



Andy and Barbara Gessner
College of Nursing

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK 2024-2026

NURSING. EXCELLENCE. PERIOD.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CLICK BELOW TO VIEW

- 4 **Welcome and Overview**
- 5 **Gessner College of Nursing Purpose and Organization**
- 6 **Academic Programs and Degree Requirements**
 - 7 Master of Science in Nursing
 - 7 Master of Science in Nursing Academic Programs
 - 8 Master of Science in Nursing Program Goals
 - 9 Doctor of Nursing Practice
 - 9 Doctor of Nursing Practice Academic Programs
 - 10 Doctor of Nursing Practice Program Goals
- 11 **Graduate Degree Plans**
 - 12 MSN Degree Plans
 - 16 Post Masters Certification
 - 17 DNP Degree Plans
- 21 Requirements for Graduate Program Admission
- 22 **Student Policies**
 - 24 Anti-Discrimination Statement
- 25 **Faculty Information**



Patricia Schrader
PHD, MSN, RN CMSRN

Associate Dean / Clinical Associate Professor

Hi! I am Dr. Patricia Schrader, Associate Dean and Clinical Associate Professor.

Welcome to the University of Houston **Andy and Barbara Gessner College of Nursing (CON)** where we educate a diverse student population that builds professional leaders and clinical experts. The Gessner College of Nursing has been offering educational, informational, and cultural opportunities to students from many South Texas counties since 2006. Located at campuses in Houston, Sugar Land, and Katy, the Gessner College of Nursing establishes educational partnerships with both rural and urban health care facilities. The nursing faculty utilize many learning modalities to provide exemplary education across a continuum of cultural, educational, and generational learning concepts. Approved graduate programs include the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Administration, Education and Family Nurse Practitioner tracks, the Education and Administration Certificate Programs, and the Post Master's Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Family Nurse Practitioner or Administration tracks.

Students will see and experience many innovative changes when joining the Gessner College of Nursing this fall. More change will be upcoming throughout the year. Nursing faculty are committed to guiding students' learning and to providing challenging experiences which will serve our graduates well as they enter the richly rewarding, dynamic, and rapidly-evolving healthcare environment.

Nursing faculty view Gessner College of Nursing students as future professional colleagues and expect students to conduct themselves in a professional manner on campus and in the clinical area. The Gessner College of Nursing policies inform students of expectations of graduate students. The graduate nursing student handbook contains policies specific to the Gessner College of Nursing programs that supplement those found in course syllabi, the [UH Catalog](#) and the [UH Student Handbook](#). Students are responsible for using the Handbook as a resource when questions arise and as a guide to academic and nonacademic policies and procedures.

The information in this handbook is updated every two years or as needed; however, changes may also be made throughout the academic year. If a change occurs, an announcement will be posted on the [Gessner College of Nursing website](#) and in the Gessner College of Nursing's learning management system.

**Congratulations on your decision to advance your education.
The faculty and staff are here to help you reach your goal!**



[Click to View](#)

[Mission and Vision Statement](#)

[Philosophy and Conceptual Framework](#)

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program is designed to build upon the BSN degree. Students in the MSN program are prepared to function at advanced levels with an expanded knowledge of theory, research, population health, and clinical application. Graduates are prepared to provide evidence-based health care and to work in interdisciplinary teams. Each graduate will be prepared to function in their chosen advanced practice role. Family Nurse Practitioner students are educationally prepared to sit for national certification through the [American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board \(AANPCB\)](#) or the [American Nurses Credentialing Center \(ANCC\)](#).



MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The Master of Science in Nursing program prepares professional nurses for leadership roles in nursing. Graduate study in nursing requires the acquisition and systematic application of knowledge and skills in nursing practice, evidence-based practice, and a nursing role. Innovative educational delivery and part-time study is available for the Nurse Administration, Nurse Education, and Family Nurse Practitioner tracks.

Post Master's Certificates in Nursing Education and Nursing Administration are available.

