- The name and contact information of the advisor who will accompany the party at the pre-hearing conference and hearing;
- If the party does not have an advisor who will accompany the party at the hearing, a request that the College provide an advisor for purposes of conducting questioning as specified in these procedures.

A party's written response to the investigation report may also include:

- Argument regarding whether any of the allegations in the Formal Complaint are supported by a preponderance of the evidence; and
- Argument regarding whether any of the allegations in the Formal Complaint constitute Sexual Harassment.

**Pre-Hearing Conference**

Prior to the hearing, the hearing officer will conduct a pre-hearing conference with the parties and their advisors. The pre-hearing conference will be conducted live, with simultaneous and contemporaneous participation by the parties and their advisors. By default, the pre-hearing conference will be conducted with the hearing officer, the parties, the advisors, and other necessary College personnel together in the same physical location. However, upon request of either party, the parties will be separated into different rooms with technology enabling the parties to participate simultaneously and contemporaneously by video and audio.

In the hearing officer's discretion, the pre-hearing conference may be conducted virtually, by use of video and audio technology, where all participants participate simultaneously and contemporaneously by use of such technology.

During the pre-hearing conference, the hearing officer will discuss the hearing procedures with the parties; address matters raised in the parties' written responses to the investigation report, as the hearing officer deems appropriate; discuss whether any stipulations may be made to expedite the hearing; discuss the witnesses the parties have requested be served with notices of attendance and/or witnesses the parties plan to bring to the hearing without a notice of attendance; and resolve any other matters that the hearing officer determines, in the hearing officer's discretion, should be resolved before the hearing.

**Issuance of Notices of Attendance**

After the pre-hearing conference, the hearing officer will transmit notices of attendance to any College employee (including administrator, faculty, or staff) or student whose attendance is requested at the hearing as a witness. The notice will advise the subject of the specified date and time of the hearing and advise the subject to contact the hearing officer immediately if there is a material and unavoidable conflict.

The subject of an attendance notice should notify any manager, faculty member, or other supervisor, as necessary, if attendance at the hearing will conflict with job duties, classes, or other obligations. All such managers, faculty members, coaches, and other supervisors are required to excuse the subject of the obligation, or provide some other accommodation, so that the subject may attend the hearing as specified in the notice.

The College will not issue a notice of attendance to any witness who is not an employee or a student.

**Hearing**

After the pre-hearing conference, the hearing officer will convene and conduct a hearing pursuant to the College's Hearing Procedures. The hearing will be audio recorded. The audio recording will be made available to the parties for inspection and review on reasonable notice, including for use in preparing any subsequent appeal.

The hearing will be conducted live, with simultaneous and contemporaneous participation by the parties and their advisors. By default, the hearing will be conducted with the hearing officer, the parties, the advisors, witnesses, and other necessary College personnel together in the same physical location. However, upon request of either party, the parties will be separated into

different rooms with technology enabling the parties to participate simultaneously and contemporaneously by video and audio.

In the hearing officer's discretion, the hearing may be conducted virtually, by use of video and audio technology, where all participants participate simultaneously and contemporaneously by use of such technology.

While the Hearing Procedures and rulings from the hearing officer will govern the particulars of the hearing, each hearing will include, at a minimum:

- Opportunity for each party to address the hearing officer directly and to respond to questions posed by the hearing officer;
- Opportunity for each party's advisor to ask directly, orally, and in real time, relevant questions, and follow up questions, of the other party and any witnesses, including questions that support or challenge credibility;
- Opportunity for each party to raise contemporaneous objections to testimonial or non-testimonial evidence and to have such objections ruled on by the hearing officer and a reason for the ruling provided;
- Opportunity for each party to submit evidence that the party did not present during the investigation due to mistake, inadvertence, surprise, or excusable neglect;
- Opportunity for each party to make a brief closing argument.

Except as otherwise permitted by the hearing officer, the hearing will be closed to all persons except the parties, their advisors, the investigator, the hearing officer, the Title IX Coordinator, and other necessary College personnel. Except for the investigator and the parties, witnesses will be sequestered until such time as their testimony is complete.

During the hearing, the parties and their advisors will have access to the investigation report and evidence that was transmitted to them earlier.

While a party has the right to attend and participate in the hearing with an advisor, a party and/or advisor who materially and repeatedly violates the rules of the hearing in such a way as to be materially disruptive, may be barred from further participation and/or have their participation limited, as the case may be, in the discretion of the hearing officer.

Subject to the minimum requirements specified here, the hearing officer will have sole discretion to determine the manner and particulars of any given hearing, including with respect to the length of the hearing, the order of the hearing, and questions of admissibility. The hearing officer will independently and contemporaneously screen questions for relevance in addition to resolving any contemporaneous objections raised by the parties and will explain the rationale for any evidentiary rulings.

The hearing is not a formal judicial proceeding and strict rules of evidence do not apply. The hearing officer will have discretion to modify the Hearing Procedures, when good cause exists to do so, and provided the minimal requirements specified in this section are met.

### **Subjection to Questioning**

In the event that any party or witness refuses to attend the hearing, or attends but refuses to submit to questioning by the parties' advisors, the statements of that party or witness, as the case may be,

whether given during the investigation or during the hearing, will not be considered by the hearing officer in reaching a determination of responsibility.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the hearing officer may consider the testimony of any party or witness, whether given during the investigation or during the hearing, if the parties jointly stipulate that the testimony may be considered or in the case where neither party requested attendance of the witness at the hearing.

The hearing officer will not draw an inference about the determination regarding responsibility based solely on a party or a witness's absence from the live hearing and/or refusal to submit to questioning by the parties' advisors.

### **Deliberation and Determination**

After the hearing is complete, the hearing officer will objectively evaluate all relevant evidence collected during the investigation, including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence, together with testimony and non-testimony evidence received at the hearing, and ensure that any credibility determinations made are not based on a person's status as a Complainant, Respondent, or witness. The hearing officer will take care to exclude from consideration any evidence that was ruled inadmissible at the pre-hearing conference, during the hearing, or by operation of the prohibition against considering the sexual history of the Complainant.

The hearing officer will resolve disputed facts using a preponderance of the evidence (i.e., "more likely than not") standard and reach a determination regarding whether the facts that are supported by a preponderance of the evidence constitute one or more violations of the policy as alleged in the Formal Complaint.

### **Discipline and Remedies**

In the event the hearing officer determines that the Respondent is responsible for violating this policy, the hearing officer will, prior to issuing a written decision, consult with an appropriate College official with disciplinary authority over the Respondent and such official will determine any discipline to be imposed. The hearing officer will also, prior to issuing a written decision, consult with the Title IX Coordinator who will determine whether and to what extent ongoing support measures or other remedies will be provided to the Complainant.

### **Written Decision**

After reaching a determination and consulting with the appropriate College official and Title IX Coordinator, the hearing officer will prepare a written decision that will include:

- Identification of the allegations potentially constituting Sexual Harassment made in the Formal Complaint;
- A description of the procedural steps taken by the College upon receipt of the Formal Complaint, through issuance of the written decision, including notification to the parties, interviews with the parties and witnesses, methods used to gather non-testimonial evidence, and the date, location, and people who were present at or presented testimony at the hearing.
- Articulate findings of fact, made under a preponderance of the evidence standard, that support the determination;

- A statement of, and rationale for, each allegation that constitutes a separate potential incident of Sexual Harassment, including a determination regarding responsibility for each separate potential incident;
- The discipline determined by the appropriate College official;
- Whether the Complainant will receive any ongoing support measures or other remedies as determined by the Title IX Coordinator; and
- A description of the College's process and grounds for appeal.

The hearing officer's written determination will be transmitted to the parties. Transmittal of the written determination to the parties concludes the hearing process, subject to any right of appeal.

Although the length of each adjudication by hearing will vary depending on the totality of the circumstances, the College strives to issue the hearing officer's written determination within fifteen (15) business days of the conclusion of the hearing.

### **Dismissal During Investigation or Adjudication**

The College shall dismiss a Formal Complaint at any point during the investigation or adjudication process if the Title IX Coordinator determines that one or more of the following is true:

- The conduct alleged in the Formal Complaint would not constitute Sexual Harassment, even if proved; or
- The conduct alleged in the Formal Complaint falls outside the scope of the policy.

The College may dismiss a Formal Complaint at any point during the investigation or adjudication process if the Title IX Coordinator determines that any one or more of the following is true:

- The Complainant provides the Title IX Coordinator written notice that the Complainant wishes to withdraw the Formal Complaint or any discrete allegations therein (in which case those discrete allegations may be dismissed);
- The Respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the College, as the case may be; or
- Specific circumstances prevent the College from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the Formal Complaint, or any discrete allegations therein (in which case those discrete allegations may be dismissed).

In the event the Title IX Coordinator determines that a Formal Complaint should be dismissed pursuant to this provision, the Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice of dismissal to the parties and advise them of their right to appeal. The Title IX Coordinator may refer the subject matter of the Formal Complaint to other College offices, as appropriate. A dismissal pursuant to this provision is presumptively a final determination as it pertains to this policy, unless otherwise specified in writing by the Title IX Coordinator in the written notice of dismissal.

### **Appeal**

Either party may appeal the determination of an adjudication, or a dismissal of a Formal Complaint, on one or more of the following grounds:

- A procedural irregularity affected the outcome;
- There is new evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination or dismissal was made, that could have affected the outcome;
- The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or hearing officer had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally, or against the individual Complainant or Respondent, that affected the outcome;

No other grounds for appeal are permitted.

Appeals must be filed in writing with the President of the College within seven (7) business days of receipt of the notice of dismissal or written determination. The appeal must specifically:

- Name of the Complainant;
- Name of the Respondent;
- A detailed statement of the basis for the appeal including the specific facts, circumstances, and argument in support of it; and,
- Requested action, if any.

Promptly upon receipt of an appeal, the President will conduct an initial evaluation to confirm that the appeal is timely filed and that it invokes at least one of the permitted grounds for appeal. If the President determines that the appeal is not timely, or that it fails to invoke a permitted ground for appeal, the President will dismiss the appeal and provide written notice of the same to the parties.

If the President confirms that the appeal is timely and invokes at least one permitted ground for appeal, the President will provide written notice to the other party that an appeal has been filed and that the other party may submit a written opposition to the appeal within seven (7) business days. The President will also promptly obtain from the Title IX Coordinator any records from the investigation and adjudication necessary to resolve the grounds raised in the appeal.

The President will resolve the appeal within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the appeal and any written opposition to it and may take any and all actions that he/she determines to be in the interest of a fair and just decision. The decision of the President is final.

The President shall issue a short and plain, written statement of the resolution of the appeal that explains the outcome of the appeal and the rationale. The written statement shall be provided to the Complainant, the Respondent, and the Title IX Coordinator/Deputy Title IX Coordinator within three (3) business days of the resolution.

The determination of a Formal Complaint, including any discipline, becomes final when the time for appeal has passed with no party filing an appeal or, if any appeal is filed, at the point when the President has resolved all appeals, either by dismissal or by transmittal of a written decision. No further review beyond the appeal is permitted.

### **Treatment Records and Other Privileged Information**

During the investigation and adjudication processes, the investigator and adjudicator are not permitted to access, consider, disclose, permit questioning concerning, or otherwise use:

- A party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party; or
- Information or records protected from disclosure by any other legally recognized privilege, such as the attorney client privilege; unless the College has obtained the party's voluntary, written consent to do so for the purposes of the investigation and adjudication process.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the investigator and/or adjudicator may consider any such records or information otherwise covered by this section if the party holding the privilege affirmatively discloses the records or information to support their allegation or defense.

**Sexual History**

During the investigation and adjudication processes, questioning regarding a Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the Complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the conduct alleged, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the Complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the Respondent and are offered to prove consent.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a Complainant who affirmatively uses information otherwise considered irrelevant by this section for the purpose of supporting the Complainant's allegations, may be deemed to have waived the protections of this section.

**Informal Resolution**

At any time after the parties are provided written notice of the Formal Complaint, and before the completion of any appeal, the parties may voluntarily consent, with the Title IX Coordinator's approval, to engage in mediation, facilitated resolution, or other form of dispute resolution the goal of which is to enter into a final resolution resolving the allegations raised in the Formal Complaint by agreement of the parties.

The specific manner of any informal resolution process will be determined by the parties and the Title IX Coordinator, in consultation together. Prior to commencing the informal resolution process agreed upon, the Title IX Coordinator will transmit a written notice to the parties that:

- Describes the parameters and requirements of the informal resolution process to be utilized;
- Identifies the individual responsible for facilitating the informal resolution (who may be the Title IX Coordinator, another College official, or a suitable third-party);
- Explains the effect of participating in informal resolution and/or reaching a final resolution will have on a party's ability to resume the investigation and adjudication of the allegations at issue in the Formal Complaint; and
- Explains any other consequence resulting from participation in the informal resolution process, including a description of records that will be generated, maintained, and/or shared.

After receiving the written notice specified in this paragraph, each party must voluntarily provide written consent to the Title IX Coordinator, before the informal resolution may commence.

During the pendency of the informal resolution process, the investigation and adjudication processes that would otherwise occur are stayed and all related deadlines are suspended.

If the parties reach a resolution through the informal resolution process, and the Title IX Coordinator agrees that the resolution is not clearly unreasonable, the Title IX Coordinator will reduce the terms of the agreed resolution to writing and present the resolution to the parties for their written signature. Once both parties and the Title IX Coordinator sign the resolution, the resolution is final, and the allegations addressed by the resolution are considered resolved and will



not be subject to further investigation, adjudication, remediation, or discipline by the College, except as otherwise provided in the resolution itself, absent a showing that a party induced the resolution by fraud, misrepresentation, or other misconduct or where required to avoid a manifest injustice to either party or to the College. Informal resolution pursuant to this section is not subject to appeal.

A party may withdraw their consent to participate in informal resolution at any time before a resolution has been finalized.

Absent extension by the Title IX Coordinator, any informal resolution process must be completed within thirty (30) business days. If an informal resolution process does not result in a resolution within thirty (30) business days, and absent an extension, abeyance, or other contrary ruling by the Title IX Coordinator, the informal resolution process will be deemed terminated, and the Formal Complaint will be resolved pursuant to the investigation and adjudication procedures. The Title IX Coordinator may adjust any time periods or deadlines in the investigation and/or adjudication process that were suspended due to the informal resolution.

Informal resolution will not be permitted if the Respondent is a non-student employee accused of committing Sexual Harassment against a student.

#### **Presumption of Non-Responsibility**

From the time a report or Formal Complaint is made, a Respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged misconduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made final.

#### **Conflicts of Interest, Bias, and Procedural Complaints**

The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, hearing officer, appeals officer, and informal resolution facilitator will be free of any material conflicts of interest or material bias. Any party who believes one or more of these College officials has a material conflict of interest or material bias must raise the concern promptly so that the College may evaluate the concern and find a substitute, if appropriate. The failure of a party to timely raise a concern of a conflict of interest or bias may result in a waiver of the issue for purposes of any appeal.

