Nurse Practitioner

Student Handbook

Welcome

Welcome to West Coast University's Advanced Nurse Practitioner program. We embrace a student-centric learning partnership that leads to professional success. We deliver transformative education within a culture of integrity and personal accountability. This handbook serves as a guide for Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Postmaster Certificate (PMC) program policies and information about the practicum course(s). Students must read this information handbook, the West Coast University catalog, and the course syllabi to understand the policies and processes that guide their matriculation through the program. Our goal is to promote effective communication and superior academic quality. Please note that the information and policies in this handbook may be revised at any time. Students will be officially notified of any changes as soon as possible.

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About West Coast University

Founded in 1909, West Coast University is a private institution focused on health care education. The University offers both undergraduate and graduate health sciences degrees, delivering transformational education within a culture of integrity and personal accountability. West Coast University is dedicated to helping prepare the next generation of nursing, healthcare, and business professionals. Campuses are located throughout Los Angeles, Orange, and San Bernardino Counties in California, as well as in Richardson, Texas and Miami, Florida.

University Accreditation

West Coast University is accredited by WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), a regional accreditation body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). www.wscuc.org

University Mission and Institutional Learning Outcomes

University Mission

At West Coast University, we embrace a student-centric learning partnership that leads to professional success. We deliver transformational education within a culture of integrity and personal accountability. Faculty and industry professionals work together to create market-responsive programs. We continuously pursue more effective and innovative ways through which students develop the competencies and confidence required in a complex and changing world.

Institutional Learning Outcomes

Institutional Learning Outcomes

Critical Thinking: Implement intellectual and practical problem-solving strategies through assessment and critical thinking.

Quantitative Reasoning: Apply appropriate mathematical and analytical methods to guide informed decision making.

Communication: Effectively communicate in all mediums (such as oral, written, nonverbal) to disseminate information and ideas.

Digital and Information Literacy: Utilize technology to identify and evaluate information.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Demonstrate knowledge and awareness of individuals' perspectives and identity while promoting a sense of belonging.

Ethics: Apply and promote ethical reasoning in local, national, and/or global communities.

Collaboration and Teamwork: Engage proactively and cooperatively in a variety of settings while exhibiting mindful and professional awareness of team dynamics.

WEST COAST
UNIVERSITY
Founded 1909

Nursing Program Accreditation at West Coast University

The Baccalaureate Degree Program in Nursing, Master's Degree Program in Nursing, Doctor of Nursing Practice program, and Post-graduate APRN Certificate Program at West Coast University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education 655 K Street, Suite 750, Washington DC 20001, (202) 877-6791 (http://www.ccneaccreditation.org).

College of Nursing Mission

The mission of the College of Nursing is to provide evidence-based and innovative nursing education to culturally diverse learners, preparing nurses to provide quality and compassionate care that is responsive to the needs of their patients, families, and community.

Post-Licensure Programs Overview

Undergraduate	Graduate			Post-Graduate
Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN-BSN)	**Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)**			**Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)**
The RN-BSN degree completion option is for students who have completed a pre-licensure nursing program, are Registered Nurses, and seek to earn a bachelor's degree in nursing. The BSN degree consists of 120 credit hours and a 135-hour clinical/practicum completed in a community health setting.	The MSN program is for Registered Nurses pursuing a master's degree in nursing. The MSN program offers different entry points and concentration areas and is administered by three program deans and an assistant director. Program Dean assignments are based upon population-focus or specialty area.			The DNP program is for master's prepared Registered Nurses seeking a terminal degree in nursing focusing on leadership. Students complete a translational research project in a practice setting during the program. The DNP program does not prepare graduates for license or certification as an APRN.
	Entry Points			
	RN-MSN	*MSN*	*Post-Masters Certificate*	
	Specialty/Population-Focus			
	Non-Advanced Practice Registered Nurse	*Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN)*		
	Advanced Generalist (AG) Nurse Informatics (NI) Nurse Educator (NE) Nurse Leader (NL)	Adult Gero *Acute Care* Nurse Practitioner (AGACNP) Adult Gero *Primary Care* Nurse Practitioner (AGPCNP) Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP)		

Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Advanced Practice Registered Nurse

This section of the handbook will provide MSN students who have enrolled in one of the Nurse Practitioner programs with information related to clinical policies and procedures. This includes the Adult-Gerontology Acute Care (AGACNP), Adult-Gerontology Primary Care (AGPCNP), Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) and Psychiatric Mental Health (PMHNP) track options.