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PROGRAM GOALS (OUTCOMES)

1. Assume advanced leadership roles in a variety of health care settings.
2. Exemplify ethical, legal, and professional standards for advanced nursing practice.
3. Integrate advanced knowledge of nursing and related disciplines in the roles of educator, administrator, or clinician.
4. Participate in research and other scholarly activities to expand nursing knowledge.
5. Work effectively in interdisciplinary relationships or partnerships to promote, maintain, and restore the health of clients; improve health care delivery systems; shape health policy; or influence professional education.

POST MASTER'S DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE (DNP)

The Post Master's Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program is designed to build upon the existing MSN program at UH. The Gessner College of Nursing DNP is a practice focused post master's program educating in evidence-based practice, quality improvement, and systems leadership.

The DNP program is offered in a hybrid model utilizing both online and face-to-face modalities two days per term at the University of Houston campus. Additionally, clinical experiences are available face-to-face in the community setting.



DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The DNP program is a part-time post master's program designed for working nurses. Students may chose to enroll in one of two tracks: (1) the [Post-Master's Administration](#), or (2) the [Post-Master's Family Nurse Practitioner Track](#).

DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE PROGRAM GOALS (OUTCOMES)

1. Perform at the highest level of advanced nursing practice, providing expanded health care access to individuals, families, populations, and communities.
2. Incorporate leadership and interprofessional collaboration skills to deliver safe, effective, comprehensive, cost-effective care.
3. Develop, implement, and evaluate innovative programs in the areas of patient care, population health, leadership, education, and policy.
4. Enhance nursing education in nursing programs through evidence-based knowledge, research, ethical standards, technology, and clinical judgment to advance quality of care and health concerns.
5. Guide change in health care policies and systems.
6. Demonstrate achievement of DNP nationally recognized essentials and competencies.

GRADUATE DEGREE PLANS

MSN DEGREE PLANS

CORE COURSES (18 Credit Hours)

Course Number	Title	Credit Hrs.	Lab/Practicum Hrs.
NURS 6301	Advanced Research Integrated Evidence Practice	3	
NURS 6306	Policy, Role, and Economics	3	
NURS 6320	Healthcare Informatics	3	
NURS 6332	Biostatistics	3	
NURS 6333	Population Health	3	
NURS 6351	Evidence-based Practice Project (NOT FNP)	3	
CORE TOTAL		18	

NURSING ADMINISTRATION CONCENTRATION COURSES (18 Credit Hours)

Course Number	Title	Credit Hrs.	Lab/Practicum Hrs.
NURS 6309	Advanced Leadership and Management	3	
NURS 6316	Healthcare Organizational Behavior	3	
NURS 6317	Human Resource Management in Healthcare	3	
NURS 6318	Health Care Delivery Systems and Organization	3	
NURS 6319	Health Care Finance	3	
NURS 6321	Leadership Practicum	3	135
CONCENTRATION TOTAL		18	
TOTAL ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM		36	

EDUCATION CONCENTRATION COURSES (24 Credit Hours)

Course Number	Title	Credit Hrs.	Lab/Practicum Hrs.
NURS 6312	Measurement and Evaluation in Nursing Education	3	45
NURS 6313	Theories and Methods of Teaching and Learning in Nursing	3	45
NURS 6314	Development of Nursing Curriculum	3	
NURS 6330	Advanced Diagnostic Physical Exam	3	
NURS 6331	Advanced Pharmacotherapy	3	
NURS 6335	Management of Health Disorders in Adults	3	
NURS 6336	Management of Health Disorders in Adults Clinical	3	135
NURS 6338	Advanced Pathophysiology	3	
CONCENTRATION TOTAL		24	
TOTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM		42	225

FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER CONCENTRATION COURSES (32 Credit Hours)

