



Graduate Student Handbook
Department of Nursing

Welcome to West Chester University and the Department of Nursing graduate program. We hope that you will find your experience here to be challenging and rewarding.

This handbook supplements the current West Chester University Graduate catalog and other university publications. The guide includes useful information for your success in the Program. You are strongly encouraged to keep and refer to this handbook throughout your course of study.

Please note that the material in this handbook is subject to change as University or department policies are revised. Your advisor is there to guide you, but it is still your responsibility to complete all requirements, conform to policies that are in force, and meet all deadlines. Periodic checking of the Department and University website and consultation with your advisor can help to prevent an untimely delay in your date of graduation or problems with your practice experiences.

We look forward to a rewarding association with you and hope that you will take advantage of all that our Department and the University have to offer.

The Graduate Faculty

Department and Faculty Contact Information

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Mission Statement & Philosophy

The mission of the West Chester University Department of Nursing is to provide the highest quality of undergraduate and graduate nursing education to students who come from diverse populations. All graduates are prepared to provide evidence-based quality nursing care, and to become nursing leaders within the nursing profession. The baccalaureate program provides the art and scientific foundations of entry into nursing practice. The graduate programs provide preparation into advanced nursing practice and education roles; thereby, giving students the ability to synthesize knowledge, strengthen communication, and empowerment to promote health care. The Doctor of Nursing Practice program further prepares advanced practice nurses at the highest level to fully evaluate and contribute to increasingly complex health care systems. These contributions are based on contemporary nursing science, organizational, political, cultural, and economic principles.

Graduates of these nursing programs will be professionals capable of assuming leadership in present and emerging health care roles, citizens who contribute to society and who are committed to life-long learning and personal development.

The Department of Nursing affirms the WCU Vision, Mission and Values Statements and the College of Health Sciences Mission Statement. It shares the University's commitment to teaching, research, and service to individuals, families, communities and populations. The following statement reflects the Department of Nursing's philosophical beliefs.

The Department of Nursing recognizes that individuals, families, communities and populations are entitled to optimum health and quality health care. Nurses play an integral role in health promotion, disease prevention and enhancing the quality of life throughout the lifespan. According to the ANA "nursing is the protection, promotion and optimization of health and abilities, prevention of illness and injury, alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, communities and populations." Advanced practice nursing roles include expert clinician, educator, researcher, consultant, and leader. The nursing programs at West Chester University recognize the responsibility to provide innovative educational programs that reflect the growing needs and current trends of diverse populations.

The faculty of the Department of Nursing provide a caring and supportive environment while respecting the diversity of the student body and communities which it serves. The University community cultivates and supports faculty/student collaboration and mentoring. The students are treated as individuals with unique qualities and learning needs. Through professional actions, the faculty reflects the Department's philosophy of excellence in nursing practice, creation of evidence-based research, establishing strong interdisciplinary associations and fostering supportive relationships with colleagues, students, and the community.

The 2008 AACN *Essentials* document (*The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education*), the 2011 AACN *Essentials* document (*The Essentials of Master's Education*), and the 2006 AACN *Essentials* document (*The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice*) provide structure for the curriculum content of all programs. The faculty designed programs facilitate the students' abilities to creatively respond to a continuously changing health system. Innovative educational experiences are cooperatively planned to meet the needs of both the students and clients empowering them in the nursing- client partnership. The interpretation, development and implementation of ethical evidence-based research are stressed throughout the educational process.

Ethical decision making, accountability, critical thinking, and effective communication skills are emphasized. This is achieved by the application of nursing theory and empirical evidence to professional practice. All programs promote lifelong learning, leadership, and prepare the student for advance professional degrees or post-doctoral studies.

December 2015

Program Goals

At the end of the MSN Program, the graduate will be able to:

1. synthesize philosophy, theory, content, and methods of health science and nursing science as a basis for nursing practice.
2. demonstrate advanced clinical skills in intervening with society including culturally diverse and/or medically underserved individuals or aggregates.
3. assume beginning Advanced Practice Nursing roles as a Nurse Educator or Clinical Specialist.
4. design health care strategies in which nurses contribute to the health promotion and disease prevention of individuals and aggregates.
5. evaluate health care issues, trends, and policies.
6. pursue and evaluate professional development as a continuing professional learner.
7. collaborate with interdisciplinary groups for the purpose of health care planning and programming.
8. acquire a foundation for doctoral study in nursing.
9. assume the role of advocate to promote accessibility of health care services and to enhance quality of care.
10. demonstrate a philosophy of nursing that reflects commitment to social justice and the advancement of nursing science.
11. participate in scientific inquiry directed to the health care needs of populations as well as individuals and families.

Admission Requirements

Applicants to the Graduate Program must meet the [Graduate Nursing Requirements](#). All qualified applicants are admitted to the program.

CURRICULUM

Requirements for the Master of Science in Nursing- Nurse Educator

I. Core Component (25 credits)

NSG 530 (3) * S	Theoretical Foundations of Nursing Practice
NSG 531 (3) * S	Healthcare Policy, Finance and Organization
NSG 532 (3) * F	Pathophysiology for Advanced Practice Nursing
NSG 533 (4) * S/F	Physical Assessment for Advanced Practice Nursing
NSG 534 (3) * F	Pharmacology for Advanced Practice Nursing
NSG 535 (3) * F	Population-Based Health Promotion/Epidemiology
NSG 536 (4) * F	Evidence-Based Practice Research
NSG 537 (3) * S	Ethical Decision-Making in Healthcare

(* Semester: Spring = S; Fall = F; subject to change based on needs)