#### **General Objections**

Parties are expected to raise any objections, concerns, or complaints about the investigation, adjudication, and appeals process in a prompt and timely manner so that the College may evaluate the matter and address it, if appropriate.

#### **Vendors, Contractors, and Third Parties**

The College does business with various vendors, contractors, and other third parties who are not students or employees of the College. Notwithstanding any rights that a given vendor, contractor, or third-party Respondent may have under this policy, the College retains its right to limit any vendor, contractor, or third-party's access to campus for any reason. And the College retains all rights it enjoys by contract or law to terminate its relationship with any vendor, contractor, or third-party irrespective of any process or outcome under this policy.

#### **Confidentiality**

The College will keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment or Retaliation including any Complainant, the identity of any

individual who has been reported to be a perpetrator of Sexual Harassment or Retaliation including any Respondent, and the identity of any witness.

The College will also maintain the confidentiality of its various records generated in response to reports and Formal Complaints, including, but not limited to, information concerning Supportive Measures, notices, investigation materials, adjudication records, and appeal records.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the College may reveal the identity of any person or the contents of any record if permitted by FERPA, if necessary to carry out the College's obligations under Title IX and its implementing regulations including the conduct of any investigation, adjudication, or appeal under this policy or any subsequent judicial proceeding, or as otherwise required by law. Further, notwithstanding the College's general obligation to maintain confidentiality as specified herein, the parties to a report or Formal Complaint will be given access to investigation and adjudication materials in the circumstances specified in this policy.

While the College will maintain confidentiality specified in this section, the College will not limit the ability of the parties to discuss the allegations at issue in a particular case. Parties are advised, however, that the manner in which they communicate about, or discuss a particular case, may constitute Sexual Harassment or Retaliation in certain circumstances and be subject to discipline pursuant to the processes specified in this policy.

Note that certain types of Sexual Harassment are considered crimes for which the College must disclose crime statistics in its Annual Security Report that is provided to the campus community and available to the public. These disclosures will be made without including personally identifying information.

### **Other Violations of This Policy**

Alleged violations of this policy, other than violations of the prohibitions on Sexual Harassment and Retaliation, will be subject to review under the Student Code of Conduct for students, or the Bon Secours Mercy Health Non-Harassment/Non-Discrimination and Corrective Action policies.

### **Training**

The College will ensure that College officials acting under this policy, including but not limited to the Title IX Coordinator, investigators, hearing officers, administrative officers, informal resolution facilitators, College provided advisors, and appeals officers receive training in compliance with 34 C.F.R. § 106.45(b)(1)(iii) and any other applicable federal or state law.

### **Recordkeeping**

The College will retain those records specified in 34 C.F.R. § 106.45(b)(10) for a period of seven years after which point in time they may be destroyed, or continue to be retained, in the College's sole discretion. The records specified in 34 C.F.R. § 106.45(b)(10) will be made available for inspection, and/or published, to the extent required by 34 C.F.R. § 106.45(b)(10) and consistent with any other applicable federal or state law, including FERPA.

### **Disciplinary Action**

If it is determined that the College's Sexual Harassment Policy was violated, the Respondent will be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal from College employment (employee) or

expulsion from the College (student). In cases of Sexual Assault, the minimum sanction will consist of suspension.

### **Employee Sanctions**

According to the Bon Secours Mercy Health Corrective Action policy, the following are possible sanctions that may be imposed upon employees:

- Written warning
- Final written warning
- Termination
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
- Administrative Leave
- Other Actions: In addition to or in place of the above sanctions, Mercy College may assign any other sanctions as deemed appropriate.

### **Student Sanctions**

The following are possible sanctions that may be imposed upon students or organizations singly or in combination:

**Verbal Warning:** Students will be counseled privately by faculty, staff, or administration regarding inappropriate behavior or misconduct, and a report will be completed documenting the verbal discussion.

**Written Warning:** Students will receive a written warning and a corrective action plan will be developed, including present and future consequences of inappropriate behaviors or misconduct.

**Temporary Suspension:** Students are suspended from all college classes and activities and not permitted to be on college property or assigned clinical sites for the period of time during which an investigation is being conducted or the discipline is occurring.

**Suspension:** A student can be suspended from all college classes and activities and not permitted to be on college property or assigned clinical sites for a specified period of time.

**Dismissal:** A student dismissed from a program or the college may be permitted to return to the college through the readmission policy to the College.

**Expulsion:** A student expelled from the college is not permitted to return to the college through the readmission process. Disciplinary action may continue for events that occurred prior to a student's expulsion from the college.

**Other Actions:** In addition to or in place of the above sanctions, the Mercy College may assign any other sanctions as deemed appropriate.

### **Training, Prevention, and Education**

In order to promote the awareness of policies against sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence or assault (including domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking) and to make victim resources available, a training, prevention, and education program has been established. The following information will be included in a variety of programs for new students and employees and training for students who serve as resident advisors. Ongoing prevention and awareness

campaigns for all students, faculty, staff, and administrators will also be conducted. The information included in these programs consists of the following:

- A statement that Mercy College of Ohio prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual violence or assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.
- The definitions of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence or assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.
- The definition of consent.
- A statement that sexual violence or assault (including domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking) violates College policy and criminal law.
- Common facts and myths about the causes of sexual violence or assault.
- Safe and positive options for bystander intervention that may be taken by an individual to prevent harm or intervene in risky situations involving these offenses.
- Methods of encouraging peer support for victims.
- A statement explaining the College's primary concern is the safety of members of the College community; that the use of alcohol or drugs never makes the victim at fault for sexual violence or assault; and that students or employees who are victims should not be deterred from reporting incidents out of concern that they might be disciplined for related violations of drug, alcohol, or other College policies.
- How to recognize warning signs of abusive behavior and how to avoid potential attacks.
- What someone should do if she/he has been a victim of, or witness to sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence or assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking.
- Individuals to whom incidents may be reported.
- The availability of, and contact information for, campus and community resources for sexual violence or assault victims.
- College policies and disciplinary procedures available for addressing alleged violations and the consequences of violating these policies. Such proceedings shall:
  - Provide a prompt, fair, and impartial investigation and resolution;
  - Be conducted by officials who receive annual training on issues related to sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, and how to conduct an investigation and hearing process that protects the safety of victims and promotes accountability.
- The Complainant and the Respondent are entitled to the same opportunities to have others present during a disciplinary proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisor of their choice.
- Both the Complainant and the Respondent shall be simultaneously informed in writing of:
  - The outcome of any disciplinary proceedings that arises from an allegation of sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking;
  - The College's procedures for the accused to appeal the results of the disciplinary proceeding;
  - Any change to the disciplinary results that occurs prior to the time such results become final; and
  - When disciplinary results become final.
- Possible sanctions or protective measures the College may impose following the final determination of the College's disciplinary procedure regarding sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

- How the College will protect the confidentiality of victims, including how publicly- available recordkeeping (e.g., campus Clery reports) will be handled without the inclusion of identifying information about the victim, to the extent permissible by law.
- That persons who report being a victim of sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking must receive written notification about:
  - Existing counseling, health, mental health, victim advocacy, legal assistance, and other services available for victims, both on campus and in the community.
  - Options for, and available assistance in, changing academic, living, transportation, and working situations, if requested by the victim and if such accommodations are reasonably available, regardless of whether the victim chooses to report the crime to campus police or local law enforcement.
- Procedures reporting parties should follow if sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking has occurred, as well as the fact that the following written information must be provided to victims:
  - The importance of preserving evidence as may be necessary to prove criminal domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, or to obtain a temporary restraining or other protective order;
  - The name and contact information of the College employee(s) to whom the alleged offense should be reported;
  - Reporting to law enforcement and campus authorities, including the victim's option to (a) notify law enforcement authorities, including on-campus and local police; (b) be assisted by campus authorities in notifying law enforcement authorities if the victim so chooses; and (c) decline to notify such authorities;
  - Where applicable, the rights of victims and the College's responsibilities regarding orders of protection, no contact orders, restraining orders, or similar lawful orders issued by a criminal, civil, or tribal court.

**Options for Assistance Following an Incident of Sexual Misconduct**

Call 911 if the victim is in the midst of any kind of emergency, immediate harm or threat of harm. Mercy Public Safety-(419) 251-1444 or Mercy Health Police-Youngstown- (330)-480-3288 are also resources which can be contacted with an emergency.

The College has designated a Director of Compliance and Risk Management/Title IX Coordinator (Toledo campus), Leslie Erwin (419-251-1710) and a Deputy Title IX Coordinator (Youngstown location), Elizabeth Cardwell (330-480-2170), to monitor and oversee overall compliance with laws and policies related to nondiscrimination based on sex. The Title IX Coordinator and Title IX Deputy Coordinator at Mercy College are available to explain and discuss: the victim's right to file criminal complaint (in cases of Sexual Violence); the process for filing a Title IX complaint; the right to receive assistance with the process; how confidentiality is handled; available resources both on and off campus; and other related matters.

The victim is encouraged to ***seek immediate assistance from police and healthcare providers*** for physical safety, emotional support, and medical care.

*Title IX Coordinator – Toledo*

Leslie Erwin  
Director of Compliance and Risk Management  
Title IX Coordinator  
2221 Madison Avenue  
Toledo, Ohio 43604  
419-251-1710  
titleIX@mercycollege.edu

*Deputy Title IX Coordinator – Youngstown*

Elizabeth Cardwell  
1044 Belmont Avenue  
Youngstown, Ohio 44501  
330-480-2170  
Elizabeth.Cardwell@mercycollege.edu

*Mercy Health Public Safety – Toledo*

Police Chief, Director of Emergency Management  
MOB 1 Garage  
Mercy St. Vincent Medical Center  
2213 Cherry Street  
Toledo, OH 43608  
(419) 251-1444

*Mercy Health Police – Youngstown*

Mercy Youngstown Police- Chief  
Mercy St. Elizabeth Hospital  
1044 Belmont Avenue  
Youngstown, OH 44501  
(330)-480-3288

*Toledo Police*

Toledo Police Department  
525 North Erie Street  
Toledo, OH 43604  
(419) 245-3256 (non-emergency number)

*Youngstown Police*

Youngstown Police Department  
116 West Boardman Street  
Youngstown, OH 44503  
(330) 747-7911 (non-emergency number)

The College's Title IX and Deputy Title IX Coordinators are available to assist the victim in notifying Mercy Public Safety or Mercy Health Youngstown Police, if so desired. Mercy Public Safety or Mercy Health Youngstown Police will escort the victim to a safe place and transport to one of the System's hospitals or a sexual assault response center for a medical examination, if needed. Mercy Public Safety or Mercy Health Youngstown Police can also provide access to a confidential sexual assault advocate. If the victim would prefer not to notify Mercy Public Safety, Mercy Health Youngstown Police or the local police, the individual is strongly encouraged to seek assistance from the College's Title IX and Deputy Title IX Coordinators who can provide the victim with information on options,

rights, and remedies. Victims can also go to the Counseling and Wellness Center for additional support.

**Information for victims seeking medical care:**

For the preservation of evidence in the event of a sexual assault, the following guidelines are recommended:

- (a) Do not destroy the physical evidence that may be found in the vicinity of the crime. If the crime occurred in the victim's home, the victim should not clean until the police have had an opportunity to collect evidence.
- (b) Tell someone all details remembered about the assault. Write down all details remembered as soon as possible.
- (c) Do not bathe or douche. Do not urinate, if possible.
- (d) Do not eat, drink liquids, smoke, or brush teeth if oral contact took place.
- (e) Keep the clothes worn during the offense. If clothes are changed, place clothes in a paper bag (evidence deteriorates in plastic).
- (f) Get prompt medical attention at a local hospital.

**Resources:**

**Medical and Counseling Services**

Mercy College Counseling Services:

Lisa Sancrant

Director of the Student Success Center

2221 Madison Avenue

Toledo, OH 43604

(419) 251-1454

[lisa.sancrant@mercycollege.edu](mailto:lisa.sancrant@mercycollege.edu)

**Off-Campus Services – Toledo**

Sexual Assault/Rape

**YWCA H.O.P.E. Center**

1018 Jefferson Avenue

Toledo, OH 43624

(419) 241-3235 non-emergencies

24-Hour Hotline: (866) 557-7273

Area Hospitals that Provide Sexual Assault Examinations and Information and Referrals:

**Mercy St. Vincent Hospital**

2213 Cherry Street

Toledo, OH 43608

(419) 251-3232

**Mercy St. Charles Hospital**

2600 Navarre Avenue

Oregon, OH 43616

(419) 696-7300

University of Toledo Medical Center

3000 Arlington Avenue  
Toledo, OH 43614  
(419) 275-1620

St. Luke's Hospital

5901 Monclova Road  
Maumee, OH 43537  
(419) 893-5920

The Toledo Hospital

2142 North Cove Boulevard  
Toledo, OH 43606  
(419) 874-1494

**Off-Campus Services – Youngstown**

Rape Crisis and Counseling Services

535 Marmion Avenue  
Youngstown, OH 44502  
(330) 782-5664 non-emergencies  
24 Hour Hotline: (330) 782-3936

Area Hospitals that Provide Sexual Assault Examination and Information and Referrals:

Mercy St. Elizabeth Hospital

1044 Belmont Avenue  
Youngstown, OH 44504  
(330) 480-2344

Coordinator of the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Program

Office Phone: (330) 480-3323  
Cell Phone: (330) 301-8418

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights

(800) 421-3481 or [ocr@ed.gov](mailto:ocr@ed.gov)

Legal Assistance

Legal Aid of Western, OH, Inc. provides legal services to those recovering from domestic violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking. (419) 724-0460 (Lucas County), (888) 534-1432 or [www.legalaidline.org](http://www.legalaidline.org)

**Protection Orders**

In Ohio, there are different kinds of protection orders available to victims, including Domestic Violence Civil Protection Orders (DVCPO), Civil Stalking Protection Orders (CSPO), and Sexually Oriented Offense Protection Orders (SOOPO). Courts can issue ex parte (temporary) orders and orders for longer lengths of time. Ex parte orders are typically put in place until a hearing before a judge occurs. A victim should be prepared to present documentation and/or other forms of evidence when filing for an order of protection. When a protection order is granted, they are enforceable statewide. If you have obtained an order and need it to be enforced in this area you should contact local law enforcement.



At the Toledo campus:

- A DVCPO should be filed for in a Domestic Relations Court. The address for the Lucas County Court of Domestic Relations is: 429 Michigan St., Toledo, OH 43604. The phone number is 419-213-6850. More information is available here: <https://www.co.lucas.oh.us/163/Domestic-Relations-Court>
- A CSPO or SOOPO should be filed for in a Common Pleas Court. The address for the Lucas County Common Pleas Court is: 700 Adams St., Toledo, OH 43604. The phone number is 419-213-4777. More information is available here: <https://www.co.lucas.oh.us/307/Common-Pleas-Court>

At the Youngstown location:

- A DVCPO should be filed for in a Domestic Relations Court. The address for the Mahoning County Court of Domestic Relations is: 120 Market St # 4, Youngstown, OH 44503, (330) 740-2208. More information is available here: [http://www.mahoningdrcourt.org/court\\_forms.htm](http://www.mahoningdrcourt.org/court_forms.htm)
- A CSPO or SOOPO should be filed for in a Common Pleas Court. The address for the Mahoning County Common Pleas Court is: 120 Market Street, Youngstown, OH 44503, 330-740-2158.

