

NURSING

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The philosophy of the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Program is the belief that clinical practice is constantly changing as are health needs and health delivery systems. Integral to the nursing profession is the need to work effectively and cooperatively with other disciplines to promote health. The focal point of the MSN curriculum is the understanding of the nursing process, with a strong emphasis on the medical knowledge of diseases complemented by behavioral science concepts. The courses developed are interdependent and have been structured to provide in-depth knowledge in the area of concentration of the student's choice. Acquisition of research skills and the application of nursing theory to practice are major emphases of the curriculum. The graduates of the MSN program will have the knowledge and skill to function in their chosen specialty areas. The goals of the MSN program at CSU are to:

1. Educate nurses who will contribute significantly to the health, education, business, political, and social structure of the nation and the world.
2. Enhanced the knowledge of the learner to develop analytical skills, broad-based view points and the ability to link theory to practice.

The MSN program at CSU is designed to prepare nurses for the challenges facing the profession in the 21st century by focusing on community health nursing, nursing administration and nursing education. The MSN degree requires 45 credit hours of graduate coursework and a practicum with a capstone project or thesis option. The program incorporates value-added curricula that focus on minority health and nursing informatics. The curricula are aligned with the NLN recommendation to improve the diversity of the nursing workforce, continuity of patient care and to reduce medical errors.

Admission Requirements

Prospective students seeking admission to the MSN program must meet requisite standards of academic ability and work experience. The Admission Committee will place emphasis on qualifications and credentials considered to be indicators for student success in graduate education: critical thinking and writing skills. Applications to the MSN program must be made through the School of Graduate and Professional Studies, including submission of original transcripts of candidate's undergraduate coursework, and payment of the application fee. Application materials must be received by March 15 each year for the fall semester enrollment. Early application is encouraged. Applicants may apply to the program up to 12 months prior to the desired start date.

Students seeking admission into the MSN degree must meet the following admission requirements:

1. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree in nursing (BSN) from a program accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency for nursing;
2. Have attained a GPA 3.0 or better (on a 4.0) scale);
3. Proof of license as a registered nurse in the State of Illinois;
4. Official transcripts from all previously attended postsecondary institutions;
5. Statement of Goals – maximum of two pages describing goals and rationale for pursuing a master's degree in nursing. Include nursing experiences that have prepared the applicant to pursue a new role following completion of the program;

6. Three letters of professional recommendation from individuals familiar with the applicant's competence in the practice of nursing and potential for successful graduate education;
7. An interview with the Department of Nursing Admission Committee;
8. International students must have their academic transcripts evaluated by the University recognized agencies and must score 600 (paper-based) or 250 (computer-based) or higher on the Test of English as Foreign Language (TOEFL).

Courses taken prior to admission to the MSN program must be approved at the time of admission if they are to be counted toward the degree. A maximum of 9 credits can be accepted as transfer credits. These courses must be completed with a grade of B or better. Approval must be granted by both the department and the School of Graduate and Professional Studies. To gain approval, an original transcript must accompany the application and be submitted to the School of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Upon admission into the program, a faculty advisor will be assigned to each student based on his/her area of concentration specialty. The faculty advisor will monitor the student's performance each semester.

Progression and Probation Policy

The following academic progress and probation policy will be enforced in the MSN program:

1. Students must maintain a minimum of 3.0 cumulative grade point average to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress and good academic standing. A student is placed on probation if his/her cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 for any term. After being placed on probation, a student must attain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 within the next two terms or be dismissed from the graduate program.
2. No more than two grades of C can be earned in any of the MSN courses. A course in which a D is obtained must be repeated to obtain a grade of C or better. When a student has a grade of D or F, he/she will be put on probation and must repeat the course and obtain a C grade or better.
3. Where a student has two or more grades of "I" outstanding, the student will be reviewed for probationary status.

