



MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE *of* PHARMACY *and* HEALTH SCIENCES

School of Nursing

MSN and CAGS Student Handbook



Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Online

19 Foster Street
Worcester, MA 01608

***Please refer to the Clinical Student Handbook for MSN and CAGS clinical/preceptorship policies and information**

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

Welcome from the Dean

Dear Graduate Nursing Student:

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

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

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

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

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

The future of nursing rests in the hands of those prepared to lead with knowledge, integrity, and compassion. We look forward to supporting you in your academic journey. Together, we will advance the future of healthcare through compassionate practice, clinical excellence, evidence-based scholarship, and a commitment to lifelong learning.

Welcome to this important chapter of your professional nursing journey.

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

Leadership, Faculty, and Staff Directory

Leadership Team

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Accreditation and Program Approval



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

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

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



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

School of Nursing Guiding Statements

The School of Nursing (SON) at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (hereafter MCPHS or University) offers the Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing (BSN), Master of Science degree in Nursing (MSN) degree, Post-Graduate Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS), and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) programs that prepare competent, caring, and ethical nursing professionals and leaders to meet the ever-changing needs of the healthcare environment. The philosophy, mission, vision, core values, goals, and outcome statements of the School of Nursing provide a guiding framework for its faculty, staff, students, and clinical partnerships.

Philosophy

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

Education is a self-actualizing, creative, and lifetime endeavor involving systematic inquiry and progression from novice to expert. The educational process must be learner-centered to foster intellectual vitality, critical thinking, and responsibility for ongoing professional development. Nursing education must be academically rigorous and socially relevant, embracing multiple ways of knowing and integrating the liberal arts and sciences with professional nursing study. Weaving scholarly, professional, and practice-related activities throughout the education process creates a cohesive tapestry of caring and patient-centered care.

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

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

School of Nursing Core Competencies

The core competencies necessary to meet the primary goals of nursing are *communication*, *assessment*, *critical thinking*, and *technical skill*. The core competencies allow the nurse to assess, plan, design, provide, and manage culturally competent, cost-effective, high quality, and direct and indirect nursing care across the lifespan to diverse populations across an ever-changing healthcare delivery system. We

strive to achieve competence in nursing practice through a thoughtful and intentional blending of theory, knowledge, and experience.

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

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

School of Nursing Mission

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

School of Nursing Vision

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

School of Nursing Core Values

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

MSN Program Goals

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

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

The MSN program prepares advanced practice nurses to provide health care to diverse populations, and to demonstrate professional leadership roles in practice and is consistent with the standards of *The American Association of Colleges of Nursing Essentials: Core Competencies for Nursing Education (2026)* and the *National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties' (NONPF) Nurse Practitioner Role Competencies (2022)*.

In addition, the MSN program is informed by the following professional organizations:

The American Nurses Association (ANA) Scope and Standards of Practice (2021); The ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses (2025); The National Council of State Boards of Nursing Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification and Education (2008); National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties NTF National Task Force (NTF) Standards for Quality Nurse Practitioner Education, 6th edition (2022); Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) Core Competencies (2023); AACN Test Content Outline for FNP and PMHNP; AANPCB Examination Blueprint for FNP and PMHNP; and the National Panel for Nurse Psychiatric Mental Health NP Competencies (2023).

MSN End of Program Learning Outcomes

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

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

American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses

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

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

Provision 1: Dignity and Respect

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

Provision 2: Primary Commitment

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

Provision 3: Trust and Advocacy

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

Provision 4: Responsibility and Accountability for Practice

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

Provision 5: Duties to Self

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

Provision 6: Ethical Work Environments

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

Provision 7: Knowledge Development and Social Policy

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

Provision 8: Collaborative Relationships

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

Provision 9: Commitment to Society and Social Justice

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

Provision 10: A Global Nursing Community

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

Professional Comportment

Professional comportment (*the manner in which one behaves or conducts oneself*) is expected of all nursing students in the SON. Professional comportment embodies the core values of MCPHS and is defined as behaving in a way that exemplifies respect for individuals including those in the academic setting, health care setting and community of practice.

Communication is an essential element of professional comportment, and as such, should be practiced throughout the nursing program. Policies set forth in this handbook provide a framework to socialize students to behave in an ethical, responsible, and professional manner.

Students are expected to display professional demeanor, interactions and boundaries with patients and their families, clinical staff, peers, faculty and the public at all times in consideration of their representation of the profession of nursing and the MCPHS (See the [ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses](#)).

Essential expected behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Consistent display of professional demeanor and appropriate interpersonal interactions and boundaries with patients, staff, and peers; including emails to faculty and staff.
- Adherence to the profession's Code of Ethics;
- Timeliness and adherence to preparation, attendance, policies, and deadlines;
- Prompt notification of absence or tardiness according to the established absence policies;
- Adherence to SON professional dress guidelines;
- Exhibiting professional and responsible behavior when representing MCPHS in any manner or venue while wearing the white coat, clinical uniform, lanyard, or any MCPHS logo; and
- Displaying professional conduct in using digital or online platforms (examples include Blackboard, Email, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, Facebook, YouTube, etc.).
- No falsification of any test results;
- Academic and Professional Integrity congruent with the School of Nursing and the University

Individuals whose behavior, in the preceptor, faculty member, or staff's opinion, is disruptive to the learning environment and or does not adhere to the SON Professional Comportment policy, may be given a corrective warning. Coaching may be given for minor infractions.

