

Program Overview: Masters of Science in Nursing



About This Major . . .

Masters of Science in Nursing

The Masters of Science in Nursing (MSN) program is designed to prepare nurses for advanced nursing practice roles as a leader and educator in health care or academic settings. Graduates are prepared to formulate clinical, administrative, or policy decisions to promote health with patients experiencing wellness, acute illness, or chronic illness, and to develop, manage, and evaluate the care within communities and health care systems.

The MSN program requires completion of 36 credits, including 21 credit hours of core courses giving students a foundation in advanced nursing practice knowledge. Students can choose from three 15-credit cognates (Advanced Nursing, Nurse Educator, or Nursing Leadership and Administration). The final semester includes a three-credit capstone course which requires a clinical practicum and completion of a service learning project.

The MSN program is fully accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

All CMU graduates are expected to demonstrate proficiency in critical thinking, communication fluency, quantitative fluency, and specialized knowledge/applied learning.

In addition to these campus-wide student learning outcomes, MSN graduates will be able to:

1. Synthesize advanced theoretical, empirical, and ethical knowledge to engage in systematic critical inquiry for a chosen domain of nursing.
2. Incorporate leadership skills and behaviors to foster best practices, promote professional growth, inter-professional collaboration, and positive change in people and systems within health care and education.
3. Apply current evidence-based knowledge to inform and/or initiate change in educational, clinical, and organizational environments.
4. Appraise the impact of social determinants, culture, diversity, values, and globalization in the delivery of population health.
5. Develop strategies to improve individual and population health outcomes based on health promotion and disease reduction principles.
6. Evaluate quality improvement and safety initiatives, accountability and communication to improve patient outcomes.
7. Utilize information systems, technology, and patient data for ethical, clinical decision-making that promotes cost effectiveness and positive health care outcomes.
8. Advocate for policies to improve the health outcomes of populations and the quality of the health care delivery system as it impacts professional nursing practice.

Program Highlights:

Advance Your Education

The MSN program is designed for students already possessing a baccalaureate degree in nursing. MSN graduates will be prepared to advance to higher levels of nursing education including Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) or Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing (PhD) programs.

Enjoy Flexibility

The curriculum is delivered in a hybrid format, providing flexibility for students to remain in their current work positions and home communities using online course delivery methods. This format also provides opportunities for personal interaction with faculty and peers in focused intensive sessions at selected points during each semester.

Find Your Path

This program is structured to provide a foundation for career paths for future leaders in advanced nursing practice.

Be a Leader

Graduates are prepared to practice as nurse educators and leaders with the critical thinking skills and knowledge necessary to promote the profession of nursing through guiding clinical practice, teaching, research, program development and implementation, and scholarship.

Program Requirements

A student must follow CMU graduation requirements by completing 36 semester credit hours, including three-credits of capstone coursework at the 500-course level. Graduate students develop a degree plan with the program director that will be the basis for registration each semester. The program director and faculty are available to assist students as they progress through the program, but each student is ultimately responsible for his/her own education and contacting their program director or faculty as needed. In general, CMU's programs of study are based on two curriculum types:

1. Essential Learning

The program prepares nurses to provide expert leadership in the delivery of healthcare services and programs to individuals, families, and communities across the lifespan in a variety of settings. Completing courses at CMU affords a graduate nursing student the opportunity to study and engage in clinical practice in both urban and rural settings.

2. What You Will Study in This Major

Graduates are prepared to pursue new and innovative roles that result from health care reform and changes in an evolving and global health care system. Numerous opportunities exist for the student to assist in further developing the nation's healthcare system through student experiences and culminating projects. Emphasis is placed on providing students with the advanced theoretical knowledge and practice skills needed to undertake clinical leadership in a variety of health care settings. Evidence-based practice, outcomes management, quality improvement, and clinical decision-making are highlighted.

Core Knowledge

The core knowledge component requires 12 credit hours including:

- Nursing Research Methods
- Health Information Systems
- Organizational Leadership
- Health Policy

Advanced Practice Core

The advanced practice core courses (nine credit hours) each have integrated clinical component requirements and cover the following topics:

- Pathophysiologic Concepts
- Pharmacology for Advanced Nurse Practitioners
- Advanced Health Assessment

Capstone

Three credit hour capstone project.

Oral Comprehensive Exam

Oral and written comprehensive defense.

Other Requirements

A graduate of the MSN program must complete the prescribed course of study with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher within four (4) years.

Choose a Cognate:

Nine credit hours of the program are based on which cognate you choose.

Advanced Practice Cognate:

- Chronic Illness Management
- Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
- Quality Improvement

Nursing Education Cognate:

- Teaching Strategies for the Nurse Educator
- Curriculum Design/Evaluation
- Nurse Educator Practicum

Nursing Leadership and Administration Cognate:

- Organizational Theory and Behavior
- Advanced Business Law and Ethics
- Managerial Economics