Course Number	Title	Credit Hrs.	Lab/Practicum Hrs.
NURS 6230	Diagnostic Tests & Procedures	2	
NURS 6330	Advanced Diagnostic Physical Examination	3	
NURS 6331	Advanced Pharmacotherapy	3	
NURS 6335	Management of Health Disorders in Adults	3	
NURS 6336	Management of Health Disorders in Adults Clinical	3	135
NURS 6338	Advanced Pathophysiology	3	
NURS 6345	Management of Health Disorders in Women and Children	3	
NURS 6346	Management of Health Disorders in Women & Children Clinical	3	180
NURS 6355	Management of Health Disorders Across the Lifespan in Diverse Settings	3	
NURS 6356	Management of Health Disorders across the Lifespan in Diverse Settings Clinical	3	180
NURS 6366	Capstone Clinical	3	180
CONCENTRATION TOTAL		32	675 PRACTICUM
TOTAL FNP PROGRAM		47	675

***POST MASTER’S CERTIFICATE IN NURSING EDUCATION (9 Credit Hours)**

Course Number	Title	Credit Hrs.	Lab/Practicum Hrs.
NURS 6312	Measurement & Evaluation in Nursing Education	3	45
NURS 6313	Theories and Methods of Teaching and Learning in Nursing	3	45
NURS 6314	Development of Nursing Curriculum	3	
CONCENTRATION TOTAL		9	90
TOTAL POST MSN CERTIFICATE		9	90

***POST MASTER’S CERTIFICATE IN NURSING ADMINISTRATION (9 Credit Hours)**

Course Number	Title	Credit Hrs.	Lab/Practicum Hrs.
NURS 6309	Advanced Leadership and Management	3	
NURS 6317	Human Resource Management in Health Care	3	
NURS 6319	Healthcare Finance	3	
CONCENTRATION TOTAL		9	0
TOTAL POST MSN CERTIFICATE		9	0

**Post Master’s certificate candidates are required to achieve a grade of B or higher in all post MSN certificate courses to be eligible to earn the certificate.*

DNP DEGREE PLAN

The following courses are required for earning the Post Master’s Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree. Students also have the opportunity to complete a Post Master’s Certificate in Nursing Education while earning the DNP. Students should refer to individual degree plans and course descriptions for additional information on course prerequisites.

Course Number	Title	Credit Hrs.	Lab/Practicum Hrs.
Semester 1			
NURS 8301	Healthcare Project Design, Methods, & Analysis	3	
NURS 8302	Advanced Practice Finance and Economics	3	
Semester 2			
NURS 8207	Writing for Publication	2	
NURS 8208	DNP Seminar I	2	
Semester 3			
NURS 8336	Advanced Synthesis Practicum	3-6	135-270

DNP DEGREE PLAN

Course Number	Title	Credit Hrs.	Lab/Practicum Hrs.
Semester 4			
NURS 8215	Advanced Leadership and Management Seminar	2	
NURS 8316	Advanced Leadership Practicum	3	135
OR			
NURS 8225	Complex Health Deviations Seminar	2	
NURS 8326	Complex Health Deviations Practicum	3	135
Semester 5			
NURS 8205	Interdisciplinary Care Seminar	2	
NURS 8306	Interdisciplinary Focus Clinical	3	135
Semester 6			
NURS 8304	Systems Management of Vulnerable Populations	3	

DNP DEGREE PLAN

Course Number	Title	Credit Hrs.	Lab/Practicum Hrs.
Semester 7			
NURS 8303	Complex Systems and Leadership	2	
NURS 8356	Scholarly Project Development/Implementation	3-5	135
Semester 8			
NURS 8209	DNP Seminar II	2	
NURS 8357	Scholarly Project Dissemination	3	
TOTAL		37-42	540-810

DNP PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS



Graduates of a DNP program must achieve 1000 clinical hours from a combination of clinical hours in a master's program and the DNP program. Each student will achieve a minimum of 500 clinical hours in the Gessner College of Nursing DNP program. To ensure students meet the required minimum 1000 clinical hours, students with an MSN degree that did not include 500 clinical hours must have a portfolio review to determine an action plan for achieving the required clinical hours. A plan will be developed to achieve any additional hours required. The portfolio may include a written description of the individual's practice experience, participation in academic and specialized programs in the specialty area, national certification in specialty area, and/or additional activities and experiences that exemplify expert practice in nursing and healthcare leadership. The clinical hours accepted to meet the 500-hour requirement at the master's level must be outside the individual's normal scope of paid employment.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE PROGRAM ADMISSION

Applicants to the graduate nursing programs must meet all requirements for graduate admission as described in the [UH Catalog](#), on the Gessner College of Nursing [MSN website Requirements Page](#) and on the Gessner College of Nursing [DNP website Requirements Page](#).