School Activities and Resources

Student Representation on the Shared Governance Committees

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

Computer Laboratories

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

- **Worcester Campus:** Desktop computers are on the third (3rd) floor of 25 Foster Street and in the library. Printing is available at both locations.
- **Manchester Campus:** Desktop computers are in the computer laboratory on the second (2nd) floor of 1260 Elm Street. Printing is available at this location.
- **Boston Campus:** Desktop computers are located on the third (3rd) floor of the Matricaria Building (179 Longwood Avenue) and first (1st) floor of the Griffin Building (670 Huntington Avenue). Printing is available at both locations.

Library and Learning Resources

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

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

Online students are encouraged to utilize services through the Library and Learning Resources. Jeremy Laporte, Circulation Supervisor, Library and Learning Resources, is available for research consultations, where students can:

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

Contact: Jeremy Laporte, (Jeremy.laporte@mcphs.edu)

The Center for Academic Success and Enrichment (CASE)

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

Academic Coaching

Academic Coaches work collaboratively with students by program cohort assignment and can assist students with a variety of topics ranging from time management and prioritization, study skill development, connecting with campus resources and more. The CASE staff are available to meet with

students on an appointment basis Monday – Friday 9:00am-4:00pm ET. To schedule an appointment with your assigned coach/counselor visit the [Student Success Hub](#). For questions about CASE services, please reach out to case.wm@mcphs.edu.

University Learning Network (ULN)

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

Students can utilize the ULN’s appointment-based services (Subject Tutoring, English Language Resource Center, & Writing Center) by visiting Student Success Hub. Brainfuse can be accessed through the Tools section of the course’s Blackboard page.

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

Accessing CASE Support

Student Success Hub: To schedule an appointment with an Academic Coach or an appointment-based ULN service, including Subject Tutoring, the English Language Resource Center (ELRC), and the Writing Center, visit the Student Success Hub (<https://www.mcphs.edu/studentsuccesshub>) and navigate to the “Offices & Services” section.

CASE Worcester/Manchester On Demand: All students have access to CASE On Demand, our Blackboard organization offering academic resources, strategies, and support throughout their academic journey. Students can find study and learning strategies, program-specific resources, university information, tutoring and academic coaching resources, and guidance on academic policies and processes. Students are encouraged to utilize CASE On Demand as a resource for navigating their academic experience and supporting their success.

Counseling Services for Online Students

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

To meet with Counseling Services for one session contact:

counseling.worc@mcphs.edu

508.373.571

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

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

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

[Mindwise Suicide Prevention Training | MCPHS](#)

Additionally, they offer online tools, including:

- **Virtual Sleep Lab**
The [Virtual Sleep Lab](#) has a collection of apps and books that can help improve your sleep
- **Sleep 101 - Free sleep training course found in Blackboard under course catalog.**
- **Virtual Relaxation Space**
The [Virtual Relaxation Space](#) has tips, links, videos, podcasts, and articles for students to utilize for stress management and relaxation.
- **Online Screening Tool**
The free and anonymous [Online Screening Tool](#) for MCPHS students who are deciding whether consultation with a counselor may be helpful.

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

General Policies

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)

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

The Administrative Simplification Clause of HIPAA Title II addresses Electronic Transaction Standards, Unique Identifiers, Privacy Standards and Security Standards concerning all data pertaining to the care of each individual patient in any healthcare facility. The provisions under the privacy and security standards impose strict compliance with confidentiality on the part of all who have access to patient records. All healthcare providers are required to have documented training regarding these patient privacy regulations.

All SON students must attend a formalized training session on HIPAA regulations provided by MCPHS and/or by the clinical agency. Students are expected to adhere to all HIPAA provisions and standards related to patient privacy. Failure to do so may subject the student to disciplinary action under the MCPHS Student Code of Conduct.

Immunization Requirements

Please refer to the section of the [MCPHS Course Catalog](#) titled “MCPHS University Immunization Policy.”

Immunization information and clearances are provided through CastleBranch, the University’s contracted vendor. Students must meet all deadlines for immunizations and testing/screening as outlined by the University. It is the student’s responsibility to confirm requirements are up to date every semester in Castle Branch.

In accordance with state law, MCPHS policy, and clinical agency requirements, students must show proof of required immunizations, unless they qualify for one of the exemptions allowed by law.

Noncompliance with MCPHS immunization requirements will result in administrative withdrawal from the MCPHS or might negatively impact progression in the academic program.

Students must complete before the start of the semester of clinical courses. **Adherence to the deadline set in place by the Clinical Placement Office is required in order to attend clinical.**

Without full clearance of immunization requirements, students will not be eligible to begin clinical learning experiences and consequently may be unable to meet course or program requirements. Students who do not meet course or program requirements will be required to step out of the course. The student may be considered for the next course offering if there is space and if compliance is completed.

Some healthcare agencies and clinical education sites may have additional immunization requirements. To be eligible for clinical placements, students must meet ALL University immunization requirements, and any additional requirements imposed by the clinical agency to which the student is assigned. In cases where the clinical site does not pay for the completion of any additional immunization requirements, the student is responsible for paying any associated fees.

***Please note:** additional screening and testing may be necessary during public health emergencies.

Good Moral Character

Many State Boards of Nursing require applicants for licensure to demonstrate “good moral character” as part of the eligibility process. This requirement applies to both initial RN licensure and advanced practice licensure (e.g., Nurse Practitioner).

While definitions vary by state, Boards of Nursing may review factors such as:

- Criminal history (including misdemeanors and felonies)
- Substance-related offenses (e.g., DUI/OUI)
- Disciplinary actions by prior licensing boards
- Academic integrity violations
- Falsification of records or applications
- Ongoing legal matters

In some cases, applicants may be required to provide court documentation, written explanations, character references, or appear before the Board for further review. This process can delay licensure or, in certain circumstances, result in denial of licensure.

