

Pennsylvania Western University
School of Nursing

Doctor of Nursing Practice
Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)
Nursing Administration & Leadership
Family Nurse Practitioner



GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK
Academic Year 2026-2027

***DISCLAIMER:** Graduate Student Policies may be updated or revised, and all students will be notified of any substantive changes.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Graduate Program Contact Information	4
Email communication	4
PennWest Global Online	4
PennWest Libraries	4
PennWest Bookstores	4
Student Accounts and Billing	4
Military and Veteran Services and Support	4
Academic Advising	4
PennWest Academic Calendar	4
PennWest Academic Policies	4
Academic Integrity	
PennWest Tuition and Aid	5
Information Technology Services	5
D2L Brightspace	5
Global Online Technical Requirements	5
Writing Support	5
Title IX and Non-discrimination Statement	5
Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion	5
Students with disabilities	5
Accreditation Statement	5
Sigma Chapter	6
Mission Statements	7
University	7
Department of Nursing	7
MSN Program Goals	7
Program Learning Outcomes	7-9
MSN Program	7-9
MSN in Nursing Administration and Leadership Program	7-9
MSN Family Nurse Practitioner	7-9
DNP	10
Programs	
MSN in Nursing Administration and Leadership Program	11-18
MSN Family Nurse Practitioner	19-39
DNP	40-54
Graduate Policies	55-64
Retention policies	56
MSN Progression requirements	57-58
Formal written complaints	59
Practicum and Clinical course requirements	60
Grading Policies for graduate courses	61
Academic Integrity Policy	62
Drug Policy	63-64
Appendices	
Appendix A – Steps in obtaining legal certification and prescriptive authority in PA	66
Appendix B – Academic Integrity Policy	67
Appendix C – Fundamental Requirements	68-71
Appendix D – DNP Portfolio	72-74
Appendix E – Format for DNP Project Title Page	75

Departmental Information

PennWest School of Nursing

Associate Dean Nicole Evanick (evanick@pennwest.edu)

Department Chair Melanie Best (mbest@pennwest.edu)

Assistant Chair Alexis Parks (aparks@pennwest.edu)

Assistant Chair and Graduate Coordinator Emilie Kennedy (ekennedy@pennwest.edu)

Graduate Faculty

Please contact PennWest Nursing Department secretaries for a list of faculty members including their areas of expertise.

Heather Whitney(hwhitney@pennwest.edu)

Tina Simpson (simpson_c@pennwest.edu)

Rebecca Bish (bish_r@pennwest.edu)

Email

Check your PennWest University e-mail account (several times per week) as this is the e-mail that is registered in the course e-mail system and will be used by University Administration, faculty, and classmates to communicate.

[PennWest Global Online](#)

[PennWest University Libraries](#)

PennWest Book stores

[PennWest Cal](#)

[PennWest Clarion](#)

[PennWest Edinboro](#)

Student Accounts and Billing

[Student Accounts](#)

Military and Veteran Services and Support

[PennWest Cal](#)

[PennWest Clarion](#)

[PennWest Edinboro](#)

Academic Advising

Admissions staff will assign advisors; check your PennWest student profile or Starfish for the name and email of your advisor. If you do not have one assigned, please contact

Tina Simpson at simpson_c@pennwest.edu to inform them.

[PennWest Academic Calendar](#)

[PennWest Academic Policies](#)

[PennWest University AI Policy](#)

PennWest Tuition and Aid

Information Technology Services

Submit a ticket to get help

Contacts

California Campus - 724-938-5911

Clarion Campus - 814-393-2640

Edinboro Campus - 814-732-2111

techsupport@pennwest.edu

D2L Brightspace

The D2L Help Desk offers 24/7 support via toll free number at 1-866-877-6398. You can also click on “Get Help?” bubble in the lower right-hand corner of any D2L page. When you click on it you will be connected to the Brightspace Virtual Assistant.

Global Online Technical Requirements

Writing Support

Services include individual consultation with student writers; face-to-face writing consultations; online writing consultations (synchronous and asynchronous); writing workshops and assistance to ESL students. All students can use the writing support by scheduling an appointment in Starfish.

APA style is required for all written assignments in the MSN program. Students are required to write effectively in Discussion Forums and in written assignments.

- APA Style Guide www.apastyle.org
- Online Writing and Learning Center at Purdue [APA Style at OWL at Purdue](#)

<https://www.pennwest.edu/about/news/2024/edinboro-writing-center-2024.php>

Title IX & Non-discrimination Statement

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Students with Disabilities

Students reserve the right to decide when to self-identify and when to request accommodations. Students requesting approval for reasonable accommodations should contact the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Students are expected to adhere to OSD procedures for self-identifying, providing documentation and requesting accommodations in a timely manner.

Students will present the OSD Accommodation Approval Notice to faculty when requesting accommodations that involve the faculty.

Accreditation Statement

Pennsylvania Western University of Pennsylvania's MSN in Administration and Leadership is accredited by Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). While we are in transition to Penn West, we are maintaining both accreditations; however, we will be converting to one accreditor over the next year.

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)
655 K Street, NW, Suite 750
Washington, DC 20001
Phone (202)887-6791
Fax (202)887-8476

Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)
3390 Peachtree Rd. NE Suite 1400
Atlanta Ga, 30326
Phone (404) 975-5000

Sigma Chapter

Sigma Theta Tau International ([STTI](#)) was founded in 1922 by six nurses at the Indiana University Training School for Nurses, now the Indiana University School of Nursing in Indianapolis, IN. Sigma Theta Tau is derived from the Greek words of love, courage and honor. The Mu Xi Chapter at Pennsylvania Western University is one of 470 international chapters.

There are two ways that you can become a member of Mu Xi –as a student or community leader.

MSN Students

- Enrolled in graduate nursing program at Pennsylvania Western University
- Completed at least 8 credits (1/4 of the MSN curriculum)
- GPA of 3.5 or better
- Be recommended by university faculty

To join as a Nurse Leader – For nurses who have not been previously inducted as a nursing student and are not currently enrolled in a nursing program

- Be legally recognized to practice nursing in his/her country
- Have a minimum of a baccalaureate degree or the equivalent in any field
- Demonstrate achievement in nursing

Graduate Nursing Mission, Goals, Student Learning Outcomes

University Mission

Penn West Mission: Penn West encompasses campuses at California, Clarion and Edinboro. Penn West empowers students to build meaningful lives through a broad array of accredited programs, career focused learning and an unwavering focus on student success. A comprehensive institution, Penn West provides accessible, affordable higher education on its three premier residential campuses in western Pennsylvania and its global virtual campus.

Penn West Department of Nursing Mission Statement

The mission of the Penn West Nursing programs is to provide affordable, high-quality education from entry level nursing practice to the doctorate, which prepares graduates to meet the holistic health care needs of individuals, families, and communities.

MSN PROGRAM GOALS

The MSN program will produce graduates who:

1. Integrate advanced knowledge and skills in the specialty role.
2. Synthesize critical thinking, research, and theoretical knowledge in order to engage in scientific inquiry.
3. Possess a foundation for certification in the nursing specialty.
4. Are prepared for doctoral study.

Upon completion of the Penn West MSN nursing program students will be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate person-centered professional nursing care, supported by evolving nursing knowledge, liberal arts, the sciences and other sources that is holistic, individualized, and evidence-based.**

NP Domain 1: Knowledge of Practice

The nurse practitioner integrates, translates, and applies established and evolving scientific knowledge from diverse sources as the basis for ethical clinical judgement, innovation, and diagnostic reasoning.

NP Domain 2: Person-Centered Care

The nurse practitioner uses evidence-based and best practices to design, manage, and evaluate comprehensive person-centered care that is within the regulatory and educational scope of practice. Fundamental to person-centered care is respect for diversity, differences, preferences, values, needs, resources and determinates of health unique to the individual.

MSN AONE Competencies

- 1. Knowledge- clinical practice knowledge, delivery models/work design, health care economics & policy, governance, evidence-based practice/outcome measurement and research, patient safety, performance improvement/metrics, risk management.**

2. Professionalism- Personal & Professional Accountability, career planning, ethics, advocacy.

2) Create evidence-based strategies that promote the well-being of culturally diverse individuals, families, vulnerable populations, and communities.

NP Domain 3: Population Health

The nurse practitioner partners, across the care continuum, with public health, healthcare systems, community, academic community, governmental, and other entities to integrate foundational NP knowledge into culturally competent practices to increase health promotion and disease prevention strategies in effect the care of populations.

NP Domain 4: Practice Scholarship and Translational Science

The nurse practitioner generates, appraises, synthesizes, translates, integrates, and disseminates knowledge to improve person-centered health and systems of care.

MSN AONE Competencies

- Leadership-Foundational thinking skill, personal journey disciplines, systems thinking, succession planning, and change management.
- Professionalism- Personal & Professional Accountability, career planning, ethics, advocacy.
- **Establish collaboration with an interdisciplinary team as well as patients, families, or communities to optimize the quality and safety of healthcare outcomes.**

NP Domain 5: Quality and Safety

The nurse practitioner utilizes knowledge and principles of translational and improvement science methodologies to improve quality and safety for providers, patients, populations, and systems of care.

NP Domain 6: Interprofessional Collaboration

The nurse practitioner collaborates with the interprofessional team to provide care through meaningful communication and active participation in person-centered and population-centered care.

MSN AONE Competencies

1.Communication- effective communication, relationship management, influencing behaviors, diversity, community involvement, medical/staff relationships, academic relationships.

- Leadership-Foundational thinking skill, personal journey disciplines, systems thinking, succession planning, and change management.

- Professionalism- Personal & Professional Accountability, career planning, ethics, advocacy.

5.Business Skills-Financial management, human resource management, strategic management, information management and technology.

4) Utilize communication technologies and informatics to gather data, drive decision making, and improve the delivery of healthcare services in alignment with professional and regulatory standards.

NP Domain 7: Health Systems

The nurse practitioner demonstrates organizational and systems leadership to improve healthcare outcome.

NP Domain 8: Technology and Information Literacy

The nurse practitioner envisions, appraises, and utilizes informatics and healthcare technologies to deliver care.

MSN AONE Competencies

1. Communication- effective communication, relationship management, influencing behaviors, diversity, community involvement, medical/staff relationships, academic relationships.

1. Knowledge- clinical practice knowledge, delivery models/work design, health care economics & policy, governance, evidence-based practice/outcome measurement and research, patient safety, performance improvement/metrics, risk management.

2. Leadership-Foundational thinking skill, personal journey disciplines, systems thinking, succession planning, and change management.

3. Professionalism- Personal & Professional Accountability, career planning, ethics, advocacy.

5. Business Skills- Financial management, human resource management, strategic management, information management and technology.

5) Demonstrate a professional identity that embodies accountability, ethical principles, and self- reflection that is aligned with nursing's values to promote personal health, well-being, lifelong learning, and leadership. (Domains 9 and 10)

NP Domain 9: Professional Acumen

The nurse practitioner demonstrates the attributes and perspectives of the nursing profession and adherence to ethical principles while functioning as a committed equal partner of the interprofessional health care team.

NP Domain 10: Personal and Professional Leadership

The nurse practitioner participates in professional and personal growth activities to develop a sustainable progression toward professional and interpersonal maturity, improved resilience, and robust leadership capacity.

MSN AONE Competencies

1. Communication- effective communication, relationship management, influencing behaviors, diversity, community involvement, medical/staff relationships, academic relationships.

- Knowledge- clinical practice knowledge, delivery models/work design, health care economics & policy, governance, evidence-based practice/outcome measurement and research, patient safety, performance improvement/metrics, risk management.

- Leadership-Foundational thinking skill, personal journey disciplines, systems thinking, succession planning, and change management.

- Professionalism- Personal & Professional Accountability, career planning, ethics, advocacy.

5. Business Skills- Financial management, human resource management, strategic management, information management and technology.

DNP PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The terminal learning outcomes for the PennWest University DNP program are to prepare advanced practice nurses to be able to:

1. Apply clinical scholarship through advanced nursing practice within complex health systems.
 - AACN DNP Essentials I, II, III, V, VI, VII, VIII
2. Design, implement, analyze, and disseminate research that translates evidence to practice.
 - AACN DNP Essentials I, III, IV, V, VIII
3. Demonstrate advanced leadership skills for empowering and influencing others to bring about change.
 - AACN DNP Essentials II, III, V, VI, VII
4. Utilize information and management systems to support evidence-based practice.
 - AACN DNP Essentials II, III, IV
5. Establish inter-professional relationships to provide comprehensive delivery of advanced practice nursing.
 - AACN DNP Essentials II, III, VI, VIII

Pennsylvania Western University
Master of Science in Nursing Administration and Leadership



MSN CURRICULUM - Nursing Administration and Leadership Program

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program in Nursing Administration and Leadership is 30 credits and builds on the BSN program. There is one pre-requisite/co-requisite statistics 3-credit course for admission into the MSN program, completed at the undergraduate level.

All MSN students in the Nursing Administration and Leadership program are required to complete 12-credits of core courses, 6-credits of cognate courses to support their area of specialization, and 12-credits of specialty courses, for a total of 30 credits. NUR 7115 Nursing Administration Role Practicum is designed as a capstone course/practicum that is taken as the last course in the program. This is 6-credit practicum experience. Students work with qualified nurse administrators and leaders as their preceptors.

The practicum hours can be used in combination with other graduate practicum hours towards attaining a DNP.

In addition, graduates can seek from the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) and American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE).

CORE (12 credits)

NURS 6010 Theory & Research in Nursing
NURS 6012 Health Policy in Nursing
NURS 6013 Information Systems in Healthcare Organizations
NURS 6014 Population Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

COGNATES (6 credits)

NURS 7140 Legal Aspects of Health Care Administration
NURS 7150 Financial Management in Non-Profit Healthcare Organizations

SPECIALTY (12 credits)

NURS 7110 Nursing Organization & Leadership Theory
NURS 7120 Nursing Administration & Leadership Role
NURS 7115 Nursing Administration Role Practicum

MSN Leadership and Administration (From Fall 2025 Forward)

CORE (12 credits)

NURS 6019 Evidence Based Practice
NURS 6055 Health Policy & Professional Nursing
NURS 6013 Information Systems in Healthcare Organizations
NURS 6044 Health Promotion within the Community

COGNATES (6 credits)

NURS 7140 Legal Aspects of Health Care Administration

NURS 7150 Financial Management in Non-Profit Healthcare Organizations

SPECIALTY (12 credits)

NURS 7110 Nursing Organization & Leadership Theory

NURS 7120 Nursing Administration & Leadership Role

NURS 7115 Nursing Administration Role Practicum

PENN WEST UNIVERSITY
MSN PROGRAM COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

NURS 6019: EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE 3 credits

In this course, students will translate evidence-based practice (EBP) for quality nursing care based on current research and knowledge. Emphasis will include the use of scholarly inquiry, evaluation of existing nursing practice guidelines and theory to engage in critical analysis and synthesis of best evidence to inform nursing practice. Students will apply evidence-based practices to the role of the MSN professional. Offered spring annually.