II. NSG Role Specialty (15 Credits) –Nurse Educator

NSG 541 (3)	History & Philosophy of Higher Education and Nursing Education
NSG 542 (3)	Curriculum Development & Design in Nursing Education
NSG 543 (3)	Measurement and Evaluation in Nursing Education
NSG 544 (3)	Teaching Strategies for Classroom & Clinical Settings (125 clinical hours)
NSG 545 (3)	Nursing Education Teaching Practicum (125 clinical hours)

III. Degree Candidacy-----After 15 credits are completed

IV. Intent to Graduate-----Final Semester

**REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER INNURSE SCIENCE:
ADULT HEALTH GERONTOLOGY (CNS)**
I. Core Component (25 Credits)

NSG 530 (3) * S	Theoretical Foundations of Nursing Practice
NSG 531 (3) * S	Healthcare Policy, Finance and Organization
NSG 532 (3) * F	Pathophysiology for Advanced Practice Nursing
NSG 533 (4) * S/F	Physical Assessment for Advanced Practice Nursing
NSG 534 (3) * F	Pharmacology for Advanced Practice Nursing
NSG 535 (3) * F	Population-Based Health Promotion/Epidemiology
NSG 536 (3) * F	Evidence-Based Practice Research
NSG 537 (3) * S	Ethical Decision-Making in Healthcare

(* Semester: Spring = S; Fall = F; not subject to change based on needs)

II. NSG Role Specialty (17 Credits) – Adult Health Gerontology (CNS)

NSG 551 (2)	Advanced Nursing Practice I
NSG 552 (3)	Advanced Nursing Practice II
NSG 553 (3)	Advanced Nursing Practice III
NSG 554 (3)	Theories of the Aging Process
NSG 555 (3)	Differential Diagnosis in Older Adults
NSG 556 (3)	Health-Illness Transitions

III. Degree Candidacy-----After 15 credits are completed

IV. Intent to Graduate-----Final Semester

Course Descriptions

NSG 530 Theoretical Foundations of Nursing Practice (3)

The focus of this course is on the analysis and evaluation of the theoretical foundations of nursing. Students are introduced to nursing theory through a comprehensive overview. The historical development of nursing theories and a comparison of nursing theories with theories from other disciplines are explored. Emphasis is on theory as base for advanced nursing practice and nursing education. The relationship of theory to research, education and practice is analyzed.

NSG 531 Health-Care Policy, Finance, and Organization (3)

This course will introduce students to the concepts and tools of health-policy development as well as the skills necessary to be an effective policy analyst. The course will address healthcare finance and organization for the advanced practitioner.

532 Pathophysiology for Advanced-Practice Nursing (3)

This course is designed to explore pathophysiologic concepts beginning at the cellular level and proceeding through major body systems. Emphasis will be placed on pathophysiologic changes across the lifespan. This course analyzes the signs and symptoms of various diseases enabling the student and the advanced practice nurse to identify the mechanisms of disease and the clinical manifestations of those diseases so that rational therapies and interventions can be designed and implemented based on the pathophysiologic changes. Appropriate screening and diagnostic laboratory evaluative methods will also be included.

533 Physical Assessment for Advanced-Practice Nursing (4)

In this course, students will build on their physical assessment knowledge with a combination of comprehensive theoretical and clinical experiences in advanced physical assessment. Students will focus on attainment of enhanced skills to complete a holistic health assessment and physical examination of the adult, adolescent, and pediatric client. Strategies include collection of relevant data via appropriate interviewing methods, and developmental and physical assessment techniques with an emphasis on refinement of communication techniques and psychomotor skills.
(60 hours of Clinical Practice of Physical Assessment Skills)

534 Pharmacology for Advanced-Practice Nursing (3)

This course will build upon pharmacologic knowledge acquired at the baccalaureate level. This course will introduce the advanced-practice nurse to pharmacologic concepts utilized in advanced-practice roles. Clinical decision making is applied as students explore pharmacologic aspects of disease management. Communication is encouraged and required through in-class discussion and written assignments.

535 Population-Based Health Promotion/Epidemiology (3)

This course will provide an overview of the epidemiological model of disease causation. Various epidemiological study designs and their applications will be presented.

536 Evidence-Based Practice Research (3)

This course is designed to support nurse leaders in implementing and sustaining evidence-based practice within their organizations. Beginning with an introduction to formulating clinical questions, course participants will systematically review and synthesize scientific evidence; perform appraisals of evidence-based practice guidelines; design comprehensive plans for integrating evidence-based clinical practice changes specific to their practice setting; produce drafts of potentially publishable articles related to evidence-based practice; become familiar with grant proposals; and become more knowledgeable about the ethical implications related to evidence-based practice.

537 Ethical Decision Making in Health Care (3)

This is a core course in the Master of Science nursing program. Students will examine ethical principles, theories, and concepts affecting clinical practice. Using these principles, students will focus on the identification, articulation, and planned action for ethical concerns of the patient, family, healthcare provider, system, community, and public policy levels.

541 History and Philosophy of Higher Education and Nursing Education (3)

This course is designed as an introduction to nursing education. The course examines historical and current philosophies of education that impact nursing education. The history of nursing education is examined and discussed in relation to current and future trends in nursing education. Philosophical similarities and differences between higher education and nursing education models are examined from a historical perspective with emphasis on the present and future state of nursing education. External and internal factors and issues influencing nursing education are discussed.

542 Curriculum Development and Design in Nursing Education (3)

This course is designed to examine the theory and practice of curriculum development as a group process, synthesizing basic principles of curriculum in nursing education.

543 Measurement and Evaluation in Nursing Education (3)

This course will focus on the application of principles of measurement and evaluation within nursing education. Practical experiences will include the construction and evaluation of classroom tests and clinical assessment instruments, as well as interpretation of standardized tests used within nursing education. Current trends and issues related to evaluation will be discussed.