Curriculum Pattern (Semester by Semester Course Offering)

The curriculum patterns for the three nursing specialties are presented below:

Criteria for Selecting the Practicum Option Project

The practicum will provide the students with "real world" experience in a community health, management or educational setting and students will have the opportunity to apply the skills and knowledge acquired during the practicum to formulate a capstone project. The practicum spans over two semesters, requiring a minimum of 500 hours during the NURS 5122/5123 I and II courses. Students must be in good academic standing and have completed all MSN course requirements prior to registering for NURS 5123: Field Practicum in Nursing and Capstone Project. The goal of the practicum is to enable students to acquire relevant skills in their area of specialty. At the end of the practicum experience, the students will be able to:

1. Integrate public nursing theory, knowledge, and skills in a practice setting;

2. Experience the “real world” of nursing practice – organization, structure, and function, local and organizational politics, program planning, administration, and evaluation, community needs assessment, and community relationships and participation;
3. Develop skills and knowledge in an area of nursing interest not covered in-depth elsewhere in the students’ educational plan;
4. Demonstrate competence in a nursing practice area;
5. Demonstrate leadership, teamwork, communication skills and creativity in the development of a nursing practice;
6. Complete and submit a paper summarizing the practicum experience in an area of nursing practice.

Project Supervision Process and Evaluation

The Practicum Coordinator will hold a meeting once every semester to provide students with more information on how to plan for or create a field practicum opportunity, steps toward a successful field experience and journaling techniques. Planning for the field practicum will begin at least three months before its projected start date. The students will work with the faculty advisor to develop practicum objectives. The area of research or service interest will be discussed with the faculty advisor, who will approve and forward the recommendation to the Practicum Coordinator who in turn maintains a listing of agencies and organizations with which the university has placement agreements.

A month prior to registering for NURS 5123: Field Practicum in Nursing and Capstone Project, the students will be required to complete and obtain approval for the following forms:

- i. The MSN Practicum Registration Form (Appendix 1).
- ii. The Practicum Learning Agreement Form (Appendix 2).

Students will not be allowed to register for NURS 5123: Field Practicum in Nursing and Capstone Project unless these forms have been submitted and approved by the faculty advisor. Both forms will be completed and returned to the Practicum Coordinator at least three months prior to beginning the field placement.

The Criteria for Selecting the Thesis Option

For the Thesis Option, the student will use quantitative or qualitative research methods to collect empirical data to answer a research question. The decision to select a thesis option (NURS 5124- Thesis Proposal and NURS 5125- Thesis Research and Defense) is entirely that of the student. The student will be required to discuss this decision with an assigned faculty advisor. The process for registering for the course is the same as with the Non-Thesis or Practicum Option. A month prior to registering for NURS 5124- Thesis Proposal, the students will be required to complete the following forms:

- i. The MSN Thesis Proposal Registration Form (Appendix 3).
- ii. The Thesis Proposal Agreement Form (Appendix 4).

Students will not be allowed to register for NURS 5124- Thesis Proposal unless these forms have been submitted and approved by the department chair and faculty advisor. Both forms will be completed and returned to the department chair at least one month prior to beginning the research proposal.

After selecting a research topic, the student must obtain the approval of a faculty advisor. The topic can be identified by the student or it can be based on an ongoing project that a faculty advisor approves. The student must show evidence of approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Protection of Human Subjects in Research training at the time of registering for NURS 5125- Thesis. Students will work closely with their faculty advisor and the two Thesis Committee members.

Composition of the Thesis Committee

After approval of the research topic, the student will be assigned a thesis chair by the department chairperson. The thesis chair will supervise the research project in conjunction with other faculty advisors. The topic of the research will determine the thesis chair and faculty advisors to be assigned. The research interest and expertise of the faculty will drive the decision (Refer to criteria 15-17).

The department chair, in consultation with the thesis chair, will recommend two other cognate graduate faculty members within or outside the department to form the Thesis Committee. The appointment of the thesis chair and the composition of the thesis committee must be approved by the dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies. Subsequently, the student will be approved to register for NURS 5124- Thesis Proposal. A copy of the NIH certificate must be submitted with the research proposal.

Final Thesis Defense

Following the submission of the thesis, the student will be required to present the research findings at a public forum arranged by the department. The Thesis Committee will determine the grade to be assigned for both NURS 5124- Thesis Proposal and NURS 5125- Thesis Research and Defense. A grade of S (satisfactory) or NS (Not satisfactory) will be assigned. Students with a NS grade will be provided an opportunity to address the concerns of the Thesis Committee members.

Course Offerings for Nursing (NURS)

5000: PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF NURSING PRACTICE (3)

Prerequisite: Admission to the Master's of Nursing Program

This course analyzes the history and philosophy of science as a basis for knowledge and academic critique of nursing theory, research, and practice through differing philosophical and ethical perspectives.