NURS 6055 HEALTH POLICY & PROFESSIONAL NURS 3 credits

This course is intended to familiarize graduate nursing students with current healthcare policy, the roles and responsibilities, processes, and strategies that create and support policy-based initiatives in healthcare, and the effect of policy on healthcare. Students will apply the concepts gained in this course in advocacy and leadership roles in search of creative solutions to pervasive issues in health care to culturally diverse populations. Offered summer annually.

NURS 6013 - Information Systems for Nurses in Health Care Organizations 3 credits

This course is designed to introduce students to information systems in health care organizations. Students will examine, evaluate, and utilize a variety of information systems available to the nurse administrator and leader in health care organizations. Use of information systems, standardized databases, and statistics needed for population analysis are presented. During the course, students will compare and interact with information management applications related to administration, education, practice and research. Multimedia technology and software will be used for projects related to the students' area of interest. Offered spring annually.

NURS 6044: HEALTH PROMOTION WITHIN THE COMMUNITY 3 credits

This course introduces students to health promotion theory, disease prevention and social determinants of health related to strategies to improve health for diverse populations. Students will assess health risks, services and needs of populations, and analyze data to drive the improvement of care. Students will demonstrate the ability to investigate program(s) focused on improving wellness using an evidence-based risk assessment and interventions using standards of care. Offered fall annually.

NURS 7110 - Nursing Organization & Leadership Theories 3 credits

This course is designed to provide nurse administrators and leaders with an understanding of organization, management, and leadership theories as they apply to today's healthcare delivery systems. In addition, students will explore leadership skills and decision making in the provision of culturally responsive, high-quality nursing care, healthcare team coordination, and oversight and accountability for care delivery and outcomes. Students will demonstrate the ability to develop a strategic plan and incorporate a collaborative team. Offered fall annually.

NURS 7120 - Nursing Administration and Leadership Role 3 credits

This nursing administration and leadership specialty course focuses on health care knowledge and transformational leadership skills and competencies essential to the role development of nurse leaders

and administrators for the 21st century. Students discover how to develop high-performance practice areas and how the leadership role is advanced through mentorship and career development. Contemporary studies and models for leadership competency are explored, and students critically self-assess their own competence, developing action plans in those areas they perceive as deficient. The role of managing one's personal resources in developing leadership competency is addressed. Students also gain competence in managing human resources. Concepts, models and principles of continuous quality improvement, tools and techniques for improving quality and performance are broadened. Students identify a quality topic and plan in preparation for completing the practicum project in NUR 7115. Offered fall annually.

NURS 7140 - Legal Aspects of Health Care Administration 3 credits

This course includes an introduction to the laws, regulations and court decisions covering the employment relationship, including labor-management relations, OSHA, EEOC, ERISA, ADA, etc. Health care law and an overview of practical ways to improve the quality and safe delivery of nursing care in health care organizations will also be reviewed. This course explores the most pressing legal and ethical issues and concerns related to the delivery of patient care, and the administration of nursing services. This course is structured to present theories of ethical practice, as well as issues of the law related to health care delivery. Offered fall annually.

NURS 7150 - Financial Management in Non-Profit Healthcare Organizations 3 credits

This course is intended to prepare students to effectively interact with financial management staff and participate in various aspects of financial control and planning in non-profit health care organizations. Included will be perspectives of financial management in health care, including trends in the industry and the forces that influence the financing of health care organizations. Financial statements, interpretation and analysis of financial reports, and topics such as cost-benefits analysis, budgeting, and capital management will also be addressed. Additional emphasis will be given to cost effectiveness and financial future of health care organizations. Offered summer annually.

NURS 7115 - Nurse Admin Role Practicum 6 credits

This course provides students with the opportunity to synthesize and apply their understanding of nursing administration and leadership within and across complex integrated organizational and institutional boundaries. In this culminating experience, students plan, execute, and evaluate nursing practice within the context of the practice setting(s) or among a specific population of interest within the organization or in communities. Within the practice situation, students enact leadership roles to expand, enhance, and optimize positive outcomes. The learning experience consists of an administrative practicum and online seminars. This culminating experience of the graduate program is designed to provide students with an opportunity to apply the knowledge and competencies acquired throughout the program of study to actual and simulated practicum situations. Offered spring annually.

Pennsylvania Western University

MSN NURSING ADMINISTRATION & LEADERSHIP PROGRESSION PLANS

MSN in Administration and Leadership Full Time, Fall Cohort Start, 5 semesters

Figure 1

FALL: Term 1	SPRING: Term 2	SUMMER: Term 3	FALL: Term 4	SPRING: Term 5
NURS 7110 Nursing Organization and Leadership Theory (3 cr), 1 st 7.5 weeks NURS 6044 Health Promotion & the Community (3 cr), 2 nd 7.5 weeks	NURS 6013 Information Systems for Nurses in Health Care Organizations (3 cr), 1 st 7.5 weeks Nurs 6019 G01 & G02 Evidence Based Practice (3 cr), 2 nd , 7.5 weeks	NURS 6055 Health Policy in Nursing (3 cr), 1 st , 7.5 weeks NURS 7150 Financial Management in Non-profit Health Care Organizations (3 cr), 2 nd , 7.5 weeks	NURS 7140 Legal Aspects of Health Care Administration (3 cr), 1 st , 7.5 weeks NURS 7120 Nursing Administration and Leadership Role (3 cr), 2 nd 7.5 weeks	NURS 7115 Nursing Administration Role Practicum (6 cr), full term, (180 hours clinical practicum)
TOTAL: 6 Credits	TOTAL: 6 Credits	TOTAL: 6 Credits	TOTAL: 6 Credits	TOTAL: 6 Credits

Pennsylvania Western University
MSN IN ADMINISTRATION AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAM POLICIES

MSN POLICY 1 Admission Requirements

MSN Programs in Nursing Administration & Leadership

- Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree (BSN) with a GPA of 3.00 or higher in the undergraduate nursing degree or in the last 60 credits completed (Students with a GPA below 3.00 may apply for conditional admission)
- Official transcripts from an accredited BSN program
- Unencumbered RN licensure in the state in which the applicant is employed in nursing
- Current Resume indicating at least one year of experience working in nursing, preferably nursing management for the Nursing Administration & Leadership program
- An essay to include career goals and objectives as well as a description of how the student plans to use the MSN degree

- **International Global Online Applicants**
 - o Scholastic record must be comparable to those reflected by a 3.00 GPA verified with official transcripts and applicant needs to be licensed in their country of residence
 - o Applicants must submit a credential evaluation from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) for nursing course work and World Education Services (WES) for non-nursing course work

Conditional Admission Requirements

- Conditional Admission may be granted with the following modifications of the Regular Admissions Requirements. Those admitted conditionally based on missing document/s or pre/co-requisites, have up to a maximum of two semesters to satisfy these requirements:
 - o Bachelor's degree with a GPA under 3.00 will be reviewed for a decision
 - o Unofficial transcripts
 - o Deficiencies in Pre/Co-requisite Courses (up to two maximum semesters to satisfy the deficiencies)

Pre/Co-Requisite Courses

- Applicants may remove deficiencies in the following pre/co-requisite courses at Penn West or another accredited institution prior to regular admission or after conditional admission
 - o 3 credits Statistics

Pennsylvania Western University

Master of Science in Nursing Family Nurse Practitioner



INTRODUCTION TO MSN-FNP PROGRAM

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Master of Science in Nursing - Family Nurse Practitioner (MSN-FNP) Program is a graduate level nursing program that prepares graduates to provide primary care across the lifespan in rural and medically under-served communities. The MSN-FNP program is fully accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) and approved by the Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing.

To meet the needs of a large geographic region that includes Pennsylvania, New York, and Ohio, courses are delivered online with the exception of clinical practicum experiences in the student's home community and a limited number of skill labs. The 51-semester hour program can be completed in 3 years of part-time study. Program graduates receive a joint degree granted by both universities and are eligible to sit for national certification as a family nurse practitioner through the American Nurses Credentialing Center or the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Program. Graduates find employment in settings that include community health centers, outpatient clinics, student health and women's health centers, emergency rooms, urgent care centers, and private practices.

VISION

The vision of the MSN Program is that students and faculty will be responsive to the needs of a dynamic health care system as they contribute to the welfare of the region, state, and global community through scholarly activities and advanced nursing practice. The MSN Program will provide the foundation for a life-long process of personal and professional growth as well as for post-graduate education.

CORE VALUES

- Integrity
- Professionalism
- Excellence
- Leadership
- Social justice
- Self-mastery

CURRICULAR THREADS

- Evidence based advanced practice
- Critical thinking
- Systematic inquiry
- Effective communication
- Advocacy

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of the Master of Science in Nursing Program is derived from the philosophies of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Programs of Clarion and Edinboro Universities, which are complementary in nature, and is consistent with the stated missions of both universities.

Human beings reflect diverse cultures and lifestyles as they interrelate with family, community, and social systems. An individual's life experiences influence health beliefs, choices, and practices. Each individual has the right and the responsibility to make decisions affecting health and to be supported in those decisions. Each individual is unified, dynamic and continually interacts with the environment.

Environment is the aggregate of influences that interrelate with individuals. Multiple environmental factors—legal, ethical, political, socio-economic, and historical—affect both the level of health of humans and their ability to acquire health care services. Advanced practice nurses impact health care services and practices through change making endeavors.

Health, as an ever-changing process, encompasses well-being and illness, and is an evolving potential that cannot be quantified. Nursing interfaces with health as nurse professionals work with clients to direct, organize and monitor individuals' progress toward maximum well-being.

Nursing is a consumer-focused profession that addresses the health care needs of individuals and communities. Advanced nursing practice involves inquiry and a variety of ways of knowing. As an evolving discipline with a clinical focus, nursing is grounded in theory and research and encompasses professional standards of practice. The scope of advanced nursing practice remains fluid.

Advanced practice nurses are leaders who function autonomously and interdependently assuming the roles of nurse practitioner, clinical specialist, nurse anesthetist, nurse midwife, nurse educator, and nurse administrator. Nurse practitioners are case managers who are responsible for health promotion, disease prevention, caring/healing, and teaching/coaching through interdisciplinary communication and collaboration. They are qualified to perform acts of medical diagnosis or prescription of medical therapeutic or corrective measures in collaboration with and under the direction of a physician licensed to practice medicine in this Commonwealth (Pennsylvania Code 49§21:251).

Graduate nursing education builds upon the knowledge and skills that individuals obtain in baccalaureate nursing programs and prepares graduates to be critical thinkers and use diagnostic reasoning in their professional role. Learning includes research methodology for application to nursing problems and participation in research studies. The educational process provides for role development and opportunities to apply advanced nursing knowledge and related theories to practice and educational settings.

APPLICATION AND ADMISSION PROCEDURES

A complete application packet includes the following:

- ✓ Completed online application form
- ✓ Non-refundable application fee—payable at the time of online application submission
- ✓ Official transcripts from undergraduate and graduate institutions attended

- ✓ 3.0 GPA BSN
 - ✓ Unencumbered RN license
 - ✓ Statistics course with minimum grade of a C in the last 10 years, Pathophysiology within the last 5 years is recommended
 - ✓ Two recommendation forms
 - ✓ Resume
 - ✓ Copy of registered nurse license in the state(s) where the student will complete clinical practice hours. **Practice sites are currently limited in some states due to state regulations.**
 - ✓ A 1–2-page personal statement describing your understanding of the family nurse practitioner role and your goals for practice in that role
1. ***Mail all gathered materials not otherwise submitted online in one envelope to: Office of Graduate Programs, Clarion University, 840 Wood St; Clarion, PA 16214.*** All documents become the property of Clarion University and Edinboro University and will not be returned or duplicated for any purpose outside of the universities. An application is considered “complete” when all application materials are in the Clarion University Graduate Admissions Office.
 2. Upon receipt of the materials, the Clarion University Graduate Admissions Office forwards the complete packet to the members of the Admission, Progression, and Graduation Committee. **Review of applications are conducted during the month of October or until the class is filled.** Applications received after October 1st may be reviewed for acceptance on a space-available basis.
 3. After reviewing all applications, members of the Admission, Progression, and Graduation Committee submit a recommendation regarding admission to the Graduate Studies Office. Options include deny admission, admit provisionally (with provisions described), full admission, and wait listed. Students with prior graduate degree work must submit materials describing the courses they think will substitute for courses in the MSN curriculum. Members of the Admissions, Progression, and Graduation Committee make the decision regarding such substitutions.
 4. The Graduate Studies Office informs each applicant of the decision of the Admissions Committee via a letter that also informs the applicant to contact the program designee for his/her advisor’s name and contact information. The program designee directs the applicant to contact the advisor to develop a program plan.
 5. The faculty advisor meets with the applicant via email or phone. At this meeting, the faculty advisor evaluates the applicant’s previous coursework and the decision of the Admissions, Progression, and Graduation Committee, and develops an individual program plan. A copy of the program plan is sent to the MSN Program Coordinator for inclusion in the student database and individual student’s file.

APPLICATION DEADLINES

MSN Students are only admitted to the fall semester. To be fully considered for the limited number of seats in our competitive nursing program, all materials must be in PennWest Clarion’s Graduate Office by October 1st prior to the fall start date for any given year. PW University operates on a rolling admissions basis which means that applications may be submitted and reviewed any time prior to the deadline. It is recommended that applications be submitted far enough in advance of the deadline to insure ‘complete’ status. Applications received after the October 1st deadline are only considered ***if the***

fall class has not already been filled. Otherwise, those applications are held for review the next October.

Applicants who meet the criteria for admission are accepted on a “space available” basis and will be notified by December 15th. In the event that no spaces are available, an otherwise qualified applicant may be placed on a waiting list for the upcoming fall admission or for the following fall admission.

Applications to the Post-Master’s Certificate Program will be considered at any time. Admission is based on qualifications and space availability.

ENROLLMENT AS A NON-DEGREE STUDENT

Occasionally individuals will want to engage in graduate study without formally entering a graduate program. Such individuals should apply for non-degree admission status at the time of application. All admission requirements must be met. Individuals remaining in this status may not receive a graduate degree. Courses taken while a person is in this status will be identified as non-degree on the student’s transcript. The non-degree student who, after taking courses in the non-degree status, seeks a graduate degree must be formally admitted to a graduate degree program under regular admission procedures. Graduate programs may or may not accept courses taken while a student is in non-degree status. No program may accept more than nine credits taken in non-degree status. Applicants admitted on a non-degree basis are not guaranteed regular full admission status. Certain course restrictions apply for non-degree students. Students that are not enrolled in the MSN program but take individual classes that are included in the curriculum are subject to course surcharges. (See: <http://www.clarion.edu/admissions/graduate/nondegree-and-transient-applicants/index.html>)

TRANSFER OF CREDIT

PennWest University graduate programs allow students to transfer credit for graduate courses taken at other accredited institutions. It is an MSN program policy that 30 credits of the total required degree credits are taken in the PennWest University’s MSN Program. Courses transferred must be certified as graduate level on the transcript and must have a grade of “B” or better. Transfer credit course grades are not computed in the university’s quality-point average.