544 Teaching Strategies for Classroom and Clinical Settings (3)

The course explores the various teaching strategies used in nursing classroom and clinical settings for students with diverse needs. The course is designed to prepare students to facilitate learning in these settings. It will provide the student with the opportunity to synthesize and integrate educational theories, research, and curriculum planning and evaluation into the role of nurse educator. The course will facilitate the student's examination of the teaching-learning process and skills in professional nursing. The use of information technologies to support the teaching-learning process will also be explored (8 hours per week to equal 125 hours).

545 Nursing-Education Teaching Practicum (3)

This course provides the opportunity to integrate theory and practice in a formal nursing education setting. Students will use theories to organize, plan, and implement the nurse educator role in a nursing-education setting selected in collaboration with the faculty. Students will participate in the teaching-learning process and will have the opportunity to develop the skills of a professional nurse educator through their preceptorial teaching experience. Emphasis will be placed on baccalaureate education (8 hours per week to equal 125 hours).

551 Advanced Nursing Practice I (2)

This course provides an opportunity to integrate theory and practice that prepares students for advanced nursing practice as an adult/gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS). Students use theories from nursing and other sciences to plan, manage, and evaluate direct-care services provided to adults and families in community settings. Clinical experiences focus on case management, advanced assessment, diagnosis, planning, and evaluation as it relates to wellness, health promotion, and maintenance in this population. Opportunities for inter-professional experience are provided. Students participate in faculty-led seminars discussing current topics related to the clinical focus areas with emphasis on clinical decision-making skills. Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN) mentor students in a clinical practice setting (112 hours of clinical practicum in wellness and promotion).

552 Advanced Nursing Practice II (3)

This course provides an opportunity to integrate theory and practice that prepares students for advanced nursing practice as adult/gerontology clinical nurse specialists (CNS). Students use theories from nursing and other sciences to plan, manage, and evaluate direct-care services provided to adults and families in institutional and community settings. Clinical experience focuses on case management, including advanced assessment, diagnosis, planning, and evaluation as it relates to the management of acute and chronic comorbidities in this population. Opportunities for inter-professional experience and collaborative practice are provided. Students participate in faculty-led seminars discussing current topics related to the clinical focus areas with emphasis on clinical decision-making skills. Advance practice registered nurses (APRN) mentor students in a clinical practice setting – 112 practicum hours.

553 Advanced Nursing Practice III (3)

This course provides an opportunity to integrate theory and practice that prepares students for advanced nursing practice as an adult/gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS). Students use theories from nursing and other sciences to plan, manage, and evaluate direct-care services provided to adults and families in acute care and long-term care institutional settings. Clinical experience focuses on case management, advanced assessment, diagnosis, planning, and evaluation as it relates to the management of acute and complex chronic comorbidities in this population. Opportunities for multidisciplinary and collaborative practice are provided. Students participate in faculty-led seminars related to the clinical focus areas with emphasis on clinical decision-making skills. Advance Practice Registered Nurses (APRN) mentor students in a clinical practice setting – 168 practicum hours.

554 Theories of the Aging Process (3)

This course will present in-depth analysis of aging theories (various developmental, biological, physiological, psychological, and social) and how they explain the process of normal aging and disease development. Students will discuss the major theoretical themes and clinical perspectives for theory application, as well as identify trends and topics in modern aging research. The defined population of the adult-gerontology CNS practice to be discussed in this course includes young adults (late adolescents and emancipated minors), adults, and older adults (young-old, old, and old-old adults).

555 Differential Diagnoses in Older Adults (3)

This course provides didactic content to prepare the CNS to provide primary and/or acute care to older adults. From a case-study approach, students will examine advanced nursing management of health, illness, and disease states in older adults as compared to younger adults. Content addresses differential diagnosis and management of common health problems, including appropriate physical assessment, diagnostic procedures, laboratory tests, and follow-up care for patients with both acute and chronic conditions. Students use evidence-based care and clinical guidelines to provide safe, holistic, and cost-effective care to the adult and geriatric patient in a variety of healthcare settings.

556 Health Illness Transitions (3)

This course introduces transitions theory as the underpinning for the constantly shifting health-care needs of individuals across the age continuum (from late adolescence to the older adult) in a variety of settings. After a brief introduction, the course will offer learning through application of this theory to a variety of developmental, situational, and health-illness transitions.

Clinical Practicum Requirements

<p>West Chester University Department of Nursing Guidelines for Nursing Clinical Courses</p>

SELECTION OF THE CLINICAL AGENCY

1. The agency is willing to cooperate with the Department of Nursing to provide internships, teaching experiences or advanced practice experiences for graduate students.
2. The agency is approved or accredited as is appropriate.
3. The agency is willing to sign the WCU Department of Nursing Letter of Agreement.

CREDENTIALS OF THE PRECEPTOR

1. The preceptor will hold a minimum of a master's degree in nursing.
2. The preceptor will serve as a role model for the graduate student in education or in an advanced practice role.
3. The preceptor will have demonstrated expertise in education or in an advanced practice role.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE PRECEPTOR

The preceptor will:

1. Review with the student the course and personal objectives to be met during the experience.
2. Plan experiences with the student which will meet course objectives.
3. Facilitate the student's meeting of the course objectives in the setting.
4. Participate in the evaluation of the experience.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT

The graduate student will:

1. Submit to the Graduate Coordinator evidence of a current PA RN license, current malpractice insurance (1,000,000/3,000,000 coverage), a current health assessment report, and current CPR certification.
2. Complete mandatory clinical agency clearances.
3. Write specific personal objectives for the practicum, a tentative schedule, and how she/he will complement the cooperating institution.
4. Participate in seminar or discussions.
5. Write a clinical journal which documents experiences which fulfill the course and personal objectives.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE FACULTY MEMBER

1. The faculty will collaborate with the student and preceptor in planning the experience.
2. The faculty member will monitor student's progress and evaluate the student's success in meeting course objectives.
3. Make site visits as appropriate.