The APRN specialty tracks include MSN core courses, APRN core courses in pathophysiology, pharmacology, advanced assessment, and specialty courses. During specialty courses, students apply advanced practice nursing skills to assess and care for patients across the lifespan in a variety of healthcare environments and varies by specialty.

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MSN Essentials

The MSN Essentials guides the preparation of graduates for diverse areas of practice in several healthcare settings. The MSN Essentials can be found in their entirety at:
https://www.aacnnursing.org/Education-Resources/AACN-Essentials

MSN Graduate Program Learning Outcomes

MSN Essentials are integrated throughout MSN core courses. The MSN core courses offer expanded study in the healthcare areas of advocacy, program management, education, clinical practice, research, and health policy formulation. Graduates will formulate an inspirational perspective of nursing, incorporating a wide range of theories from nursing and other sciences.

The West Coast University Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Program is committed to the development of the nursing professional who can:

Integrate nursing science and related fields, such as physiology, statistics, psychosocial, political, finance, genetics, public health, and organization sciences in the continued improvement of nursing across the continuum of healthcare settings.

1. Provide leadership in a variety of settings that promotes high-quality, safe patient care that also incorporates ethical decision making and effective interprofessional working relationships.
2. Demonstrate the skills needed to effect quality improvement that incorporates the various models, standards, and performance measures necessary to apply quality principles, within any type of organization.
3. Apply evidence-based research in clinical practice by identifying actual or potential practice problems in a setting and resolving them through the role of change agent.
4. Demonstrate proficiency in computer skills, both technical and in the application of informatics, to enhance, deliver, communicate, integrate, and coordinate patient care.
5. Recognize the need for and ability to affect policy changes by using the policy development process and advocacy strategies to influence individual health and healthcare systems.
6. Communicate and coordinate inter-professionally in a variety of settings to manage and coordinate care.
7. Identify and integrate the various evidence-based practices of health promotion and disease prevention using client-centered, culturally, and age-appropriate concepts in the nursing process of services to individuals, families, and broad-based aggregate populations.

8. Demonstrate an advanced level of scientific and nursing-specific knowledge with the ability to integrate that knowledge into nursing practice that influences healthcare outcomes for individuals, families, populations, and/or systems.

The APRN specialty tracks prepares the graduate to:

1. Assume a position in a primary or acute care setting as a primary care or acute care nurse practitioner, upon successful completion of the national certification exam(s).
2. Provide comprehensive primary health care emphasizing health promotion and disease prevention to individuals, families, and groups across the life span.
3. Utilize and conduct research that will promote quality health care and its delivery to improve clinical outcomes for selected population groups.
4. Manage available technology and/or information systems in the delivery of primary care.
5. Implement culturally competent primary care with a focus on quality improvement and safety that incorporates the socioeconomic, political, ethical, and diversity aspects of each population.
6. Apply theoretical foundations and change principles while leading in the development and implementation of innovations that advance practice in a primary care setting.
7. Use ethical principles in decisions regarding issues related to individuals, populations, and healthcare delivery systems.
8. Provide advocacy and leadership in the primary care setting that addresses the needs of culturally diverse populations, providers, and environments.

APRN Core Competencies

Competencies are higher-level skills that represent the ability to demonstrate mastery over care management and that provide a foundation for decision-making skills under a variety of clinical situations across all care settings. At completion of the APRN program, the APRN graduate possesses the nine (9) core competencies regardless of population focus. The core competencies can be found at: https://cdn.ymaws.com/nonpf.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/competencies/20170516_NPCoreCompsContentF.pdf

Clinical Sequence

Prior to entering the clinical course and practicum sequence (see tables below), all APRN students must have completed the following courses:

- NURS 530 Advanced Physiology and Pathophysiology
- NURS 676 Advanced Pharmacology

- NURS 681 Advanced Health/Physical Assessment Lab
- NURS 682 Care Coordination and Role of the Advanced Practice Nurse

Clinical Course Practicum Sequence and Hours by APRN track

Adult Gero Acute Care NP Program 2021
Total Hours=500
NURS 696L-A Acute Care Adult & Geriatric Patient: Practicum I (150 direct patient care hours)
NURS 697L-B Acute Care and Geriatric Patient: Practicum II (150 direct patient care hours)
NURS 682L-A Advanced Healthcare Residency I (100 direct patient care hours)
NURS 682L-B Advanced Healthcare Residency II (100 direct patient care hours)