The institution will also enforce any temporary restraining order or other no contact order against the alleged perpetrator from a criminal, civil, or tribal court. Any student or employee who has a protection order or no contact order should notify the Title IX Coordinator and/or Deputy Title IX Coordinator and provide a copy of the restraining order so that it may be kept on file with the institution and can be enforced on campus, if necessary. Upon learning of any orders, the institution will take all reasonable and legal action to implement the order.

## **STUDENT COMPLAINT POLICY**

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, June 2018*

Mercy College has established a policy and procedure for addressing the concerns and complaints of students fairly and promptly, when there is no other more specific policy or procedure that governs the matter at hand.

This policy applies only to concerns and complaints of students at the College, and the procedure will only be utilized when the subject matter of the concern or complaint is not covered by another policy or procedure.

The College is committed to providing an educational climate that is conducive to the personal and professional development of each individual. The Student Complaint Policy and Procedure can be used when students believe they have been treated unfairly or inequitably by another member of the College community or if they have other complaints about their experience at the College, and the subject matter of the concern or complaint is not covered by existing policies and procedures, such as the College's Title IX, Violence Against Women and Campus SaVE Policy and Procedures, the Student Code of Conduct and the Student Academic Appeal Process.

Before filing a complaint under this policy, a student is encouraged to seek an informal resolution of the matter by discussing it directly with the individual(s) involved. However, seeking informal

resolution is not required. Also, note that the College prohibits retaliation against any individual for bringing a complaint under this policy or participating in an investigation. Additionally, students are advised that the Student Complaint Policy and Procedure will not be used as an additional appeal when another set of procedures has already been applied.

**External complaints:** In addition to filing an internal complaint with the College using the procedure below, students also have the right to file a complaint with any of the following:

***Complaints to the Ohio Department of Higher Education (formerly the Ohio Board of Regents)***

The Ohio Department of Higher Education is responsible for responding to formal complaints against public, independent non-profit and proprietary institutions of higher education in Ohio. While the Ohio Department of Higher Education has limited authority over colleges and universities and cannot offer legal advice or initiate civil court cases, their staff will review submitted complaints and work with student complainants and institutions.

Ohio Department of Higher Education  
25 South Front Street  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Phone: (614) 466-6000  
Fax: (614) 466-5866  
[hotline@highered.ohio.gov](mailto:hotline@highered.ohio.gov)

***Complaints to the Ohio Attorney General***

The Ohio Attorney General reviews general consumer complaints about business, non-profit and public entities. More information is available via the Attorney General's office and website.

Ohio Attorney General  
30 E. Broad St., 14th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Phone: (800) 282-0515  
<https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Individuals-and-Families/Consumers/File-a-Complaint>

***Complaints to the Higher Learning Commission***

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) has established a clear distinction between individual grievances and complaints that appear to involve broad institutional practices. Where a complaint does raise issues regarding the institution's ongoing ability to meet the Criteria of Accreditation, the Commission forwards the complaint to the institution and requests a formal response.

HLC Contact information:

The Higher Learning Commission  
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500  
Chicago, Illinois 60604-1411  
Phone: (312) 263-0456 or 800-621-7440  
Fax: (312) 263-7462  
[info@hlcommission.org](mailto:info@hlcommission.org)

HLC complaints webpage: <https://www.hlcommission.org/Student-Resources/complaints.html>

Students having concerns or complaints for which they are unsure of the applicable process or reporting mechanism may file such concern with the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students by utilizing Form 511/519-A [Concern and Complaint Electronic Form](#). The Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students will communicate with the student to gain an understanding of the situation. If the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students determines that another College policy or procedure governs the situation (e.g., grade appeal, sexual misconduct, etc.), the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students will act as a facilitator to ensure the information is directed to the appropriate College official. If the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students determines that no other College procedures govern, the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students will work informally with the student, and others as necessary, to reach a resolution of the situation.

If the student and Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students are unable to resolve the situation, the student may file a formal written complaint with the President of the College. The President of the College will conduct an investigation into the matter, taking all steps deemed necessary based on the circumstances, and will issue a written decision to the student. The President's decision is final and not subject to further appeal.

#### ***Documentation***

Formal complaints made under this policy or other any other College policy, and their respective resolutions, are appropriately tracked and documented. Electronic copies of complaints are kept with the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students; however, resolutions may also be kept with the appropriate Vice President and/or member of Mercy College Administration. If applicable, hard copies of each complaint and any related documentation are kept with the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students' office in a locked file.

An annual summary of complaints will be prepared and kept by the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students. The summary will be brought to Executive Staff for review prior to May 1 of each year, and the summary will be shared with the Board of Trustees at the annual meeting in June.

## COLLEGE SAFETY AND SECURITY

---

All items of College property, including furniture, equipment, and other items, are to remain in their designated locations. Removal of College property from the campus premises will be interpreted as an act of theft. Appropriate disciplinary and/or legal action may be taken against the violator(s).

### COLLEGE CLOSING/CANCELLATIONS

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, April 2008*

*Procedures revised June 2019*

#### **Guidelines for cancelling classes, delaying, early closing and/or closing:**

1. The decision to alter the hours of operation of the College will be determined by College administration.
2. Generally, this decision will be made between 5:30 and 6:00 am, but circumstances may alter this timeline. If administration decides to delay opening or to close the College, notification is made through the following ways:
  - The RAVE alert system
  - Posted to Facebook
  - Posted on the Mercy College website
  - Posted to various media outlets (TV, radio)
3. NO COMMUNICATION WILL BE SENT if the College stays open.
4. In the case of a Level 3 Snow Emergency for Lucas County, as issued by the Sheriff's Department, the College will close and there will be no open labs.
5. Distance Education courses will be delivered regardless of delayed starts, cancellation of classes or closing the College.
6. In the case of a weather-related delay or closure employees do not report to work. Based on their regular work schedule, employees will be paid for the hours of weather-related delays and closures.
7. Classes with scheduled start times that are prior to the start of the delay are considered cancelled (i.e., an 8:00 am – 11:30 am class and a delay until 10:00 am).
8. In the case of cancelled classes due to reasons other than inclement weather (such as broken pipes, lack of heat, etc.), the College is open, and employees are to report to work, unless otherwise notified.
9. Toledo and Youngstown are treated as separate locations for weather-related decisions.

### COMMUNICABLE DISEASE/PANDEMIC POLICY

*Policy approved by Mercy College Board of Trustees, June 2020*

In order to promote a safe and healthy learning environment, Mercy College (the "College") administration has adopted this policy to mitigate the spread or outbreak of communicable diseases. This policy will be interpreted and administered in order to protect the health and well-being of the College community.

This policy applies to Mercy College administration, faculty, staff, students, visitors and other parties such as vendors and affiliates.

This policy applies to all communicable diseases as identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and local county health departments. According to the CDC, communicable diseases are diseases that can be transmitted and make people ill, caused by infective agents (such as, bacteria and viruses), which invade the body and multiply or release toxins to cause damage to normal body cells and their functions. These infective agents can spread from a source of infection (e.g. patients, sick animals) to a person through various routes of transmission such as air, object, or through casual contact. As of the date of this policy, the CDC has identified the following common communicable diseases:

- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Diphtheria (upper respiratory infection)
- Herpes simplex
- Meningococcal infections
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Cytomegalovirus infections
- Tuberculosis
- Viral Infections, such as COVID-19
- Varicella
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Streptococcal infection
- Zoster
- Enteroviral infections
- Other communicable diseases are applicable to this policy as periodically identified by the CDC, the ODH and local county health departments.

**Possible actions during a communicable disease outbreak:** It is the intent of the College to comply with all applicable federal and state laws in connection with an individual who contracts a communicable disease. Students, employees and visitors are encouraged to immediately report information related to the potential occurrence of a communicable disease within the College community. In the event of a known or potential communicable disease in the College community, the College will review and monitor the situation on a case-by-case basis and work with local, state and federal authorities, as necessary, to determine the appropriate course of action.

As permitted by law, the College administration may take steps to identify and address known or potential communicable diseases, including but not limited to the following:

Concerning the College community,

- Closing of one or more parts of the College by order of the Governor;
- Closing of one or more parts of the College as authorized by the College President while awaiting a decision by the Governor or State or Local Public Health Director;
- Closing of one or more parts of the College by agreement between Public Health officials and the College authority or by order of Public Health officials;
  - in the event of College closure, College administration may determine alternate delivery methods to maintain the continuity of education and related services for students.
- Concurrence by public health officials and/or the College that employee(s) should be excluded from the workplace;

- Isolation of ill or symptomatic individuals upon public health official guidance; or quarantine of exposed or potentially ill individuals upon public health official guidance.
- College administration may also institute infection control practices, based upon guidance by public health officials, such as social distancing, including without limitation measures such as:
  - reducing face-to-face exposure by using conference calls and video conferencing;
  - restricting or avoiding travel to high-risk locations;
  - canceling meetings, workshops, training sessions, and scheduled events; requiring employees to work from home to reduce exposure in the workplace;
  - establishing flexible working hours to avoid mass transportation;
  - installing protective barriers between work stations or increasing space between workers;
  - reinforcing hand washing and requiring the use of protective equipment such as hand sanitizers and masks (provided by the College);
  - scheduling employees in shifts;
  - controlling access to buildings; and
- College administration may also implement additional suggested practices and actions recommended by public health officials including but not limited to the ODH and the CDC.

Concerning individuals, and in addition to the above:

- Inquire about an individual's medical condition;
- Require an individual who has contracted a communicable disease to submit a physician's statement of health prior to returning to the College, which may include proof of appropriate vaccination and/or negative test for the communicable disease;
- Require an individual to submit to an appropriate medical evaluation from a physician of the College's choosing at the College's expense;
- Consult with the individual's physician (with appropriate consent) regarding the communicable disease;
- Consult with a physician designated by the College, and such other persons or resources, including the public health department, to assist in determining the appropriate course of action;
- Exclude individuals who are infected or at risk of infection from the classroom, workplace or other College activities (employees will follow the College's policies, procedures and other requirements for requesting/receiving benefits and leaves of absence);
- Maintain the confidentiality of and/or disclose the identity and other information regarding the communicable disease as may be required by law;
- Follow guidance or directives from federal, state or local authorities; and
- Implement other temporary action(s) that is reasonably required to prevent unacceptable risk of exposure until the College is able to consult with a physician or federal, state or local authorities.

### **Programs with Clinical/Practicum Experiences**

If faculty and students continue participating in clinical or practicum experiences during a communicable disease outbreak or pandemic, they should adhere to the communicable disease protocol of the assigned clinical site and any supplemental procedures communicated by College.

### **EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN (ERP)**

The Emergency Response Plan (ERP) serves as the campus crisis communication plan. It details the resources available, and how the College will use those resources in responding to one of many emergency scenarios/situations that may occur on campus. The Campus Violence Prevention

Committee, consisting of Mercy College faculty, staff, students, Mercy Protective Services personnel and local rape crisis center representatives, is responsible for the ERP and its annual review. The Emergency Response Plan is located on the College website at <https://mercycollege.edu/student-affairs/campus-safety>. Questions regarding the ERP or its contents should be directed to the Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students at 419-251-1512.

## GRADUATE PROGRAMS OF STUDY

---

### MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

#### Overview

The Master of Health Administration (MHA) program is an **online program**, with the exception of the required practicum experience for students with less than one year of healthcare leadership experience. The program is built on the College mission and values and is designed to prepare **aspiring** and **existing** healthcare professionals to serve or advance in healthcare leadership roles. The program will encourage students to **demonstrate an understanding of evidence-based decision making** within a context that values diversity and is sensitive to the ethical implications of decision making within healthcare delivery. The program provides a **broad base of knowledge and** prepares graduates to lead in a value-based healthcare environment.

#### Mission

The mission of the MHA program is to provide individuals with the advanced knowledge and skills needed to lead and to serve in dynamic healthcare organizations.





### **Program Learning Outcomes**

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

1. **Knowledge of the Healthcare Environment:** Explain the legislative, regulatory, political, and consumerism impact on the environment of healthcare and the components of healthcare delivery systems in the United States.
2. **Essential Business Literacy:** Demonstrate the essential business principles required for the stewardship of healthcare organizations.
3. **Ethical Practice, Diversity, and Inclusion:** Evaluate the professional and ethical standards of decision making within the management and delivery of healthcare, including inclusion and diversity within employee and patient populations, and other related complex health issues.
4. **Population Health and Evidence-Based Decision Making:** Analyze population health management strategies in the delivery of value-based healthcare, utilizing health information science, technologies, and analytics to drive evidence-based decisions in the management of care.
5. **Communication and Relationship Management:** Demonstrate effective communication and human resource practices in the management of healthcare organizations.
6. **Health Leadership:** Inspire individual and organizational excellence and successfully lead change to attain the healthcare organization's strategic initiatives.

### **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Students seeking admission to the MHA program must complete the following:

- Submit a completed graduate program application with required documents and any fees.
- Submit official transcripts from the bachelor degree granting higher education institution and all graduate-level transcripts.
  - An applicant with less than 40 credit hours on the bachelor degree granting transcript will be required to provide additional transcripts.
  - An applicant must possess a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally-accredited institution with a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA (on a 4.0 scale)\*
- Submit a current professional resume or Curriculum Vitae and a statement of purpose. The statement of purpose (750-1000 words) should state education and career goals as well as the reason for seeking this degree.
- Provide three professional references: [MHA Reference Form](https://mercycollege.edu/academics/programs/graduate/health-administration) at <https://mercycollege.edu/academics/programs/graduate/health-administration>. References may include employers, previous instructors, or healthcare professionals with whom the student has worked who can speak to professional/leadership experience and capacity for successfully completing the MHA program.

**MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION****CURRICULUM**

<b>Course Number</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>
HCA 510	Healthcare Delivery in the United States	3
HCA 515	Healthcare Economics	3
HCA 520	Health Policy and Law	3
HCA 525	Human Resource Management	3
HCA 530	Healthcare Operations Management	3
HCA 535	Healthcare Financial Management	3
HCA 540	Healthcare Informatics	3
HCA 545	Quality Improvement in a Changing Healthcare Environment	3
HCA 550	Leadership, Communications, and Organizational Culture	3
HCA 555	Healthcare Ethics and Spirituality	3
HCA 560	Population Health and Managed Care	3
HCA 565*	Health Administration Practicum	3
HCA 570	Healthcare Strategic Management	3
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>36-39</b>

**SAMPLE MHA PROGRAM OF STUDY**

<b>Course Number</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>
<b>SEMESTER I</b>		
HCA 510	Healthcare Delivery in the United States	3
HCA 550	Leadership, Communications, and Organizational Culture	3
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>		<b>6</b>

<b>SEMESTER II</b>		
HCA 515	Healthcare Economics	3
HCA 520	Health Policy and Law	3
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>		<b>6</b>

Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours
<b>SEMESTER III</b>		
HCA 525	Human Resource Management	3
HCA 535	Healthcare Financial Management	3
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>		<b>6</b>

<b>SEMESTER IV</b>		
HCA 530	Healthcare Operations Management	3
HCA 540	Healthcare Informatics	3
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>		<b>6</b>

<b>SEMESTER V</b>		
HCA 545	Quality Improvement in a Changing Healthcare Environment	3
HCA 555	Healthcare Ethics and Spirituality	3
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>		<b>6</b>

<b>SEMESTER VI</b>		
HCA 560	Population Health and Managed Care	3
HCA 565*	Health Administration Practicum	3 (0-0-1-3)
HCA 570	Healthcare Strategic Management	3
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>		<b>6-9</b>
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>36-39</b>

#### **\*HEALTH ADMINISTRATION PRACTICUM**

- Students having one-year or more of healthcare leadership experience as approved by the program director (by the end of semester IV), are not required to take the practicum course, but will have the option to participate in the practicum experience in a varying credit hour format (1-3 credit hours). Note: One credit hour = 40 hours.
- Students with less than one year of healthcare leadership experience as approved by the program director (by the end of semester IV), will be required to take the practicum course (3 credit hours = 120 hours).

#### **HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

The College requires all students entering programs which include a clinical component, practicum, or field experience (health program) to comply with specific health requirements, such as documentation of positive titers, vaccinations other health requirements. Students may request waivers or extensions of vaccinations and other health requirements, which may be approved or

denied by clinical facilities. If waivers/extensions are denied, it will prevent placement in clinical experiences and progression in the academic program. The College will make a reasonable attempt to find alternate clinical placements for students seeking waivers or extensions of vaccinations, but it is at the discretion of clinical sites whether students are permitted to participate in clinical experiences. The requirements may vary depending on the program of study and the clinical agency. Students in such programs can find information on criminal background checks, drug screens, and health requirements at (<https://www.mercycollege.edu/background>). Current information is maintained on the College website and is subject to change. Students are responsible for all costs associated with criminal background checks, drug screens, and health requirements. Students who do not meet listed health requirements may not be able to fulfill the clinical, practicum, or field experience requirements and complete their program of study.

Please see the program administrator with questions regarding documentation for health records, including titer and vaccination requirements.

### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

The Master of Health Administration degree will be awarded to students who have successfully completed all required coursework, have a minimum of 36 credit hours, and have fulfilled all other requirements for graduation. The program of study must be completed within five years as measured by the first semester of enrollment through degree completion.

### **MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION: FAST TRACK**

Undergraduate students who are pursuing Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Administration (BSHCA)/ Healthcare Administration (HCA) Minor or Bachelor of Science in Medical Imaging (BSMI) at the College may be granted permission to take one or more (maximum of six credit-hours) 500 level graduate courses if the student meets all the following conditions:

1. Students must have senior status at the time they take graduate coursework.
2. Students must have a College GPA of 3.5 or higher at the time of request.
3. Students must complete the Graduate Course Request form and obtain permission from their academic advisor, undergraduate program director, and the graduate coordinator or director of the course requested.
4. Only the following courses will be considered: HCA 525, HCA 535, HCA 545, and HCA 550.
5. Graduate coursework can only substitute for eligible program prescribed coursework as listed below.
6. All other course pre-requisites and conditions apply.

Students may apply up to six credit-hours of graduate-level credit to satisfying the requirements for both degrees only when the grade received is a “B” or better. Graduate coursework earning a “C” can only be applied toward bachelor’s degree requirements. Graduate coursework at a “C” or lower will need to be repeated and a “B” or better must be earned for graduate program credit to be awarded. Completion of graduate coursework does not imply acceptance into a graduate program, all other program admission requirements apply. Graduate coursework taken by undergraduate students must be utilized to meet program specific requirements for the undergraduate degrees associated with HCA, BSMI, and the HCA minor.

Undergraduate students taking graduate courses will be charged the undergraduate tuition rate.

**BSHCA/HCA Minor or BSMI Program Core Courses Eligible for Direct Graduate Course Substitutions**

<u>Graduate Course Substitution Options</u>		<u>Eligible Undergraduate Program Core Courses</u>			
<u>MHA*</u>		<u>BSHCA/HCA Minor*</u>		<u>BSMI*</u>	
HCA 525	Human Resource Management	HCA 312	Human Resource Mgt. in HC Organizations	HCA 312	Human Resource Mgt. in HC Organizations
HCA 535	Healthcare Financial Management	HCA 410	Introduction to Healthcare Finance	HCA 410	Introduction to Healthcare Finance
HCA 545	Quality Improvement in Healthcare	HCA 435	Quality Improvement and Patient Safety	IMG 410	Quality Improvement in Medical Imaging
HCA 550	Leadership, Comm. & Organizational Culture	HCA 310	Organizational Behavior in Healthcare		

\*Undergraduate courses descriptions can be found in the 2020-2021 Mercy College Undergraduate Catalog.

## **MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING: LEADERSHIP TRACK AND EDUCATION TRACK**

### **OVERVIEW**

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program offers two focused tracks and prepares baccalaureate nurses for the professional nursing practice role with a focus in nursing leadership, or a focus in nursing education. “Graduates of master’s degree programs in nursing are prepared with broad knowledge and practice expertise that builds and expands on baccalaureate or entry-level nursing practice. This preparation provides graduates with a fuller understanding of the discipline of nursing in order to engage in higher-level practice and leadership in a variety of settings and commit to lifelong learning” (AACN, 2006, 2010). A master’s education will allow the nurse to transition into a research or practice-focused doctoral program. The MSN program is built on the College mission, vision, and values.

The Master of Science in Nursing program, with a focus in nursing leadership, or a focus in nursing education, is a 36-credit hour program of study that aligns with the nine Essentials of Master’s Education in Nursing identified by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (2011). The curriculum is designed to provide all courses in an asynchronous, online, distance education platform with the exception of the practicum experiences that will be completed in a geographical location most convenient for the student. Students can complete the program in six semesters by enrolling in six credit hours per semester. The semesters are divided into 8-week sessions; this design allows students to take one course at a time, with the exception of courses taken in the summer semester which are six (6) weeks, and the Capstone II course which is a full semester. The program of study must be completed within five years as measured by the first semester of enrollment through degree completion.

### **NURSING MISSION STATEMENT**

Mercy College of Ohio Division of Nursing prepares quality graduates to care for and serve diverse populations within healthcare systems reaching persons of our communities and global environment through critical thinking, clinical judgement, and scholarship with the evolution and implementation of evidence-based practice. The Division of Nursing inspires students to dedicate themselves to service, intellectual inquiry, social engagement, leadership, and lifelong learning in the spirit of the Mercy values. Through graduate education, the Division of Nursing provides graduates with a greater understanding of the discipline of nursing in order to engage in higher-level practice and leadership in a variety of settings and to commit to lifelong learning.

### **GOALS**

The MSN program is designed to:

- Promote excellence in the education of nurses for the advanced role as leaders and educators in healthcare.
- Cultivate Christian values of compassion, excellence, human dignity, justice, sacredness of life and service in the profession of the nurse leader and nurse educator.
- Prepare graduates for the advanced role in nursing leadership and/or nursing education through the application of nursing theory and evidence-based practice.

- Foster self-direction in pursuit of lifelong learning, and personal and professional development.
- Prepare graduates to address top priorities in global health based on needs and emerging health issues.

### **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to the graduate program application requirements, students seeking admission to the MSN program must meet the following criteria:

- Submit official transcripts from higher education institution(s) where the original nursing degree was earned (Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Science, and/or Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree), and any subsequent coursework thereafter.
- Possess a degree in nursing at the bachelor's level or higher from a regionally accredited institution and a professionally accredited (ACEN or CCNE) program with a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA (on a 4.0 scale).
  - Submit official transcripts from the bachelor degree granting higher education institution and all graduate-level transcripts.
  - An applicant with less than 40 credit hours on the bachelor degree granting transcript will be required to provide additional transcripts.
- Provide proof of an active unencumbered RN license.
- Submit a current professional resume or Curriculum Vitae and a statement of purpose. The statement of purpose (750-1000 words) should state the student's education and career goals and reason for seeking the MSN.
- Provide three professional references using the forms provided at <https://www.mercycollege.edu/program/nursing-master-of-science/admission-requirements>. References may include an employer, previous nursing faculty, or nursing professionals with whom the applicant has worked. The applicant will send an electronic link to the person from whom he/she is seeking a reference. The person providing a reference will identify his/her name, position, e-mail, phone number, and will complete a short survey about the applicant using on online application process, identifying personal and professional strengths.

### **PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon completion of the MSN program the graduate will:

1. Demonstrate the **College Values** of compassion, excellence, human dignity, justice, sacredness of life, and service within the advanced nursing practice role.
2. Employ holistic **critical thinking** and diagnostic reasoning to guide nursing actions in advanced nursing practice situations.
3. Develop articulate **communication skills** for use in client care, teambuilding, advanced practice, education, research, and leadership.
4. Function as a **leader** in advanced nursing practice.
5. Integrate **scholarship** into advanced professional practice through intellectual inquiry, generating scholarly activities, and unique nursing knowledge through research, and applying new knowledge to advanced nursing practice.
6. Demonstrate **professional expertise** in knowledge development, clinical practice, research, systems leadership, and communication technologies.
7. Synthesize and integrate knowledge from nursing and relevant sciences to influence **quality care** in advanced nursing practice that affects healthcare outcomes across varied populations.

## MERCY COLLEGE OF OHIO MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING



### **CURRICULUM**

The MSN curriculum is a 36-credit hour program of study that is designed to be completed in six semesters. Courses are offered in eight-week sessions, so students can take one course at a time, with the exception of the courses offered in the summer which may be six-week sessions, and the Capstone II course that is offered over a full semester.



**MSN PROGRAM COURSES: LEADERSHIP TRACK**

<b>COURSE NUMBER</b>	<b>COURSE NAME</b>	<b>CREDIT HOURS</b>
NUR 510	Theoretical Foundations for Professional Nursing Practice	3
NUR 515	Research and Evidence-Based Practice	3
NUR 520	Healthcare Policy in the Global Community	3
NUR 525	Population-Based Healthcare	3(2 - 1) *
NUR 530	Informatics and Healthcare Technologies	3
NUR 535	Leadership and Strategic Management for Advanced Nursing Roles	3
NUR 540	Healthcare Systems and Organization for Nurse Leaders	3
NUR 545	Strategic Management of Human Resources	3
NUR 555	Financial Management in Healthcare	3
NUR 550	Leadership Capstone I	3
NUR 560	Leadership Practicum	3(0.5-2.5) *
NUR 565	Leadership Capstone II	3
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS</b>		<b>36</b>

\*Practicum hours are based on a 15-week semester and are calculated as one credit hour for every 40 hours. Example: Leadership Practicum has 2.5 credit hours. Practicum hours are calculated as: 2.5 X 40 = 100 total hours.

**MSN LEADERSHIP TRACK SAMPLE PROGRAM OF STUDY**

<b>YEAR 1</b>		
<b>SEMESTER I</b>	<b>SEMESTER II</b>	<b>SEMESTER III</b>
<u>EIGHT WEEK 1 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 510:</b> Theoretical Foundations for Professional Nursing Practice	<u>EIGHT WEEK 1 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 520:</b> Healthcare Policy in the Global Community	<u>SIX WEEK 1 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 530:</b> Informatics and Healthcare Technologies
<u>EIGHT WEEK 2 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 515:</b> Research and Evidence-Based Practice	<u>EIGHT WEEK 2 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 525:</b> Population-Based Healthcare	<u>SIX WEEK 2 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 535:</b> Leadership and Strategic Management for Advanced Nursing Roles
<b>YEAR 2</b>		
<b>SEMESTER IV</b>	<b>SEMESTER V</b>	<b>SEMESTER VI</b>
<u>EIGHT WEEK 1 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 540:</b> Healthcare Systems and Organization for Nurse Leaders	<u>EIGHT WEEK 1 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 555:</b> Financial Management in Healthcare	<u>EIGHT WEEK 1 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 560:</b> Leadership Practicum

<u>EIGHT WEEK 2 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 545:</b> Strategic Management of Human Resources	<u>EIGHT WEEK 2 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 550:</b> Leadership Capstone I	<u>TWELVE WEEK SESSION</u> <b>NUR 565:</b> Leadership Capstone II
--	---	---

**MSN PROGRAM COURSES: EDUCATION TRACK**

<b>COURSE NUMBER</b>	<b>COURSE NAME</b>	<b>CREDIT HOURS</b>
NUR 510	Theoretical Foundations for Professional Nursing Practice	3
NUR 515	Research and Evidence-Based Practice	3
NUR 520	Healthcare Policy in the Global Community	3
NUR 525	Population-Based Healthcare	3(2 - 1) *
NUR 530	Informatics and Healthcare Technologies	3
NUR 536	Teaching and Learning Strategies in Nursing Education	3
NUR 541	Advanced Nursing Curriculum Design	3
NUR 546	Evaluation Methods in Nursing Education	3
NUR 551	Integrated Advanced Pathophysiology, Physical Assessment, and Pharmacology	3
NUR 556	Education Capstone I	3
NUR 561	Education Practicum	3(0.5-2.5) *
NUR 566	Education Capstone II	3
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS</b>		<b>36</b>

\*Practicum hours are based on a 15-week semester and are calculated as one credit hour for every 40 hours. Example: Education Practicum has 2.5 credit hours. Practicum hours are calculated as:

$$2.5 \times 40 = 100 \text{ total hours.}$$

**MSN EDUCATION TRACK SAMPLE PROGRAM OF STUDY**

<b>YEAR 1</b>		
<b>SEMESTER I</b>	<b>SEMESTER II</b>	<b>SEMESTER III</b>
<u>EIGHT WEEK 1 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 510:</b> Theoretical Foundations for Professional Nursing Practice	<u>EIGHT WEEK 1 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 520:</b> Healthcare Policy in the Global Community	<u>SIX WEEK 1 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 530:</b> Informatics and Healthcare Technologies
<u>EIGHT WEEK 2 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 515:</b> Research and Evidence-Based Practice	<u>EIGHT WEEK 2 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 525:</b> Population-Based Healthcare	<u>SIX WEEK 2 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 536:</b> Teaching and Learning Strategies in Nursing Education

YEAR 2		
SEMESTER IV	SEMESTER V	SEMESTER VI
<u>EIGHT WEEK 1 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 541:</b> Advanced Nursing Curriculum Design	<u>EIGHT WEEK 1 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 551:</b> Integrated Advanced Pathophysiology, Physical Assessment, and Pharmacology	<u>EIGHT WEEK 1 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 561:</b> Education Practicum
<u>EIGHT WEEK 2 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 546:</b> Evaluation Methods in Nursing Education	<u>EIGHT WEEK 2 SESSION</u> <b>NUR 556:</b> Education Capstone I	<u>TWELVE WEEK SESSION</u> <b>NUR 566:</b> Education Capstone II

### **MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PRACTICUMS**

Students are required to complete two practicum experiences during the curriculum. The first is associated with one of the foundation courses: NUR 525 Population-Based Healthcare course (1 credit hour = 40 hours), and the second is associated with one of the specialty focused track courses, either NUR 560 Leadership Practicum course (2.5 credit hours = 100 hours), or NUR 561 Education Practicum course (2.5 credit hours = 100 hours).