PRACTICUM PLACEMENT

1. The Graduate Coordinator or the Coordinator for the School Nurse program will initiate contact with agencies and determine the feasibility of the placement of students within any given semester.
2. The faculty member will initiate contacts with the agency preceptor for practicum placement.
3. The Graduate Coordinator or the Coordinator for the School Nurse program will initiate letters of agreement to the agencies.

CLINICAL HOURS

CNS Adult Gerontology

NSG 551 - 8 hours/week

NSG 552 - 8 hours/week

NSG 553 - 8 hours/week

Nurse Educator

NSG 544 – 8 hours/week

NSG 545 – 8 hours/week

*CNE prep course

School Nurse

NSG 502 – 8 hours/week

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL NURSING STUDENTS PRIOR TO PRACTICUM COURSE

1. **All Course Prerequisites as Stated in Academic Policies**

2. **CPR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT**

Nursing students enrolled in nursing courses with a clinical component are required to be currently certified in Life Support (BLS) Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation. Each student is responsible for making his/her own arrangements for initial certification and for renewals. Courses given by the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association are among the acceptable resources for CPR certification. The CPR course must include certification in two rescuer resuscitation and resuscitation of children and infants. Students will not be permitted to participate in clinical experiences until current CPR validation (e.g. CPR card) is submitted to the Graduate Coordinator.

3. **LIABILITY (MALPRACTICE) INSURANCE**

Nursing students are required to have professional liability insurance when enrolled in nursing courses with a clinical component. The face sheet of the insurance policy must be submitted at the beginning of practicum courses. The student may not begin clinical experience until the policy is on file.

Forms for subscribing for insurance are available from the secretary in the Nursing Department. Students may apply on-line and pay for their insurance.

At the present time, students are required to carry coverage in the amount of \$1,000,000/\$3,000,000 to meet the requirements of some of the clinical agencies.

4. **CRIMINAL and PA CHILD/ELDER ABUSE HISTORY CLEARANCES**

In accordance with PA Nursing Law and Child Protective Services Law in an effort to protect client safety and property, students will be required to complete a criminal background check and child/elder abuse history clearance prior to beginning practicum courses.

Clinical placements may be denied by the clinical site due to felony or misdemeanor convictions, or other adverse findings, and the inability to be placed at a clinical site will prohibit the student from graduating. Since there is not a comprehensive list from clinical sites and licensing agencies, we cannot provide guidance on what would absolutely exclude the student

from clinical placement or licensure. However, these decisions are typically dependent upon the nature of the incident, time since the incident occurred, and frequency and type of the incident.

A. REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL NURSING STUDENTS PRIOR TO PRACTICUM COURSE
Continued

5. Substance Abuse Policy

Students are expected to perform unimpaired. Prior to progressing to the nursing practicum courses, students must have a negative substance abuse result. If a student is suspected of substance abuse, as evidenced by documented impaired behavior, they will be removed from the classroom/clinical setting and may be asked to submit to further testing. Additionally, if the student is suspected of impairment, they will be asked to find arrangements to leave the clinical/classroom site. Further testing and alternate arrangements will be at the expense of the student. This policy is in addition to the West Chester University Student Code of Conduct and the Drug-Free Campus: Policies, Guidelines, and Resources (*The Ram's Eye View Student Handbook*).

Substance Testing

Students must have a test performed at the designated laboratory during the stated testing period before progressing to each practicum experience. Tests are performed by a qualified agency or laboratory using standard procedures for maintaining chain of custody. Tested substances are; amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cannabinoids, cocaine, opiates and phencyclidine. Students are responsible for all costs associated with these tests. Students' results are sent directly to the Department of Nursing. Students with a positive result will be dismissed from the nursing major. Refusal to be tested will result in dismissal from the nursing major.

6. FBI Check

Students may be required to have a FBI check performed before practicum. Students are responsible for costs associated with this check. Student results are accessed directly by the clinical agency. Student access to the clinical agency is at the discretion of the clinical agency based on this FBI check.

7. Health Requirements

A Health Form is required for all nursing students at WCU prior to their practicum courses. This requirement helps to protect the health of the students as well as the clients with whom you come in contact while providing nursing care. In order to comply with agency requirements, a two-step Tuberculin Skin Test (TST) will be required for all students prior to

practicum courses. The two-step test requires you to receive an initial TST, which will need to be read in 48-72 hours and another TST in two weeks, which will need to be read in 48-72 hours. Students with a positive TST must have a chest x-ray or a QuantiFERON gold blood test completed and have clearance from a health care provider of no active disease. A one-step TST must be completed prior to senior year. Our department requirements conform to the rules and regulations of the Pennsylvania State Board of Nurse Examiners in regard to provisions for the protection of students' health and requirements of our clinical affiliates.

If a health problem is identified, indication of how the problem will be remediated must be included in the student's health file. In some cases students must provide clearance to participate in the clinical setting.

- a. The health report for MSN students in practicum courses must include:
 - 1. completed health form
 - 2. evidence of immunity to Rubella, measles, mumps, poliomyelitis, flu, tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, **Hepatitis B**, and varicella.
 - a. immunization record - evidence of first 3 series vaccination and booster of Tdap/TDaP within the last 10 years OR
- b. laboratory test results showing positive titer

Advisement Process for the MSN Graduate Program

The Department of Nursing encourages active participation of the faculty advisor in the area of academic guidance and counseling. Each faculty member is assigned student advisees by the graduate coordinator. The faculty member is available for advisement during posted office hours and by appointment. Office hours may change from semester to semester because of differences in class and clinical assignments.

