

Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program Handbook

Welcome from the Dean

On behalf of the faculty and staff, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the DNP program at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) School of Nursing. We are very happy that you have chosen UNLV to continue your nursing education. At the UNLV School of Nursing, we pride ourselves on creating a warm and dynamic student-centered environment. Our motto is Nurse Leaders Start Here. You will find many opportunities here for professional growth and opportunities. This handbook provides information needed to facilitate your progression in your program of study. While the primary responsibility for your success lies with each of you, many individuals stand ready to assist you in your efforts. If you have additional questions, contact your advisor who will be happy to help. You've made the right choice by choosing the UNLV School of Nursing. We're here to help you advance your nursing career through discovery and scholarship. We really believe in you and are happy to be a part of your professional journey.

Best regards,

Angela Frederick Amar, PhD, RN, ANEF, FAAN

Dean and Professor



Welcome from the Associate Dean of Advanced Education

Welcome to UNLV and the School of Nursing. We are happy that you are here! We are excited to partner with you to facilitate your educational journey. Our online graduate programs serve your need for flexibility. We have an excellent curriculum that enhances your leadership and practice and provides you with the knowledge and skills necessary to translate evidence into practice. The faculty is committed to a curriculum that is delivered through a lens of equity and justice and how you, the health care practitioner, leads systemic change and provides exceptional care in organizations and communities. This Handbook is your tool to guide you through the program. As the Associate Dean of Advanced Education, I am here to serve you, the student.

Imelda Reyes, DNP, MPH, FNP-BC, CNE, FAANP

Associate Dean of Advanced Education and Professor in Residence

Welcome from the Director of Doctoral Education

Dear colleague: Congratulations on becoming part of the UNLV School of Nursing DNP Program! You are on your way to becoming part of an important community of scholars, educators, researchers, and leaders. In this program, you will have a myriad of opportunities to grow in each of these roles, experience professional growth and mentorship, gain skills as a scientist, generate new knowledge, and participate in the development of collegial and supportive networks with your colleagues. This handbook is your guide to getting started and taking an active part in your DNP journey and will serve as a reference for you throughout. This will be a challenging and exciting time, and I hope you will feel free to reach out with questions, concerns, or just to say "Hi." Everyone at the School of Nursing is here to help you, but we can only do that if you let us know when you need us! We're so happy you're here and are excited to see what you will do next.

In welcome,

Candace W. Burton, PhD, RN, AFN-BC, FNAP

Director of Doctoral Education and Associate Professor



Mission Statement(s)

Our mission is to advance the science of health and healthcare by preparing nurse clinicians, educators, leaders, and researchers to optimize health equity and wellness of individuals, families, communities, and populations. The School of Nursing promotes, improves, and innovates nursing through interdisciplinary and transformational education, scholarship, practice, and community engagement.

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide program specific information that is not found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Students are responsible for understanding and following the policies and procedures delineated in this document and the UNLV Graduate Catalog, as well as the NSHE Code, UNLV Bylaws, and the UNLV Student Conduct Code. Questions about policies should be directed to the Graduate College: valarie.burke@unlv.edu or gradassociatedean@unlv.edu.

Department Graduate Faculty

A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Faculty must hold graduate faculty status to be involved in graduate education at UNLV. For up to date information regarding graduate faculty status in your department, visit the [Graduate Faculty status web page](#).

Program Information

Doctor of Nursing Practice

Advanced Practice

Contact Information

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Department Website and Office Information

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Program Requirements

Program requirements regarding [admission, coursework and culminating experience](#) are found in the graduate catalog.

Advisory Committee Guidelines

For programs that require a thesis or dissertation, a graduate advisory committee is mandatory and must conform to the Degree Progression Policies and Procedures provided in the graduate catalog.

Membership on DNP Graduate Advisory Committees (GACs) is to be determined by the student in consultation with their advisor, other members of the faculty, the Director of Doctoral Education, and/or others as needed. GAC Chairs must be full-time members of the School of Nursing Faculty with appropriately approved graduate faculty status privileges. While the student's advisor may also serve as Chair of the GAC, this is not required. One additional faculty GAC member from the School of Nursing and one faculty member from outside the School of Nursing (Graduate College Representative) are also required for a complete GAC.

