

**RN-BSN
STUDENT HANDBOOK
Academic Year
2021**

**DEPARTMENT
OF
NURSING**



**West Chester University
West Chester, Pennsylvania 19383**

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Dear Student,

Welcome to the RN-BSN Program at West Chester University! We hope that you will find your experience here to be pleasant, challenging, and an overall rewarding experience.

This handbook is intended to serve as a Nursing Department Handbook in conjunction with the current West Chester University Undergraduate Catalog and other university publications. This handbook has been prepared for students and provides program guidance in addition to useful Nursing Department and RN-BSN Program information. Students are strongly encouraged to refer to this handbook throughout your academic career at WCU. Students will find it helpful in planning their academic careers and will provide answers or insight into frequently asked questions.

Please note that the material in this handbook is subject to change as University and/or department policies may be revised on a yearly basis. Department advisors will keep you informed about department and undergraduate policy changes. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to remain informed, complete all requirements, participate in advising sessions, conform to policies and meet all required deadlines. Consultation with the assigned faculty advisor will assist students and prevent any delays in academic progression.

Our RN-BSN faculty 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.

Sincerely,

Dr. Julie McCulloh Nair PhD, RN, APHN-BC, CCRE
Associate Professor
Director - RN-BSN Program

General Information

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The RN to BSN curriculum is designed for those that currently hold an active RN license, in addition to students enrolled in a concurrent RN-BSN program with one of our Community College partners. We refer to students with an active RN license as *Traditional Students* and those enrolled in the concurrent program as *Concurrent Students*. Both programs allow students to earn the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. The program was developed with working nurses in mind and is offered in an online format that allows our students to balance home, work, and school responsibilities.

The RN to BSN program at WCU is customized for each student based on their prior college level course work and is rooted in the AACN's baccalaureate essentials. Students can earn a baccalaureate degree in as little as two semesters. This is dependent upon the amount of credits a student transfers to WCU.

Because everyone comes to the program with a different number and variety of credits from various institutions, the courses students are required to complete at WCU will vary for each student.

The RN-BSN program is designed to meet the needs of new registered nurses, in addition to those who are returning to school to complete their BSN degree. All courses within the RN-BSN program are completed online with some being offered during the summer session. Core nursing coursework is not offered during the winter session.

Program Delivery Options

The WCU RN-BSN program is delivered completely online to all students. Additional resources are available at our Main and Philadelphia Campuses.

Courses run over 7 weeks, except for NSG 313 which runs over 10 weeks.

Students must complete 120 credits to graduate, and 30 credits must be completed at WCU to meet residency requirements. Of those thirty credits, twenty-four (24) are from the required **nursing courses**. The nursing course work can be completed in 12 months (fall, spring summer) as a full-time student. If the student has a prior bachelor's degree, the coursework can be completed in two semesters (fall, spring) if attending full time. Part time enrollment is a popular option. Students have the ability to select which type of enrollment best suits their needs.

Students must also complete **General Education requirements** to meet the university graduation requirements. Most often, general education courses assist students to meet the credit requirements for graduation and some may be transferred into the university. **The Diversity "J" course requirement will not transfer and must be completed at WCU.**

Additional credits from other **accredited** institutions may transfer. Currently, WCU does not charge for transfer of credits or have a limit on the age of transferred courses. The Department of Nursing has articulation agreements with several Pennsylvania Community Colleges, which facilitates the transfer of credits and eases the admission process.

Academic passports are currently available for students who transfer from The Community College of Philadelphia and Delaware County Community College to help with the transition into WCU's RN-BSN program. Those with an Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S) are eligible.

- Community College of Philadelphia (Effective Fall 2018)
- Delaware County Community College (Effective Fall 2019)

Students with an A.A.S will automatically have satisfied the first 45 credits of WCU's new general education requirements. This includes First Year Experience, English Composition, Mathematics, Science, Humanities, Behavioral/Social Science, Speaking Emphasis, Ethics Requirement, Arts, and Interdisciplinary. **The Diverse Communities and Writing Emphasis requirements are not included; students are required to complete them at West Chester University.** The Writing Emphasis and Ethics credits required for graduation are included in the RN-BSN program so students do not need to complete additional credits to meet this requirement. Students must also complete any prerequisites and/or related major requirements. Please refer to the [Academic Passport section in the Undergraduate Catalog](#) for more information.