Each semester students consult with their advisors to plan their course selection for the next semester. Prior to registration, schedules are available on-line and in the Graduate Studies Office. Students discuss course selections with the faculty advisor during office hours or at special times posted by faculty members specifically for pre-scheduling. It is important that students will seek out and confer with their advisors at other times during the course of the school year.

**West Chester University
Department of Nursing
MSN Advisement Sheet Nurse Educator**

I. Core Component (26 Credits)

NSG 530 (3) Theoretical Foundations of Nursing Practice	_____
NSG 531 (3) Healthcare Policy, Finance and Organization	_____
NSG 532 (3) Pathophysiology for Advanced Practice Nursing	_____
NSG 533 (4) Physical Assessment for Advanced Practice Nursing	_____
NSG 534 (3) Pharmacology for Advanced Practice Nursing	_____
NSG 535 (3) Population-Based Health Promotion/Epidemiology	_____
NSG 536 (3) Evidence-Based Practice Research	_____
NSG 537 (3) Ethical Decision-Making in Healthcare	_____

II. NSG Role Specialty (15 Credits) –Nurse Educator

NSG 541 (3) History &Philosophy of Higher Education and Nursing Education	_____
NSG 542 (3) Curriculum Development & Design in Nursing Education	_____
NSG 543 (3) Measurement and Evaluation in Nursing Education	_____
NSG 544 (3) Teaching Strategies for Classroom & Clinical Setting	_____
NSG 545 (3) Nursing Education Teaching Practicum	_____

III. Degree Candidacy-----After 15 credits are completed

IV. Intent to Graduate-----Final Semester

**West Chester University
Department of Nursing
MSN Advisement Sheet
Adult Health Gerontology (CNS)**

I. Core Component (26 Credits)

NSG 530 (3) Theoretical Foundations of Nursing Practice	_____
NSG 531 (3) Healthcare Policy, Finance and Organization	_____
NSG 532 (3) Pathophysiology for Advanced Practice Nursing	_____
NSG 533 (4) Physical Assessment for Advanced Practice Nursing	_____
NSG 534 (3) Pharmacology for Advanced Practice Nursing	_____
NSG 535 (3) Population-Based Health Promotion/Epidemiology	_____
NSG 536 (3) Evidence-Based Practice Research	_____
NSG 537 (3) Ethical Decision-Making in Healthcare	_____

II. NSG Role Specialty (17 Credits) – Adult Health Gerontology (CNS)

NSG 551 (2) Advanced Nursing Practice I	_____
NSG 552 (3) Advanced Nursing Practice II	_____
NSG 553 (3) Advanced Nursing Practice III	_____
NSG 554 (3) Theories of the Aging Process	_____
NSG 555 (3) Differential Diagnosis in Older Adults	_____
NSG 556 (3) Health-Illness Transitions	_____

III. Degree Candidacy-----After 15 credits are completed

IV. Intent to Graduate-----Final Semester

RECENT GRADUATE POLICY CHANGES – Effective starting Fall 2014

Enrollment Policy

**Approved through the summer CAPC pilot process. Effective for one year (approved August 8, 2014).*

Students have a maximum of 6 years for degree completion. During that time students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment during fall and spring semesters. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment may affect degree completion due to course availability. Before a semester of non-enrollment, students are encouraged to contact their graduate coordinator, graduate studies, financial aid office (if applicable), and international programs (if applicable) to discuss implications of non-enrollment. A maximum of two semesters of non-enrollment are permitted before a student must enroll or request a leave of absence. Students who fail to reenroll or request a leave of absence are subject to readmission.

Enrollment Classification

1. Enrolled

- a. Enrolled in at least 1 credit-bearing course.
- b. Enrolled in GSR799, Continuous Registration. This denotes Graduate Student Research – This enrollment classification is designated for students completing IP grades and/or taking comprehensive exams. Students will be permitted to enroll in GSR799 if actively engaged in work towards the completion of the IP or comprehensive exams. The graduate coordinator must confirm a student is actively working on the completion of an IP or comprehensive exams before a student is enrolled in GSR799. Students will only be permitted two consecutive semesters of enrollment in GSR799. GSR799 is a non-graded and non-credit bearing course.

2. Non-Enrolled

- a. Enrolled in 0 hours of credit-bearing courses.
- b. Not eligible for GSR799.
- c. Students can have up to two consecutive semesters (fall and spring) of non-enrollment.
- d. Students must apply for a Leave of Absence during the second semester or enroll in credit-bearing courses in order to maintain good enrollment status.

3. Leave of Absence (LOA)

- a. Students wishing to be excused from the enrollment policy due to extenuating circumstances must file a formal request for a Leave of Absence. Forms are available on the Graduate Studies webpage.
- b. A Leave of Absence is not guaranteed, and students must request the LOA before the start of the semester in which the leave is requested.

NG Grades at the Graduate Level:

NG grades will be given when a student fails to complete course requirements by the end of a semester and a time extension is granted by the professor. Students must complete course requirements as stipulated by the professor as and not later than the end of the 14th week of the subsequent semester, or the NG grade will convert to an F at the end of the semester.

Unless a professor indicates a deadline when assigning a NG, graduate students have until the 14th week of the subsequent to complete course requirements. Please note, this means NG grade changes are due to the Registrar's office at the conclusion of the 15th week.