Degree Program Benchmarks

To progress in the DNP program, the student must:

1. Maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 (B) or above each semester enrolled.
2. Receive a grade of "B" or above in all required cognate and nursing courses. If less than a "B" occurs, for example a "B-" is earned, the student must repeat the course. The student may repeat a course only one time.
3. Complete a minimum of six degree program credits per calendar year (3 credits per semester; calendar year defined as fall and spring semesters).
4. Continuously register for three semester hours of credit each semester while working on a culminating project.
5. Maintain the standards of academic and professional integrity expected in a particular discipline or program.

Program Timelines

(Full-time; students seeking part-time study status should contact the Student Services office for modified plans of study)

Sample BSN to DNP track. Official degree requirements are found in the Graduate Catalog.

Course #	Course Title	Term to be taken	Credit
NURS 704	Advanced Pathophysiology and Genetics I	Year 1 FA	3
NURS 703	Health Assessment	Year 1 FA	3
NURS 712/734	Health Systems Science & Quality Improvement	Year 1 FA	3
NURS 737/725	Advanced Statistics & Methods for Doctoral Nursing Practice	Year 1 SP	3
NURS 726	Healthcare Issues and the Law	Year 1 SP	3
NURS 730	Advanced Pharmacology and Genetics II	Year 1 SP	3
NURS 718	Business Management for Advanced Practice Nurse Leaders	Year 1 SP	3
NURS 716	Population Health	Year 1 SU	3

Course #	Course Title	Term to be taken	Credit
NURS 708/700	Analysis and Economics of Healthcare Systems and Delivery	Year 1 SU	2
NURS 714	Family Theory and Health Promotion	Year 1 SU	2
NURS 719R	Health and Public Policy for Advanced Practice Nursing	Year 1 SU	3
NURS 701	Diagnostic Reasoning and Clinical Decision Making for the FNP (<i>45 clinical hours</i>)	Year 2 FA	2
NURS 729	Translation of Evidence into Healthcare Practice	Year 2 FA	3
NURS 788	DNP Project I (<i>90 practice hours</i>)	Year 2 FA	2
NURS 766	Informatics	Year 2 FA	2
NURS 740	FNP Adult and Women's Health (<i>180 clinical hours</i>)	Year 2 – SP	6
NURS 788	DNP Project II (<i>180 practice hours</i>)	Year 2 – SP	3
NURS 788	DNP Project III (<i>180 practice hours</i>)	Year 2 – SU	3
NURS 750R	FNP Children and OB (<i>180 clinical hours</i>)	Year 2 – SU	6
NURS 760R	FNP Geriatric & Chronic Illness (<i>180 clinical hours</i>)	Year 3 FA	6
NURS 768	DNP Forum and Role Transformation	Year 3 FA	2
NURS 769	Dissemination	Year 3 FA	3

Sample MSN to DNP track. Official degree requirements are found in the Graduate Catalog.

Course #	Course Title	Term to be taken	Credit
NURS 734	Health Systems Science & Quality Improvement	Year 1 FA	3
NURS 729	Translation of Evidence into Healthcare Practice	Year 1 FA	3
NURS 718	Business Management for Advanced Practice Nurse Leaders	Year 1 FA	3
NURS 758	Advanced Statistics & Methods for doctoral nursing practice	Year 1 SP	3
NURS 726	Healthcare Issues and the Law	Year 1 SP	3
NURS 788	DNP Project I (<i>180 practice hours</i>)	Year 1 SP	3
NURS 788	DNP Project II (<i>180 practice hours</i>)	Year 1 SU	1
NURS 716	Population Health: Analysis and Evaluation	Year 1 SU	3
NURS 708	Analysis and Economics of Healthcare Systems and Delivery	Year 1 SU	3
NURS 788	DNP Project III (<i>180 practice hours</i>)	Year 2 FA	2
NURS 719R	Health and Public Policy for Advanced Practice Nursing	Year 2 FA	3

Course #	Course Title	Term to be taken	Credit
NURS 766	Informatics	Year 2 FA	2
NURS 788	DNP Project IV (180 practice hours)	Year 2 SP	3
NURS 768	DNP Forum and Role Transformation	Year 2 SP	3
NURS 769	Dissemination	Year 2 SP	1

Professional Code of Ethics/Discipline Guidelines

UNLV Graduate College policy regarding academic integrity can be found in the graduate catalog.