Students may transfer up to 12 credits of approved non-clinical course work toward the MSNFP degree. The proposed transfer credit must not be more than five years old.

Students may **not** transfer in an advanced pharmacology course. This course must be taken at PennWest due to the opioid certification requirements for the state board of nursing.

Students already holding an earned MSN degree may transfer up to nine credits from that degree. Up to nine credits may be granted for life experience based upon careful evaluation of such experience.

Correspondence course credits are not accepted for transfer. No more than six semester hours will be transferred from another institution after a student has been admitted to the Clarion and Edinboro Universities program. Course credit will not be transferred until the course has been evaluated and approved.

- Students who wish to take a course at another institution while enrolled in the PennWest University's MSN Program are referred to the [transfer credit policy](#) for guidance.

CREDIT BY CHALLENGE

Students may challenge up to three credits of course work with the permission of the Graduate Nursing Faculty.

ADVISEMENT

Upon admission to the MSN Program the student will be assigned a faculty advisor. Before beginning the first course, the successful applicant should meet with the graduate advisor for orientation and assistance in planning his or her program of studies. This can be accomplished face-to-face, by phone, email, or desktop conferencing.

HEALTH POLICY

Upon acceptance to the MSN program, students are required to sign a Fundamental Requirement Agreement. Specific health forms are not required for admission to the MSN Program. However, clinical agencies may require certain health requirements which must be met prior to clinical practice in that agency. It is the student's responsibility to meet those requirements. All fees incurred in attaining health requirements are the responsibility of the student. The faculty reserves the right to request medical clearance from a student prior to clinical placement. Clinical paperwork and health requirements will be submitted to Castle Branch (student fee associated).

FUNDAMENTALS REQUIREMENT

All students are expected to meet minimal requirements to fulfill a nurse practitioner's scope of employment. Appendix C contains a copy of the form that each student is required to sign. This form will be kept in the students' folders.

CURRICULUM

OVERVIEW: MSN-FNP

The American Nurses' Association publications, "Standards of Clinical Practice" (1991) and "Advanced Nursing Practice: Nurse Practitioner Curriculum Guidelines" (1990), provided the original framework for developing the nurse practitioner curriculum in 1995. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing publication "Essentials of MSN Education for Advanced Practice Nursing" (AACN, 1996) informed the core competencies.

Until 2014, the joint Clarion and Edinboro Master of Science in Nursing Family Nurse Practitioner (MSN-FNP) program and Post-Master's Family Nurse Practitioner (PM-FNP) Certificate program followed the same curriculum since its initial approval in 1995. Since that time, the program has evolved from a hybrid of face-to-face and online classes to a completely online program, with the

exception of select skill labs and precepted clinical practicum experiences in students' home communities.

To meet the highest standards, a revised curriculum for the FNP program was submitted to and approved by the curriculum committees of both universities in 2013. With final approval by the Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing, the revised curriculum went into effect fall 2014. The framework for the revised curriculum for the FNP program is based upon the "Nurse Practitioner Core Competencies" (NONPF, 2012), which subsume the nine essentials in the AACN (2011) "Essentials of Master's Education," and the "Population Focused Nurse Practitioner Competencies" (NONPF, 2013).

Content is organized around core graduate nursing courses and specialty courses in the family nurse practitioner concentration. Master of Science in Nursing students take all core courses and specialty courses.

MSN-FNP CURRICULUM (From Fall 2025 forward)

Core Courses

NURS 6011	Advanced Concepts in Pathophysiology
NURS 6022	Pharmacologic Applications
NURS 6019	Evidence Based Practice
NURS 6111	FNP Role Transition
NURS 6044	Health Promotion within the Community
NURS 6055	Health Policy & Professional Nursing

Family Nurse Practitioner Courses

NURS 6155	Advanced Health Assessment
NURS 6166	Advanced Health Assessment Practicum
NURS 6466	Women's Health/Gender Related Care
NURS 6477	Women's Health/Gender related Care Practicum
NURS 6122	Clinical Diagnostics
NURS 6266	Primary Care I
NURS 6277	Primary Care I Practicum
NURS 6366	Pediatric Primary Care
NURS 6377	Pediatric Primary Care Practicum
NURS 6566	Primary care II
NURS 6577	Primary Care II Practicum

Prior to 2025 Fall Admits

Core Courses

NURS 6011	Advanced Concepts in Pathophysiology
NURS 6022	Pharmacologic Applications
NURS 6099	Advanced Evidence Based Practice
NURS 6111	FNP Role Transition
NURS 6144	Health Promotion: Family & community Perspectives
NURS 6455	Nursing and Public Policy

Family Nurse Practitioner Courses

NURS 6155	Advanced Health Assessment
NURS 6166	Advanced Health Assessment Practicum
NURS 6466	Women's Health/Gender Related Care
NURS 6477	Women's Health/Gender related Care Practicum
NURS 6122	Clinical Diagnostics
NURS 6266	Primary Care I
NURS 6277	Primary Care I Practicum
NURS 6366	Pediatric Primary Care
NURS 6377	Pediatric Primary Care Practicum
NURS 6566	Primary care II
NURS 6577	Primary Care II Practicum

SECOND MASTER'S DEGREE – Family Nurse Practitioner

Second master's degree Curriculum (Please note that this program was put into moratorium in 2023 and is no longer offered)

Individuals holding a graduate degree in nursing may earn a second master's in nursing degree in the PennWest Universities' Family Nurse Practitioner concentration. In order to qualify for a second master's degree, regardless of where the first degree was earned, graduate students must successfully complete a minimum of 30 hours of credit in the Clarion and Edinboro Universities' Program beyond the first master's degree and meet program requirements with respect to the required semester hours of credit and courses for the major. Second master's degree students would typically have transfer credits in nursing theory and research that could apply to the requirements of 6144 Health Promotion: Family & Community, 6099 Advanced Evidenced-Based Practice, 6111 FNP Role Transition, 6455 Nursing and Public Policy. Clinical courses and the internship are required of all degree students regardless of prior advanced education.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CREDIT/CLOCK HOURS

****Beginning with the Fall 2025 cohort The FNP program consists of 18 credits of theory courses, (including evidence-based research and role transition), and 33 credits of combined theory and practicum, for a total of 51 credits The program incorporates 510 hours of didactic course work (computed at 15 clock hrs. per credit) including portfolio/scholarly project and 765 hours of clinical practicums. Clinical practicums are computed at 45 clock hours per credit.

***** (For all cohorts that began prior to Fall of 2025) The FNP program consists of 17 credits of theory courses (including evidence-based research and role transition), 32 credits of combined theory and practicum, for a total of 49 credits. The program incorporates 495 hours of didactic course work (computed at 15 clock hrs. per credit) including thesis/scholarly project and 518 hours of clinical practicums. Clinical practicums are computed at 45 clock hours per credit.

*****If a student steps out of the program, they will need to have an individual gap analysis to determine the amount of clinical hours needed if they are between the old and new curriculum.

MSN FNP PROGRESSION PLANS

Students will study part-time as outlined in the following program plan.

PROGRAM OF STUDY MSN/FNP

INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM PLAN STARTING FALL 2025 COHORT

Figure 2

Fall Term I		Spring Term I		Summer Term I	
Course	Credit/WK	Course	Credit/WK	Course	Credit/WK
NURS 6011 Advanced Concepts in Pathophysiology	3/3	NURS 6022 Pharmacologic Applications	3/3	NURS 6111 FNP Role Transition	2/2
NURS 6044 Health Promotion within Community	3/3	NURS 6019 Evidence Based Practice	3/3	NURS 6122 Clinical Diagnostics	1/1
				NURS 6055 Health Policy & Professional Nursing	3/3
Semester Credits	6	Semester Credits	6	Semester Credits	6
Total Program Hours	6	Total Program Hours	12	Total Program Hours	18
Direct Clinical Hours	0	Direct Clinical Hours	0	Direct Clinical Hours	0
Total Direct Clinical Hours	0	Total Direct Clinical Hours	0	Total Direct Clinical Hours	0

Fall Term II	Spring Term II	Summer Term II
--------------	----------------	----------------

Course	Credit/ WK	Course	Credit/ WK	Course	Credit/ WK
NURS 6155 Advanced Health Assessment	4/4	NURS 6466 Women's Health/Gender Related Care	3/3	NURS 6266 Primary Care I	3/3
NURS 6166 Advanced Health Assessment Seminar/Practicum (135 direct clinical hrs)	3/3*	NURS 6477 Women's Health Seminar/Practicum (135 direct clinical hrs)	3/3*	NURS 6277 Primary Care I Seminar/Practicum (180 direct clinical hrs)	4/4*
Semester Credits	7	Semester Credits	6	Semester Credits	7
Total Program Hours	25	Total Program Hours	31	Total Program Hours	38
Direct Clinical Hours	135	Direct Clinical Hours	135	Direct Clinical Hours	180
Total Direct Clinical Hours	135	Total Direct Clinical Hours	270	Total Direct Clinical Hours	450

Fall Term III		Spring Term III	
Course	Credit/ WK	Course	Credit/ WK
NURS 6366 Pediatric Primary Care	3/3	NURS 6566 Primary Care II	3/3
NURS 6377 Pediatric Primary Care Seminar/Practicum (135 direct clinical hrs)	3/3*	NURS 6577 Primary Care II Seminar/Practicum (180 direct clinical hrs)	4/4*
Semester Credits	6	Semester Credits	7
Total Program Hours	44	Total Program Hours	51
Direct Clinical Hours	135	Direct Clinical Hours	180
Total Direct Clinical Hours	585	Total Direct Clinical Hours	765

COHORTS THAT BEGAN PRIOR TO FALL 2025

Figure 3

Fall Term I		Spring Term I		Summer Term I	
Course	Credit/ WK	Course	Credit/ WK	Course	Credit/ WK
NURS 6011 Advanced Concepts in Pathophysiology	3/3	NURS 6022 Pharmacologic Applications	3/3	NURS 6111 FNP Role Transition	2/2
NURS 6144 Health Promotion	3/3	NURS 6099 Advanced Evidence Based Practice	3/3	NURS 6122 Clinical Diagnostics	1/1
				NURS 6455 Health Policy & Professional Nursing	2/2
Semester Credits	6	Semester Credits	6	Semester Credits	5
Total Program Hours	6	Total Program Hours	12	Total Program Hours	17
Direct Clinical Hours	0	Direct Clinical Hours	0	Direct Clinical Hours	0
Total Direct Clinical Hours	0	Total Direct Clinical Hours	0	Total Direct Clinical Hours	0

Fall Term II		Spring Term II		Summer Term II	
Course	Credit/ WK	Course	Credit/ WK	Course	Credit/ WK
NURS 6155 Advanced Health Assessment	4/4	NURS 6466 Women's Health/Gender Related Care	3/3	NURS 6266 Primary Care I	3/3
NURS 6166 Advanced Health Assessment Seminar/Practicum (70 direct clinical hrs/65 seminar hrs)	3/3*	NURS 6477 Women's Health Seminar/Practicum (64 direct clinical hrs/15 seminar hrs)	3/3*	NURS 6277 Primary Care I Seminar/Practicum (64 direct clinical hrs/15 seminar hrs)	3/3*
Semester Credits	7	Semester Credits	6	Semester Credits	6
Total Program Hours	24	Total Program Hours	30	Total Program Hours	36
Direct Clinical Hours	70	Direct Clinical Hours	64	Direct Clinical Hours	64
Total Direct Clinical Hours	70	Total Direct Clinical Hours	134	Total Direct Clinical Hours	198

Fall Term III		Spring Term III	
Course	Credit/ WK	Course	Credit/ WK
NURS 6366 Pediatric Primary Care	3/3	NURS 6566 Primary Care II	3/3
NURS 6377 Pediatric Primary Care Seminar/Practicum	3/3*	NURS 6577 Primary Care II Seminar/Practicum (224	4/4*

(96 direct clinical hrs/15 seminar hrs)		direct clinical hrs/30 seminar hrs)	
Semester Credits	6	Semester Credits	7
Total Program Hours	42	Total Program Hours	49
Direct Clinical Hours	96	Direct Clinical Hours	224
Total Direct Clinical Hours	294	Total Direct Clinical Hours	518

COURSE DISCRIPTIONS

Core Courses

NURS 6011: ADVANCED CONCEPTS IN PATHOPHYSIOLOGY

3 credits

This course is devoted to the study of the physiological process of disease and the body's response to this process. It is the goal of the course to present broad physiological principles that advanced practice nurses can apply to their clinical experiences. Specific diseases will be used to exemplify pathophysiological concepts, and treatment is examined at the molecular level as response to the pathophysiology. The course investigates exogenous causes of diseases, emphasizing infection, inflammation, and the immune response, as well as endogenous diseases of the nervous, endocrine, cardiovascular, hepatic pulmonary, and renal systems. Offered fall annually.

NURS 6022: PHARMACOLOGIC APPLICATIONS

3 credits

Covers principles of pharmacology as applied to advanced nursing practice. This includes drug effectiveness, mechanism, and interaction. Emphasis will be on the pharmacological action of drugs on specific organ systems and the clinical use of drugs in treatment of disease conditions. Emphasis will be on critical decision-making skills in the selection of drug therapy, doses of drugs, routes of administration and preferred therapy. This course focuses upon pharmacologic implications for the family nurse practitioner in working with individuals across the life span. Pre-requisite: NURS 6011. Offered spring annually.

{NURS 6099: ADVANCED EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE (Prior to 2025) 3 credits

This course focuses on the elements of evidence-based practice. Identifying clinical/research questions and critically analyzing current nursing and health related research provides the basis for translation of the evidence into day-to-day practice. Integration of existing evidence with clinical judgement forms the basis for improvement in patient, population, and organizational outcomes. Offered spring annually.

NURS 6019: EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE (Starting with Fall 2025 cohort)

3 credits

In this course, students will translate evidence-based practice (EBP) for quality nursing care based on current research and knowledge. Emphasis will include the use of scholarly inquiry, evaluation of existing nursing practice guidelines and theory to engage in critical analysis and synthesis of best evidence to inform nursing practice. Students will apply evidence-based practices to the role of the MSN professional. Offered spring annually.

NURS 6111: FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER ROLE TRANSITION

2 credits

This course prepares students for successful development from the role of RN to that of practicing family nurse practitioner. The evolving role of the family nurse practitioner will be explored as will approaches for employment contract/collaborating agreements, practice development, and advancing professional standards. Professional, ethical, and legal accountability are emphasized. **Prerequisites** : NURS 6011, NURS 6022, NURS 6144 or 6044, NURS 6099. Offered summer annually.