Adult Gero Primary Care NP Program 2021
Total Hours=500
NURS 679L-A Primary Care Adult & Geriatric Patient: Practicum I (100 direct patient care hours)
NURS 679L-B Primary Care Adult & Geriatric Patient: Practicum II (100 direct patient care hours)
NURS 684L Primary Care Women's Health: Practicum (100 direct patient care hours)
NURS 682L-A Advanced Healthcare Residency I (100 direct patient care hours)
NURS 682L-B Advanced Healthcare Residency II (100 direct patient care hours)

Family NP Program 2021
Total Hours=600
NURS 679L-A Primary Care Adult & Geriatric Patient: Practicum I (100 direct patient care hours)
NURS 679L-B Primary Care Adult & Geriatric Patient: Practicum II (100 direct patient care hours)
NURS 684L Primary Care Women's Health: Practicum (100 direct patient care hours)
NURS 685L Primary Care Pediatric Patient: Practicum (100 direct patient care hours)
NURS 682L-A Advanced Healthcare Residency I (100 direct patient care hours)
NURS 682L-B Advanced Healthcare Residency II (100 direct patient care hours)

Family NP Program 2016
Total Hours=650
NURS 663L-A Primary Care Adult and Geriatric Patient: Practicum (97.5 direct patient care hours)

NURS 663L-B Primary Care Adult and Geriatric Patient: Practicum (97.5 direct patient care hours)
NURS 664L-A Primary Care Women's Health: Practicum (65 direct patient care hours)
NURS 664L-B Primary Care Women's Health: Practicum (65 direct patient care hours)
NURS 662L-A Primary Care Pediatric Patient: Practicum (65 direct patient care hours)
NURS 662L-B Primary Care Pediatric Patient: Practicum (65 direct patient care hours)
NURS 668L-A Advanced Healthcare Residency A (97.5 direct patient care hours)
NURS 668L-B Advanced Healthcare Residency B (97.5 direct patient care hours)

Psychiatric Mental Health NP Program 2021
Total Hours=500
NURS 686L Mental Healthcare Across Lifespan (150 direct patient care hours)
NURS 687L Mental Healthcare Across Lifespan (150 direct patient care hours)
NURS 682L-A Advanced Healthcare Residency I (100 direct patient care hours)
NURS 682L-B Advanced Healthcare Residency II (100 direct patient care hours)

APRN Clinical Practicum Expectations

West Coast University requires APRN students to complete a minimum of direct patient care precepted practicum hours in their program of study as written in the above NP tracks. These hours are divided into specialties and population of focus as described in each clinical course syllabus. Clinical practicum hours must be obtained with a WCU approved preceptor and at a WCU approved clinical site. Clinical placements are secured through a partnership between the student, faculty, and the Coordinator, Clinical Relations (CCRs). Preceptors and clinical sites go through a vetting process with WCU personnel to ensure the preceptor and the clinical site are suitable for optimal student learning and achievement of program and course objectives.

Clinical hours are defined by the National Task Force (NTF) Criteria (2016) as "hours in   which direct clinical care is provided to individuals, families, and populations in population-focused areas of NP practice; clinical hours do not include on-site intensive weekends, physical assessment practice sessions, or a community project, if they do not include provision of direct care. Clinical experiences and time spent in each experience should be varied and distributed in a way that prepares the student to provide care to the populations served."

General Clinical Practicum Application Process Overview

Prior to beginning each clinical practicum course, a clinical placement application must be completed, identifying the site and preceptor for each course/term. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Clinical Placement Team of their identified preceptor and submit the clinical application to their CCR or request additional support in securing a preceptor. It is the students' responsibility to know their program's clinical practicum course sequence and to know which term and start date the student will begin their clinical practicum courses.

West Coast University advises students to submit their clinical application as early as possible and no later than 16 weeks prior to starting each clinical practicum course. Students are encouraged to contact their Student Success Advisor (SSA) or assigned Coordinator, Clinical Relations (CCR) early with any questions about their program of study or clinical practicum start date. This allows for timely processing and the ability to address any missing items, errors, or other problems that may lead to a delay in approval and academic progress.

