



MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE *of* PHARMACY *and* HEALTH SCIENCES

School of Nursing

MSN Student Handbook



Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences

Online

19 Foster Street
Worcester, MA 01608

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This Handbook is not intended and cannot be construed as a contract or guaranty of any kind, express or implied, and Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences may change, delete, or add to it unilaterally in its sole discretion and without notice. This Handbook supersedes any previous School of Nursing MSN Student Handbook or Manual. Students are expected to know the contents of this Handbook. Students will be notified of changes in this Handbook as they occur. Additional guidelines and policies are contained in the individual course syllabi. Students are expected to know the contents of the course syllabi.

Welcome from the Dean of Nursing

Dear Graduate Nursing Student:

Welcome to the School of Nursing at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS)!

We are delighted to welcome you to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program at MCPHS. As the oldest institution of higher education in Boston, founded in 1823, MCPHS has a rich tradition of academic excellence and innovation in teaching and learning. The School of Nursing (SON) builds on this legacy by offering graduate programs that prepare nurses for advanced practice in today's complex and rapidly evolving healthcare environment.

The School of Nursing offers a Master of Science in Nursing and a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study, both designed to support your growth as a nursing leader and practitioner.

The School of Nursing is distinguished by its:

- **Integrated Structure:** A unified School of Nursing with BSN, MSN, and DNP programs offered across four campuses—Boston, Worcester, Manchester (NH), and Online—providing flexibility and access to a diverse academic community.
- **Learner-Centered Approach:** A commitment to student-centered education that immerses you in rigorous, relevant, and innovative learning experiences.
- **Collaborative Clinical Partnerships:** Strategic partnerships with healthcare organizations that create reciprocal relationships, offering real-world insights and hands-on experiences.
- **Advanced Simulation Technology:** Cutting-edge simulation resources that enhance knowledge retention, foster clinical decision-making, and build the confidence needed for high-quality, safe, and effective practice.
- **Interdisciplinary Learning Environment:** An academic culture that encourages intellectual dialogue, scholarly inquiry, and collaboration across disciplines.
- **Inclusive Academic Community:** A learning environment that is reflective, inclusive, participatory, and committed to embracing diversity, equity, and respect for all.

Our vision of academic excellence is realized through a dynamic and engaged learning environment that values social justice, innovation, clinical scholarship, and teaching excellence. At the heart of our mission is a partnership among students, faculty, and clinical affiliates—one in which nursing education informs practice, and practice continually shapes education.

The future of nursing is in the hands of those who choose to lead. As you embark on this transformative journey, know that we are dedicated to your success. Together, we will shape the future of healthcare through compassionate care, evidence-based practice, and lifelong learning.

Welcome to the next chapter of your professional journey. We are honored to be part of it.

Warm Regards,

Tammy L. Gravel, EdD, MS, RN
Dean and Chief Nurse Administrator, Associate Professor

Leadership, Faculty and Staff Directory

Leadership Team

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Approval and Accreditation



Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) through its Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. Accreditation of an institution of higher education indicates that it meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of institutional quality periodically applied through a peer review process. An accredited college or university is one that has available the necessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, is substantially doing so, and gives reasonable evidence that it will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Institutional integrity is also addressed through accreditation.

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
<http://www.ccneaccreditation.org>.

The Master of Science in Nursing degree program at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
<http://www.ccneaccreditation.org>.

The Doctor of Nursing Practice degree program at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
<http://www.ccneaccreditation.org>.

School of Nursing Guiding Statements

The School of Nursing (SON) at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS) offers the Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing (BSN), Master of Science degree in Nursing (MSN) degree, Post-Graduate Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS), and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree programs that prepare competent, caring, and ethical nursing professionals and leaders to meet the ever-changing needs of the healthcare environment.

Philosophy

Congruent with the philosophy and core values of MCPHS, the SON philosophy reflects our beliefs in a set of core values that are fundamental to nursing education and shared and upheld by the nursing students, faculty, staff, and our clinical partners.

Education is a self-actualizing, creative, and lifetime endeavor involving systematic inquiry and progression from novice to expert. The educational process must be learner-centered to foster intellectual vitality, critical thinking, and responsibility for ongoing professional development. Nursing education must be academically rigorous and socially relevant, embracing multiple ways of knowing and integrating the liberal arts and sciences with professional nursing study. Organized around a clear appreciation of the domain of nursing, the curriculum's foundation embraces the nursing metaparadigm: person/people; health/illness; society/environment; and nursing. Weaving scholarly, professional, and practice-related activities throughout the education process creates a cohesive tapestry of caring and patient-centered care.

Nursing is deeply rooted in the science of caring and connection to others. Individuals have unique qualities and basic needs for respect and recognition of personal dignity. The universality of human rights and needs transcend the boundaries of age, gender, race, ethnicity, class, culture, language, spirituality, and religion. Human diversity and psychosocial-cultural factors influence, and are influenced by, the experience of individuals, communities, and society. Incorporation of humanity and respect is vital to the process of healing and the quality of nursing care.

The primary goals of nursing are to promote, restore and maintain health, prevent disease, and provide care and comfort throughout the lifespan, during illness, and at the end of life. The patient is the center of nursing care and may be an individual, family, group, or community in varying states of health. Nursing appreciates the patient as having distinct and unique needs that continuously change and are redefined as the patient interacts with the nurse, healthcare providers, and the environment. It is critical that a nurse anticipates and adapts to the changing needs of the patient. Identification of patient needs, the provision of nursing care, healthcare experience, and environment are fundamentally connected. The nurse helps create a healing environment for each patient by collaborating with the patient and other healthcare providers to establish mutual goals that enable the patient to attain optimal health.

The core competencies necessary to meet the primary goals of nursing are *communication, assessment, critical thinking, and technical skill*. The core competencies allow the nurse to assess, plan, design, provide, and manage culturally competent, cost-effective, high quality, and direct and indirect nursing care across the lifespan to diverse populations across an ever-changing healthcare delivery system. We strive to achieve competence in nursing practice through a thoughtful and intentional blending of theory, knowledge, and experience.

Our clinical affiliations allow for sharing of resources, knowledge, and experiences between nursing practice and academic nursing. Students, faculty and staff, along with our clinical affiliates form a dynamic triad whereby nursing practice informs nursing education and nursing education influences the practice of nursing and the delivery of healthcare. The goal of our clinical partnerships is to provide a solid, functional, and rigorous foundation for evidence-based nursing practice.

The future of nursing rests with those in the profession. Throughout the various levels of nursing education, faculty and students refine and enhance the beliefs and values that sustain nursing education. We are dedicated to the advancement of all engaged in this endeavor. We believe that the most effective, inspiring, and celebrated professionals are individuals who continue to make their personal development primary and see it as essential to professional excellence. Nurses must be willing to grow and explore outside their comfort zone both personally and professionally as it enhances their ability to innovate, increases their efficacy, and enriches their lives.

School of Nursing Mission

To provide students with a high-quality and innovative nursing education that fosters scientific inquiry, professional service, and leadership in a diverse and evolving healthcare environment.

School of Nursing Vision

To be recognized as a center of excellence in nursing education, where practice, education, scholarship, and community engagement connect to advance nursing and healthcare outcomes.

School of Nursing Core Values

Community Engagement, Belonging, Respect, Innovation, Accountability, and Excellence in Practice

MSN Program Goals

The SON provides excellent education that aims to prepare students as liberally educated persons and master's-prepared professional nurses. We aim to:

- Cultivate a learner-centered environment where individuals are empowered to think, conceptualize, reason, and make sense of the lived worlds
- Prepare students as liberally educated persons and master's-prepared professional nurses
- Prepare nursing graduates who are globally informed and conscientious about diverse and rapidly changing healthcare environments
- Incorporate the values of respect, literacy, practice, and integration
- Build on a foundation of baccalaureate-level nursing knowledge
- Utilize evidence-based teaching practices
- Prepare students as liberally educated persons and master's-prepared professional nurses
- Incorporate the values of respect, literacy, practice, and integration
- Provide opportunities for personal and professional development of students, faculty, staff, and clinical partners
- Connect education to practice through partnerships, preceptorships, and/or mentorships

The MSN program prepares advanced practice nurses to provide health care to diverse populations, and to demonstrate professional leadership roles in practice and is consistent with the standards of the following professional organizations: *The American Association of Colleges of Nursing Essentials: Core Competencies for Nursing Education (2021)* *The American Nurses Association (ANA) Scope and Standards of Practice (2021)*; *The ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements (2015)*; *The National Council of State Boards of Nursing Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification and Education (2008)*; *NONPF Core Competencies (2022)*; *NONPF National Task Force (NTF) for Quality Nurse Practitioner Education, 6th edition (2022)*; *Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) Core Competencies (2023)*; *NAACN Test Content Outline*; *National Panel for Nurse Psychiatric-Mental Health NP Competencies (2023)*; and *PMHNP Board Certification Exam*.

MSN End of Program Learning Outcomes

Graduates of the MSN program will be able to demonstrate the essential competencies for an entry level to advanced professional nursing practice that demonstrate the following outcomes at the advanced professional practice level of nursing:

1. Demonstrate expert clinical reasoning and decision-making by integrating comprehensive assessment, diagnostic acumen, and evidence-based therapeutic management to deliver safe, culturally sensitive, and compassionate patient-centered care across diverse populations and practice settings.
Domains 1: Knowledge for Nursing Practice and, 2: Person-Centered care
2. Collaborate with interprofessional teams to drive system-based practice using advanced communication, leadership skills, and knowledge of social determinants of health to optimize care coordination and enhance patient and population health outcomes.
Domains 3: Population Health; 6: Interprofessional Partnerships; 7. Systems-Based Practice and 10: Personal, Professional and Leadership Development.
3. Critically appraise, synthesize, and apply current research and evidence-based guidelines to inform clinical practice and policy, enhancing patient care and improving health outcomes at individual and population levels.
Domain 4: Scholarship for the Nursing Discipline
4. Cultivate a robust professional identity by integrating effective communication, lifelong learning, mentorship, compassionate care, and ethical practice to enhance the standards of advanced nursing practice.
Domains 9: Professionalism and 10: Personal, Professional and Leadership Development
5. Propose quality improvement initiatives that enhance clinical practice, patient safety, and healthcare delivery systems by employing reflective, data-driven strategies for continuous personal and organizational development.
Domains 5: Quality and Safety; 7: Systems-Based Practice; and 8: Informatics and Healthcare Technologies

American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses

The Code of Ethics is one of several professional nursing standards that frame the curriculum of the undergraduate and graduate nursing programs. The Code provides a standard of practice to guide nursing professionals toward thoughtful, ethical, and high-quality nursing care. The Nursing Code of Ethics underscores all activities within the profession of nursing and adherence to the principles is a prerequisite to participation in the SON.

It is an expectation that all students read and refer to the American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics (2025) located on the ANA website: <https://codeofethics.ana.org/home>

Provision 1: Dignity and Respect

- The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.

Provision 2: Primary Commitment

- A nurse's primary commitment is to the recipient(s) of nursing care, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.

Provision 3: Trust and Advocacy

- The nurse establishes a trusting relationship and advocates for the rights, health, and safety of recipient(s) of nursing care.

Provision 4: Responsibility and Accountability for Practice

- Nurses have authority over nursing practice and are responsible and accountable for their practice consistent with their obligations to promote health, prevent illness, and provide optimal care.

Provision 5: Duties to Self

- The nurse has moral duties to self as a person of inherent dignity and worth including an expectation of a safe place to work that fosters flourishing, authenticity of self at work, and self-respect through integrity and professional competence.

Provision 6: Ethical Work Environments

- Nurses, through individual and collective effort, establish, maintain, and improve the ethical environment of the work setting that affects nursing care and the well-being of nurses.

Provision 7: Knowledge Development and Social Policy

- Nurses advance the profession through multiple approaches to knowledge development, professional standards, and the generation of policies for nursing, health, and social concerns.

Provision 8: Collaborative Relationships

- Nurses build collaborative relationships and networks with nurses, other healthcare and nonhealthcare disciplines, and the public to achieve greater ends.

Provision 9: Commitment to Society and Social Justice

- Nurses and their professional organizations work to enact resource practices, policies, and legislation to promote social justice, eliminate health inequities, and facilitate human flourishing.

Provision 10: A Global Nursing Community

- Nursing, through organizations and associations, participates in the global nursing and health community to promote human and environmental health, well-being, and flourishing

Professional Comportment

Professional comportment (*the manner in which one behaves or conducts oneself*) is expected of all nursing students in the SON. Professional comportment embodies the core values of MCPHS and is defined as behaving in a way that exemplifies respect for individuals including those in the academic setting, health care setting and community of practice. Communication is an essential element of professional comportment, and as such, should be practiced throughout the nursing program. Policies set forth in this handbook provide a framework to socialize students to behave in an ethical, responsible, and professional manner.

Students are expected to display professional demeanor, interactions and boundaries with patients and their families, clinical staff, peers, faculty and the public at all times in consideration of their representation of the profession of nursing and the MCPHS (See the [ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses](#)). Essential expected behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Consistent display of professional demeanor and appropriate interpersonal interactions and boundaries with patients, staff, and peers; including emails to faculty and staff. Specifically, the code provides the following guidance:

- Respect for human dignity – A fundamental principle that underlies all nursing practice is respect for the inherent worth, dignity, and human rights of every individual. Nurses consider the needs and values of all people in all professional relationships.
 - Relationships with colleagues and others – The principle of respect for other people extends to all individuals with whom the nurse interacts. The nurse maintains compassionate and caring relationships with colleagues and others with a commitment to the fair treatment of individuals, to integrity preserving compromise, and to resolving conflict. Nurses function in many roles including direct care provider, administrator, educator, researcher, and consultant. In each of these roles, the nurse treats colleagues, employees, assistants, and students with respect and compassion. This standard of conduct precludes any, and all, prejudicial actions, any forms of harassment or threatening behavior, or disregard for the effect on one's actions on others. The nurse values the distinctive contribution of individuals or groups and collaborates to meet the shared goal of providing quality health services.
- Adherence to the profession's Code of Ethics;
 - Timeliness and adherence to preparation, attendance, policies, and deadlines;
 - Prompt notification of absence or tardiness according to the established absence policies;
 - Adherence to SON professional dress guidelines;
 - Exhibiting professional and responsible behavior when representing MCPHS in any manner or venue while wearing the white coat, clinical uniform, lanyard, or any MCPHS logo; and
 - Displaying professional conduct in using digital or online platforms (examples include Blackboard, Email, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, Facebook, YouTube, etc.).