The number of MSN and DNP students admitted each year is determined by availability of appropriate qualified faculty and/or clinical resources. Applicants are reviewed on an individual basis.

POLICIES

(FOR ALL NURSING STUDENTS)

[S100 Academic Progression](#)

[S101 Student Clinical Readiness](#)

[S104 Classroom, Lab, and Clinical Attendance](#)

[S106 Evaluation of Faculty and Course](#)

[S108 Financial Aid and Scholarship Information](#)

[S112 Inactive Status](#)

[S113 Minimal Technology Requirements](#)

[S117 Student Involvement in Curriculum and Evaluation](#)

[S122 Blood, Body Fluid, and Hazardous Exposure Policy and Protocol](#)

[S123 Clinical Agency Policy and Procedure](#)

[S126 Classroom Expectations](#)

[S127 Student Testing](#)

[S133 Non-Student Formal Complaints](#)

[S134 Preceptor Responsibilities](#)

[S135 ADA Policy](#)

[S136 Student Professional Conduct and Demeanor](#)

[S137 Academic Jeopardy Notification](#)

[S138 Dress Code Policy](#)

[S139 Core Performance Standards \(CPS\) for the College of Nursing](#)

[S140 Medication Administration](#)

[S141 Simulation Laboratory Policy](#)

[S142 Student Grading Policy](#)

[S143 Student Library Services](#)

ADDITIONAL POLICIES FOR ALL GRADUATE STUDENTS

[G305 MSN Degree Plan](#)

[G308 Transfer of Graduate Credit](#)

[G310 Graduate Student Advanced Practice](#)

[G311 Graduate Student Professional Behavior](#)

ADDITIONAL POLICIES FOR DNP STUDENTS

[D600 Student Admission](#)

[D601 Attendance Policy](#)

[D603 Clinical Practice Hours](#)

[D604 DNP Degree Plans](#)

[D605 DNP Academic and Portfolio Advisement](#)

[D606 Scholarly Project Prospectus - Form A](#)

[D607 DNP Portfolio - Form B](#)

[D608 Security Screening](#)

[D609 DNP Time Limit](#)

[D610 Student Status Change](#)

[D611 Grading Policy](#)

[D612 Eligibility for Graduation](#)

STUDENT POLICIES

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The policy of the University of Houston (UH) is to ensure equal opportunity in all its educational programs and activities, and all terms and conditions of employment without regard to age, race, color, disability, religion, national origin, ethnicity, military status, genetic information, sex (including gender and pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity or status, or gender expression, except where such a distinction is required by law. Employees, students, and visitors to campus with questions and/or complaints regarding discrimination, or sexual misconduct (such as sexual violence) under Title IX, may contact the Title IX Coordinator for University of Houston or the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. The Title IX Coordinator as well as the ADA and Section 504 Coordinator for UH and can be contacted at:

Rebecca Lake

[Title IX Coordinator](#)