Students are required to have all preceptors and clinical sites approved by the Clinical Placement Team prior to attending practicum or logging any clinical hours. A request for a preceptor or clinical site does not guarantee the preceptor will be approved. Upon receipt of clinical placement application, the CCR will process the request to review the preceptor and to determine whether a Clinical Affiliation Agreement is in place. The Clinical Affiliation Agreement (CAA) is a legal binding agreement between West Coast University and the facility. An agreement MUST be in place before the student can begin a clinical rotation. Clinical Affiliation Agreements are completed by the clinical site and WCU's authorized representatives.

Applications must be completed in their entirety and submitted to the CCR. Approval of the site and preceptor must occur prior to the student starting the clinical course and logging hours. Students who log clinical hours prior to receiving appropriate written approval via WCU email of their preceptor and clinical site may result in the denial of any completed clinical hours. Students cannot begin logging clinical hours until their clinical application is fully approved and have received written notification from the CCR via their WCU email that the site and preceptor are approved, the student is registered for the course, and the course/term has begun.

Students are strongly encouraged to seek out clinical sites and preceptors from the first day of admission. The deadline for submitting a clinical application is 16 weeks before the student is scheduled to begin the first clinical practicum experience and each clinical course thereafter.

NOTE: Students must submit a separate clinical placement application for each clinical site and preceptor every term, even if the clinical site and preceptor remain the same.

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If an application is submitted after the deadline, there is no guarantee that application review and approval of the site and preceptor will be completed prior to the term start. Submitting the application by the application deadline is strongly advised to allow adequate time for processing to ensure that an application is reviewed and approved prior to the start of the clinical practicum course. There are many factors outside of West Coast University's control that significantly impact whether an application can be approved, such as the time it takes to negotiate the Clinical Affiliation Agreement (CAA) with the student's preferred site if one does not already exist and verifying preceptor licensure, credentials, and site-specific requirements. For additional information you may access the Clinical Information Center Site at https://canvas.westcoastuniversity.edu/courses/13686

Role of the Coordinator, Clinical Relations (CCR)

Post-licensure nursing students enrolled in the RN-MSN APRN, MSN-APRN and APRN Post-Master Certificate programs are assigned to a Coordinator of Clinical Relations (CCR). Coordinators, Clinical Relations (CCRs) are members of the clinical department who help students understand and navigate the clinical policies and procedures.

CCRs are available to answer questions about the clinical application process, review materials to help students ensure that they have completed all application and documentation requirements, obtain Clinical Affiliation Agreements with clinical sites, and work collaboratively with other members of the clinical team throughout the clinical approval process. Once clinical placement applications have been approved and the student has started clinical practicum hours, the CCRs continue to provide ongoing student support.

Students will receive an introduction via WCU e-mail from the Clinical Department during their first course upon enrollment in the NP program which includes the student's assigned CCR, contact information, and next steps.

Clinical Compliance Requirement

In preparation for the practicum experience, students are required to comply with all clinical compliance requirements through the Clinical Compliance Tracking system. As a nurse practitioner student representing WCU at the clinical site, there is an ethical and legal responsibility for protecting others within the healthcare setting and the larger community. Information on how to set up an account can be found in the Clinical Information Center within Canvas.

All program tracks require students to submit the following documents and be approved 16 weeks prior to beginning the first clinical practicum course:

1. Acceptable Criminal Background check as outlined in the student's enrollment agreement.
2. Verification of the student's state unencumbered license through a state approved website.

3. Copy of the student's current American Heart Association Basic Life Support (BLS) CPR card. This must be a certification through the American Heart Association.
4. Verification of the student's current health insurance.
5. Students are required to have an Initial TB screening and annual TB screening, or QuantiFERON level, or a chest x-ray (every four years). If the first test reading is positive, no further skin testing is done. Required follow-up by the student's health care provider includes a chest x-ray to rule out active disease and evaluation for appropriate medication and follow-up therapy. The student may be required to provide documentation of a yearly negative PPD. For students who have documentation of a previous positive PPD, no skin testing is performed and follow-up including health evaluation, symptom screening, and periodic chest x- rays are required per current CDC guidelines. Symptom screening review is to be completed annually.
6. A headshot photo that can be used for a clinical ID badge is required.
7. Updated influenza shot or declination form.
8. Covid series vaccines (2 injections of mRNA + booster, 1 injection of Johnson & Johnson) or complete the declination option available in Complio.