Individuals whose behavior, in the preceptor, faculty member, or staff's opinion, is disruptive to the learning environment may be given a corrective warning(s) and/or coaching for minor infractions. Repeated or egregious unprofessional behavior may lead to suspension, indefinite suspension or expulsion from the master's program at the sole discretion of the Dean of Nursing/Chief Nursing Officer or their designee. Students suspended indefinitely must apply for readmission in writing to the Office of the Dean of Students. Such applications should include a detailed account of the corrective measures taken to ensure the required change(s) in behavior.

School Activities and Resources

Student Representation on the Graduate Program Committees

Students are asked to represent their cohort on various committees in the graduate program. The student representative is an integral member of the shared governance of the School of Nursing and is invited to present student feedback and recommendations to the committees. As per the SON bylaws, students have voting privileges. Students will be notified via email and the Graduate Virtual Village of the available opportunities to serve on and participate in these committees.

Computer Laboratories

All MCPHS students have access to the computer laboratories on all campuses with a valid student ID:

- **Worcester Campus: Desktop computers are on the third (3rd) floor of 25 Foster Street and in the library.** Printing is available at both locations.
- **Manchester Campus: Desktop computers are in the computer laboratory on the second (2nd) floor of 1260 Elm Street.** Printing is available at this location.

- **Boston Campus:** Desktop computers are located on the third (3rd) floor of the Matricaria Building (179 Longwood Avenue) and first (1st) floor of the Griffin Building (670 Huntington Avenue). Printing is available at both locations.

Library and Learning Resources

The MCPHS library system is available to all students and fosters research and learning. The MCPHS library provides access to electronic resources. There are over 11,655 volumes of books, journals, and multi-media; 700 serial subscriptions; around 41,500 electronic books; and 145 databases.

Online portal: <https://www.mcphs.edu/library>

Online students are encouraged to utilize services through the Library and Learning Resources. Karen Alcorn, Reference and Instruction Librarian; Associate Professor, is available for research consultations, where students can:

- Discuss and narrow the topic;
- Refine searching techniques; and
- Choose the highest-quality information to use.

Contact: Karen Alcorn, MLS, (karen.alcorn@mcphs.edu)

The Center for Academic Success and Enrichment (CASE)

The Center for Academic Success and Enrichment (CASE) supports students through providing a number of academic support services introducing them to the strategies that will enhance performance in their academic programs and ultimately contribute to their professional lives.

Academic Coaching

Academic Coaches work collaboratively with students by program cohort assignment and can assist students with a variety of topics ranging from time management and prioritization, study skill development, connecting with campus resources and more. The CASE staff are available to meet with students on an appointment basis Monday – Friday 9:00am-4:00pm ET. To schedule an appointment with your assigned coach visit Student Success Hub. Questions related to CASE services can be directed to the CASE department email: case.wm@mcphs.edu.

University Learning Network (ULN)

The ULN is intended to support students in meeting the challenges of our health- science based programs with our resources consisting of: Subject Tutoring (Peer/Professional), English Language Resource Center (ELRC), and the Writing Center.

Students can utilize the ULN's appointment-based services (Subject Tutoring, English Language Resource Center, & Writing Center) by visiting Student Success Hub.

Questions related to University Learning Network services can be directed to ULN@mcphs.edu.

Accessing CASE Support

Student Success Hub: To schedule an appointment with an Academic Coach or an appointment-based ULN service, including Subject Tutoring, the English Language Resource Center (ELRC), and the Writing

Center, visit Student Success Hub at the following link and navigate to the “Offices & Services” section: www.mcphs.edu/studentsuccesshub.

Counseling Services for Online Students

Online students are eligible to visit MCPHS Counseling Services for a free case management consultation. During this visit, our staff will go over how to find an [off-campus provider](#) along with tips on [navigating the insurance process](#). Other referral provider service for all students can also be found here: [Welltrack Connect](#). The main link to the online student Counseling Services: [Resources for Online Students | MCPHS](#)

To meet with Counseling Services for one session contact:

counseling.worc@mcphs.edu

508.373.571

After-hours/ urgent care telephone counseling services support is also available, please call 508.373.5718 and press 9 to be connected directly to the after-hours counselor. For emergencies, call 911, or go to your local emergency room.

Additional urgent care support for online students can be found here:

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline | MCPHS](#)

[Mindwise Suicide Prevention Training | MCPHS](#)

Additionally, we offer online tools including:

Virtual Sleep Lab

The [Virtual Sleep Lab](#) has a collection of apps and books that can help improve your sleep

Sleep 101 - Free sleep training course found in Blackboard under course catalog.

Virtual Relaxation Space

The [Virtual Relaxation Space](#) has tips, links, videos, podcasts, and articles for students to utilize for stress management and relaxation.

Online Screening Tool

The free and anonymous [Online Screening Tool](#) for MCPHS students who are deciding whether consultation with a counselor may be helpful.

Online students are strongly encouraged to check with their own Health Insurance provider about mental health benefits/ coverage and telehealth options/coverage.

General Policies

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)

In 1996, Congress passed federal regulations to provide portability of health insurance when an employee leaves a job as a way to be able to change insurance carriers without a break in coverage. The act contains other provisions that have a major impact on the practice of healthcare providers.

The Administrative Simplification Clause of HIPAA Title II addresses Electronic Transaction Standards, Unique Identifiers, Privacy Standards and Security Standards concerning all data pertaining to the care of each individual patient in any healthcare facility. The provisions under the privacy and security standards impose strict compliance with confidentiality on the part of all who have access to patient records. All healthcare providers are required to have documented training regarding these patient privacy regulations. All SON students must attend a formalized training session on HIPAA regulations provided by MCPHS and/or by the clinical agency. Students are expected to adhere to all HIPAA provisions and standards related to patient privacy. Failure to do so may subject the student to disciplinary action under the MCPHS Student Code of Conduct.

Immunization Requirements

Please refer to the section of the [MCPHS Course Catalog](#) titled “MCPHS University Immunization Policy.” Immunization information and clearances are provided through CastleBranch, the University’s contracted vendor.

In accordance with state law, MCPHS policy, and clinical agency requirements, students must show proof of required immunizations, unless they qualify for one of the exemptions allowed by law. Noncompliance with MCPHS immunization requirements will result in administrative withdrawal from the MCPHS or might negatively impact progression in the academic program.

Some healthcare agencies and clinical education sites may have additional immunization requirements. To be eligible for clinical placements, students must meet ALL MCPHS immunization requirements, and any additional requirements imposed by the clinical agency to which the student is assigned. In cases where the clinical site does not pay for the completion of any additional immunization requirements, the student is responsible for paying any associated fees. Without full clearance of immunization requirements, students will not be eligible to begin clinical learning experiences, and consequently, will be unable to meet program requirements. Immunization information and clearances are provided through the University’s contracted vendor.

Drug Testing Requirements for Clinical Sites

Some healthcare agencies and clinical sites may have additional drug testing requirements. To be eligible for clinical placements, students must meet any additional requirements imposed by the clinical rotations site to which the student is assigned. The student is responsible for paying any associated fees and completing drug testing at sites per clinical partner. Clinical site drug testing policies can preclude the student from attending clinical, thus unable to satisfy course and program requirements. Please refer to the Drug Abuse Policy set forth in the MCPHS Student Handbook regarding marijuana use.

CPR Certification

All students must show evidence of CPR training during the first semester in the graduate nursing programs. Students must be certified in **Basic Life Support (BLS) Healthcare Provider by the American Heart Association (AHA)**.

Acceptable AHA courses include BLS (instructor lead) or Heart Code BLS (blended online/skill sign off). American Red Cross, First Aid, and online courses will not be accepted. Students must provide a copy of the card/e-card, indicating active certification (AHA requires recertification every two

years) to the Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs. We recommend the student verify the course in advance to ensure it is appropriate.

NOTE: The student is responsible for submitting evidence of all required annual updates of immunizations and certification renewals. Students will not be permitted to participate in clinical learning experiences until all information is received, and consequently, may be unable to meet program requirements or experience a delay in graduation.

Physical, Technical and Professional Standards

All graduate students must have abilities and skills in the following areas: *cognitive, communication; observation; motor function and endurance; and behavioral*. Reasonable accommodation may be made for some disabilities. However, students must perform independently, with or without accommodation.

Cognitive: Intellectual, Conceptual and Quantitative Abilities

- Follow policies and procedures of MCPHS and the cognitive requirements of the clinical sites hosting the faculty and students for learning.
- Comprehend and follow assignment directions, rubrics, and course syllabi developed by faculty
- Demonstrate ability to achieve course and program outcomes.
- Demonstrate ability to comprehend, integrate, and apply knowledge.
- Develop and refine problem-solving skills crucial to practice as a nurse.
- Access, analyze, and synthesize subjective and objective data to develop nursing diagnoses and comprehensive plans of care.
- Engage effective problem solving and accurately prioritize patient needs in a prompt and timely fashion.
- Utilize current evidence, clinical judgment, and patient preferences to systematically assess, analyze, implement, and evaluate healthcare interventions.
- Promote safe, culturally competent, quality care across the lifespan.

Communication

- Must be able to communicate effectively with patients, families, and members of the healthcare team through oral, written, and interpersonal means.
- Must be able to obtain information, describe patient situations, and perceive both oral and non-verbal communication (including ability to understand normal speech without seeing the speaker's face).
- Must be able to speak, comprehend, read, and write in English at a level that meets the need for accurate, clear, and effective communication. Examples include but are not limited to giving clear oral reports; reading watches or clocks with second hands; reading graphs; reading and understanding documents printed in English; writing legibly in English; discriminating subtle differences in medical terminology.

Observation

- Must be able to observe a patient accurately. Examples include but are not limited to listening to heart and breath sounds; visualizing the appearance of a surgical wound; detecting bleeding,

unresponsiveness or other changes in patient status; detecting the presence of foul odor; and palpating an abdomen.

- Must be able to detect and respond to emergency situations, including audible alarms (e.g., monitors, call bells, fire alarms).

Motor Function and Endurance

- Must have sufficient strength and mobility to work effectively and safely with patients and carry out related nursing care.
- Must be able to complete assigned periods of clinical practice, including up to 12-hour shifts, including days, evenings, nights, and weekends.
- Must be able to respond at a speed sufficient to carry out patient assignments within the allotted time.
- Must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads.

Behavioral

- Must possess mental and emotional health required for total utilization of intellectual abilities.
- Must be able to respond and function effectively during stressful situations.
- Must be capable of adapting to rapidly changing environments and respond with flexibility in uncertain situations.
- Must be able to interact appropriately with others (patients, families, members of healthcare team) in various healthcare contexts.

Physical Requirements in Clinical Setting

Students must meet all physical, technical and professional standards to attend classes/lab/clinical. Clinical agencies may have additional, or agency-specific technical standards, which take precedence over MCPHS standards. In such instances, the program will attempt to provide a comparable alternative learning experience but if that is not possible, students may not be able to progress in the program, or complete program requirements.

Technology Requirements

To enhance the virtual classroom, the SON uses the collaborative features offered by the Learning Management System (Blackboard). MCPHS has access to two platforms, Zoom and Collaborate Ultra. Please view the Technology Requirements at <https://is.mcphs.edu/services/computing-printing/technology-requirements> to ensure that your computer or laptop meets the requirements. Review and install updates to your computer periodically to meet the technology needs. Please know that Blackboard works best with Google Chrome. A headset, microphone, and camera are required to maximize the virtual classroom.

Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and Level 1 Background Check

Certain laws and accreditation standards require health care agencies to request Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) about candidates for employment, volunteer, or training positions to determine if the candidate is eligible to be hired or on rotation in the agency. The majority of the clinical training sites at which MCPHS places students for educational experiences must comply with

these laws. To be eligible for clinical placements, students must be cleared through a Level 1/National background check and CORI check. Additional Level 1/National background checks and CORI's may be required prior to returning from a Leave of Absence or Out of Sequence Status. In addition, clinical sites may require their own background check and/or CORI checks, and students may be asked to complete several release forms. In cases where the facility does not pay the charge for the background and/or CORI check, **the student is responsible for paying the fee**. If a site requires but does not provide for obtaining background check and/or CORI checks, the student can obtain them through the Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs and will be responsible for any associated fees. The Level 1/National background check/CORI must be performed by the University's designated vendor due to clinical site/agency contractual requirements. **Students may be required to complete annual CORI checks.**

Inclement Weather

In the case of inclement weather on a clinical day when MCPHS does not close, students are expected to report to clinical as scheduled. However, at the discretion of the course coordinator/designee, scheduled clinical experiences may be delayed, cancelled, or dismissed early if travel conditions or weather forecasts pose significant concern for student safety. We encourage students to use their best judgement when deciding whether to attend clinical preceptorships in inclement weather. The student is responsible for reaching out to their clinical faculty if they are unable to attend clinical due to inclement weather.

Email Policy

All MCPHS students are required to open, utilize, and maintain (i.e., keep storage within the maximum set by the Department of Information Services) an MCPHS email account. Official University communications and notices are sent via MCPHS email accounts. All students are responsible for regularly checking their MCPHS email and for the information contained therein. Only MCPHS accounts will be used in all matters related to academics, student life, and University notifications. The University does not forward MCPHS email to personal email accounts. We encourage students to check their MCPHS email regularly (minimum of 3 times per week). Lack of response to email outreach for a length of ten business days would be considered disappearing (see Disappearing Policy).

When a student needs to contact the faculty by email, the faculty will respond to email messages in a timely manner, within 48 hours during the Monday-Friday university work week. Note that weekends and other MCPHS holidays may impact the timing of email responses from faculty.

Financial Aid

Students can arrange financial assistance through Student Financial Services at MCPHS at the following website: <https://www.mcphs.edu/admission-and-aid/financial-services>

Use of Social Media

MCPHS SON has adopted the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN)'s policy for social media. It is the student's responsibility to review and comply with the content contained in the NCSBN White Paper on social media that can be found at: https://www.ncsbn.org/public-files/NCSBN_SocialMedia.pdf.