4367 Cougar Village Drive, Building 526,

Houston, TX 77204

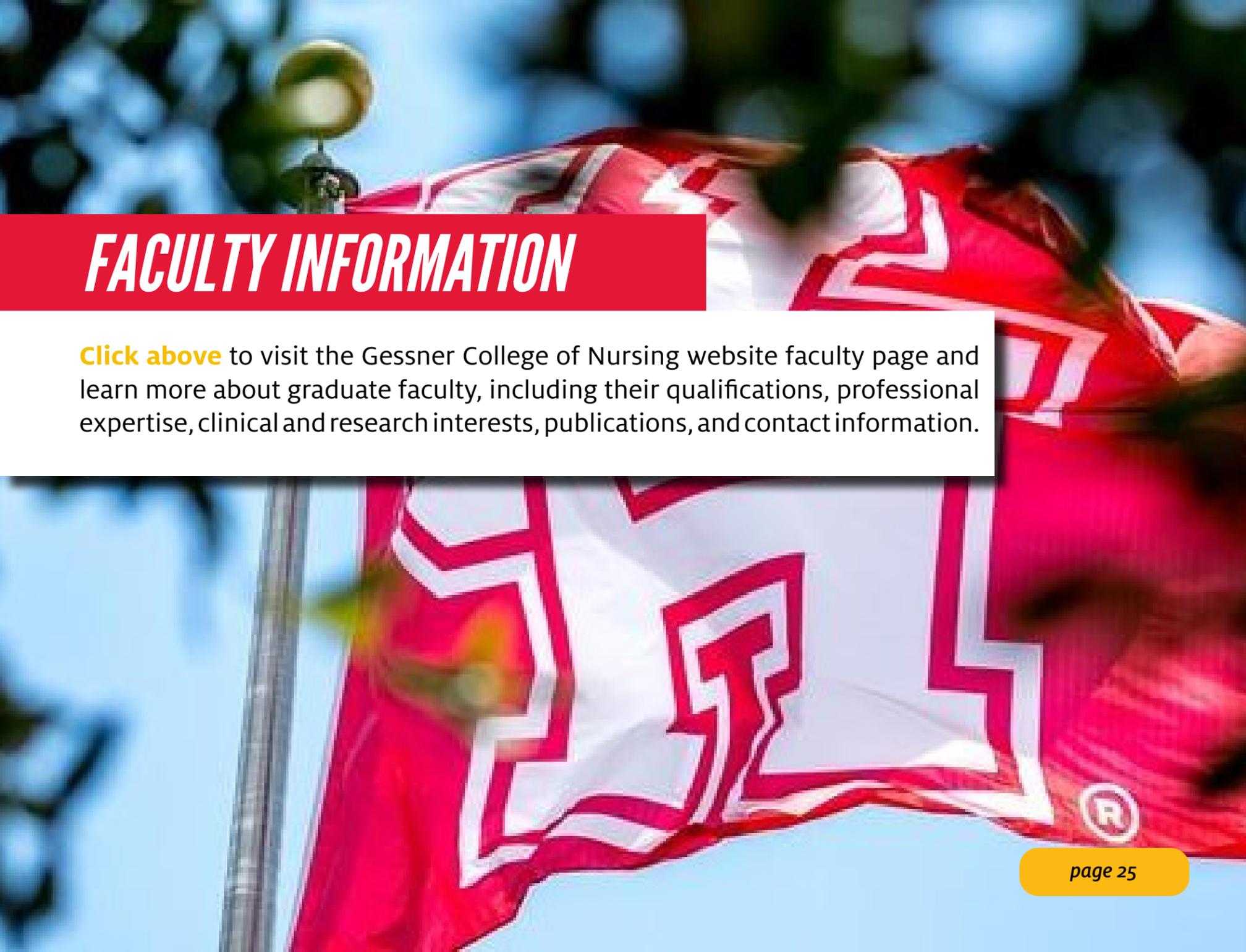
Email: eos@uh.edu

Phone: 713.743.8835



FACULTY INFORMATION

Click above to visit the Gessner College of Nursing website faculty page and learn more about graduate faculty, including their qualifications, professional expertise, clinical and research interests, publications, and contact information.





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University of Houston at Sugar Land

Brazos Hall
14004 University Blvd.
Sugar Land, TX 77479-4295

University of Houston at Katy

22400 Grand Circle
Katy, TX 77449-2563

University of Houston

Health Building 2
4349 Martin Luther King Blvd.
Houston, TX 77204-6065

Phone : (832) 842-8200
Email : nursing@uh.edu
Visit: www.uh.edu/nursing



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