Students enrolled in the graduate nursing program are strongly encouraged to:

- Review the licensure requirements of the state(s) in which they intend to seek licensure.
- Proactively disclose any legal or disciplinary history.
- Consult directly with the appropriate Board of Nursing if there are concerns about eligibility.

The University does not grant licensure and cannot override or predict Board of Nursing decisions. Students are responsible for ensuring they meet all eligibility requirements for licensure in their intended state of practice

MSN RN Licensure Requirement

An unencumbered RN license in the jurisdiction where clinical rotations will take place, is required for admission to the SON graduate programs. In the event of disciplinary action or restriction on the student's RN licensure during their tenure in the SON program, the student must notify the Associate Dean for Clinical Education and Experiential Learning and the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs in writing within 24 hrs. of notification from the state board of nursing. A restricted RN license or disciplinary action from the state board of nursing may prohibit the student from participating in clinical experiences and subsequently affect progression or program completion.

Drug Use Policy

In accordance with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, MCPHS has adopted a Drug Abuse Policy the following Drug Use policy. Please refer to the Drug Abuse Policy set forth in the [MCPHS Student Handbook](#) regarding drug use.

CPR Certification

All students must show evidence of CPR training during the first semester in the graduate nursing programs. Students must be certified in **Basic Life Support (BLS) Healthcare Provider by the American Heart Association (AHA)**. It is the student's responsibility to confirm that CPR requirements are up to date every semester.

Acceptable AHA courses include BLS (instructor lead) or Heart Code BLS (blended online/skill sign off). American Red Cross, First Aid, and online courses will not be accepted. Students must provide a copy of the card/e-card, indicating active certification (AHA requires recertification every two years) to the Clinical Placement Coordinator for the Graduate Programs. We recommend the student verify the course in advance to ensure it is appropriate.

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

Physical, Technical and Professional Standards

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

Students with a recent injury that requires the use of any assistive or supportive device are **not permitted** to participate in lab or clinical activities until they are fully cleared for unrestricted participation by a licensed healthcare provider

Cognitive: Intellectual, Conceptual and Quantitative Abilities

- Follow policies and procedures of MCPHS and the cognitive requirements of the clinical sites hosting the faculty and students for learning.
- Comprehend and follow assignment directions, rubrics, and course syllabi developed by faculty

- Demonstrate the ability to achieve course and program outcomes.
- Demonstrate the ability to comprehend, integrate, and apply knowledge.
- Develop and refine problem-solving skills crucial to practice as a nurse.
- Access, analyze, and synthesize subjective and objective data to develop nursing diagnoses and comprehensive plans of care.
- Engage effective problem solving and accurately prioritize patient needs in a prompt and timely fashion.
- Utilize current evidence, clinical judgment, and patient preferences to systematically assess, analyze, implement, and evaluate healthcare interventions.
- Promote safe, culturally competent, quality care across the lifespan.

Communication

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

Observation

- Must be able to observe a patient accurately. Examples include but are not limited to listening to heart and breath sounds; visualizing the appearance of a surgical wound; detecting bleeding, unresponsiveness or other changes in patient status; detecting the presence of foul odor; and palpating an abdomen.
- Must be able to detect and respond to emergency situations, including audible alarms (e.g., monitors, call bells, fire alarms).

Motor Function and Endurance

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

Behavioral

- Must possess mental and emotional health required for total utilization of intellectual abilities.
- Must be able to respond and function effectively during stressful situations.
- Must be capable of adapting to rapidly changing environments and responding with flexibility in uncertain situations.

- Must be able to interact appropriately with others (patients, families, members of the healthcare team) in various healthcare contexts.

Physical Requirements in Clinical Setting

Students must meet all physical, technical, and professional standards to attend classes/lab/clinical.

Clinical agencies may have additional, or agency-specific technical standards, which take precedence over MCPHS standards. In such instances, the program will attempt to provide a comparable alternative learning experience but if that is not possible, **students will not be able to progress in the program, or complete program requirements.**

Technology Requirements

To enhance the virtual classroom, the SON uses the collaborative features offered by the Learning Management System (Blackboard). MCPHS has access to two platforms, Zoom and Collaborate Ultra.

Please view the MCPHS Technology Requirements at <https://www.mcphs.edu/information-services/services/computing-printing/technology-requirements> to ensure that your computer or laptop meets the requirements. Review and install updates to your computer periodically to meet the technology needs. Please know that Blackboard works best with Google Chrome. A headset, microphone, and camera are required to maximize the virtual classroom.

Inclement Weather

Online programming does not close due to inclement weather. We encourage students to use their best judgement when deciding whether to attend clinical preceptorships in inclement weather. Students should attend clinical if they are safe to do so. If students are unable to attend clinical, they need to notify the site, preceptor, and clinical faculty and clinical hours will need to be rescheduled.

Email Policy

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

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

Use of Social Media

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

Students must also comply with the MCPHS Electronic Communications Policy, which is set forth in the MCPHS Student Handbook. If there is a conflict between the terms of the NCSBN White Paper on social media and the MCPHS Electronic Communications Policy, the terms of the MCPHS policy shall apply.

Students are also encouraged to review The Core Rules of Netiquette, from the book *Netiquette* by Virginia Shea. <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

Non-matriculated Entry

The SON supports non-matriculated students taking up to two Graduate Nursing courses with the approval of the Associate Dean for Graduate Nursing Programs. Students must apply for admission to a Graduate Nursing Program within one year of the end of the semester in which they successfully completed the course(s).