Students are required to create a Complio account after admission to a nurse practitioner program and keep all documents updated and current in the Clinical Compliance Tracking system for the duration of their program enrollment. Students who fall out of compliance may be required to halt their clinical hours even during an active clinical rotation until the account becomes compliant. Additional information can be found Clinical Information Center Site: https://canvas.westcoastuniversity.edu/courses/13686

Professional Licensure Verification

Students must maintain an active, unencumbered Registered Nurse (RN) license throughout the duration of their academic program at WCU. Verification and review of professional RN licensure will be done for all students through the Clinical Compliance process. Information for this review is gathered from a State approved website. If students have a present or past order, consent agreement, letter of reprimand, censure or complaint, or any other information issued by a professional licensing authority, they are required to inform the CCR and Program Dean of this information immediately as this can impact the placement process.

NOTE: If the status of a student's authority to practice changes at any point after the student begins clinical, the student is required to immediately inform the Dean or other designated leader of the APRN program track in which the student is enrolled. Status changes, such as actions or restrictions placed on a student's RN/APRN licenses may affect the student's ability to complete the clinical requirements and the APRN program. Failure to report encumbrances and disciplinary proceedings against RN/APRN license(s) will result in immediate dismissal from the University.

NOTE: RNs are required to have an unencumbered license in one of the approved program States. Clinical Site Identification

Our clinical team is available to support, prepare, and assist students in finding a clinical placement. The process of selecting an appropriate clinical site for placement begins with the student identifying potential clinical sites and preceptors who meet the knowledge, education, skill, and certification qualifications necessary to support the outcomes as outlined in each clinical course map. At any point in the program, a student may identify appropriate clinical sites.

West Coast University is dedicated to the academic success of their students and ensures adequate physical resources and clinical sites by collaborating with students, preceptors, and administrators to support the successful completion of each student's program of study, including securing clinical placements.

We encourage students to identify their own preceptor and clinical practicum site to promote a positive clinical experience. This empowers students to select preceptors based on individual preferences including but not limited to proximity to their home, compatibility with work schedule, personal responsibilities, and networking for future employment opportunities.

Students should plan to engage in networking early in their program to identify potential clinical sites and preceptors. Early identification is important to determine that the site or preceptor meets program requirements, that the site has a Clinical Affiliation Agreement with West Coast University, and that the site or preceptor are available and are suitable for the student to achieve the course objectives. The more active students are in the clinical practicum site identification process, the better chance of securing a site that matches a student's preference within their local community.

Primary care: A primary care practice typically serves as the patient's first point of entry into the healthcare system and as the continuing focal point for all needed healthcare services. Primary care practices provide patients with ready access to their own healthcare providers. These practices provide outpatient care to patients across the lifespan based on the population focused specialty.

Acute care: Acute care refers to a level of specialty care focused on the management of severe injuries, urgent medical conditions, exacerbation of chronic illnesses, and/or recovery after surgical procedures. Acute care settings provide patients with secondary healthcare services that address active healthcare problems.

Acute Care NP students will focus their clinical rotations in the acute care hospital setting. The AGACNP provides care to adults and older adults with acute, critical, and complex chronic illnesses across the entire adult age spectrum from young adults (including adolescents) to adults and older adults (including frail older adults). AGACNPs are prepared to provide services ranging from disease prevention to critical care to stabilize the patient's condition, prevent

complications, restore maximum health, and/or provide palliative care.

Psychiatric Mental Health NP students will focus on the provision of quality acute and non-acute mental health services for patients in various clinical settings (inpatient, outpatient, and primary care). The populations of mental health services must include pediatric, adult, and geriatric patients. Mental Health Nurse Practitioners prepare to provide services for health promotion, disease prevention, acute and chronic mental health assessments, diagnosis, and management needs.

The MSN NP programs clinical course maps have been developed to provide students with the information needed to begin the clinical practicum site search.

Tips for Clinical Site Identification

The following tips are recommended for students when they are beginning the search process. Perseverance and professionalism are key to a successful preceptor search. Prior to networking, students should be prepared with a current resume, to meet the preceptor in person or a potential phone interview and understand the population-specific learning objectives of each clinical practicum.