Students must also comply with the MCPHS Electronic Communications Policy, which is set forth in the MCPHS Student Handbook. If there is a conflict between the terms of the NCSBN White Paper on social media and the MCPHS Electronic Communications Policy, the terms of the MCPHS policy shall apply. Students are also encouraged to review The Core Rules of Netiquette, from the book *Netiquette* by Virginia Shea. <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

Academic and Progression Policies and Procedures

Grading Policy

A	4.0	100-94
A-	3.7	93-90
B+	3.3	89-87
B	3.0	86-83 (minimum passing grade)
B-	2.7	82-80
C	2.0	70-79
F	0	<69

The overall professional GPA for the MSN program is 3.0. The SON grading practice is to eliminate decimal points and to assign whole numbers as to final course graded. The “rounding up” of a final grade is based on 0.50 or above; not 0.49, 0.48, etcetera. For example, if the student grade is 82.49 or less, the student’s final grade of record is 82. Conversely, if the student grade is 82.50 or above, the student’s grade of record is 83.

For the MSN program, the minimum passing grade in any course is 83, and the overall required professional GPA remains 3.0.

Students who wish to appeal a final grade must follow the University’s grade appeal process as detailed on page 71 in the [MCPHS catalog](#).

Coursework

Assignments are due on the date specified in the course syllabus. Work submitted after the due date will be considered late and will be graded accordingly. The maximum achievable grade will be based upon a loss of 5 points per day for each calendar day including holidays and weekends that an assignment is late. For example, an assignment that is 4 days late can receive a maximum achievable grade of 80%. Any issues/concerns regarding the completion and/or submission of an assignment must be discussed with faculty before the assignment is due. Grades will not be reconsidered after they are posted.

PLEASE NOTE - Faculty, at their discretion, may allow for an individual student to have a time extension as an approved late assignment, with a maximum extension of 1 to 7 days. Students must submit their request for assignment extensions prior to the assignment's due date for it to be considered. In the event an extension is granted, the student will not be penalized according to the “late assignment” policy above.

Academic Integrity

The MCPHS SON’s primary purpose is the pursuit of academic excellence. Teaching and learning must occur in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. Such trust and respect can be developed and

maintained only if honesty prevails in the academic community. Moreover, it is the shared responsibility of all members of the MCPHS community to maintain this climate of honesty. Administrators, faculty, staff, and students all benefit from the pursuit of academic excellence in an environment characterized by integrity, honesty, and mutual respect. Such integrity is fundamental to, and represents, an integral component of professional nursing education.

In keeping with academic integrity, students are expected to be honest in their academic work, such as submission of coursework and materials that are their own. Examples of dishonest are included in the Academic Honesty Policy below.

Academic Honesty and Student Discipline Procedures

Academic violations or offenses include the following:

- 1.01 Receiving assistance, or attempting to receive assistance, not authorized by an instructor in the preparation of any assignment, laboratory exercise, report, or examination submitted as a requirement for an academic course or rotation. **Unauthorized assistance includes the use of artificial intelligence resources for such coursework not approved by the course instructor.**
- 1.02 Knowingly giving unauthorized assistance, or attempting to give unauthorized assistance, to another student in the preparation of any assignment, laboratory exercise, report, or examination submitted as a requirement for an academic course or rotation.
- 1.03 Plagiarism: Submitting another person's work (including words, images, and ideas) as one's own without the proper acknowledgment of source, or use of the words or ideas of another without crediting the source of those words or ideas. **Plagiarism also includes submitting the same work for assignments in more than one class (copying from oneself) without prior permission from the instructor and/or appropriate citation, in the same semester or subsequent semesters.**
- 1.04 Engaging or attempting to engage another person (student or non-student) to take one's own examination or taking or offering to or taking another students' exam.
- 1.05 Selling, giving, lending, or otherwise furnishing any material that can be shown to contain the questions or answers to any examination scheduled to be given at any subsequent date in any course of study offered by the University.
- 1.06 Taking, or attempting to take, steal, or otherwise procure in any unauthorized manner any material pertaining to the conduct of a class, including examinations.
- **1.07 Falsifying or presenting fictional patient information as real to fulfill requirements for work assigned by individual faculty members or clinical preceptors.**
- 1.08 Signing in another student or requesting to be signed in by another student on a course attendance sheet or falsely recording another student's attendance (as with the use of "clicker"). Signing into an assessment for another student or providing your username and password to another individual for the purpose of signing you in to an assessment is also prohibited.
- 1.09 Altering or attempting to alter grades or content on any assignment, laboratory exercise, report, exam, or previously completed examination as a requirement for an academic course or rotation.
- 1.10 Violating the Website Posting Policy regarding faculty course lectures and other course materials set forth in the MCPHS Student Handbook.

Implementation of the Academic Honesty Policy

1. The Dean of Students or designee will review the Academic Honesty Policy, issues of dishonesty, and consequences of violating the Academic Honesty Policy during new student orientation.
2. The Academic Honesty Policy will be provided by the Office of Student Affairs to all members of the University community online through the University student handbook. All entering University students are expected to acknowledge they have read the Academic Honesty Policy via an online process coordinated by the Office of Student Affairs. Refusal to do so may result in more severe sanctions should a student be found responsible for an academic honesty violation.
3. In specific testing and/or evaluation situations, students may be required to present their University ID cards to verify identity, including situations where remote proctoring tools are used during examinations
4. Each instructor is responsible for informing students of the standards of behavior expected of students in the classroom, laboratory, clinical site, and remotely, and for consistently enforcing such standards.
5. Faculty may, at their discretion, require that students sign an academic honesty statement for exam and written graded assignments. *This statement may be defined by each School or Program for specific requirements for in-person or remote assessment methods. The statement will read as follows:*

Academic Honesty Statement

I pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid and will not give or receive unauthorized aid on any examination, paper and/or assignment.

Student Name (printed) _____

Student Signature: _____ ID Number: _____

Student Discipline Procedures for Academic Honesty Policy Violations

Preliminary procedure: The University maintains a policy of open communication among all members of the University community so that any misunderstanding can be minimized and any conflicts can be expeditiously resolved between the parties involved. Hence, the first step in attempting to resolve an alleged student violation shall ordinarily be a meeting between the faculty member and the student.

The faculty member will schedule a meeting with the student to attempt to come to a resolution. The meeting should be scheduled within seven (7) business days of the faculty member's knowledge of the alleged academic dishonesty incident.

The faculty member will give the student a copy of the MCPHS Academic Honesty Policy and Student Discipline Procedures and offer the Office of Student Affairs as a resource to discuss student rights and responsibilities.

The faculty member will provide the student with the information the faculty member has regarding the alleged incident and will provide the accused student the opportunity to respond to the presented information.

After listening to the student's response, the faculty member may do one of the following:

- Determine academic dishonesty did not occur and not pursue the incident further.
- OR
- Determine academic dishonesty did occur and discuss the academic sanction the faculty member will assign (e.g., repeat of the assignment, grade reduction, failure for the assignment or exam, failure for the course). If consequences regarding academic dishonesty are listed in the course syllabus, faculty sanctions must follow information as indicated in the syllabus.

The decision of the academic dean or program director will be provided to the student within five (5) business days following the final meeting. These appellate decisions are final.

Faculty and academic deans/program directors (or their designees) report, consult, and work collaboratively with the Office of Student Affairs regarding each alleged academic dishonesty incident.

Students should be advised that, regardless of the academic resolution, all violations of the Academic Honesty Policy will be reported to and recorded with the Office of Student Affairs. When a student has accepted responsibility for the Academic Honesty Policy violation after discussion with the course faculty member or academic dean or program director (or their designee), the Dean of Students (or their designee) will send a letter to the student, faculty member, and academic dean or program director, with a copy to the Office of Student Affairs, outlining the academic sanction agreed upon among the involved parties (e.g., loss of points, change of grade, failure of exam, etc.), along with a notification of a student conduct sanction, the minimum being a disciplinary warning, to be determined by the Dean of Students or their designee in their sole discretion.

Should the Dean of Students (or their designee) determine that further action is required, based upon the disciplinary history of the student or the severity of the violation, then the matter will be processed as outlined in the Community Standards System in a hearing, as appropriate.

Complex incidents of alleged academic dishonesty that require extensive fact finding or involve a conflict of interest (e.g., the academic dean is the instructor for the course in which academic dishonesty is alleged) may be referred by the faculty member or academic dean or program director (or their designee) immediately to the Office of Student Affairs for review and disciplinary procedures as provided in the Community Standards System.

NOTE: A student may continue attending class during the resolution process for an academic dishonesty incident. If a final decision is made that a student has failed a course due to academic dishonesty, and no option for further appeal exists, the student must immediately cease attending the class in which the academic dishonesty incident occurred.

Additional policies for Academic Honesty and Integrity in a remote learning environment may be further defined by each the School of Nursing or Program.

Plagiarism Prevention Service

Students are expected to abide by the University's Academic Honesty Policy as explained in the MCPHS Student Handbook. Plagiarism is considered a violation of this policy. Plagiarism is defined as submitting another person's work as one's own without proper acknowledgment or using the words or ideas of others without crediting the source of those words or ideas. To deter plagiarism and ensure appropriate use of resources in student research and learning, the University subscribes to plagiarism prevention

services. Faculty may request students submit their written work electronically to these plagiarism prevention services to verify that when ideas of others are used, they are cited appropriately.

The graduate program at MCPHS has determined a maximum acceptable similarity index of 15% for all assignments.

Original Work

Student assignments must be original work produced during the semester calendar. **Resubmitting work from prior semesters or from other classes is considered plagiarism and will receive a “0” grade for the assignment.**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy for Graduate School of Nursing

This policy outlines the appropriate use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools by students enrolled in the MCPHS graduate nursing program. It aims to support innovation while maintaining academic integrity, ethical standards, and professional accountability. This policy applies to all coursework, clinical documentation, research, and communication within the graduate nursing program.

The MCPHS Graduate Nursing Program supports the ethical and responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools to enhance academic learning and professional development. Students may use AI platforms to support brainstorming, writing, and peer-tutoring, provided their use is transparent and aligns with program expectations.

Students will receive education on appropriate AI use, with an emphasis on using these tools to assist—not replace—their own critical thinking and academic integrity. Any AI-assisted content must be clearly identified and properly acknowledged per APA 7th edition guidelines. Submitting AI-generated work as original without disclosure is considered academic misconduct.

AI tools may not be used for clinical documentation unless explicitly authorized by faculty. Clinical decision-making must always reflect the student’s own knowledge, judgment, and adherence to evidence-based practices. Students are strictly prohibited from entering patient information or any protected health information into AI platforms.

Students are required to follow faculty instructions and the MCPHS School of Nursing’s AI policy. Upon request, students must present evidence or copies of AI-assisted work within 24 hours for faculty review.

Faculty reserve the right to limit or prohibit AI use in specific courses or assignments.

Violations of this policy will be addressed in accordance with institutional academic integrity guidelines.

Remediation Opportunities

On the occasion that a written assignment grade is significantly below the accepted 83%, an opportunity to rewrite may be offered at the faculty’s discretion. This is not considered an extra credit assignment but an opportunity to address issues identified in the first submission. The revised submission will be graded per the original assignment rubric with the maximum grade attainable 83%.

Students are strongly encouraged to utilize the MCPHS Writing Center for support with all written assignments. The course coordinator/faculty member may refer the student to collaborate with the MCPHS Writing Center, as appropriate, to best support the student in their graduate writing responsibilities.

Graduate Portfolio

A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that reflects or provides evidence of student efforts, progress, and achievement toward attainment of learning outcomes based on articulated competence (Miller, 2009) and it is a requirement of graduate nursing programs. Students should consider the development of their portfolio as a springboard for future advanced practice and further education. Information regarding competencies, work history and licensure/certification, examples of scholarly work, etc., should be contained within the portfolio and can be used in preparing for the certification examination, seeking employment, or as a requirement for future educational preparation. Students are encouraged to develop a comprehensive portfolio to showcase their achievements.

Online Quizzes/Exams

MCPHS recognizes the need to maintain academic quality in our programs. Students testing in the online environment must do so in a proctored setting. Testing can be done through MCPHS approved proctoring software.

For security and/or other reasons, quizzes/exams or assignments administered in any courses with multiple sections may not be the same in each section. Course faculty and the Course Coordinator have the right to modify quiz/exam format/type based upon their judgment.

Proctoring Software – ProctorU

MCPHS is partnering with ProctorU to provide secure live and automated online proctoring services for our online students. ProctorU provides secure live and automated online proctoring services for academic institutions and professional organizations; it is an exam security system that is widely used and protects exam integrity for more than 1,000 partners worldwide. ProctorU is a live online proctoring service available 24/7 that allows students to take exams from anywhere using a webcam and Internet connection. This service uses live proctors who monitor exams by observing the student (via webcam) and their computer screen in real time. This system allows students to continue to take course quizzes/exams from the comfort of their home and enables us to offer standardized exams in real time. The exam results will be more meaningful as they will confirm both strengths and needed remediation prior to progressing in the curriculum.

Technical Specifications

Web Camera	1280x720 resolution
PC Users	Windows 10 (10 S is not supported)
Mac Users	OS X 10.13 High Sierra
Internet Download Speed	3 Mbps

Internet Upload Speed	1 Mbps
RAM	4GB
Ports	1935, 843, 80, 443, 61613, UDP/TCP

Exam Reviews

All students will have the opportunity to review their exam outcomes and performance. This process enables students to perform better on exams by analyzing their strengths and weaknesses as a test-taker. Exam reviews are used to help students determine how to improve the way they prepare for, and take, tests. The format of the Exam Review is at the discretion of course faculty to provide the best learning opportunity. Students have forty-eight (48) hours from the time of the exam closes to contact course faculty with questions relating to the exam or challenges to the exam. After 48 hours from exam closure, and once the exam review has taken place, no challenges will be accepted, and students will have no further access to their quizzes/exams for security reasons.

HESI Examination

The HESI exams are standardized assessments. HESI standardized exams in the areas of Advanced Pathophysiology, Advanced Pharmacology, and Advanced Physical Assessment exams are utilized by the SON to facilitate student readiness for the national certification examinations in the advanced practice specialties. These exams are offered at various times throughout the student's tenure. The results will offer the student a benchmark against national averages and may be included as part of required student coursework.

Comprehensive FNP/PMHNP Exit Exams

Students in the MSN programs will take comprehensive exit examinations specific to their national certification specialty. These exams may be offered at various times throughout the student's tenure. The results will offer the student a benchmark against national averages and may be included as part of required student coursework. Various standardized testing software may be used, such as ROSH, HESI, and Barkley.

APA Writing Style

All formal papers must conform to guidelines of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th edition (2020). In addition to the *Manual*, students may find additional resources in the APA Style section of the [APA website](#).