Prior Bachelor's Degree – If a student has earned a prior bachelor's degree, general education requirements are satisfied. However, students must complete any prerequisites and/or related major requirements. **Prior degree students do not need to complete 120 credits to graduate.**

UNIVERSITY AND NURSING DEPARTMENT POLICIES

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

ACADEMIC & PERSONAL INTEGRITY

It is the responsibility of each student to adhere to the university's standards for academic integrity. Violations of academic integrity include any act that violates the rights of another student in academic work, that involves misrepresentation of your own work, or that disrupts the instruction of the course. Other violations include (but are not limited to): cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing, which means copying any part of another's work and/or using ideas of another and presenting them as one's own without giving proper credit to the source; selling, purchasing, or exchanging of term papers; falsifying of information; and using your own work from one class to fulfill the assignment for another class without significant modification. Proof of academic misconduct can result in the automatic failure and removal from this course. For questions regarding Academic Integrity, the No-Grade Policy, Sexual Harassment, or the Student Code of Conduct, students are encouraged to refer to the Undergraduate Catalog, the *Ram's Eye View*, and the University website at www.wcupa.edu.

UNIVERSITY PROBATION AND DISMISSAL POLICY

Maintenance of Academic Standards: Probation and Dismissal

A student's scholastic standing at the University is indicated by his or her cumulative Grade point average (GPA). Three categories of academic standing have been established: Good Academic Standing, Probation, and Dismissal. A student remains in good academic standing as long as he or she maintains a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.00 for all work taken at the University. Probation and dismissal are actions taken by the University when a student's GPA falls below an acceptable level at the end of the fall or spring term. No student will go on or come off academic probation, or be dismissed from the University for academic reasons, at the end of the summer term. See http://www.wcupa.edu/admin/associateprovost/policies_procedures.html for complete policy.

PLUS/MINUS GRADING

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>QUALITY POINTS</u>	<u>% EQUIVALENTS</u>
A	4.00	93-100
A-	3.67	90-92
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.00	83-86
B-	2.67	80-82
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.00	73-76
C-	1.67	70-72
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.00	63-66
D-	0.67	60-62
F	0.00	59 or lower

For more detailed information on this policy and grades of NG, W, and AU please check the university *Undergraduate Catalog*.

University Repeat Policy: Students may repeat undergraduate college-level courses to improve a grade of F, D, C, or B (not A).

1. No student may use the repeat option more than five times TOTAL. For example, this means repeating five DIFFERENT courses once each, or repeating each of two different courses twice (four repeats) and one additional course once.
2. A single course may not be repeated more than twice.
3. Replacement for the grade in the first attempt occurs automatically at the completion of the second attempt of a repeated course. This constitutes one of the five available repeats.
4. A grade replacement will only take place on the second attempt of a course.

5. When a student completes a third attempt of a course, the grades for the second and third attempts will be used to calculate the cumulative grade point average.

Undergraduate students who *take* and *complete* a course at West Chester may not repeat the course at another institution and have the credits or grade count towards a West Chester degree.

Undergraduates who take a course for graduate credit are subject to the graduate repeat policy. See the Graduate Catalog for information.

Because all students must take and pass both WRT 120 and WRT 200 to graduate, a student who fails either of these courses after three attempts will be dismissed immediately following the third failure, regardless of GPA.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability that requires accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), please present your letter of accommodations and meet with me as soon as possible so that I can support your success in an informed manner. Accommodations cannot be granted retroactively. If you would like to know more about West Chester University's Services for Students with Disabilities (OSSD), please visit them at 223 Lawrence Center. The OSSD hours of Operation are Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Their phone number is 610-436-2564, their fax number is 610-436-2600, their email address is ossd@wcupa.edu, and their website is at www.wcupa.edu/ussss/ossd.

EXCUSED ABSENCES POLICY

Students are advised to carefully read and comply with the excused absences policy, including absences for university-sanctioned events, contained in the WCU Undergraduate Catalog. In particular, please note that the **“responsibility for meeting academic requirements rests with the student,”** that this policy does not excuse students from completing required academic work, and that professors can require a “fair alternative” to attendance on those days that students must be absent from class in order to participate in a University-Sanctioned Event. The policy can be found via this link [Excused Absence Policy](#).

REPORTING INCIDENTS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

West Chester University and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. In order to meet this commitment and to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, the University requires faculty members to report incidents of sexual violence shared by students to the University's Title IX Coordinator, Ms. Lynn Klingensmith. The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when incidents of sexual violence are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a University-approved research project. Faculty members are obligated to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred to the person designated in the University protection of minors policy. Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual violence is set forth at the webpage for the Office of Social Equity at <http://www.wcupa.edu/admin/social.equity/>.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

All students are encouraged to sign up for the University's free WCU ALERT service, which delivers official WCU emergency text messages directly to your cell phone. For more information, visit www.wcupa.edu/wcualert. To report an emergency, call the Department of Public Safety at 610-436-3311.

ELECTRONIC MAIL POLICY

It is expected that faculty, staff, and students activate and maintain regular access to University provided e-mail accounts. Official university communications, including those from your instructor, will be sent through your university e-mail account. You are responsible for accessing that mail to be sure to obtain official University communications. Failure to access will not exempt individuals from the responsibilities associated with this course.

