Master of Science in Nursing

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The Master of Science in Nursing program is fully accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education and offers majors in nursing administration and family nurse practitioner. The curriculum is designed to accommodate the registered nurse graduate student who desires to remain employed. The faculty recognize that each person is a unique individual who is an integral member of many systems. Each of these systems interfaces with other complex and changing systems that create the unique fabric of each individual environment.

Emphasis on the concepts of system, critical thinking, advanced practice and change is integrated throughout the MSN curriculum. As the MSN program prepares the professional nurse for advanced practice, the nurse will think critically and make the best possible decisions for the betterment of the advanced practitioner, the client, the organization, and the overall environmental system. Central to the concepts of system, critical thinking and advanced practice is the continuous and dynamic process of change. The MSN graduate will possess the necessary skills to influence the change process and enhance the quality of healthcare for the betterment of mankind and the overall environmental system.

The purpose of the masters program in nursing is to prepare nurses for leadership positions in a variety of health care settings. Graduates from the MSN program are prepared to:

1. Assume leadership positions in health care settings
2. Contribute to the development of nursing knowledge
3. Ensure the delivery of quality and cost effective patient care
4. Assume responsibility for the therapeutic management of patient care services
5. Function as a member of the interdisciplinary team

Admission Requirements

1. Graduation from an accredited nursing program with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree (BSN).
2. 3.0 undergraduate cumulative average.
3. A total score of 800 on two of the three sections on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE).
4. Successful completion of undergraduate courses in statistics and research, basic knowledge of computers, computer spreadsheets and at least one software program.
5. Three (3) letters of recommendation.

Transfer Credit

Up to six graduate credits (two courses) in nursing may be eligible for transfer credit. Such credit is available only for graduate level nursing courses and only when the quality and comparability of the work meets with the approval of the Graduate Admissions Committee. Transfer credit will not be awarded for courses with grades below a “B.”

MBA courses are evaluated as described in the MBA section of this catalog.

Course Load

Three courses (nine credits) constitute a full-time course load for the graduate student.
Curriculum for the Master of Science in Nursing

Core Courses for all Majors
MSN 500 Nursing Theories
MSN 501 Nursing Research I
MSN 503 Health Care Policy and Politics
MSN 525 Managed Care
MSN 531 Advanced Health Assessment
MSN 533 Health Promotion

Nursing Administration
The Master of Science in Nursing with a major in nursing administration is designed to prepare nurses for leadership and management positions in a variety of health care settings. Through an integration of concepts from nursing, business and management, graduates of the program are prepared to assume leadership positions in health care settings, to contribute to the development of nursing knowledge, to demonstrate responsibility for the management of the nursing organization, and to function as a member of the executive management team.

Curriculum for the Nursing Administration Major
The curriculum has three components. The first component is the nursing core and contains those courses basic to any master of science in nursing program. The second component contains nursing administration courses which are specific to this program. The third component consists of support courses in business. Each course is three credits unless otherwise specified; the program requires a total of 40 or 43 credits.

Nursing Administration Courses
MSN 502 Nursing Research II
MSN 510 Thesis I or MSN 512 Capstone Seminar I
MSN 511 Thesis II or MSN 513 Capstone Seminar II
MSN 520 Nursing Administration I: Organizational Theory and its Applications
MSN 521 Nursing Administration II: Management of Nursing Care Delivery Systems, Program Development and Marketing
MSN 524 Nursing Administration: Financial Management
MSN 561 Practicum I

Business Courses
MBA 500 Organizational Behavior
MBA 531 Communications and Interpersonal Relations

Nursing Administration Course Options
MSN students with a major in nursing administration may elect either the thesis or the capstone seminar option. The thesis option consists of research conducted by the student in an area relevant to the major and consists of MSN 510 (2 crs) and MSN 511 (1 cr). The capstone seminar option, which consists of individual or joint professional applications projects, is comprised of two three-credit courses, MSN 512 and MSN 513.

