

Thomas Edison State College
W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing
Guidelines for Synthesis Paper and MSN e-Portfolio

I. Purpose:

The overall purpose of the MSN *Synthesis Paper* and *e-Portfolio* is to provide graduate students the opportunity to reflect on and document their achievement of the MSN Program Outcomes and Specialty Track Competencies.

II. Description:

The MSN e-Portfolio is a compilation of the graduate student's professional and academic achievements **while enrolled in the MSN program**. The combination of the *Synthesis Paper* and the *e-Portfolio* provides evidence of academic achievements, credentials earned, clinical and educational competence, and contributions to the profession.

III. Organization of the *Synthesis Paper*

The *Synthesis Paper*, through student reflective self-assessment, provides the means to demonstrate the scholarship, leadership, professional development, and nursing competencies achieved during his/her program of study. Graduate students complete and submit the paper to the practicum course GradeBook at an announced date during the third week of the final practicum. Each section of the paper must follow the outline described in these Guidelines. **APA format and graduate level writing skills are mandatory. The body of the paper should not exceed 25 pages excluding the title page, table of contents, reference page, and appendix.** The content includes

- **Title Page**
- **Table of Contents**
- **Purpose (Introduction) (Approximately 4 sentences)** is the introduction to the paper and does not require a heading.
- **Philosophy (Approximately 1-1½ pages)** is the student's personal philosophy of his/her graduate program nursing specialty: Education, Administration, or Informatics.

IV. Summary of Professional Achievements (3 pages)

- A statement of the student's professional accomplishments achieved **during the MSN program**.
- An updated copy of the student's **Curriculum Vita or Resume** (appropriate for your specialty) included as an appendix.

V. Academic Achievement of MSN Outcomes and Specialty Tracks Competencies (18 pages)

Address each MSN outcome individually. Integrate one to three specialty program competencies with each program outcome.

You may use short titles for MSN outcomes. For example, use the heading *Research Methods* for MSN Outcome 1. You do not need to type out the entire outcome.

- Reflect on **every course** in the curriculum, and reference the documents (assignments) uploaded to your *e-Portfolio* that indicate and/or support the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes you acquired during the MSN program.
- The reflective narrative should specify how course learning assignments and/or experiences uploaded in your *e-Portfolio* enabled you to achieve the MSN outcomes and competencies.
 - Learning experiences may be used more than one time; however, use a variety of learning experiences throughout the paper.

Thomas Edison State College
W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing
Guidelines for Synthesis Paper and MSN e-Portfolio

- As you discuss the achievement of a MSN outcome, include the selected competency or competencies appropriate to the outcome.
- Cite from your e-Portfolio, **the course name and number, assignment, and name of the learning activity** selected to document how you specifically achieved each outcome and competency.
- Identify any course(s) you transferred into the MSN program and **the number and title of the MSN course the transfer course replaced.**

Upon completion of the *Synthesis Paper*, you are required to have documented **every**

- **MSN Program Outcome**
- **Specialty Track Competency**
- **Core, Specialty track, and elective course taken in MSN program**
- **Course transferred into the MSN program**

Synthesis Papers with missing outcomes, competencies, or MSN program courses will require revision.

Synthesis Papers graded by mentors and returned to the learner for any revision(s) will not be graded higher than Minimal Pass.

VI. Summary Statement (maximum of 2 pages)

- Discuss your **vision** for the next five years, and your **mission** and **values** related to nursing and nursing education, administration, or informatics.
- Reflect on how the MSN program contributed to your professional growth.
- Discuss your future professional plans.

VII. e-Portfolio:

- Submit the *e-Portfolio* with the uploaded documents that support your achievement of the program outcomes and specialty track competencies
- Evidence cited in the *Synthesis Paper* and documented in your *e-Portfolio* must have the identical course name, number, and learning-activity assignment name.

VIII. APA format, Syntax, Grammar Skills , and Organization must be consistent with

- **graduate level grammar skills**
- **scholarly writing**
- **APA manual**

Synthesis Papers that receive a score below Acceptable (less than 3) for APA format and/or Grammar will require revision regardless of the total points received. Synthesis Papers returned for revision cannot be graded higher than Minimal Pass.

Thomas Edison State College
W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing
Guidelines for Synthesis Paper and MSN e-Portfolio

X. Grading Rubric for Synthesis Paper

Grading Categories	Total Points Allocated to Outcomes Competencies APA & Grammar	Total Points Received from Outcomes Competencies APA & Grammar
Exceptional	40 to 44 points with only two outcomes graded Acceptable. No outcome graded below Unacceptable. All nine outcomes and all specialty competencies must be documented to receive an Exceptional.	
Acceptable	30 to 39 points with only three outcomes graded Marginal. No outcome graded Unacceptable. All nine outcomes and all specialty competencies must be documented to receive an Acceptable grade.	
Marginal	24 to 29 points with no outcome graded Unacceptable. All nine outcomes and all specialty competencies must be documented to receive a Marginal grade.	
Unacceptable	≤ 23 or one or more outcomes graded Unacceptable or one or more competency graded Not Met	

The total score for the Synthesis Paper is 44 points (Range 11 to 44); the total score represents the sum of the outcomes with integrated competencies, APA, and Grammar, Syntax, and Organization points.

Any outcome section graded “Unacceptable” must be revised prior to resubmission

MSN Outcomes: Each of the nine (9) outcomes with integrated competencies is graded on a 4-point scale (Exceptional=4, Acceptable=3, Marginal=2, and Unacceptable=1). Any of the nine program outcomes not included in the paper or graded Unacceptable must be revised.

Specialty Competencies: Each track’s specialty competencies is graded Met or Not Met. Any competency not included in the paper requires revision prior to resubmission.

APA Format and Grammar, Syntax, and Organization are graded on a 3-point scale (Exceptional=4, Acceptable=3, and Unacceptable=1) *The Synthesis Paper* requires revision if either of these is graded less than Acceptable (3).