{NURS 6144: HEALTH PROMOTION: FAMILY & COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES 3 credits (Prior to 2025)}

Introduces the advanced practice nurse student to health promotion and disease prevention strategies for families and communities. Students will explore principles of family theory, established models of family development, epidemiology, and demography. An opportunity will be given to develop intervention plans to improve wellness-based risk assessment and knowledge of national standards of clinical preventive services. This course is a pre-requisite to all other clinical nursing courses in the nurse practitioner concentration. Offered fall annually.}

NURS 6044: HEALTH PROMOTION WITHIN THE COMMUNITY (Starting with Fall 2025 cohort) 3 credits

This course introduces students to health promotion theory, disease prevention and social determinants of health related to strategies to improve health for diverse populations. Students will assess health risks, services and needs of populations, and analyze data to drive the improvement of care. Students will demonstrate the ability to investigate program(s) focused on improving wellness using an evidence-based risk assessment and interventions using standards of care. Offered fall annually.

{NURS 6455: NURSING AND PUBLIC POLICY (Prior to 2025) 2 credits}

This course examines the implications of health care financing, structuring, labor market trends, and current health care reform proposals for nursing in general and for advanced practice nursing specifically. Additionally, the student will be stimulated to appreciate the critical need for nurses to engage in activities, individually and as members of professional organizations that will enhance the position of nursing in influencing health care policy and legislation at all levels—local, state, and federal. A pervasive theme throughout the course is the ultimate goal of improving the health care of our citizens. Offered summer annually.}

NURS 6055 HEALTH POLICY & PROFESSIONAL NURSING (Starting with Fall 2025 cohort) 3 credits

This course is intended to familiarize graduate nursing students with current healthcare policy, the roles and responsibilities, processes, and strategies that create and support policy-based initiatives in healthcare, and the effect of policy on healthcare. Students will apply the concepts gained in this course in advocacy and leadership roles in search of creative solutions to pervasive issues in health care to culturally diverse populations. Offered summer annually.

Family Nurse Practitioner Specialty Courses

NURS 6122 Clinical Diagnostics 1 credit

This course builds on previous knowledge of basic microbiology and physiology. The focus of the course is application of diagnostic methods and procedures typically carried out in various practice roles and sites. The content addresses selected common laboratory and imaging tests applicable to NP practice, the rationale for these tests, expected results and common abnormal results. The legal, ethical, and financial consequences of testing will be reviewed. **Prerequisites:** NURS 6011/6022. Offered summer annually.

NURS 6155: ADVANCED HEALTH ASSESSMENT **4 credits**

This course builds upon the basic assessment skills of the nurse. It prepares the advanced practice nurse to conduct focused and comprehensive health assessments of clients across the lifespan. The process of diagnostic reasoning is emphasized as the primary means of collecting and analyzing data obtained from the client history, physical examination, and diagnostic procedures. Two hours lecture weekly. Must be taken concurrently with NURS 6166. Pre- or Corequisite: NURS 6011. Offered fall annually and as needed.

NURS 6166: ADVANCED HEALTH ASSESSMENT PRACTICUM **3 credits**

Provides an opportunity for the student to implement the objectives identified in NURS 6155. Students may select experiences from a variety of clinical settings appropriate to the course focus. **64 contact hours prior to fall 2025. 135 contact hours starting with fall 2025 cohort.**

Prerequisite (or co-requisite) NURS 6011; must be taken concurrently with NURS 6155. Offered fall annually and as needed.

NURS 6266: Primary Care I **3 credit hours**

The focus of this course is on developing skills in gathering clinical data, diagnostic reasoning, and clinical reasoning. Analysis and synthesis of patient data to evaluate and appropriately manage acute and chronic illness across the lifespan is emphasized. **Prerequisites:** NURS 6011,6144 or 6044,6022,6099 or 6019,6111,6122,6455,6155/6166,6466/6477; Concurrently with NURS 6277. Offered summer annually.

NURS 6277: Primary Care I Seminar/Practicum **4 credit hours**

This seminar/clinical practicum includes a **180-hour clinical** (64-hour clinical prior to fall 2025 for 3 credits) practicum that gives students an opportunity to implement the objectives identified in NURS 6266. Students will select clinical settings that provide opportunities for health promotion, disease prevention, and diagnosis and management of acute and chronic health conditions across the lifespan. Additional seminar time will include virtual grand rounds and other sessions to augment the clinical experiences. **Prerequisites:** NURS 6155/6166; Concurrently with NURS 6266. Offered summer annually.

NURS 6366: Pediatric Primary Care **3 credit hours**

This course focuses on primary care approaches to the health care needs of pediatric patients from birth to emerging adulthood. Topics will include health promotion, disease prevention, and disease management with an emphasis on anticipatory guidance and early detection of health, developmental, and behavioral issues. All dimensions of development and the total health of the family are considered. **Prerequisites:** NURS 6011,6144 or 6044 ,6022,6099 or 6019,6111,6122,6455 or 6055,6155/6166,6466/6477,6266/6277, Concurrently with NURS 6377. Offered fall annually.

NURS 6377: Pediatric Primary Care Practicum/Seminar **3 credit hour**

This seminar/practicum includes a **135-hour clinical (96 hour of clinical prior to fall of 2025 cohort)** practicum that gives students an opportunity to implement the objectives identified in NURS 6366. Students will select clinical settings that provide opportunities for age-appropriate health promotion, disease prevention, and diagnosis and management of common acute and chronic health problems in pediatric patients from birth to emerging adulthood. Additional seminar time will include virtual grand rounds and other sessions to augment the clinical experiences. **Prerequisites:** NURS 6155, NURS 6166; Concurrently with NURS 6366. Offered fall annually.

NURS 6466: Women's Health and Gender Related Care **3 credit hours**

The focus of this course is holistic women's health and gender related care for patients across the life span. This course includes the care of women, men and LGBTQ individuals incorporating health promotion, wellness maintenance, disease prevention, early detection of disease, and prompt treatment of acute and chronic illness. The inter relationship of gender, social class, culture, sexual orientation, economic status, and socio-political power differentials will be covered. Critical thinking, diagnostic reasoning, and evidence-based practice guidelines for acute and chronic disease management are emphasized. **Prerequisites:** NURS 6011,6144 or 6044,6022,6099 or 6019,6111,6122,6455 or 6055,6155/6166; Concurrently with NURS 6477. Offered spring annually.

NURS 6477: Women's Health and Gender Related Care Seminar/Practicum **3 credit hours**

This seminar/practicum includes **135-hour clinical** (64 hours of clinical prior to fall 2025 cohort) practicum that gives students an opportunity to implement the objectives identified in NURS 6466. Students must select a clinical experience in a women's health practice or alternative clinical setting that provides opportunities for health promotion, wellness maintenance, disease prevention, early detection of disease, and prompt treatment of common gender-specific health problems. Additional seminar time will include virtual grand rounds and other sessions to augment the clinical experiences. **Prerequisites:** NURS 6011, 6144 or 6044, 6022, 6099 or 6019, 6111, 6122, 6455 or 6055, 6155/6166; Concurrently with NURS 6466. Offered spring annually.

NURS 6566: Primary care II **3 credit hours**

This course continues the content from NURS 6266. Its focus is continuing development skills in gathering clinical data, diagnostic reasoning, and clinical reasoning. Analysis and synthesis of patient data to evaluate and appropriately manage acute and chronic illness across the lifespan is emphasized.

Prerequisites: NURS 6011,6144 or 6044,6022,6099 or 6019,6111,6122,6455 or 6055,6155/6166,6466/6477,6266/6277,6366/6377,6266/6277; Concurrently with NURS 6577. Offered fall annually.

NURS 6577: Primary Care II Seminar/Practicum **4 credit hours**

This seminar/clinical practicum includes a **180-hour clinical (224-hour clinical prior to the 2025 cohort)** practicum that gives students an opportunity to implement the objectives identified in NURS 6566. Students will select clinical settings that provide opportunities for health promotion, disease prevention, and diagnosis and management with an emphasis on advanced illness care and the management of chronic diseases in adults. Additional seminar time will include virtual grand rounds and other sessions to augment the clinical experiences.

Prerequisites: NURS; 6011,6144 or 6044,6022,6099 or 6055,6111,6122,6455 or 6055,6155/6166,6466/6477,6266/6277,6366/6377,6266/6277; Concurrently with NURS 6566. Offered fall annually.

Clinical hour chart for teaching out:

Nurs 6166 Health Assessment Practicum

Fall of 2025 class will have 64 clinical hours

Fall of 2026 class and after will have 135 clinical hours

Nurs 6477 Women's Health Practicum

Spring of 2026 class will have 64 clinical hours

Spring of 2027 class and after will have 135 clinical hours

Nurs 6277 Primary Care I Practicum

Summer of 2026 class will have 64 clinical hours

Summer of 2027 class will have 180 clinical hours

Nurs 6377 Pediatric Practicum

Fall of 2025 and 2026 classes will have 96 clinical hours

Fall of 2028 class and after will have 135 clinical hours

Nurs 6577 Primary Care II Practicum

Spring of 2026 and 2027 will have 224 clinical hours

Spring of 2028 class and after will have 180 clinical hours

The students who began the program in the fall of 2023 and fall of 2024 will still graduate with 518 direct clinical hours. The students who begin the program in the fall of 2025 will graduate with 765 clinical hours.

COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT/PORTFOLIO

In order to successfully complete the program, students must pass a comprehensive assessment in the form of a professional portfolio. The portfolio is submitted while enrolled in NURS 6577 and assumes completion of all MSN courses with a cumulative QPA of not less than 3.0. The portfolio evaluates the ability of the student to synthesize the information from core courses with the principles of diagnosis and management in primary care.

Successful completion of the portfolio requires meeting or exceeding each outcome as determined by a grading rubric given to the student prior to submission of the final document. Students are expected to collect artifacts throughout the program for inclusion in the portfolio. Acceptable evidence includes course assignments or projects, clinical logs and reflections, a current resume, letters of recommendation, a summary of professional development experiences, and any other evidence that would support the reader's full comprehension of the student's growth as a professional. Specifically,

FNP students should demonstrate attainment of the *Nurse Practitioner Core Competencies* (NONPF, 2017) and the *Population Focused Nurse Practitioner Competencies* (NONPF, 2013) in relation to program outcomes.

Expectations must be met or exceeded for all program outcomes in order to pass. Students receiving a failing grade on the portfolio will be given an opportunity to re-submit the portfolio only one time to remediate any deficiencies or make any additions or corrections based on written feedback.

MSN-FNP Mandatory Program Purchases

All students in the FNP track must purchase the following programs for student success and clinical requirements. This is in addition to tuition costs. See the MSN Student forum for details.

Typhon (clinical patient entries, portfolio, clinical hours tracker)

Castle Branch (Clinical Requirements)

Exam Master (Proctored Exam Platform)

APEA (Comprehensive exams, QBANK review questions, FNP certification review course)

GRADUATION POLICY--MSN -FNP Program

Students must have completed all coursework required for their degree with an overall quality-point average (QPA) of 3.0 in order to graduate from the program. In addition, students must have passed the portfolio competency, with a “meets” or “exceeds” score for each outcome on the portfolio grading rubric. The maximum time for completion of the degree program is six calendar years.

It is the candidate’s responsibility to file, with the aid of his or her advisor, an Application for Graduation prior to the published deadline during the semester in which he or she intends to graduate. Graduation applications are submitted electronically through [MyPennWest](#) site.

Students have the option of participating in the Commencement ceremony at either Edinboro University or Clarion University. Commencement occurs two times a year: Spring (May) and Winter (December). Students may “walk” in the Spring Commencement if they will be completing all program requirements by the end of the summer III term. Students choosing this option should plan to apply for graduation on the date posted for May graduates.

GRADUATION RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

At least two thirds (30) of the credits meeting program requirements must be taken from PennWest University’s Master of Science in Nursing Program. This policy can be found at: <https://files.pennwest.edu/policies/ac033-grad-residency-reqs.pdf>

LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

Any student requesting a Leave of Absence from the MSN program must submit a request in writing to the MSN Program Coordinator. This letter must include a reason for requesting the leave and the student’s plans for return.

1. The coordinator has the right to request a personal interview with the student requesting the leave before a decision is made.
2. Each Leave of Absence will be handled individually according to the specific need, academic standing, and clinical performance of the student.
3. The coordinator will present the request to the Admission, Progression, and Graduation Committee with all pertinent information.
4. The Admission, Progression, and Graduation Committee will recommend denial or granting of the Leave of Absence.
5. No Leave of Absence will be granted for unsatisfactory academic performance or for a period longer than one year or two full semesters.
6. If the leave is granted, the student will be informed as such and must notify the Office of the Registrar of his or her intention to withdraw and the reason for withdrawal. At this time, the student will be informed of any conditional requirements for return (see PW Graduate Catalog).

7. Before returning to the MSN Program, the student must notify the MSN Program Coordinator of intent, the semester before returning, in order to register for the appropriate courses.

PROGRESSION OF INTERRUPTED CLINICAL COURSES

Once admitted in the MSN program, it is strongly advised that less than two years elapse between clinical courses. Clinical courses include NURS 6155/6166: Advanced Health Assessment/Practicum, all clinical decision-making courses, and the internship. If two or more years elapse, the student must receive permission from the faculty member teaching the course and may be asked to complete a practical exam or retake the previous clinical course.

STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS

All requirements for the master's degree must be completed **within a six-year period** commencing with the first graduate course registration. The MSN Program Coordinator may extend this period upon written request from the student for justifiable reasons. This request must be supported by the coordinator before submission to the office of Graduate Studies for final approval.

STUDENTS' RIGHTS

In the case of a dispute between the student and a faculty member involving academic concerns (i.e., classroom evaluation, course grades, etc.), the student should follow the procedures outlined in the appropriate publication of the university employing the faculty member, for example, Clarion University's Student Rights, Regulations, and Procedures Handbook and Edinboro University's Student Handbook. The procedures to be followed are consistent with the university in which the faculty member is employed.

CLINICAL PRACTICE IN THE MSN FNP PROGRAM

Pennsylvania Western University is a member of the NC-SARA agreement. This allows student to complete clinical rotations in any state (except California) that they hold a valid, unencumbered RN license in. All states except for California participate in the NC-SARA program.

[NC SARA Homepage](#)

[California Clinical Information Guide](#)

CERTIFICATION and PRESCRIPTIVE AUTHORITY

See Appendix A for information about obtaining certification and prescriptive authority in Pennsylvania.

EVALUATIONS FOR THE PROGRAM

Throughout the program students will be asked to evaluate courses and faculty. Students are expected to use these opportunities to provide *constructive* criticism. The intent of the evaluations is to provide valuable feedback for the planning and revising of the curriculum, teaching strategies, and other factors that would enhance the learning experience. These evaluations are completed anonymously and will be made available to students online.