ACCREDITATION

The baccalaureate degree in nursing program and master's degree in nursing program at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas – School of Nursing were originally accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) on October 13, 2008 with the current accreditation through June 30, 2024. The post-graduate APRN certificate program had their initial accreditation visit on October 2, 2017 and were accredited through June 30, 2023. The Doctor of Nursing Practice program had their initial accreditation visit on October 2, 2017 and were accredited through June 30, 2023. The Nurse-Midwifery Program had their preaccreditation visit by the Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education on March 3, 2023, and was preaccredited in April, 2023.

All eligible programs at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (Baccalaureate degree in Nursing {BSN}; Master's degree in Nursing {MSN}; Doctor of Nursing Practice {DNP}; and post-graduate APRN certificate program) are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 655 K Street NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001, 202-887-6791. The Nurse-Midwifery Program {NMW} is also preaccredited by the Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education, 8403 Colesville Road, Suite 1550, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

NURSING STANDARDS

The American Nurses Association has defined standards and codes by which all nurses practice. As a professional program it is expected that students will demonstrate behaviors that reflect the defined standards of nursing throughout their academic experience. Students in the specialty areas will also be guided by published standards appropriate to their specialty. American Nurses Association Standards of Nursing Practice

- The collection of data about the health status of the client/patient is systematic and continuous. The data are accessible, communicated, and recorded.
- Nursing diagnoses are derived from health status data.
- The plan of nursing care includes goals derived from the nursing diagnoses.
- The plan of nursing care includes priorities and the prescribed nursing approaches or measures to achieve the goals derived from the nursing diagnoses.
- Nursing actions provide for client/patient participation in health promotion, maintenance and restoration.
- Nursing actions assist the client/patient to maximize his health capabilities.
- The client's/patient's progress or lack of progress toward goal achievement is determined by the client/patient and the nurses.
- The client's/patient's progress or lack of progress toward goal achievement directs reassessment, reordering of priorities, new goal setting and revision of the plan of nursing care.

CODE OF ETHICS

The graduate program also adheres to the Code of Ethics for Nurses as published by the American Nurses Association (2015). Interpretive statements related to the statements identified below may be found at [AMA Ethics](#).

1. The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.
2. The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.
3. The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.
4. The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to provide optimal care.
5. The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.
6. The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.
7. The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.
8. The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.
9. The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.

Annual Mandatory Individual Development Plan (IDP)

Each winter break and early spring term, graduate students are **required** to complete the Graduate Student Individual Development Plan (IDP) form [Formerly known as the Student Annual Review]. The review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress, and it establishes reasonable goals for the year ahead.

Faculty Advisors/Graduate Coordinators have the option to provide feedback to each students' submitted IDP and provide acknowledgement that they have reviewed the IDP.

Reported student data is shared with students' graduate coordinators and advisors to foster opportunities for discussion about students' strengths and weaknesses, accomplishments and next requirements, and mentoring plans so that students know what they need to do in order to progress successfully through their programs in a timely manner.

Students who are graduating are also required to complete the form in order to record their achievements since the data is also used to track UNLV metrics related to the annual productivity of all students.

Additional DNP Information

On-Campus Intensives

Students may be required to attend on-campus intensives throughout the program, these vary by semester. These mandatory intensives consist of two-to-five days' hands-on activities, interprofessional education, simulation, and face-to-face interactions with faculty and experts.

Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) Student Clinical Information

UNLV School of Nursing guarantees clinical placements in Nevada in the greater Las Vegas Metro area to students who hold a valid Nevada RN license. Out-of-state students located in approved states (states in which the School of Nursing can offer various programs/tracks) must hold a valid RN license in the state and jurisdiction in which they intend to complete their program. A list of approved states is available on the Road to Rebel Nursing Webpage. Students are encouraged to partner with the School of Nursing in identifying potential preceptors and clinical practice experiences in their local community in one of those approved states. The UNLV School of Nursing must review and approve all out-of-state and out of the Las Vegas metro area preceptors and clinical sites. UNLV ensures adequate physical resources and clinical sites are available in Nevada to achieve the program's mission, goals, and expected outcomes for all admitted students. UNLV strives to approve student recommended out-of-state/out of the Las Vegas Metro area quality clinical practice experiences and preceptors; however, UNLV offers no guarantees for out-of-state/out of the Las Vegas metro area clinical placements and preceptors and/or assistance in finding out-of-state/out of the Las Vegas metro area placement sites and preceptors. If out-of-state/out of the Las Vegas metro area students are unable to secure a UNLV approved preceptor and/or site in their home communities then students are expected to acquire a Nevada RN license, relocate to the greater Las Vegas metro area, and the UNLV School of Nursing will assign them a preceptor and clinical site in the Las Vegas area (up to 75-miles from UNLV within NV state lines).

APRN students must maintain satisfactory performance in their designated clinical course to ensure progression through all clinical rotations. Students are expected to perform more independently as they progress through their clinical courses such that by the final clinical course the student is functioning with minimal supervision. Students must also follow the requirements, procedures, and responsibilities to be successful in the program.

- Students will be evaluated twice during each clinical course (at mid-term and final of the semester). The mid-term evaluation will be conducted online using the virtual clinical evaluation (VCE) approach. The final clinical evaluation will be an objective structured clinical examination (OSCE).
- Students are provided a list of preceptors and clinical sites that are affiliated with UNLVSON. If the student has a preceptor she/he would like to work with, the student should contact the Director of Clinical Operations and provide the preceptor's name and contact information by specified dates for each clinical semester.

Clinical Hours, Experiences, and E-value

Students will use this system to maintain up to date records throughout the program. The student should enter clinical experiences immediately following clinicals, **but no later than 72 hours after the clinical experience**. Failure to stay up to date with data entry may result in experiences not being counted. E-value data is used for accreditation to track students' number and type of patient encounters with diagnoses and procedures and allows faculty to track the clinical experiences of the student. The Faculty Site Visitor will review the entered data.

If clinical hours are not done in any week of the semester, students must notify their clinical instructor prior and then submit a note in the clinical log assignment indicating that hours were not completed that week. Each clinical log is pass/fail. If a student has a prearranged absence for one week (e.g., week 1 or week 15), the student is still required to submit in the clinical log assignment noting that he/she did not do clinical hours for reasons noted (e.g., week 1 – have not started clinical rotations yet; week 15 – not doing hours this week since done with required clinical hours).

Clinical hours are based on direct patient care of real people. Thus, telehealth hours count as clinical time, and simulation hours do not. Travel to and from the clinical site as well as lunch/breaks cannot be counted in the total for each clinical rotation. These guidelines follow the National Task Force guidelines on quality NP Education for a definition of direct patient care. Course hours requirements must be satisfied each term, but additional hours may be needed to achieve competence.

Nursing Discipline Resources

SIGMA THETA TAU INTERNATIONAL

The Zeta Kappa Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International was chartered at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in 1981. The purposes of Sigma Theta Tau are to recognize the achievement of scholarship of superior quality, to recognize the development of leadership qualities, to foster high professional standards, to encourage creative work and to strengthen commitment on the part of individuals to the ideals and purposes of the profession of nursing. Each year invitation to membership is extended to selected students in the undergraduate and graduate programs who demonstrate the qualities identified by the purposes of Sigma Theta Tau. Faculty members and community nursing leaders who possess the minimum of a Baccalaureate in Nursing are also invited to membership. Meetings of educational nature are planned four times per year. Learn more about the [Zeta Kappa-At-Large Chapter](#).