1. Review clinical course map for specific guidelines on selecting an appropriate site and preceptor
   - Determine the specific clinical practicum placement requirements for the clinical course.
   - Review the preceptor requirements for the clinical course
   - Make a list of the population focused healthcare settings in your community that meet the clinical course map guidelines
   - Reach out to those offices and clinics on your list
2. Consider preparing a packet of information to share with potential preceptors and sites
   - Cover letter introducing yourself
   - Resume
   - Information on the course objectives, number of clinical hours etc.
3. Be organized! Create a chart to track the contacts you have made
4. Keep in touch with your CCR – they are a valuable resource for you!

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5. Network:
   - Within your place of employment.
   - With other nurse practitioner students.
   - Use professional and personal network sites to make connections; develop a profile on professional networks (e.g., LinkedIn) to network.
   - Join or attend local NP organizations or conferences.
   - With your clinical faculty.
   - With WCU alumni.
   - Research local professional nursing associations and organizations to contact potential preceptors
6. Contact your state board of nursing to see if there is a list of potential preceptors or agencies
7. Access the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) student resources center, which may be helpful in finding a field site and preceptor (http://www.aanp.org/education/student-resource-center/connecting-with-nps)

Please be aware that preceptor licensure is also reviewed during the preceptor approval process. The process is very similar to the student license review and includes review of current and past actions affecting the preceptor's authority to practice in any jurisdiction in which the preceptor is or has been licensed. Some examples of negative information are disciplinary orders issued by a professional licensing board, malpractice information and letters of complaint, censure, or reprimand. This information will be reviewed as part of the preceptor approval process and could lead to a determination that the preceptor does not meet the university's qualifications.

Clinical Placement at the Student's Employer

Students may complete a clinical practicum where they work, assuming the location is appropriate to meeting the clinical course objectives (e.g., hospital, clinic, nursing home, health organization, public health department, etc.). A Clinical Affiliation Agreement (CAA) is required for all placements. Students' employment at the clinical site does not guarantee that a Clinical Affiliation Agreement (CAA) can be reached between West Coast University and the site. In addition, the clinical practicum experience must be:

- In a different setting than the student's usual assigned employment role or work,
- Completed outside of the student's normal working hours, and
- Under the direction of a preceptor who is not the student's immediate supervisor and who does not report to them.

If it is discovered that a student's preceptor is a supervisor, direct report, relative, family member, fiancé, roommate, significant other, friend, or any other person with a personal relationship to the student, the clinical hours will be rejected and not counted toward the clinical hour requirement. If a student utilizes a preceptor inappropriately as noted above, this may lead to a student conduct referral including potential dismissal from the university.

Change of Preceptor or Clinical Site

Unforeseen circumstances may arise requiring students to change preceptors or their site before their clinical term begins or during their clinical term. Change of preceptor or clinical sites requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will only be granted in extenuating circumstances. This should be a rare occurrence given the length of time it can take to secure a clinical site and preceptor. It is essential that the student notify the assigned CCR and Clinical Faculty immediately to request a change in the clinical site or preceptor. Remember that ALL CLINICAL SITES AND PRECEPTORS must be approved before a student can complete any hours. Failure to notify the CCR and Clinical Faculty regarding a site or preceptor change will delay the identification and approval process of the replacement clinical site/preceptor and can delay a student's progression in the APRN program. The student must follow the defined procedures for obtaining preceptor and clinical practicum site approval and the change of preceptor/clinical practicum site request does not guarantee approval.

Use of Multiple Preceptors

Students may need additional preceptors to meet all the requirements for a course. It is expected that the majority of clinical hours are completed with one identified preceptor per course/term. Because ALL preceptors must meet the preceptor qualifications and criteria for the course/term, it is imperative that students identify any additional preceptors that will be utilized early in the clinical experience so that the preceptor verification process can be completed. A clinical placement application must be submitted for every preceptor the student uses in each clinical course/term. No hours can be completed with an additional preceptor until the preceptor is approved and student has received their written approval via WCU email.

Relocation and the Impact on the Clinical Experience

Students who are considering relocating or are operating in another state as a result of traveling assignments where the student is assigned to a different area or state while in the program are advised to contact their Coordinator of Clinical Relations (CCR) prior to relocating to determine how relocation may impact clinical placement for subsequent courses, and ultimately, the progress in the program. All post-licensure students agree to complete their program and clinical hours requirements in the state where they resided when signing the enrollment agreement or as approved by the University. If a student moves out of state to an unapproved state, they may no longer be eligible to complete their clinical hours, and/or may not be able to graduate from their program of study.