### **HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

The College requires all students entering programs which include a clinical component, practicum, or field experience (health program) to comply with specific health requirements, such as documentation of positive titers, vaccinations other health requirements. Students may request waivers or extensions of vaccinations and other health requirements, which may be approved or denied by clinical facilities. If waivers/extensions are denied, it will prevent placement in clinical experiences and progression in the academic program. The College will make a reasonable attempt to find alternate clinical placements for students seeking waivers or extensions of vaccinations, but it is at the discretion of clinical sites whether students are permitted to participate in clinical experiences. The requirements may vary depending on the program of study and the clinical agency. Students in such programs can find information on criminal background checks, drug screens, and health requirements at (<https://www.mercycollege.edu/background>). Current information is maintained on the College website and is subject to change. Students are responsible for all costs associated with criminal background checks, drug screens, and health requirements. Students who do not meet listed health requirements may not be able to fulfill the clinical, practicum, or field experience requirements and complete their program of study.

Please see the program administrator with questions regarding documentation for health records, including titer and vaccination requirements.

### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

Master of Science in Nursing degree will be awarded to students who have successfully completed all required coursework in the graduate nursing curriculum, have a minimum of 36 credit hours, and have fulfilled all other requirements for graduation.

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING: FAST TRACK**

Undergraduate students who are pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at the College may be granted permission to take one or more (maximum of six credit-hours) 500 level graduate courses if students meet all the following conditions:

1. Students must have senior status at the time they take graduate coursework.
2. Students must have a College GPA of 3.5 or higher at the time of request.
3. Students must complete the Graduate Course Request form and obtain permission from their academic advisor, undergraduate program director, and the graduate coordinator or director of the course requested.
4. Only the following courses will be considered: NUR 510, NUR 520, and NUR 530.
5. Graduate coursework can only substitute for upper level BSN elective coursework in table below.
6. All other course pre-requisites and conditions apply.

Students may apply up to six credit-hours of graduate-level credit to satisfy the requirements for both degrees only when the grade received is a B or better. Graduate coursework earning a C can only be applied toward bachelor's degree requirements. Graduate coursework at a C or lower will need to be repeated and a B or better must be earned for graduate program credit to be awarded. Completion of graduate coursework does not imply acceptance into a graduate program, all other program admission requirements apply. Graduate coursework taken by undergraduate students must be utilized to meet program specific requirements for the undergraduate degrees associated with BSN degree.

Undergraduate students taking graduate courses will be charged the undergraduate tuition rate.

**MSN Courses Eligible to be Substituted for Upper Level BSN Elective Coursework**

<b>MSN Courses Eligible to be Substituted</b>	<b>BSN Elective Coursework</b>
NUR 510 Theoretical Foundations for Professional Nursing Practice	NUR 359 Essentials of Primary Care Nursing
NUR 520 Healthcare Policy in the Global Community	NUR 495 Essentials of Palliative Care Nursing
NUR 530 Informatics and Healthcare Technologies	NUR 496 Essentials of Holistic Nursing
	NUR 497 Essentials of Gerontological Nursing
	NUR 498 Essentials of Genetics in Nursing Practice

\*Undergraduate courses descriptions can be found in the 2020-2021 Mercy College Undergraduate Catalog.

## **REGISTERED NURSE TO MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PROGRAM (RN TO MSN)**

### **OVERVIEW**

The RN to MSN program provides a unique option for those students who want to continue their education after completing their associates or diploma degree in nursing and earning their RN license that ultimately results in achieving an MSN degree. The program is offered in an online learning environment and allows students to work full-time while continuing to pursue their educational goals. The program offers students 32-39 block credits for their associate or diploma degree in nursing, in addition to credit for any previously completed and required general education coursework. The student completes 18 credit hours of bachelor level nursing coursework and any remaining, required general education coursework. Upon completion of bachelor level coursework, students enter the MSN program and complete 36 credit hours of MSN Program coursework with a focus in Nursing Education or Nursing Leadership. This program option incorporates both *The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice* (2008) and *The Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing* (2011) identified by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing into the required coursework.

### **Explanation for Baccalaureate Equivalency for Graduates of the RN to MSN Degree**

The RN to MSN program of study option is available for registered nurses who hold an associate degree or diploma in nursing who want to earn an MSN with a focus in Nursing Education or Nursing Leadership. Graduates do not earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), but are required to successfully complete certain baccalaureate coursework and the RN to MSN Bridge course prior to entering the MSN coursework. Upon completion of the RN to MSN program, students will have earned a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree which assumes a *Baccalaureate Equivalent* degree. The Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE), the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) identify the MSN as a higher degree than a BSN and provides academic achievement that is beyond a BSN. The student can use the MSN transcript as a BSN equivalent if the need arises. This is further supported by the incorporation of both *The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice* (2008) and *The Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing* (2011) identified by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing into the required program of study.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Mercy College of Ohio Division of Nursing prepares quality graduates to care for and serve diverse populations within healthcare systems reaching persons of our communities and global environment through critical thinking, clinical judgement, and scholarship with the evolution and implementation of evidence-based practice. The Division of Nursing inspires students to dedicate themselves to service, intellectual inquiry, social engagement, leadership, and lifelong learning in the spirit of the Mercy values. Through graduate education, the Division of Nursing provides graduates with a greater understanding of the discipline of nursing in order to engage in higher-level practice and leadership in a variety of settings and to commit to lifelong learning.

**ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR RN TO MSN PROGRAM (UNDERGRADUATE COURSEWORK)**

There are three pathways to enter the RN to MSN Program depending on your educational record, review of required documentation and candidate status.

Please Note: New candidates must first apply for admission to the College.

Candidates must Submit a Graduate Application with RN to MSN Program selected, meet the following criteria, and submit the following documentation:

1. Possess a degree in nursing at the associate or diploma level from a regionally accredited institution that holds professional accreditation from the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) or Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (CNEA).
2. Submit official transcripts of previous associate or diploma nursing degree coursework with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0/4.0 scale (Pathway 1), or minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0/4.0 scale (Pathway 2) and a conferred associate or diploma degree in nursing.
3. Block Credit/Transfer Credit: Applicants may receive blocked credit for a previously earned college degree or diploma in nursing from an accredited program. The Office of Student Records will review the transcript and determine the number of blocked credit hours that will be granted ranging from 32-39 credit hours for previous nursing coursework in an associate degree or diploma program. Submit other official transcripts for review for general education transfer credit.
4. Registered Nurse (RN) License Verification of a current, active and unencumbered RN license.
5. Submit a current professional resume or Curriculum Vitae and a statement of purpose. The statement of purpose (750-1000 words) should state the student's education and career goals and reason for seeking an MSN.
6. Provide three professional references using the forms provided at <https://www.mercollege.edu/program/nursing-master-of-science/admission-requirements>. References may include a manager/supervisor, previous nursing faculty, or nursing professionals with whom the applicant has worked. The applicant will send an electronic link to the person from whom he/she is seeking a reference. The person providing a reference will identify his/her name, position, e-mail, phone number, and will complete a short survey about the applicant using an online application process, identifying personal and professional strengths.

**Pathway 1:**

This option is available for new candidates with an acceptable review of required documentation who have earned a cumulative GPA of 3.0/4.0 scale or higher from their associate or diploma nursing program.

1. Candidate will be granted full admission into the RN to MSN Program.
2. Candidate must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0/4.0 scale on the undergraduate general education and RN to MSN baccalaureate nursing coursework to remain eligible to continue into the graduate nursing coursework.

- Candidate in Pathway 1 will need to complete the RN to MSN Candidacy Form only if his/her cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0/4.0 scale in the general education and RN to MSN baccalaureate nursing coursework.

### **Pathway 2:**

This option is available for new candidates with an acceptable review of required documentation who have earned a cumulative GPA of 2.0-2.9 from their associate or diploma nursing program. This will be a two-step process in which the candidate will first complete the required undergraduate coursework listed below, then submit an RN to MSN Candidacy Form to be reviewed for approval to begin the graduate coursework.

#### Admission requirements for RN to MSN Program

- Candidate will be granted admission into the RN to MSN Program contingent upon completing the coursework outlined in step 2, and cumulative GPA.
- Complete required undergraduate general education coursework and RN to MSN baccalaureate nursing coursework for the following courses NUR 304, NUR 324, NUR 374, NUR 384, NUR 414, and NUR 491 with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0/4.0 scale for full admission or minimum cumulative GPA of 2.3-2.9/4.0 scale for provisional admission prior to beginning graduate coursework.
- Submit RN to MSN Candidacy Form (to begin Graduate Coursework) the semester before taking NUR 414.
  - Conditions of Provisional Admission  
Failure to meet any of the conditions below will result in program dismissal.
    - Students are required to earn a grade of a "B" or higher in the first nine (9) credit hours of coursework to be fully admitted to the program.
    - Students are required to follow and successfully complete an Academic Success Plan that includes meeting with:
      - \* Mercy College of Ohio or Smarthinking Writing Tutor 1-2 times each semester
      - \* Program Director/Program Coordinator 1-2 times each semester
      - \* Other services identified to promote student success
- Please note: If at the time of request for admission into the MSN program the student's cumulative GPA is not a minimum of 2.3/4.0 scale in his/her baccalaureate coursework, the student remains eligible to continue in the RN to BSN Program.

### **Pathway 3:**

This option is available for candidates who are current students in the BSN-C Program with an acceptable review of required documentation who have earned a cumulative GPA of 3.0/4.0 scale or higher for full admission or cumulative GPA of 2.3-2.9/4.0 scale for provisional admission on their baccalaureate coursework who wish to take advantage of the RN to MSN Program option.

- Submit RN to MSN Candidacy Form before taking NUR 414.
- Submit a current professional resume or Curriculum Vitae and a statement of purpose. The statement of purpose (750-1000 words) should state the student's education and career goals and reason for seeking the MSN.
- Provide three professional references using the forms provided at <https://www.mercollege.edu/program/nursing-master-of-science/admission-requirements>. References may include an employer, previous nursing faculty, or nursing

professionals with whom the applicant has worked. The applicant will send an electronic link to the person from whom he/she is seeking a reference. The person providing a reference will identify his/her name, position, e-mail, phone number, and will complete a short survey about the applicant using an online application process, identifying personal and professional strengths.

### **PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of liberal education (Arts and Sciences) in making clinical judgments for diverse populations with complex health problems.
2. Demonstrate leadership skills, quality improvement, and patient safety in caring for populations with complex health problems.
3. Demonstrate ability to participate in basic nursing research by sharing evidence-based nursing practices with the inter-professional healthcare team.
4. Employ knowledge and skills of information management in patient care technology.
5. Apply principles of legal, ethical, and economic policy related to influencing healthcare delivery and practice.
6. Effectively communicate and collaborate with interdisciplinary professionals to deliver evidence-based, patient-centered care.
7. Provide therapeutic nursing interventions that assist populations, communities, groups, and individuals across the life span whose lives are affected by, illness, distress, disease, disability, or death.
8. Incorporate professional behavior, the commitment to lifelong learning, and professional values, including legal and ethical aspects into the practice of nursing.
9. Integrate holistic care to a diverse population in a variety of healthcare settings.

### **PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES EFFECTIVE SPRING 2021**

1. Integrate knowledge from nursing and other disciplines as the basis for clinical judgement.
2. Apply quality improvement strategies to promote a culture of safety.
3. Incorporate evidence-based practice to ensure effective nursing care
4. Use informatics and healthcare technologies to manage and improve the delivery of nursing and health care services.
5. Demonstrate leadership strategies within the complex healthcare system to recognize and influence health policies and laws.
6. Collaborate in interprofessional partnerships to optimize health.
7. Provide health promotion and disease prevention interventions to improve population health outcomes.
8. Incorporate professional and ethical behavior, the commitment to lifelong learning, and professional values into nursing practice.
9. Provide holistic care to diverse populations across the lifespan.

### **PROGRESSION (Graduate Coursework)**

Students must successfully complete 36 credit hours of MSN coursework in the Program of Study. A maximum of six semester credit hours can be transferred in accordance with the Mercy College Graduate residency requirement at the discretion of the Program Director. Courses considered for



transfer must have been taken within 7-years of admission. Only Graduate level courses completed with a grade of “B” or 3.00 from a regionally accredited institution of higher education will be considered for transfer.

To remain in “Good Standing” and progress in the program of study, a student is expected to earn a minimum of a “B” grade in all attempted graduate degree courses. A grade lower than a “B” is not considered passing, can only be earned in a graduate program one time, and must be repeated to improve the grade. At the end of each semester, a student must have earned a cumulative GPA of at least a 3.0 to be considered in “Good Standing” and allowed to progress in the graduate degree program.

Students must successfully disseminate knowledge gained from the Evidence-Based Practice Project process through the writing of a scholarly paper and formal presentation, provide methods for disseminating the outcomes learned, and address questions from faculty and peers in the College audience. The formal presentation will provide a summary of the project, and implications for future nursing practice, theory, research, and education.

#### **PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (MSN)**

1. Demonstrate the values of compassion, excellence, human dignity, justice, sacredness of life, and service within the advanced nursing practice role.
2. Employ holistic critical thinking and diagnostic reasoning to guide nursing actions in advanced nursing practice situations.
3. Develop articulate communication skills for use in client care, teambuilding, advanced practice, education, research, and leadership.
4. Function as a leader in advanced nursing practice.
5. Integrate scholarship into advanced professional practice through intellectual inquiry, generating scholarly activities, and unique nursing knowledge through research, and applying new knowledge to advanced nursing practice.
6. Demonstrate professional expertise in knowledge development, clinical practice, research, systems leadership, and communication technologies.
7. Synthesize and integrate knowledge from nursing and relevant sciences to influence quality care in advanced nursing practice that affects healthcare outcomes across varied populations.