IP Grades at the Graduate Level:

IP grades indicate work in progress and will be used only for protected courses (theses, practicums, internships, recitals, and research reports). Students must complete course requirements as stipulated by the professor as and not later than the end of the 14th week of the second subsequent semester, or the IP grade will convert to an F. An IP grade may not be replaced with an NG.

If an NG or IP transitions to an F, a dismissal will be issued to the student. Please refer to the current **policy** on F grades.

All graduate academic policies can be found in the Graduate Catalog. An online version is available at www.wcupa.edu/gradcatalog.

GRADUATE STUDENT POLICIES
West Chester University
Office of Graduate Studies

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University. Academic dishonesty as it applies to students includes, but is not limited to academic cheating; plagiarism; the sale, purchase, or exchange of term papers or research papers; using books or other materials without authorization while taking examinations; taking an examination for another person, or allowing another person to take an examination in one's place; copying from another's paper during an examination or allowing another person to copy from one's own falsification of information which includes any form of providing false or misleading information, written, electronic, or oral; or of altering or falsifying official institutional records. Plagiarism is defined as copying another's work or portions thereof and/or using ideas and concepts of another and presenting them as one's own without giving proper credit to the source. NOTE: The Student Code of Conduct covers theft or attempted theft of property and/or services; destruction; vandalism; misuse or abuse of the real or personal property of the University, any organization, or any individual.

Grade Change Policy

A grade awarded other than IP/NG is final. Final grades can be changed only when there is a clerical or computational error. If the student thinks there is an error the student must report the alleged error in writing to the professor as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the fifth week of the following semester. If a grade change is warranted, the professor must submit a change of grade request to the office of the Registrar not later than the end of the ninth week of the semester. Final grades cannot be changed after the ninth week of the semester following the alleged error.

Graduate Student Course Repeat Policy

Graduate students must repeat courses applied to the degree for which they have received a grade of less than C- and all courses for which the program or department has a higher standard. Courses may be repeated only once. Both grades received for a course will remain on the student's record and both grades will be used to calculate the cumulative and major averages.

*****Continuous Enrollment**

All graduate students who have been admitted into a degree program must maintain continuous registration each semester (except summer sessions), or must apply for a formal leave of absence.

Degree Candidacy

After earning 15 credits, every student must file an application for admission to degree candidacy with the Graduate Studies Office.

*****Application for Graduation**

All of the forms required for graduation are available in a packet from the Office of Graduate Studies and they may be downloaded from the web page (www.wcupa.edu/_admissions/sch_dgr/default.htm.)

Deadline dates for applying to graduate are: May graduation - February 1; August graduation - June 1; December graduation - October 1.

See www.wcupa.edu/grad

CAMPUS RESOURCES

[The Graduate School](#)

The Graduate School is in McKelvie Hall on Rosedale Avenue. Students can access information on the [new student section](#). The telephone number is 610-436-2943 and the hours are Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

[Graduate Student Association \(GSA\)](#)

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is a student governing body for graduate students that promotes the well-being of graduate students through education, professional and social events at West Chester University and advocates for their needs.

[Francis Harvey Green Library](#)

The FHG Library offers the graduate student an excellent environment for study and research. Among the many services are references, computerized on-line literature searching, *and free* interlibrary loan for graduate students, and photoduplication. Use of the library is enhanced by:

- WCU's on-line card catalog - PILOT
- a computerized network of indexes and abstracts on CD-ROM
- Internet periodical indexes (Search Bank, etc.)

The library has day, evening, and weekend hours of operation. The circulation desk telephone number is 610-436-2946. **A current ID must be presented to check out material and to access indexes from home on-line.**

The Academic Computing Center (ACC)

The ACC is in Anderson Hall, North Campus on Church Street. The ACC is connected to the WCU - Local Area Network (LAN) which allows access to different types of software and services including:

The ACC provides a central location in which the majority of academic computing resources are located. Students and faculty use the ACC for academic research, Internet access, statistical processing, word processing, and numerous other academic purposes.

At the present time the facility houses more than 230 PCs. The PCs are connected to the University Local Area Network (LAN), and the Internet. During the fall and spring semesters, the ACC is open Mondays-Thursday, 8am to 11 pm; Fridays, 8am to 5 pm; Saturdays, noon to 5pm and Sundays, 4pm to 11 pm. For the latest information on ACC hours visit our website. <http://www.wcupa.edu/infoservices/clientServices/itHelpDesk/> Student assistants and full-time staff members are available to provide consultation with clients when necessary.

Student ID Cards

To borrow books from the library, graduate students must present their WCU ID (identification) card. An ID card can be purchased for a fee at the SSI Office, Sykes Union Building. (For further information on the cost and hours for pictures, contact SSI at 610-436-2955).

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing

The Honor Society of the Department of Nursing, West Chester University, was established in the spring of 1985. The first induction for the society was held on March 24, 1985. On April 17, 1994, the Honor Society was chartered as Xi Delta Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing in a ceremony conducted by Elizabeth Carnegie, DPA, RN, FAAN, member of the Board of Directors of Sigma Theta Tau. The purposes of this society are to recognize superior achievement, recognize the development of leadership qualities, foster high professional standards, encourage creative work, and strengthen commitment to the ideals and purposes of the profession.

Each fall, Xi Delta Chapter hosts an induction ceremony to honor new members. Membership is open to undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the nursing program who have demonstrated superior scholastic achievement and potential for community leadership as well as to community nurse leaders. Undergraduate candidates must have achieved a grade average of at least 3.25 and be in the top one-third of their class; graduate students are eligible if they have achieved a grade-point average significantly higher than the minimum requirement for graduation. This should be at least a 3.5 on a 4.0 scale. Community leaders must have a minimum of a baccalaureate degree and have demonstrated marked achievement in nursing education, practice, research or publication.

