

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program prepares nurses for roles as family nurse practitioners (FNPs), adult-gerontology nurse practitioners (AGNPs), or nurse educators (NEs) in healthcare or academic settings. Graduates formulate clinical, administrative, or policy decisions to promote health among patients, families, or communities along the continuum of wellness and illness. The MSN curriculum is based on competencies and guidelines established by the Colorado Board of Nursing, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), Quality and Safety Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (QSEN), and the National Task Force for Quality Nurse Practitioner Education (NTF). Graduates of the MSN FNP and AGNP tracks are eligible to take the national nurse practitioner certification examinations and are eligible for state licensure as nurse practitioners. Graduates of the MSN NE track are eligible to take the national certified nurse educator (CNE) examination. Graduates of the MSN program, regardless of track, may also pursue doctoral education (e.g., PhD, DNP, EdD).

Admission to Colorado Mesa University does not guarantee admission to the MSN Program. The MSN Program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

MSN students choose one of three tracks as their substantive area of study: FNP, AGNP, or NE. MSN courses are delivered on-line, allowing students to reside in their home communities. However, students travel to complete clinical hours (e.g., rural health). Objective standardized clinical exams (OSCEs), and graduate program student intensive (GPSI) sessions are held in both in-person and online formats.

MSN coursework, regardless of track, includes advanced pharmacology, advanced pathophysiology, advanced health assessment, nursing theory, and evidence-based practice. The FNP track includes coursework in primary care (pediatrics, adults, older adults) and care of rural/underserved populations. Students in the MSN FNP track are required to complete a minimum of 700 direct care hours. The AGNP track includes coursework in primary care (adults, older adults) and care of rural/underserved populations. Students in the AGNP track are required to complete a minimum of 600 direct care hours. The NE track includes coursework in curriculum evaluation and design, technology in the classroom, and teaching strategies. Students in the MSN NE cognate are required to complete a minimum of 250 clinical hours, 90 of which must be in direct care. Clinical rotations vary by track, but may include academic, inpatient, long-term care, primary care, and community-based sites.

MSN coursework ends with a capstone service-learning project during which students partner with health care and/or academic stakeholders to develop, implement, or evaluate a variety of projects. Students present their capstone projects publicly prior to graduation. Students are expected to submit their original work for presentation at area conferences.

Admission to the MSN Program

Students must have the following for the duration of their time in the Graduate Nursing Program.

- Earned bachelor's degree in nursing (BSN) from an accredited program.

- Unencumbered registered nurse (RN) license from a US state or territory. This must be maintained for the duration of enrollment in the Graduate Nursing Program.
- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for health care providers. This must be maintained for the duration of enrollment in the Graduate Nursing Program.
- Malpractice insurance as a graduate nursing student. Nurse practitioner students must obtain nurse practitioner student malpractice insurance once they begin clinical coursework. All students must maintain malpractice insurance for the duration of their enrollment in the Graduate Nursing Program.
- Criminal background check.
- Drug screen.
- Current immunizations. This must be maintained for the duration of enrollment in the Graduate Nursing Program. Exemptions are accepted by the program, based on the state of Colorado's policies. Immunization status may be evaluated by health care organizations prior to student placement.
- All students must provide proof of training in cultural competency and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) prior to enrollment in clinical courses.

General Policies

Up to nine credit hours may be taken as a non-degree seeking status and later applied to program requirements. Up to 18 credits of applicable courses, with a grade of "B" or higher, may be transferred from an accredited institution. Additional information may be found in the Transfer Credit section.

Requirements

The [Department of Health Sciences](#) offers three Master of Science in Nursing cognate options. See the programs below for complete overviews of all requirements, important information, and suggested course sequencing.

- [Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner \(MSN\)](#)
- [Family Nurse Practitioner, Nursing \(MSN\)](#)
- [Nursing Education, Nursing \(MSN\)](#)