Financial Aid

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

Academic and Progression Policies and Procedures

Grading Policy

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

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

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

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

Grade Appeals

Students who wish to appeal a final earned grade must follow the University’s grade appeal process as detailed in the [MCPHS Catalog](#) and is included below.

Note: Individual assignment grades are not subject to appeal.

A student who wishes to appeal a final earned grade of a course must do so within **two weeks** of the grade being posted by the Registrar's Office.

- The first appeal should be in writing to the course instructor, who must make a decision to uphold or change the grade within 3 business days of the appeal. The written appeal should contain the rationale for the appeal.
- If a mutually acceptable agreement cannot be reached (or the instructor does not respond within 3 business days), the student has 3 business days to appeal in writing to the administrator in charge of the academic unit offering the course (Department Chair, Program Director or designee). The appeal should contain the rationale for the appeal and the result of the appeal to the instructor. The academic unit administrator must decide to uphold or change the grade within 3 business days of the appeal.
- If this procedure does not successfully resolve the matter (or if the administrator does not rule on the matter in 3 business days), the student has 3 business days to appeal in writing to the chief administrator (School of Nursing Dean or designee) overseeing the academic unit offering the course. The appeal should contain the rationale for the appeal and the results of the appeals to the instructor and the academic unit administrator. The chief administrator will uphold or change the grade and inform the student within three business days. The decision of the chief administrator is final.
- Decisions on grade appeals are based solely on objective grade information. **If the grade appeal affects a student's progression status, the grade appeal process must be completed on or before the first day of class/clinical rotation, before the start of the next semester.** It is the student's responsibility to initiate the grade appeal. If the original grade is upheld, the student will be administratively withdrawn from any courses for which the failed course is a prerequisite.

Coursework

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

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

Academic Integrity

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

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

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

Academic Honesty and Student Discipline Procedures

Academic violations or offenses include the following:

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

Implementation of the Academic Honesty Policy

1. The Dean of Students or designee will review the Academic Honesty Policy, issues of dishonesty, and consequences of violating the Academic Honesty Policy during new student orientation.

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

Academic Honesty Statement

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

Student Name (printed) _____

Student Signature: _____ ID Number: _____

Student Discipline Procedures for Academic Honesty Policy Violations

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

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

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

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

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

- Determine academic dishonesty did not occur and not pursue the incident further. OR
- Determine academic dishonesty did occur and discuss the academic sanction the faculty member will assign (e.g., repeat of the assignment, grade reduction, failure for the assignment)

or exam, failure for the course). If consequences regarding academic dishonesty are listed in the course syllabus, faculty sanctions must follow information as indicated in the syllabus.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Proctored Online Exam Policy

The School of Nursing Graduate Programs will use ProctorU Proctoring Service® for all online exams including final exams. ProctorU is an online proctoring platform that is partnered with MCPHS to assist students in taking online exams while ensuring academic integrity is upheld. This platform is available 24/7 to allow students to take exams from anywhere using a webcam internet connection.

Equipment

MCPHS Required Technology

At MCPHS, technology is designed to support—not hinder—your academic success. To ensure you have the best possible learning experience, please review the technology requirements before classes begin

and confirm that your computer meets the minimum specifications. Keep in mind that additional software may be required depending on your courses and may vary each semester. Be sure to check your course syllabus at the start of each term for any specific requirements.

Please note: *An Apple iPad, Google Chromebook, Microsoft Surface Pro/Laptop or similar tablet can be helpful for note-taking and everyday tasks— but they are **not sufficient on their own** for your coursework. Many classes rely on specialized testing software that **requires a full laptop computer** to function properly. To avoid disruptions during exams or assignments, make sure you have reliable access to a laptop that meets course requirements.*

Please refer to the [MCPHS Technology Requirement](#) page for detailed information about technology requirements.

To use ProctorU, the student will need to have a high-speed internet connection, a webcam (internal or external), and a Windows-Based or Macintosh Operating System as described in the MCPHS Technology Requirements, and a valid Government ID or MCPHS-issued student ID.

The student is required to establish an Internet connection using DSL or Cable or wireless connection. A DSL or Cable connection is preferred and highly recommended. If using DSL or Cable, connect the Ethernet cable directly to the computer.

The student is required to test the functionality of their system at least 48 hours in advance of every proctored exam to allow ample time to troubleshoot any technical issues.

Preparation

A positive student experience starts with you!

First Time Testers Follow these steps:

1. Click on this link to the ProctorU page that provides step-by-step instructions on creating an account and downloading the required Guardian Browser. It also provides instructions on scheduling exam: <https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us/articles/25557846449037-How-to-Get-Started-with-the-ProctorU-Platform> .
2. View the [Five Steps For A Successful ProctorU Experience](#) article to prepare yourself for testing.
3. Watch the [test-taker experience video](#) for what to expect.
4. Test your Equipment. Click on this link for instructions <https://support.proctoru.com/hc/enus/articles/24721724814861-How-to-Test-Your-Equipment>

Taking Exams [click here](#), to view the test taker resource page specific to the live proctor launch.