University Resources

The Graduate Academy: Innovative Leadership, Professional, and Career Development

The goal of the [Graduate Academy](#) is to serve as a virtual resource providing support and many professional opportunities to UNLV graduate students. The Academy offers information about events and services such as graduate certificate programs, workshops, training sessions and career services. You can follow Academy activities via social media or look for regular updates on the website.

Academic Success Center

The goal of the [Academic Success Center](#) is to help students do well academically and complete their studies on time. They offer or will refer you to such programs and resources as tutoring, advising, skills testing, career exploration and more. They guide students every step of the way to the many established resources created to ensure they complete their educational goals. Learn more about the programs and services the center currently offers.

Alumni Association

With an alumni base 140,000 strong, the [UNLV Alumni Association](#) offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

Commencement Office

Located in the UNLV Office of the Registrar, the [commencement office](#) is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement ceremony and your diploma; for all other information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College. It is the students' responsibility to ensure they apply for [graduation on time](#) and submit all required forms to the Graduate College. Questions regarding thesis/dissertation should be directed to the Graduate College [Student Services Team](#) and questions regarding required forms should be directed to the Graduate College [RPC Team](#).

Office of Diversity Initiatives

The vision of the [Office of Diversity Initiatives](#) is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to provide leadership and

support for UNLV's diversity mission: *to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment*. This Office also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The **DRC** is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive appropriate accommodations.

Office of International Student and Scholars

International Students and Scholars (ISS) ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist and advise employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

Jean Nidetch Women's Center

The **Jean Nidetch Women's Center** is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women's Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

The Intersection

The Intersection is a one-stop resource for UNLV's highly diverse student body — a comprehensive multicultural center grounded in the academic life of our students. As an intersecting campus resource, the Intersection helps ensure students, particularly first-generation and students of color, successfully navigate their academic careers. Here, all members of campus can discuss their differences, discover their similarities, and build a shared sense of belonging.

UNLV Libraries

UNLV Libraries has always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)

The **Graduate & Professional Student Association** serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library room 2141 and Gateway Building PDAC Room. The facility a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of one graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

Office of Student Conduct

The **Office of Student Conduct** is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Conduct collaborates with the UNLV community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the *UNLV Student Code of Conduct* by:

- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;
- Establishing accountability for student choices;
- Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
- Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

Military and Veteran Services Center

The [Military and Veteran Service Center](#) is staffed with veterans and veteran education benefits experienced staff to assist more than 1,000 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office

The [Financial Aid & Scholarships Office](#) supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

Writing Center

This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumes, and we can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the [Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#) page.

University Policies and Procedures

Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures. To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the following websites:

- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Activation for Military Service](#)
- [Change of Address](#)
- [FERPA/Privacy Rights](#)
- [Health Insurance - Mandatory](#)
- [Jean Clery Campus Safety and Security Report](#)
- [Proof of Immunization](#)
- [Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects](#)
- [Rebelmail Policy](#)
- [Student Conduct Code](#)
- [Student Computer Use Policy](#)
- [Title IX](#)

UNLV does not discriminate in its employment practices or in its educational programs or activities, including admissions, on the basis of sex/gender pursuant to Title IX, or on the basis of any other legally protected category as is set forth in NSHE Handbook Title 4, Chapter 8, Section 13. Reports of discriminatory misconduct, questions regarding Title IX, and/or concerns about noncompliance with Title IX or any other anti-discrimination laws or policies should be directed to UNLV's Title IX Coordinator Michelle Sposito.

The Title IX Coordinator can be reached through the [online reporting form](#), by email at titleixcoordinator@unlv.edu, by phone at (702) 895-4055, by mail at 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Box 451062, Las Vegas, NV, 89154-1062, or in person at Frank and Estella Beam Hall (BEH), Room 555.

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the [Graduate Catalog](#):

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Academic Policies](#)
- [Admission and Registration Information](#)
- [Degree Progression Policies & Procedures](#)

In addition, the [Graduate College website](#) contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.

Handbook Information

Last revised	Revised by	Department Vote Tally: Yes/No/Abs. (date of vote)	Changes summary
3-24-23	Candace Burton	23/0/0 (4-17-23)	Updated to New Template and new program sub-plans