In addition, students will be asked to evaluate the program upon graduation (exit survey) and at one and three years after graduation (alumni surveys). One- and three-year alumni surveys will coincide with the employer survey process, which is facilitated by the MSN Program Coordinator as follows:

Follow-up Procedures

1. One and three years after graduation, two survey forms, a Graduate Survey and Employer Survey, will be sent, or be made available electronically, to all program graduates.
2. A cover letter will accompany each follow-up survey explaining its objectives and providing instructions to graduates to complete the Graduate Survey and how to provide access information to their current employer for the Employer Survey.
3. If mailed, a pre-addressed stamped envelope will be included with each follow-up form to encourage responses.

The returned follow-up surveys will be reviewed by the MSN faculty and results posted in the Desire2Learn MSN Forum.

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT ACQUISITION

Official transcripts can be obtained from the university. See <https://files.pennwest.edu/policies/ac041-transcript-diploma.pdf> for more information.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

One graduate nursing student elected by the student body or volunteering from the student body serves as the student representative for the MSN program. When one or more of the program's graduate assistants(s) is/are MSN students, they are appointed to assume this role. When there is no student representative, the Program Coordinator polls the student body via the MSN-L listserv for concerns, questions, and recommendations before each MSN meeting.

Students are also welcome to participate as members of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee which functions to a) address issues of mutual concern related to the graduate nursing program, b) address other concerns as they arise, and c) provide feedback related to curricular issues.

Professional Organizations

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF NURSE PRACTITIONERS

The American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) was the first national organization to represent nurse practitioners. Member benefits include networking, conferences, continuing education opportunities, publications, and a reduced rate on the AANP national certifying exam. Any student currently enrolled in an NP program qualifies for membership in the AANP. Student membership rates are approximately half of full membership but with all rights of membership. Students will be asked to provide proof of enrollment to qualify. Visit their website for more information: <http://www.aanp.org>

PENNSYLVANIA COALITION OF NURSE PRACTITIONERS

The Pennsylvania Coalition of Nurse Practitioners (PCNP) is the organization in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that represents nurse practitioners through regional chapters. The Northwest Pennsylvania Nurse Practitioner Association serves Erie and surrounding areas; the Nurse Practitioner Association of Southwest Pennsylvania serves Allegheny and surrounding counties.

Students are encouraged to join the organization and are offered a discounted membership rate. Each May the organization recognizes two outstanding graduating students and honors them at the Annual Meeting. Students are also encouraged to frequent the PCNP website (www.pacnp.org/) for current news re: nurse practitioners and to subscribe to the PACNP listserv.

**Pennsylvania Western University
Doctor of Nursing Practice**



INTRODUCTION FOR DNP PROGRAM

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) is one of four graduate level offerings in nursing at PennWest University. The DNP builds on the competencies of advanced practice and professional nurses. Graduates of the program receive a joint degree granted by both universities. Students are assigned to one university site for advisement and may utilize facilities and services of all three universities.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Doctor of Nursing Practice degree program prepares master's prepared nurses to achieve the highest level of professional nursing practice possible. The competency-based curriculum includes preparation in organizational and system's leadership, evidence-based practice, technology and information literacy, and health care policy advocacy. Opportunities are given for acquisition of skills. This is accomplished through mentored internship experiences and execution of a DNP Project designed to benefit a group, population, or community.

The 27-credit DNP program is designed to be flexible, affordable, and professionally rewarding. Coursework is completely online and available 24/7. Students are admitted in cohorts of 27 and follow a part-time program plan of no more than 2 courses per term over five consecutive semesters, including summers. The online, part-time structure of the DNP program accommodates employment as an advanced practice nurse while pursuing the DNP, thus easing the financial burden. Orientation to the DNP program will be conducted in an asynchronous manner on-line. Prior to the start of the first DNP courses, students will receive information regarding how to access the orientation on-line.

[Online Doctor of Nursing Practice](#)

VISION

The vision of the DNP program is to develop advanced practice nurses as leaders in nursing and practice experts whose actions and innovations will improve and transform the health of individuals, populations, and systems in the region, state, and global community.

CORE VALUES

- Excellence
- Integrity
- Social justice
- Professionalism
- Innovation
- Independence

CURRICULAR THREADS

- Translation of evidence-based inquiry to practice
- Organizational and systems leadership
- Clinical scholarship
- Intra and interprofessional collaboration

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

Doctor of Nursing Practice Admission Criteria

The PennWest University Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program is a 27-credit program. Courses are part-time over 5 semesters in an online format. Students will be admitted in cohorts and begin courses in May each year. The program is designed to be flexible, affordable, and professionally rewarding. The online, part-time structure accommodates employment as an advanced practice nurse while pursuing the DNP, thus easing the financial burden.

DNP Admission Requirements

Applicants must have a master's degree* in nursing or health science from a nationally accredited program. This may be direct care such as nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetist, clinical specialist, nurse midwife or in-direct care such as nurse administrators and nursing informatics.

The student must also meet the following requirements:

1. Completed application form.
2. Non-refundable application fee at the time of online application submission.
3. Official transcripts from all undergraduate and graduate institutions attended.
4. *Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) or other bachelor's degree from an accredited program with a GPA of 3.25 or higher (*Applicants must have at least one degree in nursing, either a BSN, BSN equivalent, or a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN). Applicants with only a diploma degree in nursing or ASN cannot be accepted*).
5. *MSN or other master's degree from an accredited program with a GPA of 3.25 or higher (*Applicants with a master's degree other than nursing may require additional coursework prior to enrollment, as determined by a review of official transcripts*)
6. A graduate course in research with a grade of "B" or higher or successful completion of graduate thesis (Completion of a graduate level capstone project will be considered upon review of the project)
7. Two professional recommendations; excluding peer reference
8. Resume/CV
9. Current unencumbered license as a Registered Nurse.
10. Written documentation of completed clinical hours in a master's program (DNP degree requires a total of 1000 hours of clinical time between the master's and doctoral programs) page.
11. A type-written 1-2 personal statement describing your learning goals and a telephone interview

*For students who have not yet completed their master's degrees, admission is contingent upon anticipated graduation from their master's degree program during their initial semester in the DNP program.

Please submit all application materials in a large envelope to the administrative site:

Graduate Admissions
PennWest Clarion University
840 Wood Street
Clarion, PA 16214

This program is 27 credits post-masters to DNP completion. Application Deadline: Accepting applications until all seats are full. Classes begin in May annually.

APPLICATION AND ADMISSION PROCEDURES

Admission into the graduate nursing programs is competitive. An applicant meeting all of the program requirements is not guaranteed admission into the program. Notification of admission status is by the PennWest University Graduate Studies Office per the recommendations of the DNP Admissions, Progression, and Graduation Committee, comprised of graduate nursing faculty from both universities. An application is considered “complete” when the following application materials are in the PennWest University Graduate Studies Office:

- A complete application packet (see below)

A Complete Application Packet Includes the Following:

- Completed application form
- Non-refundable application fee (Visa and MasterCard are accepted)
- Official transcripts from all undergraduate and graduate institutions attended
- Two recommendation forms
- Resume
- Copy of Registered Nurse and Advanced Practice Nursing licenses in the state where the applicant plans to complete internship hours
- Verification of supervised clinical hours from the applicant’s graduate program
- A type-written 1–2-page personal statement describing your learning goals

The application form itself can be completed online and is available as a link on this page [Online Doctor of Nursing Practice](#)

Mail all gathered materials not otherwise submitted online in one envelope to: Graduate Studies Office, PennWest Clarion University, 840 Wood St; Clarion, PA 16214. All documents become the property of PennWest University and will not be returned or duplicated for any purpose outside of the university.

Application Deadlines

Applicants meeting admission criteria are accepted on a “space available” basis for the next available cohort beginning in the summer semester. An applicant may be placed on a waiting list for the upcoming summer admission or for admission the following summer.

ENROLLMENT AS A NON-DEGREE STUDENT

Occasionally individuals will want to engage in graduate study without formally entering a graduate program. Such individuals should apply for non-degree admission status at the time of

application. All admission requirements must be met. Individuals remaining in this status may not receive a graduate degree. Courses taken while a person is in this status will be identified as non-degree on the student's transcript. The non-degree student who, after taking courses in the non-degree status, seeks a graduate degree must be formally admitted to a graduate degree program under regular admission procedures. Graduate programs may or may not accept courses taken while a student is in non-degree status. No program may accept more than nine credits taken in non-degree status. Applicants admitted on a non-degree basis are not guaranteed regular full admission status. Certain course restrictions apply for non-degree students.

PRE-REQUISITE COURSES FOR THOSE ACCEPTED WITH MS DEGREE OTHER THAN MSN

Following a review of transcripts, the Admission, Retention and Progression committee of the DNP program may recommend additional course work prior to enrollment into the program as determined by a review of official transcripts. Pre-requisites are offered through the consortium program and must be successfully completed prior to starting the doctoral level courses if determined necessary.

ADVISEMENT

Upon admission to the DNP Program the student will be assigned a faculty advisor. Before beginning the first course, the successful applicant should meet with the graduate advisor for orientation and assistance in planning their program of studies. This can be accomplished face-to-face, by phone, email, or desktop conferencing.

HEALTH POLICY

Specific health forms are not required for admission to the DNP Program. However, agencies may require certain health requirements for Internship hours, which must be met prior to clinical practice in that agency. It is the student's responsibility to meet those requirements. All fees incurred in attaining health requirements are the responsibility of the student. The faculty reserves the right to request medical clearance from a student prior to clinical placement.

TRANSFER OF CREDIT

PennWest University graduate DNP programs allow students to transfer a maximum of 6 credits for graduate courses taken at other accredited institutions. It is a Graduate Nursing Program policy that 70 percent of all credits required for the DNP must be earned in coursework offered by PennWest University. Courses transferred must be taken at a regionally accredited institution within the past five years, and the grade earned must be a "B" or its equivalent or better. The course(s) taken must be recognized in content and quality as similar to approved academic credit in the PennWest Universities DNP program. The credits must be capable of counting toward a graduate degree at the sponsoring institution. Course credit will not be transferred until the course has been evaluated and approved. Transfer credit course grades are not computed in the university's quality-point average.

- Students who wish to take a course at another institution while enrolled in the PennWest University DNP Program are referred to the PennWest University Graduate Catalogs for guidance.

- Transferred credits will **not** include clinical hours.
- Verification of MSN clinical hours must be provided to the graduate admission office from prior graduate nursing program. A maximum of 500 MSN hours will be considered for transfer.

DNP CURRICULUM

OVERVIEW

The DNP program curriculum is designed to build on the foundational competencies of the MSN-prepared advance practice or professional nurse. For example, a course in nursing research at the master's level serves as the foundation for NURS 808: Analytical Methods of Evidence Based Practice; and nursing theory serves as the foundation for NURS 806: Leading Nursing in Health Care Systems. Likewise, courses within the DNP curriculum are sequenced to prepare students with increasingly complex skill sets in data acquisition, analysis, and practice application that align with the AACN DNP Essentials (2006). As of the class of 2021 we will be transitioning to the new Core Competencies for professional Nursing Education (2021).

Program Outcomes	AACN DNP Essentials	DNP Essential Core Competency Domains
1. Apply clinical scholarship through advanced nursing practice within complex health systems.	I, II, III, V, VI, VII, VIII	1, 2
2. Design, implement, analyze, and disseminate research that translates evidence to practice.	I, III, IV, V, VIII	3, 5
3. Demonstrate advanced leadership skills for empowering and influencing others to bring about change.	II, III, V, VI, VII	4, 10
4. Utilize information and management systems to support	II, III, IV	7, 8

evidence-based practice.		
5. Establish inter-professional relationships to provide comprehensive delivery of advanced practice nursing.	II, III, VI, VIII	6, 9

The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (AACN, 2023)

- I. Scientific Underpinnings for Practice
- II. Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Improvement and Systems Thinking
- III. Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-Based Practice
- IV. Information Systems/Technology and Patient Care Technology for the Improvement and Transformation of Health Care
- V. Health Care Policy for Advocacy in Health Care
- VI. Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes
- VII. Clinical Prevention and Population Health
- VIII. Advanced Nursing Practice

The Essentials Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education (2026)

• Domain 1: Knowledge for Nursing Practice

Descriptor: Integration, translation, and application of established and evolving disciplinary nursing knowledge and ways of knowing, as well as knowledge from other disciplines, including a foundation in liberal arts and natural and social sciences. This distinguishes the practice of professional nursing and forms the basis for clinical judgment and innovation in nursing practice.

• Domain 2: Person-Centered Care

Descriptor: Person-centered care focuses on the individual within multiple complicated contexts, including family and/or important others. Person-centered care is holistic, individualized, just, respectful, compassionate, coordinated, evidence-based, and developmentally appropriate. Person-centered care builds on a scientific body of knowledge that guides nursing practice regardless of specialty or functional area.

• Domain 3: Population Health

Descriptor: Population health spans the healthcare delivery continuum from public health prevention to disease management of populations and describes collaborative activities with both traditional and non-traditional partnerships from affected communities, public health, industry, academia, health care, local government entities, and others for the improvement of equitable population health outcomes.

• Domain 4: Scholarship for Nursing Discipline

Descriptor: The generation, synthesis, translation, application, and dissemination of nursing knowledge to improve health and transform health care.

- **Domain 5: Quality and Safety**

Descriptor: Employment of established and emerging principles of safety and improvement science. Quality and safety, as core values of nursing practice, enhance quality and minimize risk of harm to patients and providers through both system effectiveness and individual performance.

- **Domain 6: Interprofessional Partnerships**

Descriptor: Intentional collaboration across professions and with care team members, patients, families, communities, and other stakeholders to optimize care, enhance the healthcare experience, and strengthen outcomes.

- **Domain 7: Systems-Based Practice**

Descriptor: Responding to and leading within complex systems of health care. Nurses effectively and proactively coordinate resources to provide safe, quality, equitable care to diverse populations.

- **Domain 8: Informatics and Healthcare Technologies**

Descriptor: Information and communication technologies and informatics processes are used to provide care, gather data, form information to drive decision making, and support professionals as they expand knowledge and wisdom for practice. Informatics processes and technologies are used to manage and improve the delivery of safe, high-quality, and efficient healthcare services in accordance with best practice and professional and regulatory standards.

- **Domain 9: Professionalism**

Descriptor: Formation and cultivation of a sustainable professional nursing identity, accountability, perspective, collaborative disposition, and comportment that reflects nursing's characteristics and values.

- **Domain 10: Personal, Professional, and Leadership Development**

Descriptor: Participation in activities and self-reflection that foster personal health, resilience, and well-being, lifelong learning, and support the acquisition of nursing expertise and assertion of leadership.

DNP Core Classes

- NURS 8066: DNP Leadership
- NURS 8077: Information Management in Health Care
- NURS 8088: Analytical Methods of Evidence-Based Practice
- NURS 8099: Advanced Topics in Population Health
- NURS 8100: Advanced Care of the Individual and Family

Advanced Practice

Culminating practice-based experiences build on the foundation of previous coursework in the program. Note that the internships and DNP project are also considered part of the core curriculum.