NOTE: Students are responsible for taking exams using equipment that meets equipment requirements listed above and for checking their equipment 48 hours prior to every exam. Click on this link for instructions test their equipment

<https://support.proctoru.com/hc/enus/articles/24721724814861-How-to-Test-Your-Equipment>

Testing area

The testing area should mimic the face-to-face (in class) testing environment and must correspond to the following guidelines:

1. The Room:
 - a. Select a room in the home (e.g., a home office) that is well lit. The room should be lit with light bright enough to mimic “daylight”. Overhead lighting is recommended. The light source should not be positioned behind the student.
 - b. The room should provide privacy to the student and should be free of household noise (e.g., walking traffic, playing children, barking dogs, etc.).
 - c. There should be no visible writing or notes posted on the walls or anywhere in the room.
 - d. There should be no televisions or radios playing in the background.
 - e. There should be no one else in the room while the student is testing.
2. The Sitting Arrangement:
 - a. Sitting should be at a clean desk or table with a computer, keyboard and mouse.
 - b. The desk or table should be cleared of any other items such as books, notebooks, papers, pens/pencils, calculators or any other materials.
 - c. The student should sit observing proper sitting posture in order to remain in full view of the camera.
 - d. Remove any iWatches, iPads or other electronics and place them away from the testing room.
 - e. Close all computer programs or windows on the computer prior to logging into the proctored exam.
3. Personal Appearance:
 - a. The student should be aware of their personal appearance as the sessions are being observed/recorded.

Comportment During the Exam and Exam Review

- a. The student is expected to complete the exam within the time allocated for the exam.
- b. The student must not leave the room at any time during the testing period.
- c. The student must not move the computer to another room at any time during the testing period.
- d. The student may not use the phone at any time during testing or the Exam Review. The only exception to using the phone is to contact IT support or faculty in the event of technical issues.
- e. Students are not allowed to utilize scrap paper or take notes during the exam or the exam review.
 - a. *Student with approved OSAA accommodations that include the use of scrap paper- scrap paper is allowed during the exam only and must be torn up in front of the camera immediately upon finishing the exam. Scrap paper is prohibited during exam reviews without faculty prior approval.*
- f. Screenshots of the exam during test-taking or exam review is prohibited.
- g. Students are not allowed to share details of the exams or exam reviews with others.

- h. Violation of Academic Integrity: The *Academic Integrity, Academic Honesty and Student Discipline Procedures*, and *Implementation of the Academic Honesty Policy* are located in the MSN Student Handbook which is posted in all course Blackboard sites and in the Graduate Virtual Village. Students attest to reading these policies in the MSN Student Handbook every semester.

Exam Reviews

All students will have the opportunity to review their exam outcomes and performance. This process enables students to perform better on exams by analyzing their strengths and weaknesses as a test taker. Exam reviews are used to help students determine how to improve the way they prepare for, and take, tests. The format of the exam review is at the discretion of course faculty to provide the best learning opportunity. Once the exam review has taken place, students will have no further access to their exams.

HESI Examination

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

Comprehensive FNP/PMHNP Exit Exams

Students in the MSN programs will take comprehensive exit examinations specific to their national certification specialty. These exams are used to provide readiness assessments for certification exams. Various standardized testing software may be used, such as ROSH, HESI, and Barkley.

Plagiarism Prevention Service

Students are expected to abide by the University's Academic Honesty Policy as explained in the MCPHS Student Handbook. Plagiarism is considered a violation of this policy. Plagiarism is defined as submitting another person's work as one's own without proper acknowledgment or using the words or ideas of others without crediting the source of those words or ideas. To deter plagiarism and ensure appropriate use of resources in student research and learning, the University subscribes to plagiarism prevention services. Faculty may request students submit their written work electronically to these plagiarism prevention services to verify that when ideas of others are used, they are cited appropriately.

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

Original Work

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

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy for Graduate School of Nursing

The School of Nursing encourages innovation and the responsible use of emerging technologies while upholding academic integrity, ethical standards, and professional accountability. Artificial Intelligence (AI) platforms may be ethically used as tools to support brainstorming, idea generation, grammar, organization, and translation. Faculty reserve the right to limit or prohibit the use of AI in specific courses or assignments. When AI use is permitted, faculty will provide clear guidance emphasizing that these tools are intended to assist—not replace—students’ critical thinking and original work. Students are required to identify and acknowledge all AI-assisted content in accordance with APA 7th edition guidelines and must complete a generative AI attestation for each assignment where AI use is permitted. Upon request, students must also provide evidence or copies of any AI-assisted work within 24 hours for faculty review. Submitting AI-generated text, such as paragraphs, sections, or full assignments, as one’s own constitutes academic dishonesty and will be addressed under the institution’s academic integrity policies. AI tools may not be used for clinical documentation or clinical decision-making unless explicitly authorized by faculty. All clinical work must reflect the student’s own knowledge, reasoning, and adherence to evidence-based practice. Students must comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and are strictly prohibited from entering any patient or protected health information into AI platforms. Violations of this policy will be managed in accordance with institutional guidelines governing academic integrity and professional conduct.

Recording

Voice and/or video recording of meetings, class sessions, conversations, and simulations is prohibited without the awareness of all parties and prior approval of faculty or administration. Recording without permission may constitute a professional comportment, academic integrity or code of conduct violation.

Remediation Opportunities

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

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

APA Writing Style

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

Graduate Portfolio

A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that reflects or provides evidence of student efforts, progress, and achievement toward attainment of learning outcomes based on articulated competence (Miller, 2009) and it is a requirement of graduate nursing programs. Students should consider the development of their portfolio as a springboard for future advanced practice and further

education. Information regarding competencies, work history and licensure/certification, examples of scholarly work, etc., should be contained within the portfolio and can be used in preparing for the certification examination, seeking employment, or as a requirement for future educational preparation. Students are encouraged to develop a comprehensive portfolio to showcase their achievements.