Progression

Graduate students must achieve a final grade of B (GPA of 3.0) in each nursing course to progress. All courses must be taken into consideration of pre or co requisites. A change in progression may result in a change in graduation date expected for the student. Each student must also achieve a grade point average of "B" or better to graduate.

Please see track clinical course specific policies under Family Nurse Practitioner Clinical Preceptorships and Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Clinical Preceptorships in this Handbook.

Students in the MSN and AD-MSN programs must complete the MSN degree requirements within five (5) years of starting the program. If this time limit from the date of admission into the major has lapsed and the student has not completed all degree requirements, the student must request an extension in writing and meet with the Interim Associate Dean, Graduate Programs/Dean of Nursing, who may approve or deny the extension request. The Dean's decision is final and not subject to further appeal.

Incomplete Grades

According to the [MCPHS Catalog](#), courses with a grade of Incomplete must be completed within three weeks of the new semester following the academic term (including summer sessions) in which the Incomplete grade was assigned, or the grade automatically becomes an F.

No student may progress to courses for which the course with an Incomplete is a prerequisite until the work is completed and the I grade is changed. No student can graduate with an Incomplete grade in any course necessary for graduation.

Out of Sequence Status

If a student fails any nursing course, or has any approved adjustments made to their program of study they will be designated as "out of sequence." The student must meet with their designated program Track Director to obtain an updated program of study.

Content Validation

In order to ensure that all students are competent and safe in the delivery and application of patient care, students who are not continuously enrolled in the sequence of the MSN and CAGS curriculum for a period of one semester or more or who are out of sequence via leave of absence (LOA) may be required to validate previous knowledge and skills before they may reenroll in any SON courses. Reenrollment is subject to clinical placement availability and successful demonstration of knowledge and skills.

The validation will occur via the student's demonstration of knowledge, i.e., by testing and skill demonstration, meeting established program clinical competencies in a selected simulation laboratory. Program faculty will provide guidance on what content and skills (competencies) must be reviewed by the student before the testing, but it is their responsibility to prepare for the validation testing. The student must pass the validation testing as per the outcome measures determined by the faculty. Validation of competency is on a pass/fail basis.

The student must notify the Track Director at least 30 days prior to the semester they anticipate returning to establish the validation plan. It is the students' responsibility to prepare for the validation testing. If a student fails the validation test, they must enroll in a directed study to remediate, followed by a second validation test, before re-entering the program. Failure to pass the second validation test after a directed study may result in repeating the last course(s) taken prior to LOA and/or dismissal from the program.

A student attempting to return from a leave of absence must follow the applicable process set forth in this MSN Handbook under *Return from Leave of Absence* and the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Course Catalog. If the student returns from a Health/Medical Leave of Absence, the Office of Student Affairs must clear them before performing validation testing. The Office of Student Affairs, along with the Nursing faculty, will coordinate communication regarding student clearance for leave of absence return and subsequent eligibility to schedule validation testing.

Leave of Absence

MCPHS recognizes that there are situations when a student may require a leave of absence (LOA). Such leaves are granted for a maximum of one academic year except those granted for military service. The student must meet with their program Track Director or the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs or designee, regarding the reason(s) for requesting the LOA, and the ramifications of taking a leave of absence. Leave of absence approval or denial is determined by the program Track Director, or the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs. After the initial meeting, the student must return the completed Leave of Absence form within 1 week (or 5 business days) with the required signatures: a) the student, b) Academic Dean or designee, c) Student Financial Services, and d) Immigration Services representative (for international students). The Associate Dean of Graduate Programs or designee will notify the student within 1 week (or 5 business days) upon receipt of the completed form with the finalized LOA requirements via the student's MCPHS email account. **Students who take a leave after the designated add/drop period will receive course grade(s) of W.** **For information on a Health/Medical Leave of Absence, please see the Health/Medical Leave of Absence section in the MCPHS Catalog.*

Students considering taking a LOA must be aware that they are subject to any curricular changes that have occurred in the Graduate Program during the LOA. An updated Program Plan will be provided to the student upon return to the program.

Note on leave of absence and clinical hours: If students who enrolled in the FNP or FNP CAGS or PMHNP or PMHNP CAGS programs prior to January 1, 2024, take a leave of absence for longer than one academic semester, a total of seven hundred fifty (750) clinical hours is required for graduation.

Return from Leave of Absence

Students returning from a leave of absence must confirm they are returning to MCPHS with their Online Program Director or designee prior to the following dates:

- *March 1-for a summer or fall semester return*
- *October 1-for a spring semester return*
- *Online students-30 days prior to the beginning of the semester*

Students on a Leave of Absence are *not* eligible for MCPHS Services. Students who intend to return from a LOA must also review and adhere to applicable school/program specific policies in addition to the general policy outlined herein. Students who fail to return within the designated time must reapply for admission.

A student who fails to return during the granted Leave of Absence period will be administratively withdrawn from the program. The student is responsible for contacting the Graduate Program designee at least 30 days prior to the expected return. Approval of Leave of Absence is on a case-by-case basis. See the [MCPHS Catalog](#) for additional information.

Students who wish to return to the SON must complete the Intent to Return from Leave of Absence form and notify the program Track Director no later than thirty (30) days from the start of the desired semester return date. An Intent to Return Form will be sent to the student and must be completed and submitted to the graduate program designee. A review of the program of study will take place and be updated if needed.

Probation/Dismissal

For successful completion of a graduate level course, the student must achieve a minimum passing grade of “B” (GPA of 3.0).

1. Graduate students who receive a grade below a “B” (3.0) in any course will be placed on academic probation.
2. The student must repeat the course in which they received a grade below a “B” and receive a grade of “B” or higher.
3. Students will be recommended for dismissal from the graduate nursing program for:
 - a. Failure of the same course twice (with a grade below “B”)
 - b. Failure of a total of three courses throughout the student’s tenure (with a grade below “B”)
4. Clinical, laboratory, and simulation components of nursing courses are graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. An unsatisfactory grade in clinical, laboratory, and/or simulation may result in course failure, regardless of didactic grade depending on program track.
5. Failure of the didactic portion of a nursing course will result in failure of the entire course regardless of the clinical, laboratory, and simulation grade. All elements of a course must be repeated when the course is repeated.

Academic and Clinical Warning

Academic Warning

Students who are identified as failing to maintain a minimum mid-point grade of at least a ‘B’ will receive a mid-semester warning per MCPHS policy. Each student is encouraged to access and utilize available resources to support their success. Resources may include but are not limited to:

- The course instructor
- The clinical instructor,
- The Center for Academic Success and Enrichment (academic advising and services), or
- The Writing Center.

Clinical Warning

When a concern about clinical competency or a breach of professional conduct arises, faculty may place a student on clinical warning status and initiate a clinical learning contract. Examples of incidents which may lead to a clinical warning and a clinical learning contract include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to demonstrate competence consistent with the clinical objectives of the course;
- Behavior deemed by the faculty member to be unsafe (behavior that places the student, the patient, or another staff member at risk of injury, or causes the student, the patient, or another staff member to be harmed);
- Failure to successfully complete an assigned laboratory skill, an assigned clinical paper, care plan, or other designated clinical assignment;
- Absence or tardiness that precludes an effective learning experience;
- The student does not seek appropriate consultation from the preceptor and/or other health care provider;
- Does not provide for delivery of safe patient care;
- Does not abide by the ANA Scope and Standards of Advanced Practice Nursing in dealing with the patient and other health care providers;

- Fails to be current with or complete clinical hours or submission of clinical experience documentation. This documentation includes clinical logs, clinical notes and documentation of clinical hours submitted weekly;
- Does not notify the preceptor, clinical faculty, and program Track Director of absence from a clinical site;
- Does not communicate or fails to facilitate communication between course faculty, clinical faculty, and preceptor as necessary;
- Other behavior which adversely affects patient care or does not demonstrate professionalism at all times.
- Does not meet the specialty track required hours in specific populations

Clinical Failure

Students are expected to know both the legal and ethical parameters of professional nursing practice and to demonstrate accountability and responsibility for professional practice standards throughout their course of study.

If a student's performance in a clinical setting is at any time determined to be unsafe or unprofessional in the judgment of the faculty, or if the clinical partner does not allow the student to return to the clinical site, the student will receive a failing grade for the course. Immediate action will be taken by the clinical course faculty and clinical course coordinator. The student may be immediately dismissed (sent home) from the clinical site; a grade of F will be recorded for the clinical portion of the course grade. If the student chooses to appeal the clinical failure, the student may not attend any subsequent clinical experience during the appeal process. Please note that the student who chooses to appeal the clinical failure must do so within 48 hours of being notified by the course coordinator. Students should follow the appeal procedure in the Grade Appeals section of the Grading Policies in the University Course Catalog.

Graduate Program Documentation of Clinical Warning/Remediation

The clinical learning contract will clearly specify the objectives and means to achieve them, evaluation criteria, and a timeframe by which the student must meet the contract's objectives. The evaluating faculty member will provide progress reports to the student during the contract period.

Outcomes of the clinical warning and/or contract can be successful or unsuccessful. Should the outcome be favorable for the student, documentation of the improvement will be placed in the student's record and the contract may be discontinued. If the warning represents a critical element such as, but not limited to attendance/tardiness, medication administration, organizational skills, documentation, professionalism, etc., the student will remain on warning status during subsequent courses and/or for the duration of their tenure in the nursing program. Patterns of inappropriate behavior and/or weak clinical performance may result in clinical failure.

Should the student fail to meet the prescribed objectives and timeframes noted in the clinical learning contract or if the identified behaviors persist, the result will be a clinical failure, and therefore, failure of the course and an inability to progress in the graduate program.

The clinical warning and/or clinical learning contract will be documented in the student's record. The information will indicate the date, time, place, and circumstances of the relevant incident(s). The information will be signed by the initiating course coordinator/clinical faculty and the student and

forwarded to the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs. A copy of the clinical warning/clinical contract will be given to the student. All information will be retained in the student's file for subsequent access by authorized faculty.

Certification Examination

Upon meeting graduation requirements, the student is eligible to apply for the certification examination. It is the student's responsibility to research certifications and to obtain materials (study guide/application) available through the ANCC or AANPCB for FNP and PMHNP students. Most certifying agencies have similar minimum requirements; however, there are differences in cost and in recertification fees. Also, students should contact the State Board of Nursing to obtain information about nursing practice, as this varies by state.

Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) and Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP)

Students may apply to either the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) or American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board (AANPCB) for certification

- American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) <https://www.nursingworld.org/certification/>
- American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board (AANPCB) <http://www.aanpcert.org/>

Graduation

MCPHS awards degrees in May, September, and December of each year. University-wide commencement ceremonies are held only in May and December. For more information, please visit the [MCPHS Catalog](#) for additional information and procedures.

Students with incomplete course, clinical, or program requirements inclusive of residencies as of the date of the University semester grading deadline, will be ineligible for graduation. The student's anticipated graduation date will be adjusted to reflect the next scheduled University conferral date, or conferral date in alignment with the completion plan established between the student and the program.

Communication

Chain of Command

In the event a student in the SON needs to communicate a concern, need, or issue relating to courses/clinical expectations/experiences, the student needs to follow the designated chain of command as follows:

- **Step 1:** The student needs to discuss their concern/need/issue with the faculty member of the course/clinical that s/he is having an issue with.
- **Step 2:** If the concern/need/issue is not resolved, the student may bring the concern to the course coordinator for the course/clinical the student is in.
- **Step 3:** If the concern/need/issue is not resolved, the student may bring the concern/need/issue to the program Track Director.
- **Step 4:** If the concern/need/issue still is not resolved, the student may bring the concern to the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs
- **Step 5:** If the concern/need/issue still is not resolved, the student may bring the concern to the Dean/Chief Nurse Administrator. To meet all students' needs timely and appropriately, the

student is asked to follow the appropriate chain of command as outlined. The decision of the Dean/Chief Nurse Administrator is final.

Grade Appeals

Students who wish to appeal a final course grade must follow the University's grade appeal process as detailed in the [MCPHS Course Catalog](#).

Individual assignment grades are not subject to appeal.

MCPHS Online Complaint Resolution

MCPHS makes every effort to resolve student complaints internally, using the policies and procedures outlined in the current [MCPHS Student Handbook](#). Students will fully utilize all administrative procedures to address concerns and/or complaints as timely as possible.

Disappearing

Communication from the student with faculty is essential and is expected. It is not acceptable for a student to "disappear" by lack of communication for a period of ten business (10) days. Neither absence nor notification of absence relieves the student of their responsibilities to meet class/course objectives or check their MCPHS email regularly. The SON Academic Standing Committee may consider this as grounds to recommend administrative withdrawal from MCPHS.

Change in Program

Graduate students who wish to change programs (that is, students who are requesting to move from FNP Track to PMHNP Track and vice versa) should contact the Online Student Services Specialist. Students need to be in good academic standing to request a change in track.

The process to request a Change of Program is:

- Contact the Online Student Services Specialist to obtain the Change of Program form
- The student will Submit the Change of Program form to the Online Student Services Specialist.
- The student must contact the Track Director of the desired track to discuss transfer.
- Once all feedback is received the Online Student Services Specialist will process the Change of Program form.

Note: A change in program track could result in lengthened tenure.

Program Withdrawal

A graduate student wishing to **withdraw** from the MSN program must:

- Contact the Online Graduate Student Services Specialist to initiate the withdrawal process.
- The Online Graduate Student Services Specialist will send the student the withdrawal form.
- The student will complete and return the form to the Online Graduate Student Services Specialist.
- The student must meet with their program Track Director, or the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs or designee regarding the reason(s) for requesting the withdrawal, and the ramifications of program withdrawal.

See MCPHS handbook for policy on refunds or reach out to Student Financial Services with questions.

Attendance Policies

Class Attendance

MCPHS supports a learner-centered environment and attendance at all classes, seminars, clinical experiences, simulations, and residencies directly correlates with successful course completion and represents a basic professional behavior. Students in the SON are responsible to engage in their own learning and professional comportment.

In the case of illness or prolonged absence, it is the student's responsibility to notify their course faculty within five (5) days from the first date of absence. With acceptable documentation from a student, the Office of the Dean of Students may issue an official memorandum notifying faculty of an excused absence. In the case of an approved, excused absence, the course faculty will make reasonable attempts to help the student satisfy the course's requirements (e.g., make-up classes and exams).

Students are expected to abide by instructions in each course syllabus regarding student responsibilities related to class absences. Students who fail to do so may be ineligible to receive an excused absence – regardless of the reason for the absence. With respect to completion of work missed, if an acceptable agreement between the student and professor(s) cannot be reached, the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs and/or Dean of Nursing will serve as arbitrator.