Students are required to keep an updated address on file with the University so that any mailings, lab coats and clinical badges are sent to the correct location.

Completion of Direct Patient Care Clinical Practicum Hours

Each APRN program has a specific number of required direct patient care precepted population-specific hours as described above. West Coast University allows flexibility in scheduling of practicum hours; however, practicum hours may not be carried over between terms nor completed prior to the course start. Students cannot front/backload hours or double count hours in A sections and B sections of the practicum courses. Nor are students permitted to "double-dip" clinical practicum hours using patients from an incomplete course term for the current term's patients/hours or vice versa. Claiming the same patients/hours in both course sections may result in course failure or even program dismissal. Practicum hours may only be completed after the last day of the term under special circumstances as described in the West Coast University Student Handbook Incomplete policy. Failure to adhere to the clinical practicum facility's requirements may result in failure of a practicum course.

Scheduling clinical practicum hours with Preceptor

Preceptor availability will vary based on the preceptor's schedule. Students are not guaranteed days and times of preceptor availability. Clinical hours should be scheduled at the convenience and availability of the preceptor. It is suggested that the student meets with the preceptor prior to the start of the clinical practicum to arrange a schedule and discuss issues such as parking, meals, dress code of the facility, and general site information. This meeting should include an agreement between the student and the preceptor regarding expectations of the preceptor/site.

During the meeting with the preceptor to discuss clinical requirements and schedule, it is imperative that the student confirms by a government issued identification (i.e., current driver's license, military ID) that the name of the preceptor matches the name on the documents the student submitted to the CCR. Students must also show their own valid government issued identification to the approved preceptor. This is to ensure that each party is working with the approved individual. Please note that neither party is required to make copies of or obtain information from the identification.

Population focus

Each program has population focused requirements by course. Students must complete the required population hours of focus based on the course maps and current clinical course enrollment (i.e., students in the Pediatric course must complete pediatric hours, Women's Health course must complete women's reproductive health hours).

Incompletion of Required Clinical Hours

What if a student is not able to complete the required number of clinical hours in a clinical course?

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The clinical practicum hours required for each clinical course are outlined on the clinical course maps. Students must complete all designated and required clinical practicum hours for each course by the end of the term. If clinical hours are not completed by the last day of the term, the student will need to follow the Incomplete policy located in the West Coast University Student Handbook.

Hours Tracking/Timesheet

Students should expect to see a minimum of one patient per hour on average (Example 10-hour shift=10 patients). Students are not expected to see every patient the preceptor sees. The focus should be on developing essential NP skills, quality of patient care, and the application of the population-specific course concepts. The total direct patient care time for each clinical day will be reflected as Total Logged Time.

Students must log in and out for the morning hours and log in and out for the afternoon hours. Time spent on breaks, meals, and personal activities during the day should not be counted.

Example: Student arrives at the site at 7:45am and start seeing patients at 8am. A lunch break is taken from 12:00pm and with return at 1:00pm. The clinic day ends at 5:00pm. The student will enter 8am as the start time for the morning, 12:00pm as the end time for the morning. In a new entry for the same day, the student will log afternoon hours with a start time of 1:00pm and end time of 5:00pm. The Time Log sheet that the preceptor signs would reflect 8am – 5:00pm with 8 total hours).

Field Encounter/Case log

Each clinical practicum is population specific such as: Adult/Geriatric (population 18 and up); Women's Health Clinical (Female patients with reproductive health related concerns 12 and up); Pediatrics (Birth to 21); Residency Courses (all populations previously listed) – The Family practice population is preferred as students will be able to see a wide range of patients that can best prepare them for national certification exams.

Enter each patient seen into the Field Encounter/Case Log. Each case log must include all required fields (marked in red as required) which includes:

Demographic information: course, site, interaction level, gender, age, patient population, and vitals (BP, pulse, height, weight) included

- ICD Diagnosis Code(s) – at least one
- APRN Skills List- 1-3 that apply
- Medication List: Only medications managed at the visit
- Medications managed must correlate to Diagnosis Code
- Nurse Practitioner Core Competencies- 1 only (must vary week to week)
- Procedures/Skills completed

Students must obtain their preceptor's wet signature on the weekly time log that the student generates and prints from the clinical data entry system and submit the signed time log to the time log gradebook area AND log all the patient entries for all patients seen on the clinical day(s) into the clinical data tracking system within the academic week in which the student attended clinical.

