MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING

The Masters of Science in Nursing (MSN) program prepares nurses for roles as family nurse practitioners (FNPs) and nurse educators (NE) 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 the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN)'s MSN education competencies, Quality and Safety Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (QSEN), National League for Nursing's (NLN) nurse educator competencies, and the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculty's (NONPF) nurse practitioner core competencies. Graduates of the MSN FNP track are eligible to take the national FNP certification examination and are eligible for state licensure as FNPs. Graduates of the MSN NE track are eligible to take the national certified nurse educator (CNE) examination. Graduates may also pursue doctoral education.

MSN students choose one of two cognates as their substantive area of study: NE or FNP. The courses are delivered via an online format, allowing students to reside in their home communities. However, students may be required to travel for completion of clinical hours (e.g. rural health), objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs), and graduate program student intensive (GPSI) sessions. MSN coursework, regardless of track, includes advanced pharmacology, advanced pathophysiology, advanced health assessment, nursing theory, leadership, health policy, ethics, and evidence-based practice. The FNP track includes coursework in the primary care of adults, pediatrics, and older adults, and rural health. Students in the MSN FNP cognate are required to complete a minimum of 700 clinical hours in direct patient care. The NE track continues with 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 in both direct and indirect care. Clinical rotations vary based on MSN cognate but may include academic settings, and inpatient, long-term care, community-based, and primary care sites. MSN coursework ends with a MSN capstone 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 and 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.

- Unencumbered registered nurse (RN) license from a US state or territory.
- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for health care providers.
- Malpractice insurance as a nurse practitioner student.
- Criminal background check.
- Negative drug screen.
- Current immunizations. Exemptions are accepted by the program, based on the state of Colorado's policies outlined at https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/vaccine-exemptions (https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/vaccine-exemptions/).
  Immunization status may be evaluated by health care organizations prior to student placement.

- Evidence of training for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- Evidence of training in cultural competency.

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 (https://www.coloradomesa.edu/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.

- Advanced Nursing Practice, Nursing (MSN) (http://catalog.coloradomesa.edu/areas-study/nursing/advanced-nursing-practice-nursing-msn/)
- Family Nurse Practitioner, Nursing (MSN) (http://catalog.coloradomesa.edu/areas-study/nursing/family-nurse-practitioner-nursing-msn/)
- Nursing Education, Nursing (MSN) (http://catalog.coloradomesa.edu/areas-study/nursing/nursing-education-nursing-msn/)