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

ADMISSION CRITERIA

Students must earn a cumulative GPA of 2.75 or above to be admitted to the RN-BSN program. Students must have an ADN or Nursing Diploma from an accredited school and be a licensed Registered Nurse. Students applying to the concurrent program must also be in good academic standing in their ADN program to apply to the RN to BSN concurrent program.

ADMISSION PROCESS FOR RN TO BSN PROGRAM

1. Student applies to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions as a transfer student selecting the appropriate major (BSN: RN, BSN: RN – Phila or BSN: RN concurrent) on the application. Applicants must also send official transcripts of all college level work attempted to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. **DO NOT SEND OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF NURSING.**
2. If an applicant is offered admission, the applicant will receive an official letter of acceptance from the WCU Office of Admissions and will be required to remit the tuition deposit. For students with financial constraints, the student may request the Office of Admissions to roll the deposit into the following semester bill.
3. Official transfer equivalency analysis for each applicant is completed by the WCU Office of the Registrar. Students will also receive a Transfer Credit Summary and should carefully review this for accuracy. If transfer credits are not awarded as the student expects, the student may appeal this decision using the Transfer Credit Appeal process as outlined in the Undergraduate Catalog.
4. All traditional RN-BSN students are required to be licensed by the start date of their first nursing class. Nursing students must provide a copy of their RN license following acceptance into the program. Accommodations may be made for students with late NCLEX test dates. **Concurrent RN-BSN students** are not required to be licensed by the start date of their first nursing class, but **must be licensed prior to enrolling in their final nursing course at WCU.**

5. New admissions will be screened by the Department of Nursing to ensure they meet program pre-requisite requirements and **if applicable** to ensure they are a licensed Registered Nurse. An initial advising sheet will be sent to all newly admitted students by the Program Counselor once they are matriculated into the university and a Degree Progress Report has been generated.
6. It is the **traditional RN-BSN student's** responsibility to review the following for accuracy: Initial Advising Sheet, Transfer Credit Report and Degree Progress Report. Student records will be reviewed again prior to the start of the semester to ensure any incomplete pre-requisite courses are complete and each student holds an active RN license.
7. Concurrent nursing students will work with the Program Counselor to determine their degree requirements throughout the RN-BSN program. Degree Progress Reports will not contain the academic passport until the student has graduated from DCCC. Once a transcript is sent to WCU that includes degree conferral, the academic passport will be posted to the student's Degree Progress Report.
8. The Program Director and Program Counselor reserve the right to drop students from their semester coursework for non-completion of all pre-requisite courses and failure to obtain an active RN license *if required* prior to the start of the nursing coursework.
9. WCU's Department of Nursing is unable to accept students who have achieved their Associate's Degree in Nursing from a correspondence school.

TRANSFER CREDITS

Evaluation of transfer credits is done by our Transfer Credit Analysts in the Registrar's Office. According to WCU University policy, a minimum of thirty (30) credits must be taken at West Chester University to achieve a degree at WCU by meeting residency requirements. This requirement is waived for those with a prior bachelor's degree.

FINANCIAL AID

All requests for scholarships, loans, and employment opportunities should be made to the Director of Financial Aid at 25 University Avenue, West Chester University. Loan and scholarship information is available through the office of Financial Aid and a description of the financial aid programs available at West Chester University may be found in the Undergraduate catalog and the Ram's Eye View.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year scholarship applications are available through the nursing department. The amount offered is based on available funds from private donors and nursing education grants provided by various organizations. When applications open, an announcement is made to all RN-BSN students via D2L and advisors.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENT

The Department of Nursing waived the physical requirement for the RN-BSN student who does not complete traditional clinical experiences.

DRESS CODE

The faculty believes that the appearance of a nurse is important. RN-BSN students are expected to comply with individual institution policies regarding dress code. If not specified by institution, students should wear appropriate “business casual” for university sanctioned functions.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Nursing faculty utilize Turnitin software to generate originality scores in most assignments. Students are expected to use this software when required and faculty will provide instructions for uploading assignments in D2L (WCU’s online learning platform). If a student generates a high Turnitin percentage (<25%), faculty will follow the university academic policy.

ATTENDANCE:

Each faculty member is required to take attendance throughout the session, so the university remains in compliance with Federal financial aid regulations. Faculty will consider a student present (in-attendance) if they complete the required self-introduction and participate in the first Discussion Board of the course. To be considered present (in-attendance) for subsequent attendance reporting, the student must remain actively engaged in the course (i.e. continue posting to the discussion board each week/module, turn in assignment, completing quizzes/exams, etc.).

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

Students are expected to be active every week in their courses and all assignments must be submitted by the published deadlines unless previously discussed with the professor. The following point reductions will be applied to all late assignments.

Late assignments (papers, presentations, group work) will be penalized 3% per day late up to seven days. After seven days, the assignment will receive a zero.

Exam Make-up Policy: Students must coordinate with the faculty at least one week prior to a scheduled exam to request alternate arrangements. All quizzes and exams not submitted by the due date will receive a zero.