#### **HEALTH REQUIREMENTS (MSN Program)**

The College requires all students entering programs which include a clinical component, practicum, or field experience (health program) to comply with specific health requirements, such as documentation of positive titers, vaccinations other health requirements. Students may request waivers or extensions of vaccinations and other health requirements, which may be approved or denied by clinical facilities. If waivers/extensions are denied, it will prevent placement in clinical experiences and progression in the academic program. The College will make a reasonable attempt to find alternate clinical placements for students seeking waivers or extensions of vaccinations, but it is at the discretion of clinical sites whether students are permitted to participate in clinical experiences. The requirements may vary depending on the program of study and the clinical agency. Students in such programs can find information on criminal background checks, drug

screens, and health requirements at (<https://www.mercycollege.edu/background>). Current information is maintained on the College website and is subject to change. Students are responsible for all costs associated with criminal background checks, drug screens, and health requirements. Students who do not meet listed health requirements may not be able to fulfill the clinical, practicum, or field experience requirements and complete their program of study.

Please see the program administrator with questions regarding documentation for health records, including titer and vaccination requirements.

### **REGISTERED NURSE TO MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PROGRAM**

To earn the Registered Nurse to Master of Science in Nursing (RN to MSN) degree students must complete all college requirements for the RN to MSN degree including:

#### **GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

*\*Specific courses listed are required by the program.*

*COMPLETE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING COURSES:*

#### Oral and Written Communication (GCOM)

ENG 101 English Composition I

ENG 102 English Composition II

#### Math, Statistics and Logic (GMSL)

MTH 140 Introduction to Statistics

#### Social and Behavioral Sciences (GSBS)

PSY 101 Introduction to Psychology

PSY 201 Lifespan Psychology

#### Arts, Humanities, Culture and Diversity (includes Religious Studies)<sup>3</sup> (GAHD/GAHR)

REL 290 Medical Ethics

#### Natural Sciences, Technology and Innovation (GNSI)

BIO 220 Anatomy and Physiology I

BIO 221 Anatomy and Physiology II

#### Additional hours from one or more of the above categories

BIO 210 Microbiology

*CREDIT HOURS*

6 minimum

3

3

3 minimum

3\*

6 minimum

3\*

3\*

9 minimum

3\*

6 minimum

4\*

4\*

6 minimum

4\*

---

**TOTAL GENERAL EDUCATION CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED**

**36**

#### **BACCALAUREATE NURSING COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

*COMPLETE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING COURSES:*

NUR 304 Transitions in Professional Nursing

NUR 324 Nursing Informatics

NUR 374 Population Health Assessment

NUR 384 Evidence-Based Practice

NUR 414 Current Issues in Nursing

*CREDIT HOURS*

3

3

3

3

3

---

<sup>3</sup> Mercy College students must complete at least two courses in Religious Studies to meet this requirement.

NUR 491 RN to MSN Bridge Course	3
<b>TOTAL BACCALAUREATE NURSING CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED</b>	<b>18</b>

**REQUIRED MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PROGRAM COURSE REQUIREMENTS\***

*COMPLETE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING COURSES: CREDIT HOURS*

NUR 510 Theoretical Foundations of Professional Nursing Practice	3
NUR 515 Research and Evidence-Based Practice	3
NUR 520 Healthcare Policy in the Global Community	3
NUR 525 Population-Based Healthcare	3
NUR 530 Informatics and Healthcare Technologies	3
<b>TOTAL MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED</b>	<b>15</b>

**SELECT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TRACK SPECIALTIES:**

*MSN Leadership Track Specialty Courses, Capstone I and II and Practicum Courses*

*COMPLETE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING COURSES: CREDIT HOURS*

NUR 535 Leadership and Strategic Management for Advanced Nursing Roles	3
NUR 540 Healthcare Systems and Organization for Nurse Leaders	3
NUR 545 Strategic Management of Human Resources	3
NUR 555 Financial Management in Healthcare	3
NUR 550 Leadership Capstone I	3
NUR 560 Leadership Practicum	3
NUR 565 Leadership Capstone II	3

*MSN Education Track Specialty Courses, Capstone I and II and Practicum Courses*

*COMPLETE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING COURSES: CREDIT HOURS*

NUR 536 Teaching and Learning Strategies in Nursing Education	3
NUR 541 Advanced Nursing Curriculum	3
NUR 546 Evaluation Methods in Nursing Education	3
NUR 551 Integrated Advanced Pathophysiology, Physical Assessment, and Pharmacology	3
NUR 556 Education Capstone I	3
NUR 561 Education Practicum	3
NUR 566 Education Capstone II	3
<b>TOTAL MASTERS IN NURSING SPECIALITY CREDIT HOURS</b>	<b>21</b>

<b>CREDIT HOUR REQUIREMENTS</b>	<i>CREDIT HOURS</i>
Total Required Bachelor of Science General Education Credit Hours	36
Total Required Baccalaureate Nursing Credit Hours	18
Free Elective Credit Hours <sup>4</sup>	32-39 <sup>5</sup>
Total Required Master of Science in Nursing Program Credit Hours	15
Total Master of Science in Nursing Specialty Credit Hours	21
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS FOR GRADUATION</b>	<b>122-129</b>

\*Required general education and baccalaureate nursing course descriptions are available in the 2020-2021 Mercy College Undergraduate Catalog.

*AMENDMENT START - 11/15/2020*

## **MASTER OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES**

### **Overview**

The Mercy College of Ohio Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) Program is a 118-credit hour, cohort-based program. The seven (7)-semester curriculum includes four (4) didactic and three (3) clinical semesters. Students will have seven (7) required Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPE) areas along with opportunities for elective experiences. Students are expected to participate in direct patient contact for 40-60 hours/week.

### **Mission**

The MPAS Program provides a graduate-level learning experience that produces PA graduates who can provide competent, patient-centered medical care for diverse populations in a variety of clinical settings while also embracing service, scholarship, and leadership.

### **Vision**

The Mercy College of Ohio PA program will be a premier graduate-level PA educational program in which its graduates contribute service, scholarship, and leadership to meet the medical care needs of the region, the State of Ohio, and the nation.

### **Program Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon program completion, MPAS students will be able to demonstrate competency in the following measurable and observable domains:

- Analyze population/public health issues that impact patients and their communities (e.g. health literacy, social determinants of health)
- Analyze clinical scenarios, formulate differential diagnoses, and create management plans rooted in current evidence-based and current best practice guidelines.
- Engage in critical thinking in clinical decision making and scholarly inquiry.

---

<sup>4</sup> Students may be required to take additional free elective credit to reach the 120 semester credit hours required for graduation. Free elective credit may be satisfied through prior coursework and transfer credit. See academic advisor for more details.

<sup>5</sup> 32-39 semester hours identified will have been completed by students in their associate degree or nursing diploma program.

- Defend ethical decisions with respect to individual health care cases and population/public health issues using Mercy College Values.
- Evaluate peers, interprofessional team members, and supervising professionals.
- Create an action plan for professional growth and development.

### **Program Goals**

Guided by our mission, vision, and values, the PA Program of Mercy College of Ohio aspires to meet these goals:

- National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants Board Pass Rate program performance at or above the national mean score for overall performance and for specialty and task areas
- Employment Rate of at least 95% PA placement within 12 months of graduation
- Meet Mission annually through service, leadership, or scholarship by participating in at least two of these areas annually service, leadership, and scholarship.

### **Admission Requirements**

Applicants to graduate programs at Mercy College of Ohio are assessed according to academic background, aptitude for graduate-level work, and professional experience. Applicants to graduate programs are required to have access to the internet to complete online coursework.

### **ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR MASTER IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES PROGRAM**

Admission requirements for the graduate MPAS program at Mercy College of Ohio follow. Note that competitive applicants will typically have more than minimal requirements. The PA Program does not accept transfer credits into its Graduate Program or credit by examination for prerequisite courses. The PA Program does not award advanced placement. The PA Program does not admit students with conditional, provisional, or special status.

- Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution prior to matriculation into the PA program.
- Cumulative GPA of 3.0 as a competitive threshold.
- Prerequisite GPA of 3.0 with no course grade lower than "C" as a competitive threshold. Successfully repeated with a grade "C" or above will be considered.
- Must be a US citizen or legal resident.

### **Prerequisite Coursework**

It is highly recommended students take the **prerequisite courses noted with an asterisk (\*) at an upper level, as opposed to a lower level or survey courses, preferably taken within the last 5 years.**

- One semester of **medical terminology** (minimum 1 semester hour or equivalent quarter hours) or valid certificate of completion or equivalent
- One semester of **psychology** (minimum 3 semester hours or equivalent quarter hours).
- One semester of **statistics** (minimum 3 semester hours or equivalent quarter hours).
- One semester of **genetics** (minimum 3 semester hours or equivalent quarter hours).
- One semester of **organic chemistry** (minimum 3 semester hours or equivalent quarter hours) (proper organic chemistry as prerequisite to biochemistry course).
- One semester of **microbiology** (minimum 3 semester hours or equivalent quarter hours). \*

- Equivalent of two semesters of combined **(human) anatomy and physiology** (minimum 6 semester hours or equivalent quarter hours), with lab preferred. \*
- One semester of **biochemistry** (with organic chemistry prerequisite) (minimum 3 semester hours or equivalent quarter hours). \*

### **Requirements**

- [CASPA application online](#)
- Letters of recommendation:
  - At least two academic or professional letters of recommendation.
- GRE General test within the last 5 years:
  - Preferred competitive combined verbal/quantitative score over 300
  - Preferred competitive quantitative over 150
  - Analytical Writing GRE result of 3.5 or above.
- Discernment into the profession such as healthcare experience/patient contact.
- Technical Standards must be met.
- *Clinical Requirements must be met at time of matriculation and ongoing per program requirements*
- Other relevant science courses earning “C” or above will be considered holistically within applicants’ science academic bodies of work.

### **Technical Standards and Clinical Requirements**

The MPAS Program has program-specific [technical standards](#) and [clinical requirements](#) identified on the program [webpage](#).

### **CURRICULUM<sup>6</sup>**

<b>Course Number</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>
PAS 500	PA Professional Issues and Medical Ethics	1
PAS 505	Health Care Policy and Systems	1
PAS 510	Basic Sciences Foundations	6
PAS 520	Pharmacology	3
PAS 521	Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics I	10
PAS 522	Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics II	10
PAS 523	Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics III	5
PAS 531	Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills I	2
PAS 532	Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills II	3
PAS 533	Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills III	3

---

<sup>6</sup> All MPAS degree requirements need to be completed within five years of matriculation.

PAS 534	Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills IV	3
PAS 541	Clinical Diagnostics-I: Diagnostic Labs	1
PAS 542	Clinical Diagnostics II	2
PAS 543	Clinical Diagnostics III	2
PAS 551	Evidence Based Practice-I	1
PAS 552	Evidence Based Practice-II	1
PAS 561	Clinical Integrations and Decision Making I	2
PAS 562	Clinical Integrations and Decision Making II	3
PAS 563	Clinical Integrations and Decision Making III	3
PAS 651	Scholarly Inquiry I	1
PAS 652	Scholarly Inquiry II	1
PAS 653	Scholarly Inquiry III	2
PAS 661	Supervised Clinical Experience I	6
PAS 662	Supervised Clinical Experience II	6
PAS 663	Supervised Clinical Experience III	6
PAS 664	Supervised Clinical Experience IV	6
PAS 665	Supervised Clinical Experience V	6
PAS 666	Supervised Clinical Experience VI	6
PAS 667	Supervised Clinical Experience VII	6
PAS 668	Supervised Clinical Experience VIII	6
PAS 671	Clinical Phase Seminar I	1
PAS 672	Clinical Phase Seminar II	1
PAS 673	Clinical Phase Seminar III	2
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS</b>		<b>118</b>

**SAMPLE MPAS PROGRAM OF STUDY**

Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours
<b>SEMESTER I - Summer 1</b>		
PAS 500	PA Professional Issues and Medical Ethics	1
PAS 505	Health Care Policy and Systems	1
PAS 510	Basic Sciences Foundations	6

Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours
PAS 520	Pharmacology	3
PAS 531	Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills I	2
PAS 541	Clinical Diagnostics-I: Diagnostic Labs	2
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>		<b>13</b>

<b>SEMESTER II – Fall 1</b>		
PAS 521	Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics I	10
PAS 532	Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills II	3
PAS 542	Clinical Diagnostics II	2
PAS 551	Evidence Based Practice-I	1
PAS 561	Clinical Integrations and Decision Making I	2
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>		<b>17</b>

<b>SEMESTER III – Spring 1</b>		
PAS 522	Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics II	10
PAS 533	Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills III	3
PAS 543	Clinical Diagnostics III	2
PAS 562	Clinical Integrations and Decision Making II	3
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>		<b>18</b>

<b>SEMESTER IV – Summer 2</b>		
PAS 523	Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics III	5
PAS 534	Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills IV	3
PAS 552	Evidence Based Practice-II	1
PAS 563	Clinical Integrations and Decision Making III	3
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>		<b>12</b>

<b>SEMESTER V – Fall 2</b>		
PAS 651	Scholarly Inquiry I	1
PAS 671	Clinical Phase Seminar I	1
PAS 661	Supervised Clinical Experience I	6



Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours
PAS 662	Supervised Clinical Experience II	6
PAS 663	Supervised Clinical Experience III	6
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>		<b>20</b>

<b>SEMESTER VI - Spring 2</b>		
PAS 652	Scholarly Inquiry II (1 credit hour)	1
PAS 672	Clinical Phase Seminar II (1 credit hour)	1
PAS 664	Supervised Clinical Experience IV	6
PAS 665	Supervised Clinical Experience V	6
PAS 666	Supervised Clinical Experience VI	6
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>		<b>20</b>

<b>SEMESTER VII - Summer 3</b>		
PAS 653	Scholarly Inquiry III (2 credit hours)	2
PAS 673	Clinical Phase Seminar III (2 credit hours)	2
PAS 667	Supervised Clinical Experience VI	6
PAS 668	Supervised Clinical Experience VII	6
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>118</b>

*AMENDMENT END*

## **POST MASTER'S CERTIFICATES**

Post Master's Certificates are offered in Nursing Leadership or Nursing Education.

## **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to graduate program application requirements, students seeking admission to one of the MSN Certificate offerings must meet the following criteria:

- Submit a completed graduate certificate application with required documents.
- Possess a degree in nursing at the master's level or higher from a regionally-accredited institution and a professionally accredited (ACEN or CCNE) program.
- Submit official transcripts from higher education institution(s) where the master's in nursing degree was earned and any subsequent coursework thereafter.
- Provide proof of an active unencumbered RN license.

## **POST MASTER'S CERTIFICATE IN NURSING LEADERSHIP**

Mercy College of Ohio offers a Post-Master's Certificate in Nursing Leadership, consisting of four specialty courses in nursing leadership (12 credit hours) that will prepare Master's educated

nurses to be leaders in healthcare organizations, and progress toward meeting the eligibility requirements of the American Organization of Nurse Executive Credentialing Center (AONE-CC), and American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN), to take the Certified Nurse Manager and Leader (CNML) examination.