Family Nurse Practitioner
The Master of Science in Nursing degree with a family nurse practitioner major prepares nurses for the advanced practice family nurse practitioner role and national certification. The track integrates concepts from nursing, science, and family practice to give the experienced nurse the advanced in-depth body of knowledge necessary to practice in the expanded registered nurse role of the managed care environment. The program prepares nurses for employment in rural/ Appalachian and underserved communities.

Curriculum for the Family Nurse Practitioner Major
The curriculum is divided into three components. The first component is the nursing core and contains those courses basic to any master of science in nursing program. The second component contains the family nurse practitioner clinical core. The third component consists of primary care courses specific to the Family Nurse Practitioner role. The program requires completion of 48 credit hours of graduate study.

Clinical Core Courses
MSN 530 Advanced Pathophysiology
MSN 531C Advanced Health Assessment Clinical
MSN 532 Advanced Pharmacology
MSN 569 Advanced Practice Role Seminar

Family Nurse Practitioner Courses
MSN 565 C&D Primary Care of the Family I
MSN 566 C&D Primary Care of the Family II
MSN 567 C&D Primary Care of the Family III
MSN 568 C&D Primary Care of the Family IV
Course Descriptions

MSN 500 Nursing Theories (3 crs)*
An examination of conceptual models and theories used to guide nursing education, practice and research.

MSN 501 Nursing Research I (3 crs)*
Utilization of the research process with the goal of applying the research process and critiquing articles in an area of interest to the student. Prerequisite: MSN 500, MSN 520, MSN 521 for Nursing Administration majors; MSN 500 for Family Nurse Practitioner majors.

MSN 502 Nursing Research II (3 crs)
Development of thesis/research proposal. Prerequisites: completion of 21 graduate credits to include: MSN 501, MSN 520, MSN 521.

MSN 503 Health Care Policy and Politics (3 crs)*
The study of political, social, economic and ethical influences within the health care delivery system. Special attention is given to how change occurs and to how government regulations, consumerism, and court, agency and legislative actions impact on health care.

MSN 510 Thesis I (2 crs)
Research conducted by the student in the area relevant to the major. Prerequisite: MSN 502.

MSN 511 Thesis II (1 cr)
Research conducted by the student in the area relevant to the major. A continuation of MSN 510. If a student has not completed the thesis requirements at the end of Thesis II, he/she will be required to enroll in MSN 511a, Thesis II Continuation, to finish the research. Prerequisite: MSN 510.

MSN 512 Capstone Seminar I (3 crs)
Provides the students the opportunity to synthesize and apply acquired knowledge and skills to the analysis and prescription of alternative courses of action for the problems and policy issues encountered by nurse managers and executives. Prerequisites: MSN 501, MSN 502, MSN 503, MSN 520.

MSN 513 Capstone Seminar II (3 crs)
A continuation of MSN 512, Capstone Seminar I. Students will be assigned a health care related project to plan and develop a new program or service. This may be done in conjunction with the Family Nurse Practitioner program or a community-based service organization. Prerequisites: MSN 501, MSN 502, MSN 503, MSN 520.

MSN 520 Nursing Administration I: Organizational Theory and its Applications (3 crs)*
The study of organizational theory, its applications and the basic principles of management, managerial technologies and managerial processes as they relate to administrative practice. Legal and ethical aspects of these issues are discussed.

MSN 521 Nursing Administration II: Management of Nursing Care Delivery Systems, Program Development and Marketing (3 crs)*
Explores elements of patient care delivery systems such as continuous quality improvement, risk management, standards of care and policy development. Business planning and marketing issues and strategies are also addressed. Prerequisite: MSN 520.

MSN 524 Nursing Administration: Financial Management (3 crs)*
Involves the study of health care budgets, productivity, staffing, variance analysis and patient acuity factors. The focus is on activity based costing and activity based management for health care. Attention is given to the nurse manager’s budgeting and financial management responsibilities. Various financial spreadsheet programs are utilized.

MSN 525 Managed Care (3 crs)*
Explores the impact of managed care on the healthcare system. Emphasis is on understanding and implementing aspects of managed care and includes the financial, legal and ethical issues. The use of critical pathways and the role of the case manager are also addressed.