Students are responsible for all class materials, content, and assignments. Students may only make up missed class assignments, quizzes, and exams if a valid excuse has been granted. Graded work missed due to an unexcused or unapproved absence will be assigned a grade of zero (0). All course work and exams must be completed before a student can sit for a final exam in a course.

Attendance Policy for Online Courses – General Statement

Regular online class attendance is mandatory as evident by active participation in online discussion, meeting course requirements, and timely submission of online postings, responses, case studies, assignments, and tests. Logging into the Blackboard course site is essential to student learning and success in the course. Students are expected to attend online for as many hours as listed in the course's credit hours. A minimum of 3 hours of preparation time per credit per week is recommended to assist in the student's success.

Punctuality

Punctuality is expected of students for all classes, seminars, clinical experiences, simulations, and residencies. Neither tardiness nor leaving early will be tolerated, as it impacts adversely upon the student's learning experience and is disruptive to fellow students and faculty. Students will be held accountable for all missed material.

Absence in Online Program

Online coursework is asynchronous. Assignment due dates are published in advance via the course syllabus, and tests are administered with date ranges to allow students to test around their personal schedules and obligations. Excused absences for tests are only granted in accordance with the University Excused Absence policy. Students seeking an excused absence from a test are encouraged to review the

University policy above and follow the online request process. Social absences and travel are not approved reasons for excused absences. Proctor U testing is accessible to students who are traveling locally or internationally, provided there is appropriate bandwidth and internet connection available.

Absence from Examinations

Students are expected to take all quizzes and examinations at scheduled times, unless an excused absence is granted by the Office of Student Affairs, Office of the Dean of Students (extended medical/legal) or Dean of Nursing (social). If an emergency or illness occurs, the student must contact the Office of Student affairs via the [online excused absence form](#), via email: student_affairs@mcphs.edu, and the respective course faculty member/administrative assistant before the scheduled examination.

Once an excused absence is approved, students must make arrangements to make up the missed exam within 24 hours. Failure to notify faculty may result in a grade of zero (0) for the examination. Opportunity for a make-up examination is at the course coordinator/course faculty's discretion. A make-up exam may be given in a different format, at the course coordinator/course faculty's discretion. All exams must be completed in order of course schedule and all exams must be completed before a student can sit for the course final exam.

MSN Programs of Study

Family Nurse Practitioner

Characteristics and Competencies of the Family Nurse Practitioner Graduate

A graduate of the MCPHS FNP program will display:

- Knowledge base that is sound with foundational skill in providing primary care to individuals and families across the lifespan.
- Insight and understanding of the role of the advanced practice nurse, and the professional and political issues related to the role.
- Recognize and understand the scope of advanced practice nurse as a family primary care provider.
- Recognize the advanced practice role's responsibility and practice within an interprofessional healthcare team.

FNP Curriculum for Students Enrolled Fall 2025 and beyond		
RES I	RESIDENCY I- Orientation	
Semester	Course Name	Credits
1	NUR 720 Introduction to Graduate Studies	1
	NUR 724 Advanced Physiology and Pathophysiology	3
	NUR 722 Nurse Practitioner Role and Professional Identity Development	2
		Subtotal 6
Semester	Course Name	Credits
2	NUR 726 Advanced Pharmacology for the Nurse Practitioner	3
	NUR 730 Translation of Evidence to Inform NP Practice	3
	NUR 732 Advanced Population Health Concepts	2

		Subtotal 8
Semester	Course Name	Credits
3	NUR 740 Advanced Health Assessment (includes 1 credit of lab)	4
	NUR 808 Foundations of Primary Care and Diagnostics	2
		Subtotal 6
Semester	Course Name	Credits
4	NUR 804 Quality and Leadership for Advanced Practice	2
	NUR 818 Family Primary Care I	5
		Subtotal 7
RES II	RESIDENCY II	
Semester	Course Name	Credits
5	NUR 819 Family Primary Care II	5
		Subtotal 5
Semester	Course Name	Credits
6	NUR 820 FNP Clinical Experiential Hours I (375 Clinical hrs. -25 hrs. per week)	5
		Subtotal 5
RES III	RESIDENCY III	
Semester	Course Name	Credits
7	NUR 821 FNP Clinical Experiential Hours II (375 Clinical hrs. -25 hrs. per week)	5
		Subtotal 5
		Total Credits 42

FNP Curriculum for Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025					
Mandatory 1 st Orientation/Residency Attendance prior to starting program					
Year 1, First Semester		Credits	Contact Hours/ Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
NUR 701	Professional Role Development for Advanced Practice Nursing	3	3	N/A	N/A
NUR 706	Advanced Pathophysiology	3	3	N/A	N/A
Year 1, Second Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
NUR 702	Human Diversity, Social, and Policy Issues	3	3	N/A	N/A
NUR 707	Advanced Pharmacology	3	3	N/A	N/A
Year 1, Third Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
NUR 703	Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan	5	3	2	75*
NUR 801	Survey of Telemedicine	1	1	N/A	N/A
Mandatory 2 nd Residency Attendance					
Year 2, Fourth Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
NUR 810	Family Primary Care II (Adult)	6	3	3	225**
Year 2, Fifth Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical

		Hours)		Clinical	Clinical
NUR 809	Family Primary Care I (OB/GYN/Pedi)	6	3	3	225**
NUR 816	Scholarship for Advanced Nursing: Building an Evidence-Based Practice	3	3	N/A	N/A
Year 2, Sixth Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
NUR 811	Family Primary Care III (Geri)	6	3	3	225**
NUR 823	Translating & Integrating Scholarship Practicum	3	3	N/A	N/A
Mandatory 3 rd Residency Attendance prior to graduation					
Total Credits					42

* For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 90 clinical hours will be required.

** For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 180 clinical hours will be required.

Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) FNP Program

The Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) in Family Nurse Practitioner programs are open to applicants who have previously earned a master's degree in nursing from an accredited program by either Collegiate Commission on Nursing Education (CCNE) or the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission (NLNAC).

Curriculum

Students in the CAGS FNP program must have evidence of successful completion of the core MSN courses listed in the table below or equivalent. The courses must have been completed with a letter grade of B or higher at an accredited 4-year academic institution. The 3P courses (Adv. Pathophysiology, Adv. Pharmacology, Adv Health Assessment) must be completed within three years prior to admission to the program to be considered for transfer credits. Students who have not completed the academic equivalent of the core MSN courses will be required to take the courses to complete the CAGS.

Track Courses are required to be taken at MCPHS with a grade of B or better to fulfill the CAGS requirement. A gap analysis will be performed after acceptance to the program and an individualized plan of study will be provided. The SON Graduate Program reserves the right to evaluate student applications, transcripts, and practice experience to determine program plans of study. Decisions made by the SON Graduate Program are final and cannot be appealed.

CAGS students are required to attend 3 residencies. The New Student Orientation Residency is held online prior to starting the first semester. There are two additional required residencies that are 2-days in length, held on the Worcester, MA campus. See the Residency section of this handbook for additional information.

Core MSN Courses

CAGS FNP Curriculum for Students Enrolled Fall 2025 and beyond	
Course Name	Credits
NUR 724 Advanced Physiology and Pathophysiology	3
NUR 726 Advanced Pharmacology for the Nurse Practitioner	3
NUR 740 Advanced Health Assessment (includes one lab credit)	4
NUR 722 Nurse Practitioner Role and Professional Identity Development	2
NUR 730 Translation of Evidence to Inform NP Practice	3
NUR 804 Quality and Leadership Skills and Competencies for Advanced Practice	2

FNP Track Courses

CAGS FNP Curriculum for Students Enrolled Fall 2025 and beyond	
Course Name	Credits
NUR 808 Foundations of Primary Care and Diagnostics	2
NUR 818 Family Primary Care Provider I	5
NUR 819 Family Primary Care Provider II	5
NUR 820 FNP Clinical Experiential Hours I (375 Clinical hrs. -25 hrs. per week)	5
NUR 821 FNP Clinical Experiential Hours II (375 Clinical hrs. -25 hrs. per week)	5

Core MSN Courses

CAGS FNP Curriculum for Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025	
Course Name	Credits
NUR 706 Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NUR 707 Advanced Pharmacology	3
NUR 703 Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan (includes 75 clinical hours)*	5
NUR 701 Professional Role Development for Advanced Practice Nursing	3
NUR 702 Human Diversity, Social, and Policy Issues	3
NUR 816 Scholarship for Advanced Nursing: Building an Evidence-Based Practice	3
NUR 823 Translating & Integrating Scholarship Practicum	3
NUR 801 Survey of Telemedicine**	1

*For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 90 clinical hours will be required.

**Students who are currently licensed, practicing Nurse Practitioners might not be required to complete the NUR 801- Survey of Telemedicine course depending on practice experience

FNP Track Courses

CAGS FNP Curriculum for Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025	
Course Name	Credits
NUR 810 Family Primary Care II (Adult) (includes 225 clinical hours) *	6
NUR 809 Family Primary Care I (OB/GYN/Peds) (includes 225 clinical hours) *	3
NUR 811 Family Primary Care III (Geri) (includes 225 clinical hours) *	1

* For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 180 clinical hours will be required.

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Characteristics and Competencies of the Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Graduate

Graduates of the MCPHS PMHNP program will:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge base and foundational clinical skills to deliver evidence-based mental health care to individuals and families across the lifespan in diverse settings.
- Apply the skills needed to promote optimal mental health, prevent, and treat psychiatric disorders, and support health maintenance across the lifespan.
- Articulate and critically appraise the role and responsibilities of the advanced practice nurse, including the professional, ethical, and political issues that shape the role.
- Recognize and clearly define the scope of practice of the psychiatric–mental health nurse practitioner (PMHNP) and practice within current standards and regulations.
- Assume accountability for advanced practice and collaborate effectively within interprofessional healthcare teams.

Adapted from NONPF and APNA Competencies

PMHNP Curriculum for Students Enrolled Fall 2025 and beyond		
RES I	RESIDENCY I- Orientation	
Semester	Course Name	Credits
1	NUR 720 Introduction to Graduate Studies	1
	NUR 724 Advanced Physiology and Pathophysiology	3
	NUR 722 Nurse Practitioner Role and Professional Identity Development	2
		Subtotal 6
Semester	Course Name	Credits
2	NUR 726 Advanced Pharmacology for the Nurse Practitioner	3
	NUR 730 Translation of Evidence to Inform NP Practice	3
	NUR 732 Advanced Population Health Concepts	2
		Subtotal 8
Semester	Course Name	Credits
3	NUR 740 Advanced Health Assessment (includes one lab credit)	4
	NUR 812 Management of Psychiatric Mental Health Conditions: Psychopharmacology and Psychotherapeutics	2
		Subtotal 7

Semester	Course Name	Credits
4	NUR 804 Quality and Leadership Skills and Competencies for Advanced Practice	2
	NUR 813 Psychiatric Mental Health Provider I	5
		Subtotal 7
RES II	RESIDENCY II	
Semester	Course Name	Credits
5	NUR 814 Psychiatric Mental Health Provider II	5
		Subtotal 5
Semester	Course Name	Credits
6	NUR 815 PMHNP Clinical Experiential Hours I (375 Clinical hrs. -25 hrs. per week)	5
		Subtotal 5
RES III	RESIDENCY III	
Semester	Course Name	Credits
7	NUR 817 PMHNP Clinical Experiential Hours II (375 Clinical hrs. -25 hrs. per week)	5
		Subtotal 5
		Total Credits 43

PMHNP Curriculum for Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025					
Year 1, First Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
Mandatory 1 st Orientation/Residency Attendance prior to beginning program					
NUR 701	Professional Role Development for Advanced Practice Nursing	3	3	N/A	N/A
NUR 706	Advanced Pathophysiology	3	3	N/A	N/A
Year 1, Second Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
NUR 702	Human Diversity, Social, and Policy Issues	3	3	N/A	N/A
NUR 707	Advanced Pharmacology	3	3	N/A	N/A
Year 1, Third Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
NUR 703	Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan	5	3	2	75*
NUR 801	Survey of Telemedicine ****	1	1	N/A	
Mandatory 2 nd Residency Attendance					
Year 2, Fourth Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
NUR 805	Basic Counseling Theory and Techniques for the PMHNP	3	3	N/A	
NUR 805C	Basic Counseling Theory and Techniques for the PMHNP Clinical	1		1	75**
NUR 715	Psychopharmacology for Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner	3	3	N/A	N/A
Year 2, Fifth Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
NUR 806	PMHNP I	3	3		

NUR 806C	PMHNP I	4		4	300***
NUR 816	Scholarship for Advanced Nursing: Building an Evidence-Based Practice	3	3	N/A	N/A
Year 2, Sixth Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week	Total	
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
NUR 807	PMHNP II	3	3		
NUR 807C	PMHNP II Clinical	4		4	300***
NUR 823	Translating & Integrating Scholarship Practicum	3	3	N/A	N/A
Mandatory 3 rd Residency Attendance Graduation					
				Total Credits	45

*For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 90 clinical hours will be required.

**For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 90 clinical hours will be required for NUR 805C.

***For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 225 clinical hours will be required for each course (NUR 806C & NUR 807C).

Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) PMHNP Program

The Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner programs are open to applicants who have previously earned a master's degree in nursing from an accredited program by either Collegiate Commission on Nursing Education (CCNE) or the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission (NLNAC).

Curriculum

Students in the CAGS FNP program must have evidence of successful completion of the core MSN courses listed in the table below or equivalent. The courses must have been completed with a letter grade of B or higher at an accredited 4-year academic institution. The 3P courses (Adv. Pathophysiology, Adv. Pharmacology, Adv Health Assessment) must be completed within three years prior to admission to the program to be considered for transfer credits. Students who have not completed the academic equivalent of the core MSN courses will be required to take the courses to complete the CAGS.

Track Courses are required to be taken at MCPHS with a grade of B or better to fulfill the CAGS requirement. A gap analysis will be performed after acceptance to the program and an individualized plan of study will be provided. The SON Graduate Program reserves the right to evaluate student applications, transcripts, and practice experience to determine program plans of study. Decisions made by the SON Graduate Program are final and cannot be appealed.