### **CERTIFICATE IN NURSING LEADERSHIP COURSES**

<b>COURSE NUMBER</b>	<b>COURSE NAME</b>	<b>CREDIT HOURS</b>
NUR 535	Leadership and Strategic Management for Advanced Nursing Roles	3
NUR 540	Healthcare Systems and Organization for Nurse Leaders	3
NUR 545	Strategic Management of Human Resources	3
NUR 555	Financial Management in Healthcare	3
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS</b>		<b>12</b>

### **POST MASTER'S CERTIFICATE IN NURSING EDUCATION**

Mercy College of Ohio offers a Post-Master's Certificate in Nursing Education, consisting of four specialty courses in nursing education (12 credit hours) that will prepare Master's educated nurses to teach in higher education, or in a healthcare system, and progress toward meeting the eligibility requirements of the National League for Nursing (NLN) organization, to take the Certified Nurse Educator (CNE) examination

### **CERTIFICATE IN NURSING EDUCATION COURSES**

<b>COURSE NUMBER</b>	<b>COURSE NAME</b>	<b>CREDIT HOURS</b>
NUR 536	Teaching and Learning Strategies in Nursing Education	3
NUR 541	Advanced Nursing Curriculum Design	3
NUR 546	Evaluation Methods in Nursing Education	3
NUR 551	Integrated Advanced Pathophysiology, Physical Assessment, and Pharmacology	3
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS</b>		<b>12</b>

## GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

---

The number that follows the title of the course is the number of credit hours that the student earns upon completion of the course. The first digit within the parentheses following the number of credit hours indicates the number of lecture/class hours per week (based on a 15-week semester). The second digit indicates the number of laboratory hours per week (based on a 15-week semester). The third digit is the number of practicum credit hours.

Lecture  
Lab  
Practicum

Example: COURSE 500 5 Hours (3 - 1 - 1)

### MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (HCA)

#### HCA 510

*Healthcare Delivery in the United States*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

Understanding the United States (U.S.) healthcare landscape, factors influencing the industry, and the impact of changes is critical for health leaders' success. This course provides a foundational summary and analysis of the U.S. health system, including how healthcare transformation meets market forces to achieve population health.

#### HCA 515

*Healthcare Economics*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course provides knowledge and application of economic principles to the changes impacting healthcare and an understanding of the flow of funds through the health care system and its continuum of care, including physicians, hospitals, managed care, nursing home, and pharmaceutical firms.

#### HCA 520

*Health Policy and Law*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course provides an overview of health policy through analysis of the legislative, regulatory, and political processes and their impact on the United States Healthcare System. Students will also examine the legal concepts that influence healthcare administrator decision-making.

**HCA 525**

*Human Resource Management*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course provides a leadership-level view of Human Resources (HR) as a critical healthcare strategy support function in a changing healthcare environment. Students gain insight into evidence-based human resource management to further optimize health system performance.

**HCA 530**

*Healthcare Operations Management*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course provides a review of critical principles needed for the effective administration of healthcare operations across the continuum of care. A series of relevant topics reflective of the move from volume-based, hospital-focused delivery to value-based, consumer-centric delivery will be presented.

**HCA 535**

*Healthcare Financial Management*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course focuses on the financial drivers of healthcare institutions and how funds flow across the continuum of care. Through financial analysis, the implications of strategic and operational decisions on the organization's financial outcomes will be explored.

**HCA 540**

*Healthcare Informatics*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course provides a comprehensive overview of health information science and technology with a focus on the use of evidence-based analysis to improve individual and population health, education, and research.

**HCA 545**

*Quality Improvement in a Changing Healthcare Environment*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course provides an overview of traditional healthcare quality management methods and how improvement science methodologies are changing to ensure patient-centered quality care services. The student will learn how to manage and lead disciplined process improvement science methods that are highly visible, measurable and detectable at all levels of the organization.

**HCA 550**

*Leadership, Communications, and Organizational Culture*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course provides an overview of leadership strategies and analysis of historical and contemporary leaders' traits and behaviors. The methods of how healthcare leaders translate vision and strategy into optimal organizational performance will be explored. The study of how

communication, the impact of organizational culture and climate on people and processes will also be included.

**HCA 555**

*Healthcare Ethics and Spirituality*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course prepares students to uphold high professional and ethical standards in congruence with organizational mission & values. Students will utilize tools and interventions (ethical discernment, values-based decision-making, and assessments) to navigate through morally complex healthcare issues.

**HCA 560**

*Population Health and Managed Care*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course will focus on the fundamental epidemiologic concepts and applications in healthcare management practice. Various theories and contributing factors of population health strategies, as both drivers and functions of managed care, will also be explored.

**HCA 565**

*Health Administration Practicum*

3 HOURS (0-0-1-3)

This practicum course focuses on experiential learning. Students complete the healthcare practicum experience in a healthcare-related department/facility of their choice. An experienced healthcare administrator will serve as a preceptor for each student in a healthcare organization. The course faculty member will facilitate and monitor each student's progress.

Note: Students having one-year or more of healthcare leadership experience as approved by the program director (by the end of semester IV), are not required to take the practicum course, but will have the option to participate in the practicum experience in a varying credit hour format (1-3 credit hours). Note: One credit hour = 40 hours.

Students with less than one year of healthcare leadership experience as approved by the program director (by the end of semester IV), will be required to take the practicum course (3 credit hours = 120 hours).

**HCA 570**

*Healthcare Strategic Management*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course provides an overview of healthcare strategic planning. Students will develop and implement actionable strategies key to a successful values-driven, consumer-centered healthcare environment.

## **MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING (NUR)**

### **NUR 510**

*Theoretical Foundations for Professional Nursing Practice*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course explores the evolution of nursing theory and its contribution to advanced nursing science. A major focus of this course will be the examination of the purpose of nursing theory, and how to analyze, critique, and evaluate the components of theory for use in nursing practice and research. The importance of concepts to nursing practice, as well as theory development, will be examined. Multiple theories from nursing and relevant fields will be explored relative to nursing education, nursing leadership, nursing research, and nursing practice.

### **NUR 515**

*Research and Evidence-Based Practice*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course focuses on the evaluation and utilization of nursing research to acquire evidence for nursing practice. Research studies will be evaluated for theoretical elements, ethical principles, validity, reliability, and feasibility of integration into practice. Evidence will be evaluated for evidence-based practice through the adoption of innovative quality improvement activities to an identified problem in the practice setting that is amenable to evidence-based change.

### **NUR 520**

*Healthcare Policy in the Global Community*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course focuses on analyzing health policy formation, how to affect this process, and how it impacts nursing practice and healthcare delivery. It will integrate theory and empirical research about leadership and health policy formulation into the policy development process. The student will examine legal and regulatory processes and their effects on nursing practice, healthcare delivery and health outcomes. Students will evaluate trends in healthcare and their influences in future healthcare delivery systems, and health outcomes.

### **NUR 525**

*Population-Based Healthcare*

3 HOURS (2-0-1)

This course explores the concepts of population-based healthcare, patient-centered medical home, health promotion and disease prevention from both the theoretical and application views. Discussion will focus on the health goals of the United States, as well as globally, and how health promotion efforts can assist in achieving these global health goals. Lifestyle influences on the development of major diseases and life quality are discussed, as well as the economic impact of unhealthy behaviors. Patient and family education are examined as a strategy for assisting with implementation of healthy habits. Topics include: concepts of health and wellness, Healthy People 2020, health promotion and disease prevention, health promotion theories, risk assessment and reduction theories, prevention of illness, maintenance of high-level functioning in an evolving

healthcare delivery system, exploration of multidimensional, culturally sensitive intervention strategies, wellness programs, evidence-based health practice, and safe and effective care. (2 credit hours didactic, 1 credit hour practicum = 40 hours)

**NUR 530**

*Informatics and Healthcare Technologies*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

In this course, nurse leaders will investigate emerging clinical information systems and technologies and how they impact patient safety, quality of care, patient outcomes, and the healthcare environment. Informatics and healthcare technologies encompass five broad areas: Use of patient care and other technologies to deliver and enhance care; Communication technologies to integrate and coordinate care; Data management to analyze and improve outcomes of care; Health information management for evidence-based and health education; and Facilitation and use of electronic health records to improve patient care.

**NUR 535**

*Leadership and Strategic Management for Advanced Nursing Roles*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course provides an exploration of innovative leadership principles, practices, and strategies for advanced nursing roles. It examines the constantly emerging and changing healthcare environment. Students will be challenged to develop knowledge and skills to lead healthcare teams and healthcare organizations today and in the future. Additionally, students will learn core competencies for healthcare leaders. Topics include leadership, management, innovation and change, quality improvement, communication, organizational behavior, strategic planning, mentorship, and professional development. Students will develop a personal leadership plan.

**NUR 536**

*Teaching and Learning Strategies in Nursing Education*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This graduate course provides an overview of the major teaching and learning strategies applicable to nursing education. The theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of nursing education are discussed in relation to learning theories of other disciplines. Emphasis will be placed on current educational research initiatives related to technology and innovation.

**NUR 540**

*Healthcare Systems and Organization for Nurse Leaders*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course is designed to enable the advanced nurse to develop an understanding of healthcare organizations and systems. Emphasis is placed on describing the relationship between organizational structure, leadership, and decision-making. Students examine the internal and external environments, financing of healthcare, resource management, and utilization.

**NUR 541**

*Advanced Nursing Curriculum Design*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course examines historical, philosophical, socio-cultural, political, economic, legal, ethical, and professional issues that impact curriculum in nursing education. The focus is on design and evaluation of nursing curriculum.

**NUR 545**

*Strategic Management of Human Resources*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

Students will examine leaders'/managers', individual's, and team member's roles as human resources in a healthcare environment and investigate strategies to optimize performance of human resources in relation to the strategic goals of the healthcare organization. Recruitment and retention, supply and demand along with workforce development, planning, and managing diversity are key topics. The student will learn to adapt to the latest methods to compete and survive in today's healthcare industry and meet the needs of the organization.

**NUR 546**

*Evaluation Methods in Nursing Education*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course examines various evaluation methods for the nurse educator in the classroom and clinical settings. There will be particular emphasis on designing and writing test items, analyzing test results, and analyzing classroom and clinical performance evaluation strategies. Ethical and legal implications of evaluation will also be addressed. An examination of the components of academic program evaluation, including accreditation processes will also be highlighted.

**NUR 550**

*Leadership Capstone I*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

The Capstone I course is the first of two courses that allows the student to synthesize the didactic knowledge, and practicum experiences from the master's program coursework through a culminating Evidence-Based Leadership Practice Project that contributes to the acquisition and demonstration of the core competencies of the Master's prepared graduate. The Capstone I project addresses a leadership issue in nursing practice. The project allows the student to appraise relevant evidence in developing a best practice model that will guide the development of an Evidence-Based Leadership Practice Project. *Prerequisites: NUR 510, NUR 515, NUR 520, NUR 525, NUR 530, NUR 535, NUR 540, NUR 545 and Co-requisite: NUR 555.*

**NUR 551**

*Integrated Advanced Pathophysiology, Physical Assessment, and Pharmacology*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course is designed to enable the advanced nurse to build upon prior education and practice experience to enhance nursing knowledge and skills related to pathophysiology, physical



assessment and pharmacology across the lifespan. The focus is on advanced knowledge and skills needed by nurse educators in both direct- and indirect-care roles.

**NUR 555***Financial Management in Healthcare*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course focuses on the financial health of rural/urban healthcare institutions. The student will learn about basic accounting and finance principles as well as the terminology necessary to assess the financial status of healthcare organizations. The course will introduce the student to the use of spreadsheets in the budgeting process.

**NUR 556***Education Capstone I*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

The Nurse Educator Capstone I course provides a culmination of the MSN nurse educator curriculum and allows the student to integrate knowledge and skills acquired throughout the program. Students must complete a scholarly project which synthesizes advance knowledge and skills to address an area of relevance to professional nursing education. The Capstone is a faculty guided scholarly project. It provides evidence of students' critical thinking and ability to translate research into practice in nursing education within an educational or healthcare organization. Additionally, this course provides learners with the opportunity to communicate a scholarly project in a professional manner. *Prerequisites* NUR 510, NUR 515, NUR 520, NUR 525, NUR 536, NUR 541, NUR 546, *Corequisite* NUR 551

**NUR 560***Leadership Practicum*

3 HOURS (0.5-0-2.5)

This course focuses on both theoretical and experiential learning. Students complete a leadership practicum in their area of choice. An experienced nurse leader will serve as a preceptor for each student in a healthcare organization. Course faculty members will serve as mentors and monitor the student's progress. (0.5 credit hours didactic, 2.5 credit hours practicum = 100 hours)

**NUR 561***Education Practicum*

3 HOURS (0.5-0-2.5)

This course integrates both didactic and experiential learning. Students will provide evidence of accomplishment of each *Essential of Master's Education in Nursing*. Students complete a practicum in their identified track. For a student in the education track, an experienced nurse in a clinical setting, and a nurse educator in an educational setting or healthcare organization will serve as mentors/preceptors. Course faculty members will serve as facilitators and monitor the student's progress. (0.5 credit hour: didactic, 2.5 credit hours: practicum= 100 hours)

**NUR 565**

*Leadership Capstone II*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

The Capstone II is a continuation of the work initiated in Capstone I. The Capstone is a theory-derived, Evidence-Based Leadership Practice Project that allows the student to plan collaborative leadership activities, review the literature, and demonstrate effective interdisciplinary communication with a healthcare team to identify workable solutions to a leadership practice issue. The student will perform a systematic assessment of environmental factors, analysis of the translation of evidence model selected, determine barriers and facilitators to implementing an action plan to address the leadership practice issue, and identify methods of measuring the outcomes of the project. The student will disseminate the knowledge gained in the process through the writing of a scholarly paper, and formal presentation of the project. *Prerequisite: NUR 550*

**NUR 566**

*Education Capstone II*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

The Nurse Educator Capstone II course is a continuation of the work initiated in Capstone I. It is the final step in the journey to graduation. The Capstone II is a theory-derived, evidence-based practice education project that allows the student to plan collaborative educational activities, review the literature, and demonstrate effective interdisciplinary communication with a team to identify workable solutions to nursing education practice issues.

In collaboration with a selected Nurse Educator, the student will create various teaching-learning activities. Evidence-based practices for evaluation of learning in both classroom and clinical settings are analyzed and applied. The student will disseminate the knowledge gained in the process through the writing of a scholarly paper and formal presentation of the project. The written document is a scholarly piece of writing that demonstrates competency through the synthesis of knowledge acquired in the MSN nurse educator track. *Prerequisites: NUR 556.*

(Amendment ENTER DATE)

*AMENDMENT START - 11/15/2020*

**MASTER OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT (PAS)**

**PAS 500**

*Physician Assistant Professional Issues and Medical Ethics*

1 HOUR (1-0-0)

This course is designed to introduce the Physician Assistant student to the Physician Assistant professional issues and Medical Ethics. Topics include the history of and current trends for the PA profession, its organizations, Physician Assistant roles and responsibilities, professionalism, HIPAA, credentialing and licensure, as well as medical ethics.

**PAS 505**

*Health Care Policy and Systems*

1 HOUR (1-0-0)

This course introduces the structure and function of the US healthcare delivery system. Topics include the US health delivery system, public health and health promotion issues, health care policies, and inequality to accessing health care.