Discussion grades in each course will total 25 points for each week/module. All discussion board/D2L assignments must be submitted by the week/module close date, otherwise a zero will be given for those assignments.

- No posts completed by the end of the week/module – students earn a 0 for the Discussion Grade.
- Late initial post - 10% per day deducted from the Discussion Grade.
- Non-completion of peer responses - students will earn a 0 for that portion of the Discussion Grade.
- Non-completion of one peer response - 10% deducted from that portion of the Discussion Grade.

In the event of an emergency that prevents timely submission of an assignment, students may ask their instructor to waive the late submission policy. The instructor will review the student's rationale for the request and make a determination based on the merits of the student's appeal.

Consideration of the student's total course performance to date will be a contributing factor in the determination. Students should continue to attend class, actively participate, and complete other assignments while the decision is under consideration. Emergencies will be handled on a case-by-case basis and university absence/attendance policies will be applied (see university policies above).

Good time management is a critical skill for success both in school and in life. Should you encounter an unanticipated and uncontrollable life event that may prevent you from meeting an assignment deadline, contact the Instructor immediately.

Examples of unanticipated and uncontrollable life events include a health crisis for you or an immediate family member for whom you are a caregiver; extended and extraordinarily severe weather events that disrupt communications; or being called to military duty. Poor time management, other work commitments, vacations, a wedding, not reading or following the Course Syllabus, or failure to obtain the appropriate books or computer equipment are not events that warrant special consideration or a waiver of the late assignment policy.

A preplanned absence is one that students know about in advance, regardless of the reason. For a preplanned absence, students are to make arrangements with the instructor at least one week in advance of the absence and may be advised to work ahead and submit the assignment/s earlier so as not to fall behind. If the instructor provides an alternative due date, the student is obligated to meet the deadline provided or the late policy will apply.

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

A digital citizen is someone who frequently uses online platforms to engage in a variety of activities such as health related activities, education, finances, socialization, etc. In the 21st century, it is imperative to understand the concepts of digital citizenship and their responsibility this holds for media and online platform users. Students enrolled in online programs are asked to engage in digital formats that may require the use of a singular digital source or multiple sources that include wiki pages, Facebook, Linked-in, Twitter, Zoom, etc. How students communicate and interact in these spaces matters, and one is expected to communicate with others in a respectful manner. This means no cyber bullying, sharing of private information, which includes stories or experiences shared by students in discussion board posts or other assignments. Any information posted by the instructor or students in the online classroom is not to be distributed outside of the online classroom and should only be used for individual learning purposes. Similarly, students should not share patient data in a manner that violates HIPPA regulations, nor should they violate copyright laws by posting or duplicating licensed or protected forms of information (pictures, data, music, articles). Faculty will research the accessibility policies, privacy policies, and support site information for all social media tools that they ask students to use within their courses, making them available to each student.

NETIQUETTE

- Follow the rules of good grammar, punctuation, and word choice for all written responses.
- Show consideration and respect for diverse points of view.
- Respond to individuals professionally; never write anything that you would not want others to see.

- Avoid using vulgar language.
- Avoid using flaming language - be insightful, not incite-ful.
- Make meaningful contributions to discussions; do more than just ask questions. Offer opinions and answers using facts to back your findings.
- Do not type in all capitals; it may be perceived as shouting.
- When sending emails, use your WCU account, use the course number in the title, (Example: 334- assignment question), be sure to address the recipient, and identify yourself.

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN NURSING

The use of social media and other electronic communication is increasing with growing numbers of social media outlets, platforms, and applications, including blogs, social networking sites, video sites, and online chat rooms and forums. Nurses often use electronic media both personally and professionally. Instances of inappropriate use of electronic media by nurses have been reported to boards of nursing and, in some cases, reported in nursing literature and the media.

Federal law reinforces and further defines privacy through the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). HIPAA regulations are intended to protect patient privacy by defining individually identifiable information and establishing how this information may be used, by whom and under what circumstances.

Potential consequences for inappropriate use of social and electronic media by a nurse are varied. The potential consequences will depend, in part, on the particular nature of the nurse's conduct.

Board of Nursing Implications

Instances of inappropriate use of social and electronic media may be reported to the Board of Nursing. The laws outlining the basis for disciplinary action by a Board of Nursing vary between jurisdictions. Depending on the laws of a jurisdiction, a Board of Nursing may investigate reports of inappropriate disclosures on social media by a nurse on the grounds of: unprofessional conduct; unethical conduct; moral turpitude; mismanagement of patient records; revealing a privileged communication; and breach of confidentiality.