MSN 530 Advanced Pathophysiology (4 crs)*
The focus will be on altered health states across the life span. A well grounded understanding of normal pathological processes of diseases in order to prepare the student to manage disease process and alterations in pathophysiology will be studied. Prerequisite: Basic Anatomy and Physiology.

MSN 531C Advanced Health Assessment Clinical (1 cr)
Clinical practice of comprehensive and holistic examination of the human person utilizing appropriate psychomotor skills and interview techniques. The assessment process includes the physical, social, emotional, developmental, cultural and spiritual needs of the patient and family. Corequisite: MSN 531D.

MSN 531D Advanced Health Assessment (3 crs)
Comprehensive and holistic examination of the human person utilizing appropriate psychomotor skills and interview techniques. The assessment process includes the physical, social, emotional, developmental, cultural and spiritual needs of the patient and family.

MSN 532 Advanced Pharmacology (3 crs)*
An in-depth study of pharmokinetic and pharmacodynamic properties of major drugs and the therapeutic and adverse effects on related body systems. The factors involved in rationale during selection for treatment of specific diseases. Prerequisite: MSN 530.

MSN 533 Health Promotion (2 crs)*
Current research and practice trends in health promotion and disease prevention will be examined.

MSN 561 Practicum I (2 crs)
Clinical course in which students are placed with preceptors in nursing administrative positions to apply concepts to actual practice. Prerequisite: MSN 521.

*may be offered on-line
MSN 565C Primary Care of the Family I Clinical (3 crs)
Clinical practice utilizing advanced physical assessment knowledge and health promotion strategies in the care of infants, children, adolescents, and families. Relevant theoretical foundation provides insight into the need for anticipatory guidance and family participation in the therapeutic regimen. Corequisite: MSN 565D.

MSN 565D Primary Care of the Family I (3 crs)
A study of the theoretical knowledge and skills for development of strategies in analyzing, managing and preventing problems of infants, children and adolescents and families with an emphasis on the underserved and the effects on Appalachian culture on the community. Prerequisite: MSN 530, MSN 531, MSN 533; may be taken concurrently with MSN 532 Pharmacology.

MSN 566C Primary Care of the Family II Clinical (3 crs)
Focus on the identification and treatment of issues related to the care of both genders but particularly women. Applies knowledge and skills for health promotion in an ambulatory setting. Corequisite: MSN 566D.

MSN 566D Primary Care of the Family II (3 crs)
The theoretical exploration of gender and its implications for health promotion, disease prevention and the management of normal pregnancy as well as gender related pathological conditions. Women's and men's health issues are explored. Prerequisite: MSN 565D.

MSN 567C Primary Care of the Family III Clinical (3 crs)
Focus on health promotion and the assessment and management of disease processes of the adult in the community. Clinical settings will be rural health clinics and offices of family practice/FNP offices, internists, GPs and other providers with large caseloads of adults. Corequisite: MSN 567D.

MSN 567D Primary Care of the Family III (3 crs)
Focus is on the nurse practitioner who meets the health care needs of the adult from young adult through retirement age. The focus includes health promotion, episodic illness care, management of chronic illness and issues related to the underserved population. Ethical dilemmas and legal issues resulting from the expanded role will be discussed. Leadership roles in the community practice will be addressed. The needs of clients in an underserved environment are assessed with discussion of the organization of health care for continuity of care in the community. Prerequisite: MSN 566D.

MSN 568C Primary Care of the Family IV Clinical (2 crs)
Focuses on the health promotion and assessment and management of acute and chronic illnesses in the elderly. Clinical will be in rural clinics, physician/nurse practitioner primary care settings with large caseloads of elderly. Corequisite: MSN 568D.

MSN 568D Primary Care of the Family IV (2 crs)
Focuses on the provision of integrated care to the elderly which includes normal aging changes, health promotion and the assessment and management of chronic and acute illnesses. Special attention is given to the political/ethical and cultural needs of the elderly living in the rural Appalachian area. Prerequisite: MSN 567D.

MSN 569 Advanced Practice Role Seminar (1 cr)
Focuses on the transition from the role of Family Nurse Practitioner Student to the role of Family Nurse Practitioner.