- Core Courses offer 96 practice hours total
- NURS 8950: Doctor of Nursing Practice Internship I - 135 hours (3cr.)
- NURS 8951: Doctor of Nursing Practice Internship II – 135 hours (3cr.)
- NURS 9990: Doctor of Nursing Practice Project (Clinical Dissertation) – 135 hours (6 credits +)

Total 501 total practice hours

NURS 8949: Clinical Internship Elective - variable 1-12 credits – enables students to earn more clinical hours

Internship experiences account for 270 hours of direct advanced practice in the community and can be completed at students' home locations, or, in many cases, in their work settings. If the student enters the program with less than 500 hours from their master's program, the student may take extra Internship hours to equal a total of 1,000 hours combined.

The DNP project accounts for an additional 135 practice hours. The DNP program gives students the opportunity to demonstrate acquisition of increasingly complex skill sets in data acquisition, analysis, and practice application in a practice setting.

DEGREE COMPLETION

- Core classes
- Internship hours equaling a minimum of 1,000 practice hours (MSN + DNP)
- 501 Internship hours from the DNP Program
- Professional Portfolio
- DNP Project
- DNP Professional Poster
- DNP Project Presentation
- 6-year time limit from start to finish

DNP PROGRAM PLAN

All students follow a part-time program plan. Part-time is defined as 4.5 credits or less.

Program Plan with Advanced Clinical Practice Specialty Electives

Figure 4

Summer Term I		Fall Term I		Spring Term II	
Course	Credit/WK	Course	Credit/WK	Course	Credit/WK
NURS 8066 (7.5 weeks) DNP Leadership (6 direct clinical hours)	3/6	NURS 8077 (7.5 weeks) Information Management in Health Care (15 direct clinical hours)	3/6	NURS 8099 (7.5 weeks) Advanced Topics in Population Health (41 direct clinical hours)	3/6
		NURS 8088 (7.5 weeks) Analytical Methods of Evidence Based Practice	3/6	NURS 8100 (7.5 weeks) Advanced Care of the Individual and Family (34 direct clinical hours)	3/6

				NURS 9990 (15 weeks) Doctor of Nursing Practice Project	1/3
Semester Credits	3	Semester Credits	6	Semester Credits	7
Total Program Hours	3	Total Program Hours	9	Total Program Hours	16
Direct Clinical Hours	6	Direct Clinical Hours	15	Direct Clinical Hours	75
Total Direct Clinical Hours	6	Total Direct Clinical Hours	21	Total Direct Clinical Hours	96

Summer Term II		Fall Term II	
Course	Credit/WK	Course	Credit/WK
NURS 8950 (15 weeks) Doctor of Nursing Practice Internship I (135 total direct clinical hours)	3/9	NURS 8951 (15 weeks) Doctor of Nursing Practice Internship II (135 total direct clinical hours)	3/9
NURS 9990 (15 weeks) Doctor of Nursing Practice Project	2/6	NURS 9990 (15 weeks) Doctor of Nursing Practice Project (135 total direct clinical hours)	3/3
Semester Credits	5	Semester Credits	6
Total Program Hours	21	Total Program Hours	27
Direct Clinical Hours	135	Direct Clinical Hours	270
Total Direct Clinical Hours	231	Total Direct Clinical Hours	501

***With approval of Admission Progression and Graduation committee NURS 8949 can be taken at any time during the program for up to 6 credits at a time.**

DNP PROJECT

Students are encouraged to identify the topic for their DNP project in the first semester as part of NURS 8066: DNP Leadership. The project is formalized with the assignment of a Chair the spring of year 1. The project should provide evidence of the student's ability to synthesize and apply the DNP Essentials into practice. Dissemination of the project will be in the form of a written paper in the format of a dissertation and presentation to peers and a panel of faculty. The DNP project accounts for 135 hours of clinical practice through intensive engagement with stakeholders as part of the experience.

Figure 5

DNP Projects Requirements (AACN 2015)

- a. Focus on a change that impacts healthcare outcomes either through direct or indirect care.
- b. Have a system (micro-, meso-, or macro- level) or population/aggregate focus.
- c. Demonstrate implementation in the appropriate arena or area of practice.
- d. Include a plan for sustainability (e.g. financial, systems or political realities, not only theoretical abstractions).
- e. Include an evaluation of processes and/or outcomes (formative or summative). DNP Projects should be designed so that processes and/or outcomes will be evaluated to guide practice and policy. Clinical significance is as important in guiding practice as statistical significance is in evaluating research.
- f. Provide a foundation for future practice scholarship.

American Association of Colleges of Nursing (August 2015). *New white paper on the DNP: current issues and clarifying recommendations*. Washington, D.C.

Retrieved from: <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/news/articles/2015/dnp-white-paper>

INTERNSHIPS

Advance practice hours provide students an opportunity to enhance and integrate prior learning and to acquire and apply DNP and advanced practice competencies in a mentored clinical setting. Recognizing that students come from diverse backgrounds and a broad range of experiences, students will identify their area/s of interest and growth opportunities. Students will be responsible for arranging internship hours. **As each student's internship experience will be unique, each student will need to discuss plans for internship with their assigned faculty. Students will be required to document all internship experiences and hours in an on-line database. Information about this database will be provided to students at the outset of the DNP program.**

DNP PORTFOLIO

DNP graduates will utilize an online DNP portfolio containing their work that validates achievement of program DNP Essentials. The Portfolio will be ongoing throughout the program. This is used by the student and faculty to track professional growth, program goals and DNP essential attainment. The student's academic advisor must approve the completion of the portfolio for graduation as well as the Admission, Progression and Graduation Committee and DNP Coordinator. Appendix D

Penn West University DNP Portfolio Requirements

Beginning with Cohort #2

A Doctor of Nursing Practice portfolio is good way to track the DNP essentials and your progress in becoming a DNP-prepared nurse. "The student's demonstration achievement of program outcomes provides evidence that the curricular design and teaching / learning experiences support student's readiness to practice as a new DNP-prepared nurse." (AACN 2015)

This professional DNP portfolio can easily be updated and used for employment purposes.

The PennWest University DNP Portfolio must include:

1. Professional DNP Goal /Mission for individual students.
2. Curriculum Vitae (updated throughout the program as needed)
3. Doctoral Project (updated as it progresses)
4. Selected projects for classes as guided by your instructors and that you feel are particularly supportive of your development in meeting the Doctor of Nursing Practice Essentials
5. Involvement in professional service activities (should be included in the C.V.)
6. Attendance at professional and/or research meetings and conferences
7. Inventory of paper or poster presentations at professional and scientific conferences
8. Course Outlines and Objectives for each class and the YOUR self-evaluation of how you met them
9. Reflective summary describing how student has achieved each of FPB's "Characteristics of the DNP Graduate" (see page 3)
10. Documentation of clinical hours by reflection journal pages, certificates of completion and other documentation of clinical hours.
11. Graph of clinical hours
12. Abstract for possible Publication (including the targeted publication)
13. At individual's discretion: publications, licenses, certificates and awards (these should be listed on your CV)
14. Doctor of Nursing Practice Final Review for Portfolio

American Association of Colleges of Nursing (August 2015). *New white paper on the DNP: current issues and clarifying recommendations*. Washington, D.C. Retrieved from:

<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/news/articles/2015/dnp-white-paper>

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CREDIT/CLOCK HOURS

Lecture: 1 credit = 1 clock hour per week, or 15 clock hours over a 15-week semester

Seminar: 1 credit = 2 clock hours per week, or 30 clock hours over a 15-week semester

Internship: 1 credit = 3 clock hours per week, or 45 clock hours over a 15-week semester

DNP COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

NURS 8066: DNP Leadership Credits/Clock Hours: 3 credits/3 clock hours

Provides the advanced practice nurse leadership skills for empowering and influencing others to bring about change. Focus is on understanding multiple perspectives and applying theories of leadership, organizational behavior, and systems to a variety of settings. Ethical and legal strategies to influence procedures and policy will be emphasized. Prerequisites: none. Offered summer annually.

NURS 8077: Information Management in Health Care Credits/Clock Hours: 3 credits/3 clock hours

Provides students with essential knowledge and skills to utilize information and management systems to support evidence-based practice. The role of information management systems and databases in health care will be discussed. Students will employ information technology to implement decision support programs that are pertinent to improved practice. Co-requisite: NURS 8088. Offered fall annually.

NURS 8088: Analytical Methods of Evidence Based Practice Credits/Clock hours: 3 credits/3 clock hours

Emphasis is on analytical methods to critically appraise evidence-based literature and translate research to clinical practice. Students appraise current literature related to their chosen topic, constructing an evidence basis for their selected practice project. Co- requisites: NURS 8077. Offered fall annually.

NURS 8099: Advanced Topics in Population Health Credit/Clock Hours: 3 credits/3 clock hours

Explores emerging literature related to management of complex health conditions across the lifespan. Emphasis is on health promotion and care of communities and populations. The effective utilization of health care systems, principles of epidemiology, environmental health, and community partnering and planning are examined as they relate to population health promotion. Prerequisite: NURS 8066, 8077, 8088. Co-requisite: NURS 8100. Offered spring annually.

NURS 8100: Advanced Care of the Individual and Family Credit/Clock Hours: 3 credits/3 clock hours

Explores the management of complex health conditions across the lifespan. Topics will vary and be drawn from emerging fields such as genetics, immunology, behavioral health, pharmacology, and preventive medicine. Prerequisites: NURS 8066, 8077, 8088. Co- requisite: NURS 8099. Offered spring annually.

NURS 8949: Clinical Internship Elective Credit/Clock Hours: Variable 1-12 Credit Hours

Students who have not completed at least 500 hours of clinical practice at the master's level upon acceptance into the program will acquire and apply Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) and advanced practice competencies in a mentored setting. Students will identify learning plans with faculty approval to meet their individual professional practice goals. 25% of course hours must be working with a clinical expert. Offered all sessions, 1 credit= 45 internship hours. There are no prerequisites for this course, but students must be enrolled in the DNP program.

**NURS 8950: Doctor of Nursing Practice Internship I
Credits/Clock Hours: 3 credits/9 clock hours per week (135 clinical practice hours per semester)**

First of two required internships. Provides students an opportunity to enhance and integrate prior learning. Student acquires and applies DNP and advanced practice competencies in a mentored clinical setting as a preceptor or direct care provider for individuals with complex medical conditions. Student

self-identifies learning goals/plan for faculty approval. Prerequisites: NURS 8066, 8077, 8088, 8099, 8100. Offered summer annually.

NURS 8951: Advanced Clinical Practice Internship II

Credits/Clock Hours: 3 credits/9 clock hours per week (135 clinical practice hours per semester)

Second of two required internships. Provides students additional opportunity to enhance and integrate prior learning and to acquire and apply DNP and advanced clinical practice competencies in a mentored clinical setting. Focus is on vulnerable populations and their communities. Student identifies learning goals and follows a faculty-approved plan. Prerequisites: NURS 8066, 8077, 8088, 8099, 8100, 8950. Offered fall annually.

NURS 9990: Doctor of Nursing Practice Project Credit/Clock Hours: 6 Credit/18 Clock hours

Focus is on the development, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination of a research project that translates evidence to practice. Project will relate to the advanced practice nursing role and involve direct engagement with and benefit to a group, population or community rather than an individual. Prerequisites: NURS 8055, 8066, 8077, 8088, 8099. Offered summer, fall and spring annually.

DNP PROJECT COMPLETION POLICY

For information regarding the DNP project, please review the DNP Research Manual and Appendices E & F)

DNP DISMISSAL POLICY

A student will be dismissed from the DNP program for any of the following reasons:

1. Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy (see appendix B).
2. Violation of the American Nurses Association “Code for Nurses” guidelines for ethical practice, or the National Student Nurses’ Association “Code of Academic and Clinical Conduct.”
3. Failure to notify the Office of Graduate Studies of changes in a criminal arrest history.
4. Failure to meet enrollment requirements (e.g., licensure, CPR, professional liability insurance, clearances, and site-specific requirements) for internships
5. A documented pattern of unprofessional behavior in the classroom or clinical setting.
6. Unsafe practice during the internship.
7. Failure to maintain a grade point average (QPA) appropriate to the program.
8. If the student’s academic record in more than one semester warrants probation.

A student dismissed from the university is also dismissed from the DNP program; however, a student dismissed from the DNP program is not necessarily dismissed from the university. A student who is dismissed from the DNP program will be informed by letter, a copy of which will be retained in the student’s file. The student may choose to:

1. Remain at the university and pursue another course of study

2. Withdraw from the university
3. Appeal dismissal (See *Student Rights, Regulations, and Procedures Online Handbook*)

Students who are dismissed from the DNP Program are strongly encouraged to seek the advice of their academic advisor to assist in problem solving and planning to meet their goals.

IN PROGRESS (IP) GRADES FOR DNP PROJECT

Students who have not completed NURS 9990 in the designated semester receive an “IP” (In Progress) grade. The grade "IP" is given only when the work in a course extends beyond the semester or term originally scheduled. To earn an IP grade there must be progression and satisfactory performance. The grade "IP" will not alter the QPA of the student since hours attempted, hours earned, and quality points earned will be entered in cumulative totals once the final grade is submitted. The "IP" grade shall remain on the student's transcript until the instructor submits a grade upon completion of the DNP project.

IN PROGRESS (IP) GRADES FOR CLINICAL INTERNSHIP

Students who are taking NURS 8949 Clinical Internships must complete their clinical hours for the current semester before they start a new section of NURS 8949. If students have not completed all of their hours and shown satisfactory progress for the current section of NURS 8949, they cannot proceed with NURS 8949 in a subsequent semester. NURS 8949 courses can be given an IP grade if the student does not complete their course within the semester; but a final grade must be received before student can take an additional section of NURS 8949. The DNP program will follow PennWest University policy regarding IP grades.

FUNDAMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

All students entering the DNP program complete the Fundamental Requirements Agreement upon starting NURS 8066. Students who are not progressing or who do not meet the Fundamental Requirements will take part in the remediation process.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

Any student requesting a Leave of Absence from the DNP program must submit a request in writing to the DNP Program Coordinator. This letter must include a reason for requesting the leave and the students' plans for return.

1. The coordinator has the right to request a personal interview with the student requesting leave before a decision is made.
2. Each Leave of Absence will be handled individually according to the specific need, academic standing, and clinical performance of the student.
3. The coordinator will present the request to the Admission, Progression, and Graduation Committee with all pertinent information.
4. The Admission, Progression, and Graduation Committee will recommend denial or granting of the Leave of Absence.
5. No Leave of Absence will be granted for unsatisfactory academic performance or for a period longer than one year or two full semesters.

6. If the leave is granted, the student will be informed as such and must notify the Office of the Registrar of his or her intention to withdraw and the reason for withdrawal. At this time, the student will be informed of any conditional requirements for return (see Graduate Catalog).
7. Before returning to the DNP Program, the student must notify the DNP Program Coordinator of intent, the semester before returning, in order to register for the appropriate courses.