If the allegations are found to be true, the licensed nurse may face disciplinary action by the Board of Nursing, including a reprimand or sanction, assessment of a monetary fine, or temporary or permanent loss of licensure. (National Council on State Boards of Nursing (August, 2011). *White Paper: A Nurse's Guide to Social Media*)

The entire White Paper can be found on the National Council's website www.ncsbn.org

**Students are held to the same standards stated above and may face dismissal from the program if found to be using social media in an inappropriate manner.*

RN-BSN COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Course Descriptions

**All course offerings are subject to Dean's Office approval and cancellation due to insufficient enrollment.*

NSG 330 Professional Nursing Communication Strategies

2 credits, offered fully online in 7 weeks

The course is designed for the RN-BSN student to foster beginning skills in scholarly inquiry, scientific writing, and professional communication strategies. Information science and

teamwork will be explored in the context of professional nursing. The content of this course serves as a foundation for student success in subsequent coursework and must be taken upon admission to the program. This course may be taken concurrently with other nursing or general education coursework.

NSG 313 Applied Nursing Research

*3 credits, offered fully online in 10 weeks *MAT 121/125 is a pre-requisite to this course.*

This course is designed to introduce the topic of evidence-based practice, which is the integration of existing scientific evidence, clinical judgment, patient preferences, and available resources as it is used in clinical decision making. The main focus of this course is on the iterative process of identifying clinical questions; searching, appraising, and synthesizing relevant evidence; planning and implementing practice changes; evaluating outcomes; and identifying potential areas for further improvement. Processes for leading and managing change, identifying organizational readiness for education related to evidence-based practice, and ethical issues are also explored.

NSG 332 Ethics and Health Policy in Nursing

3 credits, offered fully online in 7 weeks

This course is designed to explore the role of ethics in healthcare and public policy. Common ethical problems are discussed and strategies for resolution of ethical dilemmas are applied. This course will address such topics as end-of-life care, living wills and advanced directives, social networking and media in Nursing, research with vulnerable populations and genomics. Focus is placed on values clarification, ethical theory, ethical decision making models, and professional ethical standards. Emphasis is on ethical obligations of professional nurses in their roles as citizens, members of a profession, providers of care, and facilitators of public health policy. *This is an approved Writing Emphasis and Ethics designated course.*

NSG 334 Population and Environmental Health Nursing

*3 credits, offered fully online in 7 weeks - *Must be taken concurrently with NSG 335*

This course will allow students to explore and gain knowledge about the role of the community/public health nurse caring for individuals, families, communities, and populations. Emphasis is placed on health promotion and disease/injury prevention within vulnerable and at-risk populations. Students will be introduced to environmental health and emergency and disaster planning and response systems. Social determinants of health (SDoH) including (neighborhood, economic stability, access to education and healthcare, cultural context) will be analyzed using various evidence based and organizational resources. Entry-level competencies for public health nursing will be gained through course assignments.

NSG 335 Population and Environmental Health Nursing Practicum

*2 credits, offered fully online in 7 weeks - * Must be taken concurrently with NSG 334*

This experiential learning experience will allow students to apply their knowledge of the role of the community/public health nurse when caring for individuals, families, communities, and populations. Students will complete the assessment, design, implementation, and evaluation of a potential population-based intervention that promotes the health of a selected community. Emphasis is placed on health promotion and disease/injury prevention of at-risk populations. Students will be introduced to vulnerable and medically under-served populations while completing their community nurse project. Entry-level competencies for public health nursing will be gained through course assignments.

NSG 430 Physical and Health Assessments of Diverse Populations Across the Lifespan

3 credits, offered fully online in 7 weeks

In this course, students will build a foundation of knowledge and learn concepts and principles underlying assessment of the health status of individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds with emphasis placed on interviewing skills, health histories, and the physical and psychosocial findings in the well person across the lifespan. Students will focus on completing a holistic health and physical assessment by obtaining health histories, performing physical and psychosocial assessments, and formulating initial nursing plans using the nursing process with virtual patients.

NSG 432 Health Information, Technology, and Quality Improvement

3 credits, offered fully online in 7 weeks

This course is designed to introduce the nursing student to informatics tools that are currently being utilized in healthcare to ensure safe and quality care. Electronic Health Records (EHR), telehealth, personal reference management software, Evidence-Based Practice (EBP), and HIPAA will be emphasized.

NSG 434 Nursing Leadership & Management in Today's Healthcare Environment

*3 credits, offered fully online in 7 weeks - *Must be taken concurrently with NSG 435*

This course prepares the BSN nurse for the challenges of nursing leadership and management with a concentration on issues that currently impact the healthcare environment. BSN students are prepared to apply management theories, organizational behavior theories, and leadership styles that are relevant to the practice of nursing management. BSN students complete the course with leadership skills in maintaining best practices and standards of care as well as the ability to appropriately interact with the healthcare team in future work settings.

NSG 435 Nursing Leadership Practicum

*2 credits, offered fully online in 7 weeks - *Must be taken concurrently with NSG 434*

The practicum course has an emphasis on decision-making and advocacy for the bachelor's degree in nursing. Under the guidance of the instructor, students will demonstrate their mastery of leadership theories and styles, approaches, and frameworks.