CAGS students are required to attend 3 residencies. The New Student Orientation Residency is held online prior to starting the first semester. There are two additional required residencies that are 2-days in length, held on the Worcester, MA campus. See the Residency section of this handbook for additional information

Core MSN Courses

CAGS PMHNP Curriculum for Students Enrolled Fall 2025 and beyond	
Course Name	Credits
NUR 724 Advanced Physiology and Pathophysiology	3
NUR 726 Advanced Pharmacology for the Nurse Practitioner	3
NUR 740 Advanced Health Assessment (includes one lab credit)	4
NUR 722 Nurse Practitioner Role and Professional Identity Development	2
NUR 730 Translation of Evidence to Inform NP Practice	3
NUR 804 Quality and Leadership Skills and Competencies for Advanced Practice	2

PMHNP Track Courses

CAGS PMHNP Curriculum for Students Enrolled Fall 2025 and beyond	
Course Name	Credits
NUR 812 Management of Psychiatric Mental Health Conditions: Psychopharmacology and Psychotherapeutics	2
NUR 813 Psychiatric Mental Health Provider I	5
NUR 814 Psychiatric Mental Health Provider II	5
NUR 815 PMHNP Clinical Experiential Hours I (375 Clinical hrs. -25 hrs. per week)	5
NUR 817 PMHNP Clinical Experiential Hours II (375 Clinical hrs. -25 hrs. per week)	5

Core MSN Courses

CAGS PMHNP Curriculum for Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025	
Course Name	Credits
NUR 706 Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NUR 707 Advanced Pharmacology	3
NUR 703 Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan (includes 75 clinical hours)*	5
NUR 701 Professional Role Development for Advanced Practice Nursing	3
NUR 702 Human Diversity, Social, and Policy Issues	3
NUR 816 Scholarship for Advanced Nursing: Building an Evidence-Based Practice	3
NUR 823 Translating & Integrating Scholarship Practicum	3
NUR 801 Survey of Telemedicine**	1

*For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 90 clinical hours will be required.

**Students who are currently licensed, practicing Nurse Practitioners might not be required to complete the NUR 801- Survey of Telemedicine course depending on practice experience

PMHNP Track Courses

CAGS PMHNP Curriculum for Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025	
Course Name	Credits
NUR 715 Psychopharmacology for Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner	3
NUR 805 Basic Counseling Theory and Techniques for the PMHNP	3
NUR 805C Basic Counseling Theory and Techniques for the PMHNP (includes 75 clinical hours)*	1
NUR 806 PMHNP I	3
NUR 806C PMHNP I Clinical (includes 300 clinical hours) **	4
NUR 807 PMHNP II	3
NUR 807C PMHNP II Clinical (includes 300 clinical hours)***	4

*For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 90 clinical hours will be required for NUR 805C.

***For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 225 clinical hours will be required for each course (NUR 806C & NUR 807C).

Residency

As an invaluable part of the graduate experience, students participate in one online and two on-campus (MCPHS- Worcester) residencies to deepen understanding of key concepts and provide opportunities for collaboration, networking and connection with peers, faculty, and additional field experts. Students participate in simulated clinical experiences during residencies. Simulation allows students the opportunity to practice and refine competency in interviewing, screening, assessment, diagnosis, therapeutic communication, and counseling in a controlled, supportive environment.

Each residency is two (2) full days in length and may be held on-campus or remote per SON Graduate team discretion. Please refer to the program curriculum table for the scheduled residencies.

ADN to MSN students are required to attend an additional orientation residency upon enrollment into the Bridge AD- MSN program.

Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) students are expected to attend all required residencies.

Residency attendance is mandatory and must be completed to satisfy matriculation and graduation requirements for the graduate programs. Students unable to attend the Nursing Residency 2 or Nursing Residency 3 must attend residency during the immediate subsequent semester, which may delay program progression.

Students are expected to attend each day of the residency in its entirety and participate in all scheduled sessions of the residency program. Students who do not meet residency requirements are not permitted to progress in the program until they have satisfied the residency requirement. Students who are unable or do not fully attend and participate in residency programs may be subject to an administrative Leave of Absence, until the residency requirements are fulfilled.

Interprofessional Educational Experiences

The School of Nursing (SON) prioritizes the development of Interprofessional collaboration through

coursework, clinical activities, and experiential educational activities in accordance with the guiding documents for MSN Education. The University has an active Interprofessional Education (IPE) initiative, and many opportunities are available for members of the MCPHS community to attend. The SON prioritizes certain Interprofessional Educational (IPE) experiences. For these prioritized IPE activities, SON students are notified via email and/or blackboard announcement of the need to attend the activity. The requirement to attend IPE events is at the discretion of the SON faculty and is determined on a semester-by-semester basis. These details are communicated on email and/or blackboard announcements.

Palliative Care Competencies Modules

The AACN has developed Palliative Care competencies for education for the RN (CARES) and APRNs (G-CARES) to improve healthcare, promote public support of baccalaureate and graduate nursing education, research, and practice. These competencies have been integrated into the MCPHS MSN program through six self-paced online training modules, with applications performed through various assignments across the graduate program. Palliative care is intended for all populations of patients, across the lifespan and in all clinical settings, including the community and telehealth

Course Descriptions

Please refer to the [MCPHS Course Catalog](#) for a detailed description of all courses.

MSN Clinical Policies and Procedures

Clinical Overview

The clinical environment is where didactic course content is applied. Students may be restricted from attending clinical hours if it is determined that the quality of didactic course work, frequency of attendance, or frequency of communication does not support the student's ability to practice safely in the clinical setting.

Students are expected to evenly distribute their clinical hours from the beginning of the semester through the final week as outlined in the course schedule, to ensure a balanced and comprehensive clinical experience. Clinical attendance outside the semester calendar requires prior approval from the Track Director and is determined on a case-by-case basis considering availability of MCPHS resources. Each student's clinical schedule is subject to approval by the clinical faculty and course coordinator

During the semester, students will be asked to submit their clinical schedule and preceptor contact information to the course clinical faculty before their clinical preceptorship starts. Any deviation or revision of the proposed monthly schedule requires advanced confirmation and approval from the student's clinical faculty member. It is the student's responsibility to know and track their progress in meeting clinical hours, setting, and population requirements for each course and end of program requirements.

Students may not enter the clinical setting in any semester until they have received notification of approval to begin clinical hours from the Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs through a Letter of Attestation. Students who attend clinical hours without having received approval will forfeit all clinical hours performed at the unapproved site and may be subject to clinical warning and/or dismissal.

Students may not use their place of employment for a clinical rotation. Any exceptions must be discussed with the Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs and the Track Director. Students may not be precepted by a close friend, co-worker, or relative. Although the patient population or agency may be appropriate, role confusion for the student and the staff in that setting may occur and prevent an appropriate learning environment from being realized. Students who work in large organizations that may offer off-site options should discuss any questions regarding this policy with the Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs and the Track Director.

Clinical Course Orientation

All MSN FNP, MSN PMHNP, CAGS and AD-MSN students must complete clinical course orientation and attest to completion before completing any clinical experiences/hours.

Required Clinical Hours

All FNP and PMHNP students must complete seven hundred fifty (750) clinical hours across the lifespan before graduation.

For students enrolled in the FNP or FNP CAGS, PMHNP or PMHNP CAGS programs before January 1, 2024, six hundred thirty (630) clinical hours are required for graduation.

Note on leave of absence and clinical hours: If students who enrolled in the FNP or FNP CAGS or PMHNP or PMHNP CAGS programs prior to January 1, 2024, take a leave of absence for longer than one academic semester, a total of seven hundred fifty (750) clinical hours is required for graduation.

Clinical Evaluations

Clinical performance will be evaluated on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. The stated course clinical objectives and NONPF established performance standards shall determine the criteria for clinical evaluation. Evaluation is an ongoing process throughout the clinical experience – reflecting both written and verbal performance, professionalism, and clinical practice skills. Course clinical faculty and preceptors provide evaluative data to the course faculty. The course faculty are responsible for the final clinical evaluation grade.

For courses where clinical hours are part of the credit allotment, failure to achieve a grade of “Satisfactory” will result in overall course failure regardless of the didactic grade earned in the course. The student must repeat both components of the course (didactic and clinical hours) before progressing to later clinical courses.

For courses that have a co-requisite clinical course, failure to achieve a grade of “Satisfactory” will result in clinical course failure and the student may not progress into subsequent clinical courses until the co-requisite clinical course is successfully repeated.

Should a student fail clinical at any point in the course, the student will not be permitted to attend any subsequent classes or clinical experiences in that course. The student may continue to attend other previously enrolled non-clinical courses for the duration of the semester but will be unable to progress in the graduate program upon receipt of the course failure grade. Students may not progress into a different clinical course until after they have successfully retaken and passed the clinical course in which

a failing grade was received. Refer to the MCPHS Student Handbook for the policy regarding course failure.

Clinical Uniform/Dress Code

Students are expected to maintain a clean, neat, and well-groomed appearance appropriate to the affiliating clinical agency. White coats and nametags, distributed by the SON, must be worn in the clinical setting or per clinical facility guidelines. Replacement coats and nametags can be ordered by contacting the Graduate Administrative and Clinical Assistant.

Additional Campus-Specific Dress Requirements

Graduate nursing students are expected to dress in clothing and footwear that reflect a professional appearance while on campus and, as such, clothing should be clean and neat. White lab coats are required on campus in all areas, including the library.

Clinical Requirements

The following requirements must be completed and on file before the first clinical course starts. The Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs will prompt the collection of the onboarding requirements throughout the first two semesters of the program.

- Immunizations according to [MCPHS policy](#) and agency specific requirements
- Unencumbered nursing license in each jurisdiction (state) in which you intend to participate in clinical practice
- Evidence of current malpractice insurance as a Nurse Practitioner student*
- Current American Heart Associate (AHA) Basic Life Support (BLS) for Health Care Providers CPR certification
- Updated Resume with active MSN enrollment noted
- Completed CORI and Level 1 background check
- Preceptor documents
- Successfully completed HIPAA training
- Verification of Health Insurance

**Along with the student's APRN malpractice insurance policy, the University's group liability insurance policy provides coverage for liability while practicing as a student in MCPHS SON clinical activities.*

Clinical Seminar

Clinical seminars provide the student with access to clinical faculty which enhances clinical development. Attendance of online synchronous seminars in their entirety is mandatory. Seminars are graded and impact students final course grade. Please refer to course syllabi for clinical seminar schedules and grading. Students are expected to schedule their personal and professional schedules, if applicable, to ensure their attendance at clinical seminars. These dates are provided well in advance to make any necessary changes.

Cell Phones, Texting and Social Media use during Clinical Rotation

Cell phones, tablets and other social media are only to be used in the clinical setting to access resources needed to participate in patient care, and/or to log hours in the e-Value system. No personal use of cell phones or other social media in the clinical setting is allowed.

Telehealth Hours

The SON Graduate Team recognizes the value of telehealth care delivery to increase access to healthcare and supports the completion of a limited number of clinical hours via telehealth with prior approval.

Telehealth visits must occur at the clinical site and be directly supervised by the preceptor (both the student and preceptor must be physically present at the clinical site which cannot include the preceptor's home).

Students complete a request for telehealth hour consideration via the Clinical Rotation Intent Form. The decision to approve the telehealth clinical placement and number of hours will be made by the Track Director in collaboration with the Course Coordinator and the Clinical Operations Coordinator of the Graduate Programs.

Students in the PMHNP program may request up to 50% of total clinical hours be completed via telehealth. Students in the FNP program may complete up to 10% of total clinical hours via telehealth. The percentage is calculated across all track-specific clinical courses and not per course.

Clinical Preceptorships

The clinical preceptorship is an exciting and rewarding experience. Clinical preceptorship is the opportunity for the student to integrate and practice the skills and knowledge they have acquired through their courses and expand their role to an advanced practice level. During each of these clinical preceptorships, the student develops the advanced practice nursing knowledge, skills, and competencies they will use as primary care family nurse practitioners and psychiatric mental health providers. All students are expected to demonstrate knowledge, critical thinking, clinical skills, and competencies in the primary care or mental health practice setting aligned with the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculty (NONPF) Core Competencies and AACN Essentials (2021).

For students to attend their clinical preceptorships all clinical onboarding requirements must be completed by the dates established by the Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs. Failure to do so may result in delays attending preceptorship rotations or in program completion.

Students are expected to evenly distribute their clinical hours from the beginning of the semester through the final week as outlined in the course schedule, to ensure a balanced and comprehensive clinical experience. Each student's clinical schedule is subject to approval by the clinical faculty and course coordinator. Students' clinical hours will require at least four-hour shifts, with a maximum of 12 hours per shift. Any requests for shifts outside of these designated hours must be submitted to the course coordinator for prior approval.

Non-Massachusetts Residents/Out-of-State Preceptorships

Students who do not reside in Massachusetts or intend to complete their clinical rotations outside of Massachusetts may find additional state specific restrictions or procedures that impact their ability to attend clinical hours. Students are required to keep the Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs and Student Services Specialist or Track Director informed if they will be completing their clinical rotation in any state other than Massachusetts or their home state of record as reflected in their Student Account at the time of application. Students must notify the Student Services Specialist or Track Director if they will be moving to another state to ensure that their program's delivery will not be impacted.

Identification of Preceptorships

It is the student's responsibility to actively participate and collaborate with the Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs, Track Director, faculty, and staff in identifying and securing appropriate preceptorships. Students are expected to commit to preceptorship opportunities well in advance, to ensure the placements are approved to attend by the time the clinical courses open. It is the student's responsibility to adjust their personal and work schedules to facilitate their ability to meet the clinical course requirements for clinical hour completion. For all courses, the last day students may attend clinical hours is determined by the course faculty based upon the class calendar and is published in the course syllabi. *Students should plan to identify their potential preceptor and site as far in advance as possible, one year in advance is recommended.*

The preceptor must be a person who is capable of assisting, guiding, and directing a graduate student to meet their clinical practicum goals and objectives. The preceptor is a master's or doctoral prepared experienced professional with a commitment to teaching, and serves as a role model, resource person, consultant, and mentor. The preceptor must have at least one (1) year of clinical experience in their identified role.

Student placements for the FNP or PMHNP program will be negotiated by the student and respective Track Director. Advanced Practice Nurses, Certified Physician Assistants, and Medical Doctors may serve as preceptors for FNP students. Preceptors for the PMHNP students may include Advanced Practice Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners, Psychiatric Clinical Nurse Specialists with prescriptive authority and Medical Doctors who are credentialed and state licensed to practice in Psychiatry. All approved preceptors must be in good standing with their respective licensure boards. In addition to those mentioned above, students may also precept with a master prepared therapist for a limited number of clinical hours with Track Director approval. At least fifty-one percent (51%) of the total precepted clinical hours must be with a graduate-prepared nationally certified nurse practitioner.