Progression

Graduate students must earn a minimum final grade B (GPA of 3.0) in each nursing course to progress in the program. All courses must be taken with consideration of pre or co requisites.

When students are unsuccessful in passing a course with a minimum grade of B (GPA of 3.0), they must retake the failed course the following semester.

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

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

Incomplete Grades

The University Catalog details the Incomplete Grade Policy ([MCPHS Catalog](#)). This policy is also included below.

Courses with a grade of Incomplete must be completed within three weeks of the new semester following the academic term (including summer sessions) in which the Incomplete grade was assigned, or the grade automatically becomes an F.

The course coordinator is responsible for notifying the Office of the Registrar regarding any student who has been granted additional time for coursework completion. The course coordinator must specify the approved extended time period.

Out of Sequence Status

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

Content Validation

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

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

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

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

Leave of Absence

MCPHS recognizes that there are situations when a student may require a leave of absence (LOA). Such leaves are granted for a **maximum of one academic year except** those granted for military service.

The student must meet with their Program Track Director or the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs or designee regarding the reason(s) for requesting the LOA and the ramifications of taking a LOA. LOA approval or denial is determined by the Program Track Director or the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs on a case-by-case basis. See the [MCPHS Catalog](#) for additional information. Students on a LOA are *not* eligible for MCPHS Services.

After the initial meeting, the student must submit a LOA request through the Student Success Hub within 1 week (5 business days):

- a. the student,
- b. Academic Dean or designee,
- c. Student Financial Services, and
- d. Immigration Services representative (for international students).

The Associate Dean of Graduate Programs or designee will notify the student within 1 week (or 5 business days) of the LOA with finalized LOA requirements via the student's MCPHS email account.

Students who take a leave after the designated add/drop period will receive course grade(s) of W. **For information on a Health/Medical LOA, please see the Health/Medical Leave of Absence section in the MCPHS Catalog.*

Students considering taking a LOA must be aware that they are subject to any curricular changes that have occurred in the Graduate Program during the LOA.

An updated Program Plan will be provided to the student upon return to the program.

Return from Leave of Absence

Students who wish to return from LOA must complete *the Intent to Return from LOA* form in the Student Success Hub and notify the Program Track Director or designee no later than thirty (30) days from the start of the desired semester return date. A review of the program of study will take place and be updated if needed.

Students who intend to return from a LOA must also review and adhere to applicable school/program specific policies in addition to the general policy outlined herein. A student who fails to return during the granted LOA period will be administratively withdrawn from the program and must apply for readmission.

Probation/Dismissal

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

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

Academic Warning

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

- The course instructor
- The clinical instructor
- The Center for Academic Success and Enrichment (academic advising and services)
- The MCPHS Writing Center
- MCPHS Counseling Services

Certification Examination

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

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

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

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

NP Certification Review Reimbursement

It is strongly recommended that students participate in an NP Certification review course prior to sitting for the Certification Exam.

In our ongoing support of your success in becoming a certified nurse practitioner, the MCPHS School of Nursing reimburses graduates from our program for the cost of attending a Certification Review course up to \$500. MCPHS reimbursement covers a standard review course (**self-study bundles and test questions (Q banks) are not reimbursed**).

To request reimbursement, submit the following documents to the SON Administrative Assistant, Graduate Programs:

- Proof of course completion
- Payment receipt (must include student name, review course company name, course purchased, and proof of payment method (attached as a file, not embedded in the email))
- Student mailing address

*Please note that reimbursement may take 3-6 weeks to process.

Graduation

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

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

Communication

Chain of Command

In the event a student in the SON needs to communicate a concern, need, or issue relating to courses/clinical expectations/experiences, the student is asked to follow the appropriate chain of command as outlined below.

Step 1:	Course/Clinical faculty
Step 2:	Course Coordinator or Clinical Coordinator
Step 3:	Program Track Director
Step 4:	Associate Dean for Graduate Programs
Step 5:	Dean/Chief Nurse Administrator * The decision of the Dean/Chief Nurse Administrator is final.

Formal Complaints

MCPHS is firmly committed to ensuring an environment free of harassment and/or discrimination. The University Policy regarding formal complaints can be found in the [University Course Catalog](#).

MCPHS Online Complaint Resolution

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

Disappearing

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

Change in Program

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

The process to request a Change of Program is:

- Contact the Director of Academic Operations to obtain the Change of Program form
- The student will submit the Change of Program form to the Director of Academic Operations.
- The student must contact the Program Track Director of the desired track to discuss transfer
- Once all feedback is received the Director of Academic Operations will process the Change of Program form.

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

Program Withdrawal

A graduate student wishing to withdraw from the MSN or CAGS program must complete a university withdrawal request form in the Student Success Hub: <http://www.tinyurl.com/UW-MCPHS>.

Students wishing to withdraw from MCPHS must meet with their Program Track Director, the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs or designee regarding the reason(s) for requesting the withdrawal, and the ramifications of program withdrawal.

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

Attendance Policies

MCPHS supports a learner-centered environment. Completing online assignments & exams as scheduled & attendance in clinical learning experiences directly correlate with successful course completion & represents basic professional behavior. Therefore, students of the School of Nursing are responsible to engage in their own learning & professional comportment. In the event that a student anticipates missing or unexpectedly misses a course requirement such as assignment, exam, clinical day or seminar, in addition to communicating directly with the course and/or clinical faculty, the student should refer to the Documented/Excused Absence Request Policy located in the University Student Handbook, and follow the steps outlined within.

