Master of Science in Nursing

Curry College’s Master of Science in Nursing focuses on the timely and relevant Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL®) role. The program is designed for nurses who want to enhance their practice with cutting-edge knowledge and skills. Among the program features are:

- Convenient campus locations
- A superb nursing faculty committed to excellence in nursing education
- A cohort based model where students will stay together as a group throughout the program
- A 2 ½ year commitment; one full day of classes per week for five 15-week semesters
- Extensive clinical immersion at a range of clinical sites

Application for Admission
Curry accepts applications on a rolling basis and space in the cohort is limited. Admissions decisions are normally made within two weeks of the receipt of all application materials. We encourage applicants to complete their applications by July 1 for the upcoming Fall cohort. After that time, applications will be considered on a space available basis.

Cohort Enrollment Policy
Curry College's MSN is a cohort program with classes held one day each week for five semesters. Students entering Curry’s MSN degree program commit to continuous enrollment with the same group of students. Therefore, once enrolled, changing cohorts is not an option, except for extraordinary reasons. Extraordinary reasons, for example, are documented health or family emergencies.

Any student who requests to delay continuous enrollment in their cohort must make a formal request in writing to the Director of the MSN Program. The request must include documentation of the ‘extraordinary’ reason for changing the cohort sequence. The Director and/or the Dean may request further information. Decisions are made by the Director of the MSN Program, with final approval or rejection by the Dean of Continuing and Graduate Studies. All decisions are final.

Length of Time to Complete Program
All course work and program requirements must be completed within six years.

Grades and Academic Standing
The minimum passing grade in each course is a B- (80) and is necessary for progression in the program. A grade of C+ or lower in any course is cause for academic review. A course can only be repeated once. Students must maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 to remain in good academic standing. Academic review will take place if the GPA falls below a 3.0. Students must also maintain a satisfactory rate of progress measured by cumulative attempted credits. A student is making satisfactory progress when at least 67% of attempted credits have been completed with a passing grade. The complete Graduate Academic Standing policy can be found on the Curry website at: www.curry.edu. Go to Graduate Programs>Nursing>Advising & Support. Additional policies and information for the MSN program are in a nursing policy and information booklet.
Curriculum Requirements
The first two semesters include core graduate nursing courses. Clinical practice is introduced in the last three semesters. The 37-credit program is comprised of the following 14 courses:

Semester 1- Fall
- MSN 6200  Advanced Pathophysiology  3 credits
- MSN 6000  Advanced Assessment and Clinical Reasoning  3 credits
- MSN 6600  Informatics and Health Information Management  3 credits

Semester 2- Spring
- MSN 6300  Nursing Science and Evidence-based Practice  3 credits
- MSN 6500  Advanced Pharmacology  3 credits
- MSN 6040  Research and Statistical Analysis  3 credits

Semester 3- Fall
- MSN 6400  Nursing: Quality Management of the Environment  3 credits
- MSN 6401  Practicum 1 – Quality Management of the Environment  1 credit
- MSN 6450  Health Policy, Systems and Financing  3 credits

Semester 4- Spring
- MSN 6700  Outcome Decision Analysis  3 credits
- MSN 6701  Clinical Leadership Practicum 2 – Outcomes Management  1 credit
- MSN 6100  Leadership  3 credits

Semester 5- Fall or Spring
- MSN 7892  Capstone Course: CNL® -Seminar (scholarly project)  2 credits
- MSN 7893  Capstone Clinical: Mentored Immersion (300 hours)  3 credits

Total Required Credits  37
Advanced assessment builds on basic physical assessment concepts and addresses comprehensive health assessment. The course applies clinical decision making models while integrating assessment skills and techniques. Emphasis is placed on techniques of complete history taking and systematic physical assessment utilized by the Clinical Nurse Leader in the identification of health needs in differing care environments.

This course examines research design, analysis, and strategies for incorporation into nursing practice. It focuses on methods of using research findings to solve identified clinical problems, and in developing questions appropriate for population-based research. The course prepares students to conduct analytic critiques of the research literature for scientific merit, and to synthesize these critiques for application to practice. Students will examine evidenced based guidelines and will articulate their research base to evaluate outcomes. The course emphasizes research-based nursing practice in clinical population management.

This course focuses on the history, development and integration of the role of the Clinical Nurse Leader as a reflective practitioner. Course content includes leadership, chaos, and complexity theories, and the relationship of these theories to error and innovation in health care. Concepts of conflict, change and communication, coaching and mentoring, and advocacy, vision and creativity are discussed. Emphasis is placed on the characteristics of the CNL role and understanding and fostering development of individual leadership abilities by creating an opportunity for students to assess and reflect upon their own approaches to leadership as a Clinical Nurse Leader.

This course emphasizes utilizing knowledge of physiological alterations as a framework for clinical decision-making. Includes novel and break through scientific gains in pathophysiology using the most current literature and evidence.