Progression: Please note that the RN-BSN student must complete each nursing course NSG 313, 330, 332, 334, 335, 430, 432, 434 and 435 with a C (73 or greater) to progress in the RN-BSN Program. If a grade of a C- or lower (72 or lower) is achieved in a nursing course, the student will be required to repeat that course. If the student achieves a C- or below in a course designated as a concurrent course (334/335 and 434/435) the student will be required to repeat both courses.

OTHER COURSES

If the student does not have an Academic Passport or Prior Bachelor's degree, WCU general education requirements will apply. Those requirements will be outlined on the students' Degree Progress Report and may include art, humanities, interdisciplinary and diversity courses.

The Interdisciplinary course is also referred to as an "I" course. If required, this can be taken at any point in your academic career at WCU and there are many interesting selections in this category. I courses do occasionally transfer into WCU. Reminder - this course is not required for those with an academic passport or prior bachelor's degree.

The Diverse Communities requirement is also referred to as a "J" course. Again, there is a wide variety of courses available to assist students to meet this requirement. **Diversity Courses DO NOT transfer into WCU and must be taken at WCU.** This course is required for all RN-BSN students with the exception of those with a prior bachelor's degree.

Electives

The number of electives (both nursing and general) you will need to take will depend on the number and distribution of transfer credits. Remember you must achieve a minimum of 120 credits to achieve a BSN, in addition to meeting all of WCU's General Education requirements. Students may utilize CLEP exams to earn additional credits, BUT they may not be counted towards the 30 credit residency rule. When students need to complete 12 or more credits to satisfy their 120 credit requirement for graduation, they are highly encouraged to consider completing a minor (18 credits). There are several minors that complement the RN profession and include: Public Health, Nutrition, Psychology, Sociology, Biology and Business. Another option available is graduate level coursework that can be completed for undergraduate credits. Review the Course Catalog, specifically the course policy for [Graduate Credit](#) and discuss with your advisor.

Sample Curriculum Maps

Sample: RN-BSN Concurrent Student Curriculum Map		
Semester	Delaware County Community College	West Chester University
Fall I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NUS 110 ✓ PSY 210 ✓ BIO 151 <p style="text-align: right;">Credits: 8-15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 330 ✓ Diverse Communities (J) (Depending on DCCC credit load, MUST be taken at WCU) <p>*Prior BA students do not need (J) course Credits: 5</p>
Spring I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NUS 111 ✓ NUS 221 *may be taken in Summer I ✓ Open Elective <p style="text-align: right;">Credits: 10-16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 432 <p style="text-align: right;">Credits: 3</p>
Summer I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NUS 221 *may be taken in Spring <p style="text-align: right;">Credits: 0-3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 313 *satisfies writing emphasis ✓ NSG 332 *satisfies writing emphasis <p style="text-align: right;">Credits: 6</p>
Fall II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NUS 210 ✓ Communication Elective (COMM 111) <p style="text-align: right;">Credits: 10-13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 334 ✓ NSG 335 <p>(Must be taken concurrently) Credits: 5</p>
Winter I		<i>IF NEEDED: Work on electives to reach 30 credit residency requirement and 120 total credits needed to earn BSN</i>
Spring II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NUS 211 ✓ SOC 110 <p style="text-align: right;">Credits: 10-13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 430 <p style="text-align: right;">Credits: 3</p>
Summer II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ May Graduation from DCCC ✓ Prepare and complete NCLEX ✓ Send final, official DCCC transcript to WCU that shows ADN has been awarded 	<i>IF NEEDED: Work on electives to reach 30 credit residency requirement and 120 total credits needed to earn BSN</i>
Fall III		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 434 ✓ NSG 435 <p>(Must be taken concurrently) Credits: 5</p>
Winter II		<i>IF NEEDED: Work on electives to reach 30 credit residency requirement and 120 total credits needed to earn BSN</i>

- ✓ Upon acceptance into the DCCC Associate of Applied Science in Nursing Program, the student is eligible to apply to the WCU RN to BSN program.
- ✓ Once accepted into the DCCC/WCU concurrent program, students will begin taking Nursing (NSG) coursework at WCU to earn a BSN degree.
- ✓ Concurrent students are expected to follow the semester layout of the concurrent curriculum map, as it is an agreement between DCCC and WCU.
- ✓ Concurrent RN-BSN students must be licensed prior to earning their BSN, and will not be registered for their final Core Nursing course until their RN license is on file with the department.