Mary Kline Lecture Series and Professional Day

An annual campus-wide lecture series has been established by the Department of Nursing to honor Mary L. Kline, a distinguished member of the nursing faculty who retired in 1983 after fourteen years of dedicated teaching and service to the university. These lectures are held annually in the fall semester.

Student Representation on Department and Campus-Wide Committees

Students are invited to serve as student representatives on department committees, such as the Student Affairs, Faculty Affairs, and Curriculum committees. Campus-wide service is possible by serving as a student representative on one of several committees on campus, such as CAPC, Space Allocation and Library, Sykes Union Advisory Committee, etc. Interested students may get information from a faculty member or from the Graduate Student Association.

Graduate Research Day

Research Day is the only WCU-wide event that provides a venue for faculty and students to present, discuss, and demonstrate research and scholarship in all disciplines. It also serves as a valuable forum for researchers to practice their presentations for upcoming regional and national conferences.

Graduation Celebration

Graduate students typically hold a graduation celebration in May or December each year to recognize their accomplishments. Students plan this event, and it is held at a private home or a restaurant.

Graduate Pins

After having successfully completed the MSN, graduate students have the option of purchasing a pin representing graduation from the West Chester University Department of Nursing. More information about the pins is available from the Graduate Program Coordinator.

West Chester University of Pennsylvania School Nurse Certificate Program

The School Nurse Certification program is a 14 credit, post-baccalaureate program that prepares nursing students for initial Pennsylvania Department of Education certification as an Educational Specialist I – School Nurse. Required courses for this certification program are NSG 502, 512, 533 and EDA 542.

The strategic directions of West Chester University are aligned with service to the community. This program supports the need of Registered Nurses to receive specialized education directly related to the care of the school aged child and school community.

This program offers the resource of training school nurses during a time in our country where training of staff in schools has never been so important. Additionally, this program provides a service to our community by offering a local, cost effective, education in keeping our schools a healthy and safe place for members of the community, thus enhancing the relationship our community has with the university.

School nursing is a specialized practice of professional nursing that advances the well-being, academic success and life-long achievement and health of students. School nurses must facilitate positive student responses to normal development; promote health and safety including a healthy environment; intervene with actual and potential health problems; provide case management services; and actively collaborate with others to build student and family capacity for adaptation, self-management, self-advocacy, and learning (NASN, 2010). With this understanding, specialty training is required to provide the school nurse with the necessary ability to be successful in this area of nursing.

Washington, D.C., January 24, 2013 – Health in Mind, a new report from Healthy Schools Campaign (HSC) and Trust for America’s Health (TFAH), details immediate solutions that can help close the achievement gap and create a healthy future for all children. American children are struggling academically, and the nation faces a growing achievement gap that is increasingly tied to health disparities—today’s children could become the first generation to live shorter and less healthy lives than their parents, notes the report.

“We’ve never met a parent, teacher or school leader who didn’t recognize that healthy students are better prepared to learn,” said Rochelle Davis, President and CEO of HSC, a national advocacy organization that focuses much of its work on improving the food and fitness environment in Chicago schools. “But the truth is that vast health disparities exist in our nation and far too many children attend school in environments that do not support their health. Unless we address these challenges, our efforts to close the achievement gap will be compromised. The consequences are enormous for children’s learning and for their lifetime health.” “We are beginning to see an important shift in the way the nation addresses health and wellness,” said Jeffrey Levi, PhD, executive director of TFAH. “We know that health and education are inextricably linked; with that knowledge, we must shift how we approach both wellness and the school day,” said Dr. Gail Christopher, vice president for program strategy at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Competencies for completion of this program include:

Identification of the role of the school nurse

The school nurse's role as health educator

Understanding of student health and education plans as authored in IEPs

School nurse role in emergency management, and crisis response

Understanding legal issues related to practice

Understanding federal laws protecting children and youth with disabilities

Demonstrating competency of growth and development and cultural competence of toddler thru adolescence

This program supports students in the undergraduate programs who desire to continue with a certification as a part of the professional goals. Additionally, the school nurse program provides an entryway for the school nurse to complete their education in certification and continue on in their schooling by filtering into our Master's program.

In the department of nursing, "we are seeking views that encompass respect for difference, eagerness to learn, and a willingness to accept that there are many ways of viewing the world."

Author: Brenda Rodriguez, Compiled from "What is Cultural Competence? Fall/Winter 1995-1996 issue of the Family Resource Coalition's Report. The program objectives for this certification assist in providing a variation in learning for our students and will also assist in bringing a different learner into the department.

**West Chester University
Department of Nursing
Post Baccalaureate School Nurse Certification
Chapter 49 Accommodations and Adaptations**

School Nurse Specialist Certification – West Chester University

The Pennsylvania Department of Education requires all programs to show evidence of meeting the expectations that are outlined in Chapter 49 Accommodations and Adaptations Plan. The plan for the WCU School Nurse Certification program to meet Chapter 49 Accommodations & Adaptations requires an explanation of the program. The program requires a BSN from an accredited program for admission. WCU has a BSN program – a traditional 4 year program, an Advance 2 BSN: Second Degree Accelerated BSN, and a RN to BSN program

The Accommodation plan is a detailed grid of all requirements as outlined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). The last column of the grid identifies where (what component of education) and how the student will receive these requirements. It is noted that the student will receive these regulations either from their undergraduate program (as noted in the Baccalaureate Essentials or in undergraduate course work) and the proposed courses they receive in the School Nurse Certification Program. The Baccalaureate Essentials is a document provided to programs of nursing that serves as a framework for building nursing curriculum. Therefore, if the student who applies to the School Nurse certificate program is a graduate of an accredited nursing program then it can be assumed that this program has achieved the requirements set forth in the essentials.