This course focuses on nursing science, nursing theorists, adjunctive discipline theorists, and the use of evidence based information to advance nursing knowledge. Learners discuss and analyze conceptual and theoretical perspectives specific to advanced nursing practice. The processes of creating theory based practice guidelines will be explored. Emphasis is on creating strategies for making theory based practice a reality in the practice environment.

Based on organizational theory, students are introduced to the health care system as a laterally integrated care environment. The current National Patient Safety Goals, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) indicators of quality patient care, and evidence based practice as essential components of an environmental culture which promotes quality and provides the framework for the course. The course highlights the communication, collaboration, consultation, and leadership skills needed to enhance the student’s ability to question and analyze clinical issues and enhance clinical judgments. The course assesses areas within the micro/meso system using evidence-based data to effect change through quality/ performance improvement and educational programs. The relationship of safe quality care to effective delegation and clinical resource utilization will be analyzed. The course emphasizes the role of the Clinical Nurse Leader as a leader, educator, and advocate for safe, cost effective quality care.

This course provides for initiation into the CNL role in a care setting where management of clinical systems and national patient safety goals can be assessed and evaluated. Students learn to serve as both leader and partner on an interdisciplinary health care team in a selected clinical site. Emphasis is placed on the integration of theory and research discussed in earlier courses and the organization and leadership theory presented in NSG 6400. The student will select and describe a focused clinical problem that would have implications for improvement in clinical patient outcomes. Students begin to learn to effectively delegate and manage nursing resources.
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**MSN 6450  Health Policy, Systems and Financing**  
*Fall Semester*

This course provides the student with an overview of development, implementation, and evaluation of health policy on local, national, and global levels. The student considers the impact of health care policies on a variety of stakeholders including patients and families, care providers, insurers, and governmental regulators. A discussion of the impact of health policy financing and reimbursement within both public and private health care delivery organizations allows the learner to develop insight into considerations for individual nursing practice.

**MSN 6500  Advanced Pharmacology**  
*Spring Semester*

Advanced pharmacology builds upon a basic understanding of the concepts and principles of pharmacology. Advancing knowledge of drug actions, clinical usage of drugs and rationales for drug therapy are included. Physiological factors of disease processes are related to drug mechanisms.

**MSN 6600  Informatics and Health Information Management**  
*Fall Semester*

This hybrid course will use classroom and online approaches for class content. TIGER (Technology Informatics Guiding Educational Reform) competencies will guide course content. Students will assess systems that underlie all information technologies, and change theories. Students will utilize informatics to assess the care environment and to improve patient care outcomes and will demonstrate a beginning competency in informatics to monitor, educate and improve organizational and clinical performance. The role of the Clinical Nurse Leader as a participant in the design and implementation of information technology systems in departmental and hospital-wide initiatives will be understood in the context of current workplace environments.

**MSN 6700  Outcome Decision Analysis**  
*Spring Semester*

Using a theoretical and research basis for effecting change to improve patient outcomes is a major focus. Students will use principles of epidemiology to identify risk factors for specific populations and examine variables that influence health outcomes. The importance of patient’s perceptions, coping skills, and understanding of health and illness, to achieve optimal outcomes is integrated. Emphasis is placed on providing interventions for nursing care, health education, disease prevention and risk reduction to a specific population. Concepts related to health maintenance will be analyzed from theoretical and evidence based perspectives. Effects of cultural beliefs on response to acute and chronic illness will be discussed. Enhancement of the reflective practitioner role is continued.

**MSN 6701  Clinical Leadership Practicum 2: Outcomes Management**  
*Spring Semester*

This is a clinical practice course, which provides for a continuation of initiation into the CNL role. Improving selected patient outcomes is a major focus. Interventions for nursing care, health education, disease prevention and risk reduction will be discussed as they apply to the student’s specific clinical site. Emphasis is placed on developing a plan to ameliorate or improve the one clinical outcome problem described in NSG 6401.

**MSN 7982  Capstone CNL Seminar**  
*Fall Semester*

The capstone seminar allows students to apply skills acquired in their master’s course work and collaborate more with faculty to design a specific clinical project. Using critical analysis of data sets or other clinical instruments for decision-making, the student will implement a project or an evidence-based practice intervention appropriate to the CNL role. The final paper will be submitted in manuscript form suitable for publication. Students will lead a discussion on a focused clinical population problem related to their clinical setting. Clinical topics and populations will focus on the leading health indicators and the national priority areas.
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MSN 7983  Capstone: Mentored Immersion  3 credits

Fall Semester

The final clinical immersion course is an extensive clinical experience mentored by an experienced nurse leader. The student will expand and refine the analytical and management skills related to the CNL role. This immersion experience will provide the student with the opportunity to implement the CNL role as a reflective practitioner in a chosen care environment. The focus is on taking responsibility for the design, coordination, and management of health care and systems appropriate to the client/patient population. Communication, collaboration, negotiation, delegation, coordination and evaluation of interdisciplinary team will be integrated within the practice setting.