Please refer to Family Nurse Practitioner Clinical Experiences and Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Clinical Experiences for additional information on clinical completion standards.

Procedures for Site Agreements and Preceptor Credentialing

1. Once a preceptor/site is identified, the student will complete the Clinical Rotation Intent Form. It is imperative that all required information is filled out. If any clinical hours will be completed via telehealth, this must be indicated on the Clinical Rotation Intent Form. The Clinical Rotation Intent Form, and all forms for clinical, are in Blackboard under the *SON Graduate Virtual Student*

Center organization, All Things Clinical section.

<https://mcphs.blackboard.com/ultra/organizations/ 32838 1/cl/outline>

2. The Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs begins obtaining an affiliation agreement with the clinical site.

Note: The agreement must be returned and fully executed between MCPHS and the clinical site for the student to begin the clinical rotation. This process can take anywhere between two business days and three months, depending on the complexity of the clinical site.

3. The student will forward the preceptor's resume/curriculum vitae (CV) and national certification as an advanced practice nurse, or license if MD/DO. This process is validation of the preceptor's credentials to serve as a preceptor.

The entire process from submission of the Clinical Rotation Intent Form to finalizing the dates of clinical rotation may take several weeks to months. Students are encouraged to initiate the process as soon as possible to avoid delays in clinical rotations.

Substitute Preceptors

When a student is cleared for clinical, they will only attend clinical hours with the preceptor officially approved by the SON. If the approved preceptor(s) is on vacation, or out ill, the student may seek approval to be with a substitute preceptor for a limited time. The student must contact their assigned clinical course faculty who will then discuss this request with the Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs to seek approval for the substitute preceptor.

Students may not attend clinical hours with any unapproved preceptor. The student will forfeit any clinical hours completed with an unapproved preceptor and disciplinary action may be taken.

Clinical Hours

Any logged clinical hours in the eValue tracking software must be in person, hands-on, that the student has spent at their clinical site with their preceptor. The student may not log hours spent at home preparing for clinical or documenting. Any hours logged outside of set parameters may be considered fraudulent. The student will forfeit any fraudulent hours, and disciplinary action could be taken.

Course Faculty, Student, Preceptor and Clinical Faculty Responsibilities

Course Faculty Responsibilities

- Deliver the didactic content for the course.
- Assume overall responsibility for teaching and final didactic and clinical evaluation of student.
- Maintain communication with clinical faculty and students.
- Provide support to clinical faculty and students.

Student Responsibilities

- Collaborate with Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs to secure an appropriate clinical placement and submit site/preceptor information via Clinical Intent Form. **Include a request for consideration of telehealth hours if this will be part of the experience. Telehealth must be provided from the clinical site with the preceptor on-site with the student.**
- Coordinate with the Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs to complete all onboarding and clearance requirements for each rotation. The process may take up to six weeks or more and requires approval from both the Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs and the clinical site.
- Arrange a mutually acceptable clinical schedule between student and preceptor.
- Notify clinical faculty of the pre-established semester clinical schedule
- Notify preceptor and faculty of any illness or clinical absence, and arrange to make up missed clinical time;
- Notify clinical faculty of any issues with preceptor, site, or experience within twenty-four (24) hours of occurrence. *Note- serious safety issues or concerns should be relayed to clinical faculty ASAP after event*
- Notify clinical faculty and the Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs if an alternative preceptor is needed at your approved clinical site due to your assigned preceptor's absence (e.g., illness or vacation). Prior approval is required.
- Develop and update personal learning objectives.
- Obtain resources and experiences that facilitate the clinical learning objectives outlined in the syllabus and Graduate Handbook.
- Meet the orientation requirements of facility.
- Observe policies of the facility.
- Adhere to the standards of professional practice.
- Adhere to mandated reporter standards.
- Maintain effective communication with preceptor and clinical staff.
- Complete all clinical assignments by due dates.
- Submit the Mid-point and the Final Clinical Evaluation in a timely manner adhering to dates communicated in the course syllabus and by Clinical Faculty.
- Ensure the completion of all end of semester evaluations. Submit all end of semester documents as indicated in the course syllabus.
- Know and track progress in meeting clinical requirements including hours, setting and population
- Ensure ongoing compliance by regularly reviewing all communications from the Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs, CastleBranch, and eValue.
- Respond to emails and clinical document requests from the Clinical Operations Coordinator for the Graduate Programs **within 24 hours**.

Preceptor Responsibilities

- Provide necessary documents and certifications to the SON.
- Review the orientation module and course syllabus provided by the SON.
- Orient the student to the clinical site and to agency policies.
- Be an expert role model.
- Adhere to mandated reporter standards.

- Provide valuable, evidence-based learning experiences with appropriate patient populations.
- Provide ongoing feedback to students to improve the student's clinical skills.
- Communicate with Clinical Faculty throughout the semester.
- Guide the student to meet the needs of the patient population and the clinical site.
- Direct the student to resources and reading.
- Demonstrate and critique patient and family education skills.
- Promote critical thinking and clinical reasoning skills.
- Complete eValue Student Clinical Evaluation at the Mid-point and the end of the clinical rotation.

Clinical Faculty Responsibilities

- The Clinical Adjunct Faculty will provide clinical supervision to up to 8 students per semester.
- Clinical Adjunct Faculty will be Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN), with at least 3 years' practice experience.
- Clinical Adjunct Faculty will have an active APRN license in Massachusetts.
- Adhere to mandated reporter standards.
- Provide guidance and supervision for the student during the preceptorship.
- Support the student in developing personal values and philosophy for the advanced practice role.
- Promote personal growth of students.
- Contribute to the grading of assignments as delineated by the Course Coordinator.
- Host clinical seminars as directed by the Course Coordinator.
- Establish a collaborative relationship with preceptors.
- Confirm preceptors have obtained orientation to the SON and course specific clinical materials.
- Maintain communication with preceptors and other agency personnel (initial, mid-point, and end of semester contacts).
- Maintain communication with students (initial, mid-point, and end of semester contacts)
- Ensure the preceptorship provides adequate learning experiences for the student.
- Ensure the student is performing to expectation and maintaining a professional demeanor.
- Provide timely formative (weekly feedback on SOAPs, mid-semester update, and feedback on other course assignments) and summative feedback (student mid-term and final evaluation, and final update) to the student during the semester.
- Complete eValue Student Clinical Evaluation at Mid-Point and end of each clinical rotation and the Clinical Site evaluation at the end of each clinical rotation.
- Communicate with Course Coordinator regularly regarding student performance.
- Any requirements for an on-site visit will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Clinical Site Settings

Approval of Clinical Sites

All clinical sites are evaluated for appropriateness by the Track Directors in accordance with program requirements, certification requirements, MCPHS outcomes, and individual program learning outcomes.

To be successful in the FNP/PMHNP program, the student must be able to negotiate their learning needs within the preceptorship. The student must be aware of not only the hours they must obtain for the

program, but the **EXPERIENCES** with each distinct patient population for family and mental health nurse practitioner training.

Clinical shifts are limited to four hours and a maximum length of twelve (12) hours. Students may not attend more clinical hours than the course or program requires.

Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025

NUR 703: Advanced Health Assessment across the Lifespan (All Tracks)

Students registering for clinical courses must have an identified/established clinical rotation before enrollment. In the event a student does not have a prospective clinical rotation prior to the semester start date according to the academic calendar, they are required to reach out to the Track Director to discuss impacts on their clinical course progression and plan of study. Students must have clinical placements to participate in the clinical courses. A student without placement will be withdrawn from the course and the students overall program progression and expected graduation date will be affected.

Course Overview	Students will learn to conduct an advanced comprehensive history, physical, and psychological assessment of signs and symptoms, pathophysiologic changes, and psychosocial variations of the client across the lifespan. Students will apply diagnostic reasoning in physical diagnosis and develop a differential diagnosis based on the health history and identified signs and symptoms.
Hours	75-hours spread across the entire semester* <i>*For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 90 clinical hours will be required.</i>
Emphasis	The emphasis of the clinical experience is on methods of comprehensive data gathering, analysis and documentation of history, physical examinations, screening for common diseases, diagnostic procedures, and differential diagnosis
Appropriate Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary care offices (family practice or internal medicine) • Pre-admission testing department (opportunities to history & PE) affiliated with a hospital as an outpatient setting • Hospitalist programs – care of inpatients on general medical floors • Long term care or Assisted Living facilities • Adult day health programs • Outpatient Specialty Practice (OBGYN requires Track Director approval)
Potentially Appropriate Settings*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgent care*

**All “potentially appropriate settings” must be reviewed and approved by Track Director.*

Family Nurse Practitioner Clinical Experiences

Students registering for clinical courses must have an identified/established clinical rotation before enrollment. In the event a student does not have a prospective clinical rotation prior to the semester start date according to the academic calendar, they are required to reach out to the Track Director to discuss impacts on their clinical course progression and plan of study. Students must have clinical placements to participate in the clinical courses. A student without placement will be withdrawn from the course and the students overall program progression and expected graduation date will be affected.

Family Nurse Practitioner students may benefit from altering the sequence of their 800 level clinical courses to fit with identified preceptorships. Doing so requires approval from the FNP Track Director.

Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025

NUR 810: Family Primary Care II (Adult)

Course Overview	Students will focus on advanced practice nursing and health care management of adults. The student will provide primary health care services to adults and families in primary care type settings. During this course, the student will focus on performing comprehensive health assessments, episodic and chronic care for adults within the context of family and community. Health promotion and disease/injury prevention will be an integral component of the course. Students will also learn the diagnosis and treatment of common illnesses and injuries in adults.
Hours	225 hours spread across the entire semester * <i>*For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 180 clinical hours will be required.</i>
Emphasis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within this period the FOCUS is on the POPULATION EXPERIENCES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of experience with the variety of well care and problem-focused care must be demonstrated • If not able to obtain the required EXPERIENCES during clinical hours, additional experience will be required to fulfill this course's objectives.
Appropriate Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family practice (focusing on adult patients >21 years of age) • Primary Care • Internal medicine • Correctional health
Potentially Appropriate Settings*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgent care* • Occupational health clinics* • Adult care outpatient specialty clinics*
*Note: some alternative sites can be considered for partial hours toward the optional specialty clinical allowance. These require pre-approval from the FNP Track Director.	

NUR 809: Family Primary Care I (Pedi and Women's Health)

Course Overview	Students will focus on advanced practice nursing and health care management of pediatric patients and women with reproductive needs- and their families. During the Women's Health section, the student will provide primary health care services to women with needs related to the reproductive system. During the pediatric section, students will focus on performing comprehensive health and developmental assessments for children and their families, in addition to managing episodic and chronic disease states. Health promotion and disease/injury prevention will be an integral component of the course. Health promotion and disease/injury prevention will be an integral component of the course.
Hours	225 hours spread across the entire semester * <i>*For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 180 clinical hours will be required.</i>

Emphasis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Within this period the FOCUS is on the POPULATION EXPERIENCES• Evidence of experience with the variety of well care & problem focused care must be demonstrated• If not able to obtain the required EXPERIENCES during clinical hours, additional experience will be required to fulfill this course’s objectives.• Care delivery to two distinct populations: <table><tr><td><u>Women’s Health:</u> Adult (18+)</td><td><u>Pediatric:</u> Children from birth to young adult</td></tr><tr><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">• The emphasis is delivering primary care services to women.• Health care delivery addressing women’s health issues and care delivery related to the reproductive system’s needs.</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performance of comprehensive health (well-child checks) and developmental assessment for children and their families.• Identification and management of both episodic and chronic health issues in children</td></tr></table>		<u>Women’s Health:</u> Adult (18+)	<u>Pediatric:</u> Children from birth to young adult	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The emphasis is delivering primary care services to women.• Health care delivery addressing women’s health issues and care delivery related to the reproductive system’s needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performance of comprehensive health (well-child checks) and developmental assessment for children and their families.• Identification and management of both episodic and chronic health issues in children
<u>Women’s Health:</u> Adult (18+)	<u>Pediatric:</u> Children from birth to young adult					
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The emphasis is delivering primary care services to women.• Health care delivery addressing women’s health issues and care delivery related to the reproductive system’s needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performance of comprehensive health (well-child checks) and developmental assessment for children and their families.• Identification and management of both episodic and chronic health issues in children					
Appropriate Settings	<table><tr><td>Women’s Health<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primary Care• Internal medicine or family practice that manages own GYN and women’s health care• OB/GYN offices• Women’s health clinics• Women’s correctional health• College health clinics</td><td>Pediatric<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family primary care practices (seeing patients from birth to young adulthood, 0-21 years)• Pediatric practices• School health clinics• Recreational camp settings with medical provider</td></tr></table>	Women’s Health <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primary Care• Internal medicine or family practice that manages own GYN and women’s health care• OB/GYN offices• Women’s health clinics• Women’s correctional health• College health clinics	Pediatric <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family primary care practices (seeing patients from birth to young adulthood, 0-21 years)• Pediatric practices• School health clinics• Recreational camp settings with medical provider			
Women’s Health <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primary Care• Internal medicine or family practice that manages own GYN and women’s health care• OB/GYN offices• Women’s health clinics• Women’s correctional health• College health clinics	Pediatric <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family primary care practices (seeing patients from birth to young adulthood, 0-21 years)• Pediatric practices• School health clinics• Recreational camp settings with medical provider					
Inappropriate Women’s Health Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• labor and delivery units (inpatient)					
Potentially Appropriate Pediatric Settings*	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Urgent care or fast tracks*• Specialty clinics* (i.e., Pedi endocrine/Pedi GI)					
*Note: some alternative sites can be considered for partial hours toward the optional specialty clinical allowance. These require pre-approval from the FNP Track Director.						