Absence in Online Program

Online coursework is asynchronous. Assignment due dates are published in advance via the course syllabus to allow ample advance notice. Students are expected to complete coursework and submit assignments on time. Excused/Documented Absences and extensions are only granted for reasons outlined in the University Documented Absence Policy. Should an unexpected absence or need for an assignment extension occur, students are to adhere to the procedure below:

- For a one-day absence: Contact the course faculty to request a documented/excused absence.
- For absences lasting more than one day: Students seeking an extended documented/excused absence are encouraged to review the University policy as above and follow the online request process at:
https://forms.cloud.microsoft/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=F9EzdcHihkmZOIZfqZaC501XNiW7CJFjDSI_8ucML9UMEIMQzRKUU9HT0tES0VQN1NKVkJaTTFHUSQIQCN0PWcu&route=shorturl.

Social absences and travel are not approved reasons for excused absences.

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

Students are expected to abide by instructions in each course syllabus regarding student responsibilities related to class absences. Students who fail to do so may be ineligible to receive an excused absence – regardless of the reason for the absence. With respect to completion of work missed, if an acceptable

agreement between the student and professor(s) cannot be reached, the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs and/or Dean of Nursing will serve as arbitrator.

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

Attendance Policy for Online Courses – General Statement

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

Punctuality

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

Absence from Examinations

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

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

MSN Programs of Study

Family Nurse Practitioner

Characteristics and Competencies of the Family Nurse Practitioner Graduate

A graduate of the MCPHS FNP track will display:

- Knowledge base that is sound with foundational skill in providing primary care to individuals and families across the lifespan.
- Insight and understanding of the role of the advanced practice nurse, and the professional and political issues related to the role.

- Recognize and understand the scope of advanced practice nurse as a family primary care provider.
- Recognize the advanced practice role's responsibility and practice within an interprofessional healthcare team.

FNP Standard Curriculum for Students Enrolled Fall 2025 and Beyond

Semester	Course Name	Credits
Prior to Semester 1 start	NUR 700 Residency I: Student Orientation (synchronous online)	0 Program requirement
1	NUR 720 Introduction to Graduate Studies	1
	NUR 724 Advanced Physiology and Pathophysiology	3
	NUR 722 Nurse Practitioner Role and Professional Identity Development	2
		Subtotal 6
Semester	Course Name	Credits
2	NUR 726 Advanced Pharmacology for the Nurse Practitioner	3
	NUR 730 Translation of Evidence to Inform NP Practice	3
	NUR 732 Advanced Population Health Concepts	2
		Subtotal 8
Semester	Course Name	Credits
3	NUR 740 Advanced Health Assessment (includes 1 credit of lab)	4
	NUR 808 Foundations of Primary Care and Diagnostics	2
		Subtotal 6
Semester	Course Name	Credits
4	NUR 804 Quality and Leadership for Advanced Practice	2
	NUR 818 Family Primary Care I	5
		Subtotal 7
After completing semester 4 courses	NUR 800 Residency II: Clinical Preparedness (held on Worcester Campus)	0 Program requirement
Semester	Course Name	Credits
5	NUR 819 Family Primary Care II	5
		Subtotal 5
Semester	Course Name	Credits
6	NUR 820 FNP Clinical Experiential Hours I (375 Clinical hrs. -25 hrs. per week)	5

		Subtotal 5
After completing semester 6 courses	NUR 803: Residency III: Transition to Practice (held on the Worcester campus)	0 Program requirement
Semester	Course Name	Credits
7	NUR 821 FNP Clinical Experiential Hours II (375 Clinical hrs. -25 hrs. per week)	5
		Subtotal 5
		Total Credits 42

FNP Standard Curriculum for Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025

Mandatory 1 st Orientation/Residency Attendance prior to starting program					
Year 1, First Semester		Credits	Contact Hours/ Week		Total NUR Lab/Clinical
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/Clinical	
NUR 701	Professional Role Development for Advanced Practice Nursing *course retired	3	3	N/A	N/A
NUR 706	Advanced Pathophysiology *course retired	3	3	N/A	N/A
Year 1, Second Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total NUR Lab/Clinical
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/Clinical	
NUR 702	Human Diversity, Social, and Policy Issues *course retired	3	3	N/A	N/A
NUR 707	Advanced Pharmacology *course retired	3	3	N/A	N/A
Year 1, Third Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total NUR Lab/Clinical
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/Clinical	
NUR 703	Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan *course retired	5	3	2	75
NUR 801	Survey of Telemedicine *course retired	1	1	N/A	N/A
Mandatory 2 nd Residency Attendance					
Year 2, Fourth Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total NUR Lab/Clinical
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/Clinical	
NUR 810	Family Primary Care II (Adult)	6	3	3	225
Year 2, Fifth Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total NUR Lab/Clinical
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/Clinical	
NUR 809	Family Primary Care I (OB/GYN/Pedi)	6	3	3	225

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

Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) FNP Track

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

Curriculum

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

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

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

CAGS FNP Core Courses for Students Enrolled Fall 2025 and Beyond

Course Name	Credits
NUR 724 Advanced Physiology and Pathophysiology	3
NUR 726 Advanced Pharmacology for the Nurse Practitioner	3
NUR 740 Advanced Health Assessment (includes one lab credit)	4

NUR 722 Nurse Practitioner Role and Professional Identity Development	2
NUR 730 Translation of Evidence to Inform NP Practice	3
NUR 804 Quality and Leadership Skills and Competencies for Advanced Practice	2

CAGS FNP Track Courses for Students Enrolled Fall 2025 and Beyond

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

CAGS FNP Core Courses for Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025

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

CAGS FNP Track Courses for Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025