READMISSION POLICY

Students who withdraw from the program without securing a leave of absence, leave because of unsatisfactory performance, or fail to complete the program requirements in six years (or by the approved extension date) may apply for readmission to the nursing program if they have a cumulative QPA of 3.0.

The Admission, Progression, and Graduation committee will evaluate student requests for readmission and make a recommendation to the graduate faculty based on the following criteria:

1. General academic history
2. Grade point average
3. Clinical performance as evaluated by graduate nursing faculty and preceptors
4. Time absent from the academic program
5. Potential for success

Students must request readmission in writing and address the reason for the dismissal or withdrawal and, if applicable, what the student has done or plans to do to improve academic performance. The Committee reserves the right to request additional information. The letter must be sent to:

Admission, Progression, and Graduation Committee
PennWest University DNP Program
Department of Nursing, Department Chair
1801 West First Street Oil City, PA 16301

Requests for readmission for the fall semester of the next academic year must be received by the Committee no later than March 31. Requests for readmission for the spring semester of the next academic year must be received by the Committee no later than September 30.

Students must apply for readmission within one year from the date of dismissal. Students who are not readmitted within the one-year period will be considered new applicants and must meet the admission criteria.

Readmission to the nursing program is based on the professional judgment of the graduate nursing faculty and is contingent upon class size (space available). Students will be notified in writing of the Committee's decision.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

The program is 100% online.

GRADUATE POLICIES

Pennsylvania Western University
GRADUATE PROGRAM POLICIES

RETENTION POLICY

Probation

Students will be placed on probation for the following reasons:

1. Failure to maintain an overall quality-point average (QPA) of 3.0
2. Earning a grade of “C” or below in any one course

A letter grade of “C” in the internship courses (NURS 8950 and NURS 8951) or DNP Project (NURS 9990) may not count toward fulfillment of requirements for the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree.

A letter grade of “D” or “E” in any course also does not count toward fulfillment of requirements for the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree.

Removing Probation Status

Students placed on probation may repeat grades of “C” or below according to the following policy:

1. Only one course may be repeated
2. This one course may be repeated only one time
3. The most recent grade (regardless of whether it is higher or lower) will be the grade used for the GPA calculation.

However, all attempts and the original grade(s) earned will continue to appear on the graduate transcript.

Progression

Students are admitted in cohorts and are expected to follow all courses in sequence. Although not all courses in the DNP program have pre-requisites, any deviations from the program plan require prior approval from the DNP Admissions, Progression, and Graduation Committee.

STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS

All requirements for the DNP degree must be completed within a six-year period commencing with the first graduate course registration. The DNP Program Coordinator may extend this period upon written request from the student for justifiable reasons. This request must be supported by the coordinator before submission to PennWest School of Nursing Dean for final approval.

Pennsylvania Western University
GRADUATE PROGRAM POLICIES

GRADUATE POLICY 2 -MSN Progression Requirements

Students in the graduated nursing programs are required to achieve passing grades in each course and to maintain GPA of 3.0 or above. Grades of C or below do not demonstrate mastery of content at a graduate program level.

Students who receive graduate course grades of C or below are required to repeat the course. Graduate students **may repeat a single course for grade improvement only once.**

Graduate students are limited to a maximum total of two repeats across their program.

Academic standing, determined by assessment of course grades and GPA, is evaluated at the end of each term in the MSN program: Fall, Spring, and Summer.

Prior to enrolling in NURS 7115, the program's capstone courses, and NURS 9900 in DNP program which is the DNP Project, students must successfully pass all courses within their concentration.

The graduate programs adhere to the Graduate School Policies and those specifically pertaining to progression, excerpts from the policies noted below. NOTE: Refer to the posted policy online for complete information:

[Academic Standing: Graduate Policy](#): (excerpts/ refer to link policy online for complete information):

- Graduate students must maintain an overall grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.00 in graduate courses taken at Pennsylvania Western and required for completion of their major.
- Graduate students whose overall GPA is below 3.00 will be placed on academic probation. A graduate student on probation is not eligible to become a graduate assistant, research assistant, graduate resident hall director, assistant resident hall director, or community assistant.
- Graduate students placed on academic probation are given one probationary semester to raise the GPA. If academic progress is made during the probationary semester but the graduate student has not achieved a 3.00 GPA overall, the student will be placed on continued academic probation. If the overall GPA is still below 3.00 after the probationary semester, the student may be academically dismissed.
- Students who receive a grade of "F" in any graduate course will be dismissed from the program. Students may appeal their dismissal to the academic dean, who will make a decision regarding the appeal in consultation with the department chair, or their designee. If appeal is successful, the student will work with the academic dean and department chair, or designee, regarding requirements for continuation in the program.
- [Repeating a Course Policy](#) (excerpts/ refer to link policy online for complete information):
A graduate student, including post-baccalaureate graduate students, may repeat a course previously taken at Pennsylvania Western University under these restrictions:
 - Graduate students can **repeat a single course for grade improvement only once.**

- Graduate students **are limited to a maximum total of two repeats across their program.**
- The most recent grade (regardless of whether it is higher or lower) is the grade used for the GPA calculation.
- If a student earns a grade of “C” or below in a theory course that has a co-requisite clinical practicum, or earns a “Failure” on the co-requisite clinical practicum, the student must repeat all related co-requisite clinical courses (e.g., NURS 6155 and NURS 6166) the next semester that course is offered
- [Graduation Policy](#) (excerpts/ refer to link policy online for complete information):

To graduate from a degree program at Pennsylvania Western University, a graduate student must:

- Must complete a minimum of 30 credits and maintain a GPA of 3.0
- Must demonstrate competency as defined by program
- Meet the graduation residency requirement

(Approved: PennWest Academic Affairs, July 2022)

**Pennsylvania Western University
GRADUATE PROGRAM POLICIES**

GRADUATE POLICY 3 - Formal Written Complaint

Student issues or concerns must first be addressed with the faculty of the course. If resolution is not attained, the student may contact the Graduate Program Coordinator. If resolution is still not attained, the Graduate Program Coordinator may decide to involve the Department of Nursing Chairperson.

[PennWest Grade Appeal Policy](#)

**Pennsylvania Western University
GRADUATE PROGRAM POLICIES**

GRADUATE POLICY 4 – PRACTICUM & CLINICAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Practicum/Clinical Site & Preceptor Policies

This policy pertains to NURS 8130 Nursing Administration Role Practicum. Students must have a current, unencumbered license in the state in which they practice and a copy of this will be collected in a course prior to NURS 8130.

The course faculty maintains the responsibility for the final student evaluation.

MSN Resource Individual for NURS 8130 Policy

The MSN program defines resource persons as qualified individuals who work one-to-one with MSN students in clinical and practicum sites to promote attainment of student learning objectives. Resource individuals are currently licensed registered nurses who preferably hold a master's degree in nursing and/or a related field and have expertise in their role.

Practicum: Selection of Nurse Administrator Resource Individual – Students self-select and make initial contact with a specific, available and qualified nurse resource individual from clinical or professional healthcare related site.

MSN Practicum Site Policy

Students will work with the faculty as their preceptor with the NURS 8130 course. They will consult with a nurse administrator resource individual they have selected and approved by the faculty for their capstone project and NURS 8130 assignments. Practicum hours will be completed on the various projects required in the NURS 8130 course.

Practicum Capstone Projects Site Considerations:

- NURS 8130 – may include but is not limited to healthcare agencies, such as hospitals and community healthcare facilities, schools and other sites/agencies where nurses have a health care role.

**Pennsylvania Western University
GRADUATE PROGRAM POLICIES**

GRADUATE POLICY 5 - Grading Policy for Graduate Courses

Final grades for MSN courses will be computed according to the following percentage scale:

Figure 6

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93 - 100%
B	84 - 92%
C	75 - 83%
D	66-74%
F	65% and below
N	No Grade Reported – Research Work in Progress

***NOTE: In the Graduate programs, students with a C grade or below must retake the course. Please see GRADUATE Policy 2 – Graduate Progression Requirements for full explanation.**

Use of Points for Assignments in Graduate Courses

In addition to using a common grading scale for graduate courses, faculty will follow a total points method, criterion-referenced system for assigning course grades. Graduate courses should contain not less than 300 or more than 1000 total course points for calculation of final course grades. Course faculty will determine how each learning assessment component should be weighted with the number of points.

Pennsylvania Western University
GRADUATE PROGRAM POLICIES

GRADUATE POLICY 6 - Academic Integrity Policy

Confidentiality of Course Content:

Please note that content provided within courses (i.e. quizzes, discussion board conversations, power points, etc.) are never to be shared with individuals or any other sources outside of any courses. Materials and discussions within courses are intended to be used for educational purposes only and are to be treated in a confidential manner.

Academic Integrity Policy

Originality/Similarity Check – All papers submitted to the D2L Assignments links will automatically be assessed to determine originality/similarity. A high similarity score, or content written without proper citation and quotation marks for direct quotes, may be determined by faculty to indicate plagiarism and result in follow up according to the Academic Integrity Policy.

Read further about how to avoid plagiarism:

A Word about Plagiarism

You must document all of your source material. If you take any text from somebody else, you must make it clear the text is being quoted and where the text comes from. You must also cite any sources from which you obtain ideas, data, models, graphs, tables and other material. Paraphrasing is acceptable but avoid paraphrasing too closely to the original source. This applies to papers, discussion forums, PowerPoint presentations, posters, and other assignments that you submit. **You cannot re-use papers or parts of papers that you submitted in previous courses without approval from the faculty in the course that you are taking.** Use quotes sparingly. APA recommends that quotes should constitute no more than 10% of your paper. If you have any questions about what does or does not constitute plagiarism or how much of your paper can be in quotes, ask your faculty.

“Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be treated lightly. Plagiarism is easy to avoid, therefore give credit where credit is due you should not run into any problems.”

(Source: [Sample Plagiarism Warnings for Syllabi | Center for Teaching and Learning](#))

List of Sanctions - *Any of the following may be applied if your work is deemed to be plagiarism:*

- Written disciplinary reprimand
- A make-up assignment or examination
- Lower grade or failure on the assignment or exam
- Failure in the course
- Suspension from the University for a defined period
- Withholding or rescinding a California University of Pennsylvania degree, diploma, or certificate
- Retroactive failure of the course

**Pennsylvania Western University
GRADUATE PROGRAM POLICIES**

Figure
7

Graduate Nursing		Policies & Procedures
Title of Policy	Drug Use Policy	
Author/s		
Effective Date	March 31, 2025	
Revised	March 31, 2025	

GRADUATE POLICY 7- Drug Policy

I. Intent

This policy outlines the expectations and regulations regarding drug use, including medical marijuana, for students in the Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology (MSSLP) program at Pennsylvania Western (PennWest) University.

II. Coverage

This policy applies to all graduate students in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at Pennsylvania Western University.

III. Body of Policy

This policy upholds PennWest Policy FA049: Alcohol and Drugs. It provides further regulations for students who are providing clinical services in on-campus or externship locations, as outlined below.

General Drug Use Policy:

Students are prohibited from using, possessing, distributing, or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while engaged in clinical duties, on institutional premises, or while representing their clinical site in any official capacity. This includes the PennWest on-campus clinics, externship sites, or any other site in which the student is providing clinical or related services (e.g., screenings, health fair). Please also refer to the department policy on dress code, which covers appearance and disruptive odors.

Medical Marijuana Policy:

Patients who reside in Pennsylvania can qualify for medical cannabis if they have a terminal illness or if they suffer from certain medical conditions. However, marijuana is still a prohibited substance federally under the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). PennWest University also abides by the federal Drug-Free Workplace Act and the Federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments, which require that "as a condition of receiving funds or any other form of financial assistance under any federal program, an institution of higher education or state/local educational

agency must certify that it has adopted and implemented a program to prevent the unlawful manufacture, possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students.

Medical marijuana is not a reasonable accommodation under the ADA for students with disabilities, as marijuana is an illegal drug under the federal Controlled Substances Act, 21 U.S.C. § 812(c).

Drug Testing and Compliance:

1. Clinical externs may be required to undergo drug testing as a condition of their clinical placement/s and must comply with all institutional and site-specific drug testing policies.
2. Clinical sites have the authority to decline any student who does not pass their drug test. Clinical sites also have the authority to obtain any requested supporting documentation.
3. A positive drug test for unauthorized substances, including medical marijuana, may result in disciplinary action.
4. Any extern refusing a required drug test or found violating this policy may be subject to removal from their clinical site and possible programmatic consequences.

Consequences of Policy Violation

Failure to comply with this policy may result in any – or any combination – of the following: removal from the clinical site, instatement of a performance improvement plan, withdraw or failure of the clinical rotation, or disciplinary action from the University. Egregious behavior may result in immediate program dismissal. If adjustments are made to a student's plan of study as a result of being in violation of this policy, the student may face financial implications or delayed graduation.

IV. Authority

All department faculty have had an opportunity to review and provide feedback to this policy. It shall remain in force until revised or replaced.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

STEPS IN OBTAINING LEGAL CERTIFICATION AND PRESCRIPTIVE AUTHORITY IN PENNSYLVANIA

These are the steps you will need to follow to obtain legal certification in Pennsylvania. **If you plan to practice in another state, you will need to become familiar with their rules and regulations.**

1. Complete Curriculum! For the AANPCP, you may begin the application process as early as 6 months before graduating to allow time for review and for you to send in any missing information. However, candidates cannot sit for an examination until after they have completed all didactic courses and clinical practice hours required for their NP program, For the ANCC, the rules are the same: candidates may sit for the exam prior to degree conferral but not before completion of the program. Scores will not be released by either organization until they receive an official transcript showing degree conferral. ANCC may require you to fill in our program number on their form. (Our number is 2493).
2. Apply to the national certification organization of your choice and complete the application process. The ANCC exam requires the coordinator's signature; the AANPCP exam does not.
3. Take exam and have results sent to the Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing (SBON).
4. Once you know that you have passed the exam, complete the state board forms for legal certification (CRNP). Your portion can be completed online (see <http://www.dos.pa.gov/ProfessionalLicensing/BoardsCommissions/Nursing/Pages/Apply-Online.aspx#.VWyaVUagGpQ>) or via paper (<http://www.dos.pa.gov/ProfessionalLicensing/BoardsCommissions/Nursing/Pages/Application-Forms.aspx#.VWyanUagGpQ>)
5. Email the MSN Program Coordinator to make arrangements to sign the form that verifies your program completion. She is able to access this online and will forward it to the Registrar's Office for the school seal. The Registrar's Office will mail the signed and sealed form to the SBON. The SBON will only accept forms mailed to them directly from the school. You are responsible for mailing all other documents/fees.