**PAS 510**

*Basic Sciences Foundations*

6 HOURS (3-3-0)

This course is designed to provide a foundation in the basic sciences for the structure and function of the human body covering introductory clinically relevant genetics, medical physiology, and an in-depth study of human anatomy.

**PAS 520**

*Pharmacology*

3 HOURS (3-0-0)

This course is an introduction to the pharmacology of commonly used drugs for treating human disease with a focus on indication, mechanism of action, pharmacodynamics, pharmacokinetics, adverse effects, and drug interactions.

**PAS 521**

*Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics I*

10 HOURS (10-0-0)

This is the first of three Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics courses for the systematic study of the diagnosis and management of common acute, emergent, rehabilitative, and chronic medical disorders across the lifespan. This course series is designed to study the epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations signs and symptoms, diagnosis and pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic management as well as disease prevention, patient education, follow-up care, course of disease, and prognosis. The course series collectively covers all major systems: infectious diseases, dermatologic, neurologic, cardiovascular, eyes, ears, nose, and throat, hematologic, pulmonary, endocrine, gastrointestinal/nutritional, musculoskeletal psychiatry/behavioral, genitourinary, and reproductive. *Prerequisites: PAS 510, PAS 520, PAS 531, PAS; Co-Requisite: PAS 532, PAS 542.*

**PAS 522**

*Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics II*

10 HOURS (10-0-0)

This is the second of three Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics courses for the systematic study of the diagnosis and management of common acute, emergent, rehabilitative, and chronic medical disorders across the lifespan. This course series is designed to study the epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations signs and symptoms, diagnosis and pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic management as well as disease prevention, patient education, follow-up care,

course of disease, and prognosis. The course series collectively covers all major systems: infectious diseases, dermatologic, neurologic, cardiovascular, eyes, ears, nose, and throat, hematologic, pulmonary, endocrine, gastrointestinal/nutritional, musculoskeletal psychiatry/behavioral, genitourinary, and reproductive. *Prerequisite: PAS 521; Co-Requisite: PAS 533, PAS 543.*

**PAS 523**

*Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics III*

5 HOURS (5-0-0)

This is the final of three Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics courses for the systematic study of the diagnosis and management of common acute, emergent, rehabilitative, and chronic medical disorders across the lifespan. This course series is designed to study the epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations signs and symptoms, diagnosis and pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic management as well as disease prevention, patient education, follow-up care, course of disease, and prognosis. The course series collectively covers all major systems: infectious diseases, dermatologic, neurologic, cardiovascular, eyes, ears, nose, and throat, hematologic, pulmonary, endocrine, gastrointestinal/nutritional, musculoskeletal psychiatry/behavioral, genitourinary, and reproductive. *Prerequisite: PAS 522; Co-requisites: PAS 534.*

**PAS 531**

*Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills I*

2 HOURS (1-1-0)

This is the first of a series of four skills-based lecture and lab courses in which students acquire and practice various diagnostic and therapeutic clinical skills, such as performing basic and advanced health histories and physical exams, clinical procedures including suturing and splinting, and basic and advanced cardiac life support. In this first course, the emphasis is on the medical interview, the art of communication in medicine, the proper documentation of clinical encounters, and obtaining BLS certification.

**PAS 532**

*Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills II*

3 HOURS (0-3-0)

This is the second of a series of four skills-based courses in which students acquire and practice various diagnostic and therapeutic clinical skills, such as performing basic and advanced health histories and physical exams, clinical procedures including suturing and splinting, and basic and advanced cardiac life support. In this second course, the emphasis is on the performance and documentation of a basic “head to toe” physical examination. *Prerequisite: PAS 531.*

**PAS 533**

*Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills III*

3 HOURS (0-3-0)

This is the third of a series of four skills-based courses in which students acquire and practice various diagnostic and therapeutic clinical skills, such as performing basic and advanced health histories and physical exams, clinical procedures including suturing and splinting, and basic and

advanced cardiac life support. This third course concentrates on the performance and documentation of problem-focused medical interviews and physical examinations. *Prerequisite: PAS 532. Course is only offered with a pass/fail grade option.*

**PAS 534**

*Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills IV*

3 HOURS (0-3-0)

This is the final of four skills-based courses in which students acquire and practice various diagnostic and therapeutic clinical skills, such as performing basic and advanced health histories and physical exams, clinical procedures including suturing and splinting, and basic and advanced cardiac life support. In this final course, the emphasis is on common diagnostic and therapeutic procedures including an orientation to the operating room, the continuation of specialty-focused medical interviews and physical examinations across the lifespan from pediatrics to geriatrics including the unique healthcare needs for women, diverse patient populations, and patients with disabilities, and completion of advanced cardiac life support training. *Prerequisite: PAS 533. Course is only offered with a pass/fail grade option.*

**PAS 541**

*Clinical Diagnostics-I*

1 HOUR (1-0-0)

This is the first of a series of three courses in which students learn to order and interpret commonly used diagnostic studies for the application of clinical testing in the diagnosis and treatment of common diseases encountered in Primary Care Practice. This first course covers the theory and practice of common laboratory techniques including urinalysis, hematology, and clinical chemistry panels as well as OSHA regulations.

**PAS 542**

*Clinical Diagnostics II*

2 HOURS (1-1-0)

This is the second of a series of three courses in which students learn to order and interpret commonly used diagnostic studies for the application of clinical testing in the diagnosis and treatment of common diseases encountered in Primary Care Practice. This second course covers interpretation of 12-lead electrocardiograms and pulmonary function testing. *Prerequisite: PAS 541.*

**PAS 543**

*Clinical Diagnostics III*

2 HOURS (2-0-0)

This is the final of a series of three courses in which students learn to order and interpret commonly used diagnostic studies for the application of clinical testing in the diagnosis and treatment of common diseases encountered in Primary Care Practice. This third course covers ordering and interpretation of common imaging studies and pulmonary function tests. *Prerequisite: PAS 542.*

**PAS 551**

*Evidence Based Practice-I*

1 HOUR (1-0-0)

This two-course Evidence Based Practice (EBP) series provides the foundation for the development of skills for critical interpretation of medical literature to formulate answers to clinical questions related to diagnosis, therapy, prognosis, and harm and for future clinical quality improvement projects or research. Topics in EBP-I include identification of a research problem and formulation of a research question, research ethics, sampling methods and study designs. Students will initiate a scholarly inquiry project with a study proposal and literature review. The scholarly inquiry will continue in the EBP-II and Scholarly Inquiry I, II, and III courses. *Prerequisites: PAS 531.*

**PAS 552**

*Evidence Based Practice-II*

1 HOUR (1-0-0)

This is the second of the two-course Evidence Based Practice (EBP) series which provides the foundation for the development of skills for critical interpretation of medical literature and quality improvement or research projects. Evidence Based Practice II topics include descriptive and inferential statistics, selecting the appropriate statistical test, and hypothesis testing. Students will draft quantitative and/or qualitative analysis methods for their proposed scholarly inquiry project data collection. The scholarly inquiry will continue in the Scholarly Inquiry I, II, and III courses. *Prerequisites: PAS 551.*

**PAS 561**

*Clinical Integrations and Decision Making I*

2 HOURS (0-2-0)

This is the first in a series of three team based learning courses in which PA students engage in problem-solving, take responsibility for professional roles, cultivate skills, and partake in reflective/self-assessment experiences. Students will utilize knowledge from previous and concurrent coursework for application to case studies, interprofessional education opportunities, preclinical patient contact, and simulation/standardized patients. *Prerequisites: PAS 510, PAS 520, PAS 531, PAS 541; Co-requisites: PAS 521, PAS 532, PAS 542.*

**PAS 562**

*Clinical Integrations and Decision Making II*

3 HOURS (0-3-0)

This is the second in a series of three team based learning courses in which PA students engage in problem-solving, take responsibility for professional roles, cultivate skills, and partake in reflective/self-assessment experiences. Students will utilize knowledge from previous and concurrent coursework for application to case studies, interprofessional education opportunities, preclinical patient contact, and simulation/standardized patients. *Prerequisites: PAS 561; Co-requisites: PAS 522, PAS 532, PAS 542.*

**PAS 563**

*Clinical Integrations and Decision Making III*

3 HOURS (0-3-0)

This is the final in a series of three team based learning courses in which PA students engage in problem-solving, take responsibility for professional roles, cultivate skills, and partake in reflective/self-assessment experiences. Students will utilize knowledge from previous and concurrent coursework for application to case studies, preclinical patient contact, and simulation/standardized patients. *Prerequisites: PAS 562; Co-requisites: PAS 523, PAS 533.*

**PAS 651**

*Scholarly Inquiry I*

1 HOUR (1-0-0)

This is the first of a series of three Scholarly Inquiry courses in which students plan and carry out an evidence-based medicine, clinical practice improvement, primary research or another approved scholarly inquiry project. During the Scholarly Inquiry series, students submit a formal scholarly inquiry proposal, collect and evaluate data, and appropriately communicate and defend conclusions in oral and written formats. By the conclusion of the Scholarly Inquiry-I course, students complete a scholarly agenda proposal and apply for Institutional Review Board approval as needed for the project type. *Prerequisite: PAS 552.*

**PAS 652**

*Scholarly Inquiry II*

1 HOUR (1-0-0)

This is the second course of a series of three Scholarly Inquiry project courses in which students plan and carry out an evidence-based medicine, clinical practice improvement, primary research or another approved scholarly inquiry project. During the Scholarly Inquiry-II course, students are expected to collect their data, and commence data analysis and interpretation of analyses.

*Prerequisite: PAS 651.*

**PAS 653**

*Scholarly Inquiry III*

2 HOURS (2-0-0)

This is the third and final course of a series of three Scholarly Inquiry project courses. By the conclusion of the Scholarly Inquiry- III course, students are expected to complete their scholarly project and present and defend their findings before peers, PA program faculty and other members of the healthcare community. *Prerequisite: PAS 652.*

**PAS 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667 & 668**

*SUPERVISED CLINICAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCES I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, and VIII*

6 HOURS (0-0-6)

In the clinical phase of the PA Program, students are assigned into a series of supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPE) in a variety of settings on a rotating schedule. The supervised clinical practice experiences are divided into 8 periods of approximately 6 weeks each spanning three

semesters. Required 6-week experiences include Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Emergency Medicine and General Surgery. Experiences in Women’s Health, Pediatrics and Behavioral Health are required 3-week experiences that may be integrated throughout the clinical experiences. Elective rotations are available in a variety of clinical practice areas, pending preceptor/site availability and prior rotation experience. Electives can be in a new discipline or an augmentation of a required discipline. Students are to average 45 hours a week at the clinical experiences. The Program reserves the right to assign rotations or supplemental activities to ensure that students meet all Program requirements for the supervised clinical practice experiences. *The SCPEs are competency based with Pass/Fail grading. Prerequisite: Students must pass the PA program didactic phase to enter the clinical phase.*

**PAS 671**

*Clinical Phase Seminar I*

1 HOUR (1-0-0)

A series of three Clinical Phase Seminar courses are interwoven into the experiential phase of the PA Program to expose and reinforce an array of relevant issues to a practicing PA. Topics include PA employment, medicolegal aspects of clinical practice, patient safety and error reduction measures, reimbursement issues, healthcare policy and systems issues, and public health issues. Students also present interesting patient cases encountered during supervised clinical practicum experiences and prepare for the end of program clinical summative evaluation and board examination. *Course is only offered with a pass/fail grade option.*

**PAS 672**

*Clinical Phase Seminar II*

1 HOUR (1-0-0)

This is a continuation of the three Clinical Phase Seminar courses interwoven into the experiential phase of the PA Program to expose and reinforce an array of relevant issues to a practicing PA. Topics include PA employment, medicolegal aspects of clinical practice, patient safety and error reduction measures, reimbursement issues, healthcare policy and systems issues, and public health issues. Students also present interesting patient cases encountered during supervised clinical practicum experiences and prepare for the end of program clinical summative evaluation and board examination. Prerequisite: PAS 671. *Course is only offered with a pass/fail grade option.*

**PAS 673**

*Clinical Phase Seminar III*

2 HOURS (2-0-0)

This is the final of the three Clinical Phase Seminar courses interwoven into the experiential phase of the PA Program to expose and reinforce an array of relevant issues to a practicing PA. Topics include PA employment, medicolegal aspects of clinical practice, patient safety and error reduction measures, reimbursement issues, healthcare policy and systems issues, and public health issues. Students also present interesting patient cases encountered during supervised clinical practicum



experiences and prepare for the end of program clinical summative evaluation and board examination. *Prerequisite: PAS 672. Course is only offered with a pass/fail grade option.*

*AMENDMENT END*

## INDEX

---

### A

Academic Integrity .....	42
<b>ACCESSIBILITY/ADA/504</b> .....	66
Accreditation.....	7
Add/Drop Deadlines .....	32
Attendance .....	44

### C

Campus Violence Prevention .....	72
Change of Name or Address.....	44
Civil Rights/Nondiscrimination Policy.....	12
Civil Rights/Nondiscrimination Statement.....	1
Clery Compliance Policy .....	80
Clinical Liability Insurance.....	54
College Closing/Cancellations .....	131
<b>COMMUNICATION AND EMAIL</b> .....	99
<b>CONFIDENTIALITY</b> .....	80
Course Descriptions (Graduate).....	162
Course Grade Appeal.....	40
Course Load and Enrollment Status .....	32
Course Repeat.....	32
Course Waiver/Substitution .....	33

### D

Distance Education .....	29
Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention.....	82

### E

Emergency Response Plan .....	133
-------------------------------	-----

### F

FERPA.....	54
------------	----

### G

Graduate Admission .....	10, 156
Graduate Programs of Study .....	135

Graduation Requirements – MHA.....	139
------------------------------------	-----

### H

Hazing.....	89
Health Requirements.....	58

### I

Incomplete Grade.....	40
IT Acceptable Use Policy .....	87

### L

Library.....	30
--------------	----

### M

Master of Health Administration (MHA) .....	135
MHA Fast Track .....	139
Military Leave Policy .....	36
<b>MINORS ON CAMPUS POLICY</b> .....	90
Mission, Vision, & Values.....	6

### N

No Show.....	32
Nursing – Master of Science (MSN).....	141
Nursing – RN to MSN.....	148

### P

Post Master's Certificate in Nursing Education.....	161
Post Master's Certificate in Nursing Leadership .....	160
Pregnant Student .....	92

### R

Registration and Scheduling.....	31
Return of Title IV Aid .....	20

---

**S**

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy .....24  
**STUDENT COMPLAINT POLICY** ..... 128  
 Student Loan Code of Conduct .....27  
 Student Records .....30

---

**T**

*Title IX, Violence Against Women and Campus SaVE*  
*Policy*..... 100

Transcripts.....42  
 Transfer Credit.....12

---

**V**

Veterans Benefits.....18

---

**W**

Withdrawal from a Course.....31  
 Withdrawal from the College.....33