This Accommodation Plan was written to describe what courses would be taken at WCU to meet the competency requirements for the School Nurse. The Accommodation Plan was developed with the understanding that when students are admitted into the SN Certification program they carry the previous learned content from their accredited BSN program and have successfully passed the NCLEX exam which provides their RN license to practice. The WCU SN certification program PRAXIS I is the NCLEX successful exam completion. These two documents Essentials and NCLEX blueprint have been submitted to evidence the references in the Chapter 49 plan. Also courses within the BSN have been referred to WCU's generic under BSN program for prerequisite criteria for the SN Certification program.

Courses relevant to the plan in a BSN program include: developmental psychology; abnormal psychology; physical assessment course including a lab component; pediatrics course including didactic and clinical components; community health course with didactic and clinical components; and a psychiatric nursing course with didactic and clinical components (maybe integrated into each nursing course instead of being a separate course).

The design of this plan includes references to this content and clinical experience in a generic fashion by listing "BSN pediatrics course". All BSN programs are accredited by the AACN or National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) which validate that the programs are meeting the required professional standards (ESSENTIALS) and students are passing the NCLEX for licensure. The 'Course-competency' section reflects the WCU School Nurse Certification Program courses only. The table does not reflect the 'prior learning' from BSN courses, such as Pediatrics, Community Health, Health Assessment, Developmental Psychology, Abnormal Psychology, and Psychiatric Nursing.

**West Chester University
Department of Nursing
Post Baccalaureate School Nurse Certification
Program Outline**

The following topics will be addressed throughout the certification curriculum:

- ❖ Role of the School Nurse
- ❖ The school Nurse's Role as Health Educator
- ❖ Student health and Education Plans authored by TBA
- ❖ Emergency Management, Crisis Response, and SN Role
- ❖ Legal Issues Related to School Nursing Practice
- ❖ Federal Laws Protecting Children and Youth with Disabilities
- ❖ Growth and Development: Preschool thru Adolescence
- ❖ Cultural competence in Profession School Nurse Practice
- ❖ Collaboration in Community
- ❖ Health Promotion
- ❖ Children with Chronic Conditions
- ❖ Behavioral Assessment and Management in school

Required texts for this program include:

- ❖ Legal Issues in School Health Services (2005) by Schwab & Gelfman.
- ❖ School Nursing: A Comprehensive Text by Janice Selekman (2012)
- ❖ Jarvis, C. (2012). Physical Examination & Health Assessment. 6th Ed. Saunders Elsevier. St. Louis, MO.

In addition, Chapter 49 Accommodations & Adaptations for School Nurse Specialist are addressed in this proposal – West Chester University was developed to provide a more clear view of BSN courses and the courses in the WCU School Nurse Certification Program. All of the required competencies for the School Nurse Specialist have been met by the courses and clinical experiences on the matrix which are reflected in Appendix A.

**West Chester University
Department of Nursing
School Nurse Certification Program
Student Sequence and Advisement Form**

Student Name: _____ ID # _____
 Email Address: _____ Phone #: _____
 Date Admitted to SNC Program: _____ BSN Program: _____
 Year Completed: _____ Cumulative GPA: _____
 School District choice for clinical practicum: NSG 502 _____

Requirements for Pennsylvania School Nurse Certification. Requirements for ALL candidates seeking Certification as an School Nurse

Pre-req & Required Courses; Chapter 49.13 Requirements	When	BSN Course Desc. For Equivalent	Registered/ Completed/ Transferred	Grade
*Eng. Comp: WRT 120 or 200 (3 credits)	Prior to acceptance			
*Eng. Lit (3 credits)	Prior to acceptance			
*Mat 121 Statistics Or its equivalent (3 credits)	Prior to acceptance			
WCU core courses NSG 311; 312; 411; & 412 or its equivalent. Student must have graduated from an accredited BSN program	Prior to acceptance			
**Evidence of course completion in undergraduate program that addresses Transcultural Care	Prior to acceptance			
**Evidence of course completion in undergraduate program that addresses Care of the Individual with a Disability	Prior to acceptance			
*Praxis I: NCLEX BLS certification	Prior to acceptance			
NSG 533: Health Assessment	Prior to acceptance			
NSG 512: Legal Mandates	Prior to program completion			
EDA 542: Foundations of Spec ED	Prior to program completion			
NSG 502: School Nurse Practicum	Prior to program completion			

* All determinations are subject to final approval by the Department of Nursing.

Courses may be completed at the undergraduate or graduate level. Courses must be completed in order to qualify for certification as a school nurse. Candidates who satisfy course work at another institution must provide official transcripts to the Department of Nursing prior to qualifying for certification. **If you believe that items on your current transcript meet the 49.13 requirements indicated, please bring the courses in question to the

attention of the Department of Nursing upon submission.

WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

Department of Nursing

Letter of Agreement

Course:

Preceptor:

I understand that:

1. The student will participate in activities at my agency to fulfill course requirements and stated individual objectives;
2. I will receive a copy of the appropriate educational information, including course objectives;
3. WCU graduate faculty member will be available to provide direction for the student and collaboration with me and will make a site visit if indicated;
4. The student will respect the confidential nature of my agency's records and will comply with agency regulations and policies;
5. The student's record at WCU will contain copies of current RN licensure, evidence of liability insurance coverage, and health exam report

Preceptor: _____ Date: _____
Preceptor Title & Contact Information

WCU Faculty Member: _____ Date _____
West Chester University Faculty Member & Contact Information.