****You must have a valid RN license in order to apply for CRNP certification. The name on your CRNP application must be exactly the same as on your RN license. Please be aware that a faxed form will not be accepted by the SBON****

6. Once you have your CRNP number you may apply for prescriptive authority, which involves getting a signed collaborative agreement with your NP employer and verification of successful completion of 45 hours of pharmacology. ***To make things easier for you, the MSN Program Coordinator will automatically complete and mail the pharmacology verification form to the Registrar at the same time she sends the verification of program completion form.*** You are responsible for mailing all other documents/fees.

*Helpful Hint: Keep your collaborative agreement as broad as possible
Please visit the [Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing](http://www.pennsylvania.nursing.gov) website for up to date information.

APPENDIX B

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY PLEDGE

As professional nurses we are held to the provisions of the *Code of Ethics for Nurses* adopted by the American Nurses Association in 2001. Provisions of the *Code* address privacy, confidentiality, responsibility, moral virtue, values, and social reform, among others. More importantly, the *Code* asserts that “nurses are always accountable for their actions, decisions, and judgments” (Winland-Brown et al., 2015, p. 271).

Faculty of the PennWest University graduate programs look to the *Code of Ethics for Nurses* to inform the program policy for academic integrity. Students in the program are expected to adhere to values consistent with the profession of nursing by:

- Submitting only original work
- Properly citing sources (e.g., crediting original authors for their ideas, enclosing exact words in quotation marks)
- Not falsifying data
- Not cheating on examinations or quizzes

Plagiarism, the act of misrepresenting someone else’s words or ideas as one’s own, and other violations of academic integrity will be handled through the judicial system of the individual faculty member’s home university. As students in a joint program, the following resources further guide behavior and define potential consequences.

Penn West Nursing Student Code of Conduct Pledge:

I have read and understood the above statement and agree to abide by the standards of academic integrity of PennWest University.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Reference

Winland-Brown, J., Lachman, V. D., & Swanson, E. (2015). The new ‘Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements’ (2015): Practicum clinical application part I. *MEDSURG Nursing*, 24(4), 268-271.

Appendix C

Fundamental Requirements Agreement

Graduate Schools of Nursing of PennWest University of Pennsylvania

Students preparing for practice and professional roles in nursing must have essential skills and attributes in five areas: communication, motor, intellectual-cognitive, sensory-observational, and behavioral-social. Students are expected to meet these requirements with or without reasonable accommodations. These skills enable a student to meet graduate and professional requirements as measured by state and national credentialing agencies for nursing. Failure to meet or maintain the Fundamental requirements may result in dismissal from the program.

A. COMMUNICATION

A student must possess adequate communication skills to:

- Communicate proficiently in both oral and written English language.
- Possess reading and writing skills sufficient to meet curricular and clinical demands.
- Be able to perceive communication from others whether it be written, verbal, or non-verbal such as intonation, changes in mood, activity, and posture.

(Clinical settings are stressful and include vulnerable patients and delicate communication needs. (Students must be able to accurately describe both the communicated information and the meaning behind it.)

- Communicate verbally in a clear, professional way with patients, colleagues, other healthcare professionals, and community or professional groups.
- Communicate in writing in a clear, professional, and effective way for patient documentation, and scholarly papers required as a part of professional practice and course work.

B. MOTOR

A student must possess adequate motor skills to:

- Perform at the physical activity level that is required in the classroom and for clinical activities.
- Access transportation to clinical and academic placements.
- Participate in classroom and clinical activities as they are scheduled.
- Carry out the physical maneuvers necessary for physical examinations and to provide routine and emergency care. Examples of these include but are not limited to, palpation, auscultation, percussion, application of pressure, Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation, assisting with repositioning a patient.
- Manipulate patient-utilized equipment (e.g., durable medical equipment to include mobility and monitoring devices, etc.) in a safe manner.
- Access technology as needed for clinical management (i.e., billing, charting, monitoring).

C. INTELLECTUAL/COGNITIVE

A student must:

- Have a level of numerical literacy adequate to provide safe patient care and clinically needed skills (medication calculations, laboratory and other clinical calculations)

- Problem-solve effectively and rapidly: learn, reason, calculate, memorize, process and apply information in high-stress environments with multiple distractions.
- Identify significant findings from the patient history, evaluation, and data to formulate a diagnosis and develop an appropriate patient treatment plan as required by their degree program.
- Self-evaluate and utilize resources in order to increase knowledge to maintain continued appropriate clinical growth.
- Demonstrate personal responsibility to complete curricular and clinical projects
- Utilize currently available technology and learn new technologies as they become available for high quality, evidence-based service delivery.

D. SENSORY/OBSERVATIONAL

A student must possess adequate sensory function (vision, hearing, touch) to:

- See and hear well enough to identify normal and abnormal appearance, auscultation, percussion, and palpation.
- Discriminate text, numbers, tables, and graphs associated with diagnostic instruments and tests.
- Recognize and adjust their approach when a peer, client or caregivers do not understand the clinician's written and/or verbal communication.
- Accurately manage technology to assess and monitor patients through both visual and auditory equipment such as telephone, telehealth platforms, and remote assessment instruments (e.g. smartphone attachments, EKG, otoscopes, retinal imaging, telemedicine platforms).
- Respond to alarms and visual or auditory commands

E. BEHAVIORAL/ SOCIAL

A student must possess adequate behavioral and social attributes to:

- Model behavior is in line with the expectations of patients, faculty, and staff at any clinical site where they may spend time.
- Maintain acceptable personal hygiene: Personal hygiene is important due to the nursing profession's close contact with patients and other healthcare workers. (Potentially unpleasant or strong scents should be avoided because they are a common source of irritation to others)
- Dress appropriately: The comfort and trust of patients and co-workers is essential to nursing professional practice. Students must follow the guidelines put forth by their clinical sites. Clothing should be considered for both for its professional message and its cultural competence when caring for diverse patients.
- Project a culturally sensitive and professional image: Jewelry, body adornments, head coverings, hair (including facial hair), piercings and tattoos must be professional and culturally competent and follow the guidelines of the clinical site placement and patient populations.
- Complete responsibilities related to their academic work, teamwork and patient care in a timely manner
- Demonstrate changes in behavior as needed when given constructive feedback and advice (Ability to conform behavior to expected professional standards)

- Manage Stress so that it does not impact their abilities and competence in their student or clinical role.
- Convey information accurately with relevance and cultural competence to patients, families and other professionals. (Students must be able to accurately describe measures they take to demonstrate this if requested)
- Recognize, respect and protect individual's right to freedom from psychological and physical abuse in their professional and student role.
- Identify and barriers to communication with others and implement alternative types of communication to overcome these in their professional or student roles.
- Show respect and care for all individuals including those with disabilities and for individuals of different ages, genders, races, religions, sexual orientations, and cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Act to safeguard the patient from the incompetent, abusive or illegal practice by any individual in their professional or student role.
- Safeguard the patient's dignity, the right to privacy and the confidentiality of patient information. This standard does not prohibit or affect reporting responsibilities under the Child Protective Services Law or the Older Adults Protective Services Act or other statutes that may mandate reporting of this information.
- Conduct oneself in an ethical and legal manner, upholding the ANA Code of Ethics, the state board of nursing regulations, accrediting body standards, and university and federal privacy policies.
- Demonstrate law-abiding behavior by meeting program requirements for background checks as well as federal and state requirements to maintain nursing licensure(s) and certification.
- Meet standards of behavior that do not violate the Student Substance Abuse Policy and conform to the requirements for drug testing required by their clinical sites
- Meet medical screenings and requirements required by clinical sites (including vaccinations).
- Conduct themselves professionally and with cultural competence in both clinical, classroom or group work settings to support shared goals and support the clinical and educational needs of others.
- Tolerate noxious smells, sights, sounds and emotionally charged settings while maintaining professional behavior.

The practice of nursing at graduate levels must not pose a threat to the health and safety of patients. A student whose behavior or performance raises questions concerning his or her ability to fulfill the fundamental requirements of the role may be referred to the School of Nursing Program leaders and other academic leaders. Nursing students must act to protect the welfare of patients. Students unable to fulfill the fundamental requirements, with or without accommodation, may be dismissed from their program. In some cases, when the fundamental requirement which a student is not meeting is believed to be a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, their case will be referred to Judicial Affairs. PennWest University is committed to providing equal educational access for individuals with disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA) of 2008. The School of Nursing will, if requested, provide reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified enrolled students unless: (a) such accommodations

impose undue hardship to the institution or clinical site(s); or (b) direct threats of substantial harm to the health and safety of others due to the disability cannot be eliminated by any reasonable accommodations available that would allow the student to perform the fundamental requirements; or (c) such accommodations fundamentally alter the educational program or academic standards. Students requesting accommodation(s) should disclose this to the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) as soon as they are aware of the need.

In order for the university to plan for reasonable accommodations, during their first course in the program of study the student will:

- Will sign the *PennWest Universities Consortium Fundamental Requirements Agreement*
- *Notify the Office of Accessibility Services in their first course if they believe they may need reasonable accommodations.*

By signing below, I hereby certify that I have read and understand and comply with: FUNDAMENTAL REQUIREMENTS AGREEMENT of the Graduate Schools of Nursing of Clarion and Edinboro University of Pennsylvania

There are no barriers that will prevent me from meeting the fundamental requirements for the graduate school of nursing. If there is a development that changes my ability to meet these fundamental requirements, I agree to notify the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) and the program director for my course of study. The inability to meet these fundamental requirements with reasonable accommodations will result in dismissal from the program in accordance with policies set forth in the student handbooks, university standards of behavior, student substance abuse policy and applicable clinical site policies and rules and the state boards of nursing for which I hold licensure. I understand that the loss of professional licensure for any reason is grounds for dismissal from any nursing degree program.

Based upon the School of Nursing “Student Fundamental Requirements” policy:

_____I certify that I can meet the fundamental requirements of the graduate nursing program with or without reasonable accommodations. I understand that I should reach out to the Office of Accessibility Services if I believe I may need reasonable accommodations to fulfill any requirements of the graduate program. I understand that any request for accommodations will be evaluated to determine the adequacy of the supporting documentation and the reasonableness of the requested accommodation.

Find your nurse practice Act: <https://www.ncsbn.org/npa.htm>

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Printed Name: _____

APPENDIX D

PennWest University DNP portfolio

A Doctor of Nursing Practice portfolio is good method to track the DNP essentials and your progress in becoming a DNP-prepared nurse. “The student’s demonstration achievement of program outcomes provides evidence that the curricular design and teaching / learning experiences support student’s readiness to practice as a new DNP-prepared nurse” (AACN 2015).

=====

The PennWest University DNP Portfolio will include:

=====

1. Student’s Professional DNP Goal /Mission (what do you plan to do with your DNP; your goal).
2. Curriculum Vitae (updated throughout the program as needed)
3. Selected projects for classes as guided by your instructors that you feel are particularly supportive of your development in meeting the Doctor of Nursing Practice Essentials (defined by each course)
4. Record of involvement in professional and community service activities (This should also be included in the C.V.)
5. Record of attendance at professional and/or research meetings and conferences
6. Inventory of paper or presentations at professional and scientific conferences and/or meetings
7. Course objectives for each class and YOUR self-evaluation/reflection of how you met each of these course objectives.
8. Documentation of clinical hours by including reflection journal pages, certificates of completion and other documentation of clinical hours.
9. A log/graph of clinical hours (from #8 above) earned throughout the program (update each semester)
10. Abstract for possible publication submission the last semester of NURS 9990.
11. Doctor of Nursing Practice Final Review of Portfolio (attached to last page of this document for completion)

American Association of Colleges of Nursing (August 2015). *New white paper on the DNP: current issues and clarifying recommendations*. Washington, D.C. 0 Retrieved from:

<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/news/articles/2015/dnp-white-paper>

PennWest University DNP portfolio		
Admission, Progression and Graduation Committee Rubric for DNP Portfolio/Graduation Requirements		
DNP Candidate Name:		
Required Portfolio Element	Present	Not present /Needs revision
1) Professional DNP Goal /Mission for individual students		

2) Curriculum Vitae (updated throughout the program as needed)		
3) Selected projects for classes as guided by your instructors and defined by each course*		
4) Record of involvement in professional service activities.		
5) Record of attendance at professional and/or research meetings and conferences		
6) Inventory of paper or presentations at professional and scientific conferences and/or meetings		
7) Course objectives for each class and the student self-evaluation/reflection of how they met them		
8) Documentation of clinical hours by including reflection journal pages, certificates of completion and other documentation of clinical hours.		
9) Log/Graph of clinical hours earned throughout the program (total of 1000 hours including maximum of 500 master's program hours)		
10) Abstract for possible Publication		
11) Doctor of Nursing Practice Final Review for Portfolio		
Comments:		
DNP Coordinator Approval Signature & Date		

**Course Clinical Hours assigned:*

8066- 6 hours, 807-7 15 hours, 8099- 41 hours, 8100- 34 hours = 96 hours

PennWest University
Doctor of Nursing Practice Final Review of Portfolio

Name:

Date of Submission:

I. Professional Development and accomplishment of DNP

Write a brief narrative describing your professional development during this program and specifically describe how you met each of the 8 DNP Essentials:

II. Future Goals and Plans

Describe your professional growth and goals for the future as a DNP:

Appendix E
Format for DNP Project Title Page



TITLE OF PROJECT (all caps and centered, Times New Roman, 14 font)
By

Your Name (centered, Times New Roman, 14 font)
(Degrees earned)
Degree, Institution, year (centered, Times New Roman, 14 font)
(e.g.) MSN, Clarion and Edinboro Universities, 2011
BSN, Edinboro University, 2004

A DNP Research Project Submitted to Pennsylvania Western University
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree
Month, year (each line centered, Times New Roman, 12 font)

_____	_____
Date	Committee Chair
_____	_____
Date	Committee Member
_____	_____
Date	Committee Member
_____	_____
Date	Dean of Health Sciences and Human Services Pennsylvania Western University

Appendix F
Post-Bac MSN Clinical Hours Verification Form



School of Nursing
Verification of Post-Baccalaureate Direct Clinical Hours

DNP Learner: Complete items 1–3. Present this form to your previous institution and allow sufficient time for the Dean, Program Director, or appropriate administrative designee of your MSN or Post-Master's program to complete items 4–5 and return the form to you. (Please print legibly or type.)

Name (Last, First, Middle):	
Institution Name:	
Institution Address:	
Institution Telephone:	
Program Name:	
Type of Degree Received:	☐ Master of Science in Nursing ☐ Post-Master's Certificate
Area of Concentration:	
Graduation Date:	

Dean, Associate Dean, Director of Nursing, Advisor, or Chair: Please complete the information below indicating the student named above has completed the listed nursing practice hours. Only logged, supervised, and precepted practice hours completed as part of an MSN or Post-Master's Certificate program will be considered.

Total Number of Direct Clinical Hours Completed:	
Program Representative Name:	
Program Representative Title:	
Program Representative Telephone:	
Program Representative Signature:	
Date:	

Please direct any questions to the PennWest DNP Program Office 814-393-1851.