Sample: Traditional Student Plan of Study		
Semester	Part-time with Academic Passport	Part-time with Prior BA Degree
Fall I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 330 ✓ NSG 432 ✓ Diverse Communities (J) Gen Ed Credits: 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 330 ✓ NSG 432 Credits: 5
Spring I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 313 (MAT 121 is prerequisite) ✓ NSG 334 ✓ NSG 335 (NSG 334/335 must be taken concurrently) Credits: 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 313 (MAT 121 is prerequisite) ✓ NSG 334 ✓ NSG 335 (NSG 334/335 must be taken concurrently) Credits: 8
Summer I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 332 ✓ NSG 430 Credits: 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 332 ✓ NSG 430 Credits: 6
Fall II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 434 ✓ NSG 435 (NSG 434/435 must be taken concurrently) Credits: 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 434 ✓ NSG 435 (NSG 434/435 must be taken concurrently) Credits: 5
Winter I	IF NEEDED: Work on electives to reach 30 credit residency requirement and 120 total credits needed to earn BSN	
Spring II	IF NEEDED: Work on electives to reach 30 credit residency requirement and 120 total credits needed to earn BSN	
Requirements for Academic Passport Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MAT 121 (prerequisite for NSG 313) transferred in or taken at WCU. ✓ Diverse Communities Gen Ed (only gen ed required. MUST be taken at WCU). ✓ Complete 30 WCU residency credits (24 of which are the NSG Core Requirements). ✓ Reach 120 total credits (WCU plus transfer credits). 		Requirements for prior BA students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MAT 121 (prerequisite for NSG 313) transferred in or taken at WCU. ✓ 24 Core NSG credits. <p>*Prior BA students do NOT need 30 WCU residency credits, and do NOT need to reach 120 total credits.</p>

Sample: Traditional Student Plan of Study		
Semester	Full-Time with Academic Passport	Full-time with Prior BA Degree
Fall I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 330 ✓ NSG 313 (prerequisite MAT 121) ✓ NSG 334/335 ✓ Diverse Communities Gen Ed Credits: 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 330 ✓ NSG 313 (prerequisite MAT 121) ✓ NSG 334/335 ✓ NSG 432 Credits: 13
Spring I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 332 ✓ NSG 432 ✓ NSG 434/435 ✓ Elective Credits: 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 332 ✓ NSG 430 ✓ NSG 434/435 Credits: 11
Summer I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSG 430 ✓ Electives to reach 120 credits Credits: at least 3	
Requirements for Academic Passport Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MAT 121 (prerequisite for NSG 313) transferred in or taken at WCU. ✓ Diverse Communities Gen Ed (only gen ed required, MUST be taken at WCU). ✓ Complete 30 WCU residency credits (24 of which are the NSG Core Requirements). ✓ Reach 120 total credits (WCU plus transfer credits). 		Requirements for prior BA students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MAT 121 (prerequisite for NSG 313) transferred in or taken at WCU. ✓ 24 Core NSG credits. <p>*Prior BA students do NOT need 30 WCU residency credits, and do NOT need to reach 120 total credits.</p>

ADVISING

All **traditional RN-BSN students** are assigned to an RN-BSN faculty advisor in the Nursing Department. Students are required to maintain contact with the faculty advisor in order to progress through the program in the appropriate sequence. An advisement sheet will be utilized to facilitate academic progression by outlining graduation requirements each semester. Advising with the assigned faculty advisor **is required** prior to registering for classes each semester. Advisor holds are placed on student accounts to prevent them from registering for classes until advising sessions are complete. Course registration information can be obtained from MyWCU, the undergraduate course catalog or the Registrar's website.

All **concurrent RN-BSN students** will be assigned to an RN-BSN faculty advisor and the Nursing Program Counselor. Students should seek assistance from RN-BSN faculty advisors with academic concerns, mentoring and nursing profession related questions. Advisor holds will be placed on student accounts to prevent them from registering for classes. Students will not have access to self-schedule; therefore students will be scheduled for courses by the Program Counselor each semester. Students are expected to follow the Concurrent Curriculum Map throughout the program. WCU and DCCC courses are scheduled so they complement each other and to ensure students do not complete upper level coursework at WCU before lower level coursework has been completed at DCCC. For example, a student cannot complete the RN-BSN physical assessment course prior to completing the initial physical assessment course at DCCC.

Advising notes:

During winter and summer break, faculty advisors are not contracted to work. All advising questions or concerns should be directed to the Program Counselor or the Program Director.

It is the student's responsibility to:

- remain informed about program requirements and consult program materials that outline the RN-BSN course of study
- verify that transfer credits are posted to the student's Degree Progress Report
- meet each semester with assigned advisor to review academic progression and determine what courses are needed each semester to meet graduation requirements
- apply for graduation the semester prior to the students expected graduation or within the first 2 weeks of the graduation semester.
- **monitor their WCU email for important communications!**

Concurrent students will submit one final transcript after their AAS has been conferred, then review the transfer credit summary to ensure all credits transferred to WCU.

Scheduling is completed via MyWCU. This process occurs early in the semester to ensure students enroll in necessary courses for the next semester. At the beginning of the semester students will receive an advising reminder from their academic advisor via WCU email. Students should also check MyWCU for their scheduling date and time. Course enrollment is completed in MyWCU under my schedule, and descriptions of courses can be found in the WCU undergraduate course catalog.