Course Name	Credits
NUR 810 Family Primary Care II (Adult) (includes 225 clinical hours)	6
NUR 809 Family Primary Care I (OB/GYN/Peds) (includes 225 clinical hours)	3

NUR 811 Family Primary Care III (Geri) (includes 225 clinical hours)	1
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Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

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

Graduates of the MCPHS PMHNP program will:

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

Adapted from NONPF and APNA Competencies

PMHNP Standard Curriculum for Students Enrolled Fall 2025 and beyond

Semester	Course Name	Credits
Prior to Semester 1 start	NUR 700 Residency I: Student Orientation (synchronous online)	0 Program requirement
1	NUR 720 Introduction to Graduate Studies	1
	NUR 724 Advanced Physiology and Pathophysiology	3
	NUR 722 Nurse Practitioner Role and Professional Identity Development	2
		Subtotal 6
Semester	Course Name	Credits
2	NUR 726 Advanced Pharmacology for the Nurse Practitioner	3
	NUR 730 Translation of Evidence to Inform NP Practice	3
	NUR 732 Advanced Population Health Concepts	2
		Subtotal 8
Semester	Course Name	Credits
3	NUR 740 Advanced Health Assessment (includes one lab credit)	4
	NUR 812 Management of Psychiatric Mental Health Conditions: Psychopharmacology and Psychotherapeutics	2

		Subtotal 6
Semester	Course Name	Credits
4	NUR 804 Quality and Leadership Skills and Competencies for Advanced Practice	2
	NUR 813 Psychiatric Mental Health Provider I	5
		Subtotal 7
After completing semester 4 courses	NUR 800 Residency II: Clinical Preparedness (held on Worcester Campus)	0 Program requirement
Semester	Course Name	Credits
5	NUR 814 Psychiatric Mental Health Provider II	5
		Subtotal 5
Semester	Course Name	Credits
6	NUR 815 PMHNP Clinical Experiential Hours I (375 Clinical hrs. -25 hrs. per week)	5
After completing semester 6 courses	NUR 803 Residency III: Transition to Practice (held on the Worcester campus)	0 Program requirement
Semester	Course Name	Credits
7	NUR 817 PMHNP Clinical Experiential Hours II (375 Clinical hrs. -25 hrs. per week)	5
		Subtotal 5
		Total Credits 42

PMHNP Standard Curriculum for Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025

Year 1, First Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total NUR Lab/ Clinical
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	
RES1	Mandatory 1 st Orientation/Residency Attendance prior to beginning program				
NUR 701	Professional Role Development for Advanced Practice Nursing *course retired	3	3	N/A	N/A
NUR 706	Advanced Pathophysiology *course retired	3	3	N/A	N/A
Year 1, Second Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total NUR Lab/ Clinical
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	
NUR 702	Human Diversity, Social, and Policy Issues *course retired	3	3	N/A	N/A

NUR 707	Advanced Pharmacology *course retired	3	3	N/A	N/A
Year 1, Third Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
NUR 703	Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan *course retired	5	3	2	75
NUR 801	Survey of Telemedicine *course retired	1	1	N/A	
RES2	Mandatory 2 nd Residency Attendance				
Year 2, Fourth Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
NUR 805	Basic Counseling Theory and Techniques for the PMHNP	3	3	N/A	
NUR 805C	Basic Counseling Theory and Techniques for the PMHNP Clinical	1		1	75
NUR 715	Psychopharmacology for Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner	3	3	N/A	N/A
Year 2, Fifth Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
NUR 806	PMHNP I	3	3		
NUR 806C	PMHNP I	4		4	300
NUR 816	Scholarship for Advanced Nursing: Building an Evidence-Based Practice	3	3	N/A	N/A
Year 2, Sixth Semester		Credits	Contact Hours / Week		Total
Course	Title	(Semester Hours)	Class	Lab/ Clinical	NUR Lab/ Clinical
NUR 807	PMHNP II	3	3		
NUR 807C	PMHNP II Clinical	4		4	300
NUR 823	Translating & Integrating Scholarship Practicum	3	3	N/A	N/A
RES3	Mandatory 3 rd Residency Attendance				
Total Credits					45

Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) PMHNP Track

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

Curriculum

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

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

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

CAGS PMHNP Core Courses for Students Enrolled Fall 2025 and Beyond

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

CAGS PMHNP Track Courses for Students Enrolled Fall 2025 and Beyond

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

NUR 817 PMHNP Clinical Experiential Hours II (375 Clinical hrs. -25 hrs. per week)	5
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CAGS PMHNP Core Courses for Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025

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

CAGS PMHNP Track Courses for Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2025

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

Residency

As an invaluable part of the graduate experience, students participate in one online and two on-campus (MCPS- Worcester) residencies to deepen understanding of key concepts and provide opportunities for collaboration, networking and connection with peers, faculty, and additional field experts. Students participate in simulated clinical experiences during residencies. Simulation allows students the

opportunity to practice and refine competency in interviewing, screening, assessment, diagnosis, therapeutic communication, and counseling in a controlled, supportive environment.

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

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

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

Residency attendance is mandatory and must be completed to satisfy matriculation and graduation requirements for the graduate programs. Students unable to attend the Nursing Residency 2 or Nursing Residency 3 must attend residency during the immediate subsequent semester, which will delay program progression. Students who do not attend Residency I, New Student Orientation, will not be permitted to begin the program until the requirement has been met.

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

Interprofessional Educational Experiences

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

Palliative Care Competencies Modules

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

Course Descriptions

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

Student Responsibility for Contents of the MSN Handbook

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

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

****Please refer to the Clinical Student Handbook, MSN and CAGS Programs for clinical policies and procedures***