NUR 811: Family Primary Care III (Geriatrics)

Course Overview	Students will focus on advanced practice nursing and health care management of older adults and frail elders and families. The student will provide primary health care services to older adults and frail elders in primary care or skilled care facilities. During this course, the student will focus on performing comprehensive health assessments, episodic and chronic care for older adults and frail elders in family and community. Health promotion, disease/injury prevention and end of life care will be an integral component of the course. Students learning and teaching will address the diagnosis and treatment of common illnesses and
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	injuries; and coordination of complex health needs of the older adult and frail elder.
Hours	225 hours spread across the semester * <i>*For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 180 clinical hours will be required.</i>
Emphasis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within this period the FOCUS is on the POPULATION EXPERIENCES (elder/frail elder) • Evidence of experience with the variety of well-care & problem-focused care must be demonstrated • Evidence of experience managing complex issues of the elderly required • If not able to obtain the required EXPERIENCES during the clinical hours, additional experience will be required to fulfill this course's objectives.
Appropriate Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family practice (focusing on adult patients >65 years of age) • Primary care • Internal medicine • Skilled nursing facilities/assisted-living facilities that provide primary care to the residents (e.g., those providing care through Evercare, an NP coordinate care group for those in skilled or assisted-living facilities) • Long term care facilities • Geriatric home care agencies • Senior/Adult Day health programs with medical component • Medicare/Insurance plan elder care management programs • PACE Program
Potentially Appropriate Settings*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency rooms or inpatient settings such as with hospitalist* • Urgent care* • Hospice/Palliative care services* • Specialty outpatient clinics*
*Note: some alternative sites can be considered for partial hours toward the optional specialty clinical allowance. These require pre-approval from the FNP Track Director.	

Students Enrolled Fall 2025 and beyond

NUR 820: FNP Clinical Experience I

Course Overview	This is the first of two supervised clinical rotations in the FNP track, following the completion of all didactic coursework, including foundational, diagnostic, and specialty content. Students will begin applying their knowledge in the primary care settings under preceptor supervision, delivering evidence-based care to diverse pediatric, adult, and geriatric populations. This initial clinical experience fosters the development of independent clinical reasoning and supports professional identity formation in the advanced practice role.
Hours	375 spread across the entire semester
Emphasis	This clinical rotation focuses on the delivery of evidence-based primary care across the lifespan, encompassing diverse pediatric, adult, and geriatric populations.
Appropriate Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Practice • Internal Medicine

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age and Gender Specific Populations for partial hour fulfillment: • Pediatric Offices • Women's Health/OBGYN Clinics • Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF) • Long Term Care Facilities • Rehabilitation Settings
Potentially Appropriate Settings*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency rooms or inpatient settings such as with hospitalist* • Urgent care* • Hospice/Palliative care services* • Specialty outpatient clinics*
*Note: some alternative sites can be considered for partial hours toward the optional specialty clinical allowance. These require pre-approval from the FNP Track Director.	

NUR 821: FNP Clinical Experience II

Course Overview	This is the second of two supervised clinical rotations in the FNP track. Building upon the skills developed in Clinical I, this course allows students to advance their clinical reasoning, diagnostic accuracy, and management of increasingly complex patient cases across the lifespan. Under preceptor supervision, students are expected to demonstrate greater autonomy in delivering comprehensive, evidence-based care to diverse populations, including pediatric, adult, and geriatric patients. Clinical Experience II supports the transition from student to novice-level advanced practice provider, focusing on readiness for independent practice.
Hours	375 spread across the entire semester
Emphasis	In the final clinical experience, focus remains on the delivery of evidence-based primary care across the lifespan. Students are expected to demonstrate increased clinical independence, refine diagnostic and management skills, and address complex health conditions. Experiences reflect readiness for the advanced practice role, including comprehensive care planning, interprofessional collaboration, and the integration of social determinants and environmental factors into patient centered care.
Appropriate Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Practice • Internal Medicine • Age and Gender Specific Populations for partial hour fulfillment: • Pediatric Offices • Women's Health/OBGYN Clinics • Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF) • Long Term Care Facilities • Rehabilitation Settings
Potentially Appropriate Settings *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency rooms or inpatient settings such as with hospitalist* • Urgent care* • Hospice/Palliative care services* • Specialty outpatient clinics*
*Note: some alternative sites can be considered for partial hours toward the optional specialty clinical allowance. These require pre-approval from the FNP Track Director.	

Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Clinical Experiences

Students registering for clinical courses must have an identified/established clinical rotation before enrollment. In the event a student does not have a prospective clinical rotation prior to the semester start date according to the academic calendar, they are required to reach out to the Track Director to discuss impacts on their clinical course progression and plan of study. Students must have clinical placements to participate in the clinical courses. A student without placement will be withdrawn from the course and the student's overall program progression and expected graduation date will be affected.

A minimum of fifty-one percent (51%) of the program clinical hours must be completed with a Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) and/or Mental Health Clinical Nurse Specialist with prescriptive authority, within the NUR 806C and NUR 807C courses. Any clinical hours completed in NUR 703 or NUR 805 with an NP cannot count towards the PMHNP specialty hours.

Students must have sufficient clinical experience in each population (adult, geriatric, pediatric) across the lifespan. **At least 75 of the total clinical hours must be spent caring for the child/adolescent population.**

Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025

NUR 805C: Basic Counseling Theory & Techniques for the PMHNP

Course Overview	Along with the general types of counseling offered to clients, prominent individual, group, and family therapy approaches are considered. In addition, an opportunity to learn, explore and practice the foundational evidence-based interaction skills essential in the delivery of psychotherapy is provided. Relevant ethical concerns are noted and addressed during role-play of counseling sessions.
Hours	75-hours spread across the entire semester* <i>*For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 90 clinical hours will be required.</i>
Emphasis	Individual, family, group therapy
Appropriate Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community mental health centers (care across the lifespan) • Family counseling services • School-based therapy services • Private mental health practice (across the lifespan) • Outpatient mental health clinics • Inpatient mental health treatment facilities • Behavioral Mental Health clinics*
Appropriate providers	Note: Must be licensed/credentialed to provide therapy. May be a psychiatrist, psychologist, Licensed Social Worker, mental health nurse practitioner. Check with the Clinical Operations Coordinator for Graduate Programs and the Track Director to ensure the site is appropriate.

NUR 806C: Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Course Overview	This is the first of two sequential courses that will build upon prerequisite knowledge of theoretical concepts of advanced practice nursing and related disciplines. Students will identify and implement appropriate culturally sensitive interventions for the care of patients and their families with mental health care needs across the lifespan. Ethical and legal issues, health promotion, and disease prevention are emphasized.
Hours	300 hours spread across the entire semester * <i>*For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 225 clinical hours will be required.</i>
Emphasis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The clinical rotation will be the opportunity for the student to apply knowledge gained in the didactic part of the course. Within this period the FOCUS is on the EXPERIENCE through clinical patient exposure and preceptor mentoring. Evidence of experience with age-appropriate care of mental health illnesses, prevention, and promotion must be demonstrated. If not able to obtain the required EXPERIENCES during clinical hours, additional experience will be required to fulfill this course's objectives.
Appropriate Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Mental Health Centers In-patient psychiatry Private psychiatric practice Outpatient Psychiatry Clinics Psychiatric Consult Services State Psychiatric Facilities Urban Nurse-Managed Clinics Veterans Administration Psychiatric Facilities Domestic Violence Shelters* Psychopharmacology Clinics* Residential Substance Abuse Facilities*
Not/Partially Appropriate Settings*	*Note: Must provide diagnostic, coordination, monitoring and management of treatments plans for patients with mental health needs. Check with the Clinical Operations Coordinator for Graduate Programs and the Track Director to ensure the site is appropriate.

**May or may not be appropriate settings- must be reviewed and approved by Track Director.*

NUR 807C: Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner II

Course Overview	In Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner II, the student will deliver a holistic healthcare managed approach to caring for patients with mental health needs across the lifespan. Emphasis is placed on the acute, complex, and chronic psychiatric mental healthcare needs of patients and their families in a culturally diverse environment within integrated and coordinated care.
Hours	300 spread across the entire semester* <i>*For students enrolled prior to January 1, 2024, 225 clinical hours will be required.</i>
Emphasis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The clinical rotation will be the opportunity for the student to apply knowledge gained in the didactic part of the course. Within this period the FOCUS is on the EXPERIENCE through clinical patient exposure and preceptor mentoring.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of experience with age-appropriate care of mental health illnesses, prevention, and promotion must be demonstrated. • If not able to obtain the required EXPERIENCES during clinical hours, additional experience will be required to fulfill this course's objectives.
Appropriate Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Mental Health Centers • In-patient psychiatry • Private psychiatric practice • Outpatient Psychiatry Clinics • Psychiatric Consult Services • State Psychiatric Facilities • Urban Nurse-Managed Clinics • Veterans Administration Psychiatric Facilities • Psychopharmacology Clinics* • Residential Substance Abuse Facilities*
Not/Partially Appropriate Settings*	*Note: Must provide diagnostic, coordination, monitoring and management of treatments plans for patients with mental health needs. Check with the Clinical Operations Coordinator for Graduate Programs and the Track Director to ensure the site is appropriate.

**May or may not be appropriate settings- must be reviewed and approved by Track Director.*

Students Enrolled Fall 2025 and beyond

NUR 815: PMHNP Clinical Experience I

Course Overview	This is the first of two sequential courses that will build upon prerequisite knowledge of theoretical concepts of advanced practice nursing and related disciplines. Students will identify and implement appropriate culturally sensitive interventions for the care of patients and their families with mental health care needs across the lifespan. Ethical and legal issues, health promotion, and disease prevention are emphasized.
Hours	375 spread across the entire semester
Emphasis	<p>The clinical rotation will be the opportunity for the student to apply knowledge, skills and competencies gained in the didactic portion of the curriculum. Within this period the FOCUS is on the EXPERIENCE through clinical patient exposure and preceptor mentoring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of experience with age-appropriate care of mental health illnesses, prevention, and promotion must be demonstrated. <p>*If not able to obtain the required EXPERIENCES during clinical hours, additional experience will be required to fulfill this course's objectives</p>
Appropriate Settings	<p>Community Mental Health Centers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-patient psychiatry • Private psychiatric practice • Outpatient Psychiatry Clinics • Psychiatric Consult Services • State Psychiatric Facilities • Urban Nurse-Managed Clinics • Veterans Administration Psychiatric Facilities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychopharmacology Clinics* • Residential Substance Abuse Facilities*
Not/Partially Appropriate Settings*	*Note: Must provide diagnostic, coordination, monitoring and management of treatments plans for patients with mental health needs. Check with the Clinical Coordinator to ensure the site is appropriate.

NUR 817: PMHNP Clinical Experience II

Course Overview	In Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner II, the student will deliver a holistic healthcare managed approach to caring for patients with mental health needs across the lifespan. Emphasis is placed on the acute, complex, and chronic psychiatric mental healthcare needs of patients and their families in a culturally diverse environment within integrated and coordinated care.
Hours	375 spread across the entire semester
Emphasis	<p>The clinical rotation will be the opportunity for the student to apply knowledge gained in the didactic part of the course. Within this period the FOCUS is on the EXPERIENCE through clinical patient exposure and preceptor mentoring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of experience with age-appropriate care of mental health illnesses, prevention, and promotion must be demonstrated. <p>*If not able to obtain the required EXPERIENCES during clinical hours, additional experience will be required to fulfill this course's objectives.</p>
Appropriate Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Mental Health Centers • In-patient psychiatry • Private psychiatric practice • Outpatient Psychiatry Clinics • Psychiatric Consult Services • State Psychiatric Facilities • Urban Nurse-Managed Clinics • Veterans Administration Psychiatric Facilities • Psychopharmacology Clinics* • Residential Substance Abuse Facilities*
Not/Partially Appropriate Settings*	*Note: Must provide diagnostic, coordination, monitoring and management of treatments plans for patients with mental health needs. Check with the Clinical Coordinator to ensure the site is appropriate.

Progression with Incomplete Clinical Hours

Students are expected to arrange their clinical schedule to allow for completion of all required clinical hours within the confines of the semester, in accordance with the schedule published in the course syllabi. If extraordinary circumstances are identified that have prevented the student from meeting the clinical hour requirement, the Track Director may allow a student to proceed into the subsequent clinical course, provided they have completed a minimum of 75% of the required clinical hours by the semester deadline. Students must be in good didactic and clinical standing, and decisions regarding progression are made on a case-by-case basis.

The student will not be permitted to begin any additional clinical course hours, until all the previous outstanding clinical hours have been successfully completed and the student has received their final

course grade. In the event the student does not complete their clinical hour requirement within the first two weeks of that semester, they will be withdrawn from the clinical course they are currently enrolled in, and subject to any fees or tuition loss according to the MCPHS Academic Calendar. The student will then be moved to an “out of sequence status.” During this time, the student must complete any outstanding clinical hours before returning to any future clinical courses.

Students must be prepared to complete all outstanding clinical hours by the end of the subsequent academic semester. Any student who has an incomplete or is out of sequence due to lack of clinical hours must have successfully completed those outstanding hours within one (1) year or will have to retake the clinical course in its entirety, including all didactic, clinical components and/or co-requisites.

Any student who does not fully complete clinical hours during the semester will receive an incomplete (I). Should the student be permitted to move forward into the subsequent clinical course they will be required to complete all outstanding clinical hours.

Flexibility for Clinical Hours Completion

1. **Inter-Semester Hours:**
 - Students in good clinical standing may complete clinical hours during the inter-semester periods (spring-to-summer and summer-to-fall) with the following guidelines:
 - FNP: May complete hours between spring and summer or summer and fall to meet the 750-hour requirement.
 - PMHNP: Same guidelines apply, tailored to their program structure.
 - Winter Break Excluded: Clinical hours may not be completed during the winter break period.
2. **Requirements for Students:**
 - With the exception of unforeseen circumstances, any accommodation for inter-semester clinical hour completion should be requested **by week 6**.
 - Must maintain good clinical standing and be approved by the course coordinator.
 - Submission of a clinical calendar detailing planned hours.
 - Logging of all hours in eValue.
 - SOAP note documentation will not be required during this time.
3. **Faculty Oversight**
 - The Clinical faculty will review and verify eValue logs and calendars for inter-semester hours.
 - This is subject to oversight (faculty and preceptor) availability.
4. **75% Rule**
 - The 75% rule will remain in effect, allowing students to progress with a minimum of the following number of completed hours:
 - Students enrolled prior to Fall 2025: 168 hours completed per 225-hour semester and 225 hours per 300-hour semester.
 - Students enrolled Fall 2025 and beyond: 281 hours completed per 375-hour semester
 - For students utilizing this inter-semester option, outstanding clinical hours may extend beyond the current three-week completion timeline into a planned inter-semester period, alleviating time constraints and promoting better clinical placement flexibility.

Student Responsibility for Contents of the MSN Handbook

Upon admission to the Graduate Nursing program and at the start of each semester, students must read the MCPHS MSN Student Handbook. Students must verify by electronic signature via the Blackboard platform that they have read and will abide by the policies, protocols, and guidelines described in this document.

The *MCPHS MSN Student Handbook* is reviewed and revised as needed. The student body will be informed of any major revisions via email.