5122 FIELD PRACTICUM IN COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSING I AND II (3)

Prerequisite: Completion of all course work or consent of the Program Coordinator and Instructor.

The practicum provides an integral part of professional education that complements and supports the learning process in the classroom. The experience provides the student with opportunities to apply knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to a variety of field work situations and to test new approaches and techniques in solving problems. The practicum is a meaningful learning experience that contributes positively to the student's professional development and nursing practice. A faculty member will coordinate the fieldwork experience that contributes positively to the student's professional development and nursing practice. A faculty member will coordinate the field work experience in collaboration with the site preceptors. A minimum of 500 hours is required.

5124 THESIS PROPOSAL AND RESEARCH AND DEFENSE (3)

Prerequisites: Completion of all course work and Consent of Program Coordinator and Instructor.

Students will participate in an independent research project under the supervision of a research mentor. The project will focus on individual and community health interest and problems through literature search, defining of the problem, use of theoretical and conceptual framework, methodology for data collection, analysis, findings, discussion implications and conclusion.

5127 EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION IN HEALTH CARE (3)

Prerequisites: NURS 5000, 5111, 5115, 5117, 5135, 5145

This course covers the theories and principles of leadership/management, analysis and synthesis of the relationship of leadership/management the health care delivery system, evidence-based practice, future trends, and professional education

5135 NURSING INFORMATICS (3)

Prerequisite: NURS 5000, 5111, 5117 or consent of the Program Coordinator and Instructor.

This course is designed to expand theory into practice, the nature of nursing, information and communication technology. It provides the nurse the tools and skills to collect, process, manage, and communicate patient care data with a collaborative care delivery framework utilizing integrated networks. The goal is to communicate critical information to achieve health promotion, health restoration and maintenance as well as wellness of patient, family, and community.

5140 HEALTH CARE INFORMATION SYSTEMS (3)

Prerequisites: NURS 5110, 5111, and 5114

This course provides information on the fundamentals of the health care information system and how data are transformed into information and then again transformed into knowledge through integrated computer systems. The goal of this course is to prepare the students to be effective collaborators with the members of the health care team who do have the specialized healthcare skills but are lacking the technical insights.

5141 APPLICATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN HEALTH (3)

Prerequisites: NURS 5000, 5111, 5112, and NURS 5117

This course provides information on how to integrate geographic information system design principles into the many applications areas found in the health care system. The goal of this course is to help students develop the skills needed to identify problems and develop solutions using mapping software to present findings graphically.

5142 ADVANCED PATHOPHYSIOLOGY (3)

This course will examine the principles of physiologic function at all levels of organization from cell to organ systems as they affect human function. The course will use homeostasis as a model to account for regulatory and compensatory functions in health. Students will develop the necessary theoretical and empirical foundation for subsequent understanding of the diagnosis and management of human responses to disease and non disease-based etiologies.

5143 PHARMACOTHERAPEUTICS (3)

Prerequisites: NURS 5000, 5111, 5113, 5115, 5117, 5135, 5142, 5145, 5146

This course covers both pharmacotherapeutics and pharmacokinetics of broad categories of pharmacologic agents. It covers principles of pharmacodynamics, pharmacokinetics, adverse drug reactions, and special population's considerations, in addition to the regulations relevant to prescriptive authority for advanced practice nurses. Consideration of current health status, ethnic/racial backgrounds, socioeconomic status, cultural/spiritual implications, gender, and changes which occur across the lifespan are addressed.

5144 ADVANCED PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT (3)

Prerequisites: NURS 5000, 5142, 5143, or consent of Program Coordinator and Instructor.

The purpose of this course is to establish differential diagnoses based on logical diagnostic reasoning for health maintenance, disease prevention, and early detection. Content builds on previously acquired knowledge and skills of advanced physiology and pathophysiology, advanced pharmacology, and the domains and competencies common to the advanced practice roles. Additional Course Fee.

5145 ETHICS, POLICY, ORGANIZATION, AND FINANCING OF HEALTH CARE (3)

Prerequisites: NURS 5000, 5111, 5117, or consent of the department.

This course will cover ethical and legal issues in research and health care, quality cost effective care, design and implementation of care in a variety of health care systems, and the executive leadership role of a nurse in managing human fiscal, and physical health care resources. The course will also present how health policy is formulated, how to affect this process, and how it impacts clinical practice and health care delivery.