Do not miss online scheduling appointments. This appointment is NOT an advisor appointment, it is the designated date and time students are given to enroll in coursework for the following semester. If you are not available at the time you have been granted access to schedule, use the planner feature in MyWCU to ensure you enroll on time. Not enrolling on the assigned scheduling date and time can result in the delay of your academic progression and affect your planned graduation date. Nursing and General Education classes fill quickly, so schedule on/or closely to your appointment time to avoid issues with academic progression. Several tutorials are available on the Registrar's homepage that cover how to search for, enroll and drop courses in MyWCU. Click on this link to review: [Registration information](#)

Graduation Clearance Notes

Often, the registrar application does not recognize the unique and different requirements of the RN-BSN Program, hence the notice "Nursing Cognate not met" often found in your degree progress report. You will be cleared for graduation by the RN-BSN Program Director. For questions/concerns, contact your advisor for assistance.

The Registrar's Office will send students a graduation clearance email. Students are required to check their WCU email and respond to the Registrar's Graduation Analyst's requests for information or clarification regarding academic coursework. Students should review the Graduation Analyst's note on their Degree Progress Report once posted and discuss questions/concerns with the Faculty Advisor or Program Counselor.

Students should apply for graduation via the Registrar's office webpage at least one semester prior to your anticipated graduation. If the student's anticipated graduation date changes (which was previously applied for), students must go online to the Registrar's webpage and submit the new graduation date.

Students should discuss any plan to complete coursework at other institutions with their Faculty Advisor or Program Counselor to ensure they do not need to complete the coursework at WCU to satisfy residency requirements. If the student plans to complete courses at another institution, they must **complete a TRANSFER PERMISSION form** (on Registrar's webpage) and submit it to the WCU Registrar's Office **prior** to registering for the course off campus. This form verifies that the course is equivalent to a respective WCU course. Students must also request a transcript from that institution to have the course/credits transferred to WCU. This transcript should be sent to the Registrar's Office after the course is completed and **NOT TO ADMISSIONS**.

Course Equivalencies for most colleges can be found on Registrar's page or in MyWCU. Go into current students/registrar/transfer information/and then select course equivalencies or follow this link <https://www.wcupa.edu/Registrar/forms/transferCredit.aspx>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I have to pass the NCLEX exam before being accepted into the program?

A: Yes, if the student graduated from an ADN or Diploma program they are considered a traditional RN-BSN student. Those enrolled in our traditional RN-BSN program must successfully complete the NCLEX and be licensed before entering nursing coursework. However, they may complete General Education classes without a RN License and accommodations may be made for those with a late NCLEX test date.

No, if the student is enrolled in our concurrent program. Students enrolled in concurrent coursework will become licensed during the course of the program. They must successfully pass NCLEX exam and hold an active RN license to apply to graduate from WCU with a BSN.

Can I manage work and this program?

A: This program was developed with the working nurse in mind. Most of our students work full-time and have the ability to balance work, school, and family responsibilities.

What is the cost?

A: Please review the Admission/Tuition info on WCU's webpage or follow this link for a listing of current tuition and fees. https://www.wcupa.edu/admissions/SCH_ADM/tuition.aspx

How long is the program?

A: This varies among students and is based on prior coursework, and the ability to complete the program on a part-time or full-time basis. Once pre-requisite courses are complete, the core nursing coursework can be completed in three semesters (spring, summer, and fall). Keep in mind, students must complete 120 credits to earn a BSN. For those with a prior bachelor's degree who attend full time, they can complete the program in two semesters (Fall & Spring).

Is the program on-line?

A: YES. The RN-BSN program is 100% online. Some courses require online check-ins with faculty and peers when working on group assignments.

Can I take courses at another school?

A: Yes, but students must complete 30 credits from WCU. Appropriate paperwork must be completed and approved by the WCU Registrar's office prior to taking a course off campus. Writing emphasis and Diversity course requirements **MUST** be completed at WCU.

What credits transfer?

A: Most nursing program coursework and general education requirements will transfer. The registrar will review and determine transfer equivalencies. Additionally, West Chester does not charge for transfer credits. To determine if courses taken at another college are considered equivalent to WCU courses, please visit the Registrar's Office webpage.

Does WCU accept Excelsior/Correspondence Nursing credits?

A: NO, WCU does not accept these nursing credits.

Student Signature Page

I have read the RN-BSN Handbook. I understand the university and department policies. I understand that not following those policies may result in disciplinary actions imposed by the University and/or the Department of Nursing. I understand that it is my responsibility to check WCU email regularly so I do not miss important communications. **I understand that it is *ultimately my responsibility to ensure I* progress in the program and complete all necessary requirements for graduation.**

Name: _____ Date: _____