Clinical faculty will enter a zero grade for any unsubmitted assignments, submitted time logs that do not have a preceptor signature and do not have correlating patient entries in the clinical data entry system until the preceptor signature is submitted and patient entries are completed. Late grade penalties will apply for any patient entries that are not entered into the clinical data entry system during the clinical academic week in which the student attended their clinical practicum.

The Late Policy for all clinical assignments assesses late grade penalties of 5% per day for a maximum of 5 days past the due date. Students who submit an assignment beyond the sixth day will earn a zero grade unless prior arrangements and approval were made with the clinical faculty.

Telehealth Requirements

Telehealth is the provision of healthcare services remotely by means of electronics and telecommunications technology. Telehealth for the clinical experience is defined as the use of video conferencing with audio support as a means for interacting with preceptors and patients. Students must be active participants in the patient visits demonstrating assessment, diagnosis, and treatment planning. Telehealth clinical hours may be conducted onsite or remotely.

Students cannot conduct telehealth visits without the virtual or onsite presence of the approved preceptor. Students must be involved with their preceptor on the video during the telehealth session.

Students must have audio and video on their device and ensure they are turned on for all video telehealth sessions.

Students must have a HIPAA approved software platform for joining video telehealth session from physical locations separate from their preceptor.

Students must maintain confidentiality during video telehealth sessions from physical locations separate from their preceptor (no household interruptions from family/children/pets, not conducted in public places, etc.).

Students are not permitted to conduct personal business or use personal cell phones during telehealth practicum hours. Cell phones may only be used to communicate with their preceptor during the practicum telehealth video time.

Telehealth Hour Parameters and Limitations

Please refer to the Clinical Maps in the Clinical Information Center for specifics on how many hours may be utilized for telehealth over the course of the program. Note that telehealth hours, as with population specific hours, may not be "carried over" to another course or "banked" towards the total number of hours required in the program.

Clinical Absence

Student absence

The student is expected to treat the clinical site as they would employment. Students are expected to attend all scheduled clinical practicum days. Any absence (e.g., due to personal/family illness, weather, a death in the family) should be reported to the clinical site preceptor and the clinical course faculty prior to or on the day of absence prior to the clinical start time. The student is also expected to arrive on time and stay for the length of the clinical day (unless previously discussed and planned with the preceptor). Frequent absences, tardiness, early unplanned departures, and lack of communication are considered unprofessional and may result in the student being removed from the clinical setting.

In the event of non-attendance at the clinical site, whether due to student illness or preceptor absence, students must request an Alternative Clinical Assignment (ACA) to meet clinical course attendance requirements, see the course syllabi. When the approved preceptor is absent, students must notify their clinical professor and must not attend clinical unless an alternate preceptor at that site has been previously approved by the clinical team.

Costs Associated with the Clinical Experience

Students should be aware of the costs associated with clinical, which may vary depending on several factors. Students will incur and are responsible for paying costs associated with completing clinical. Examples of costs include, but are not limited to, the following: travel to/from clinical site, parking, fuel, childcare, living costs during program, books, course materials, health insurance, costs associated with completion/renewal of onboarding requirements (e.g., immunizations, physical exam [if applicable], CPR certification), state licensing fees, stethoscope, additional equipment costs, etc.

Clinical Name Badges & Lab Coats

West Coast University provides one clinical badge for all clinical students after Clinical Compliance is completed and verified, and one lab coat for students enrolled in an APRN program track. It is required for every student participating in a clinical to have and visibly wear their WCU name badge throughout their course. Any name badge or lab coat replacement will be at the expense of the student.

Clinical Attire

Students should be professionally and appropriately dressed for all clinical experiences. Students may wear professional clothing, or clean, pressed scrubs, and the WCU Lab coat depending on the clinical setting and dress code. The WCU student identification badge is to be worn and always clearly visible. Students should bring a stethoscope and other essential equipment to the clinical site. Tattoos must always be covered in clinical (may vary according to the clinical site requirements), lab and community settings. Fingernails must be trimmed short. Light or clear polish without chips is acceptable. No artificial or acrylic nails or components thereof are permitted. Make up is to be worn in moderation. No perfumes or scented lotions. No low necklines. Clean, closed toe, clinically appropriate shoes should be worn at all times. .

Clinical Course Orientation

The Clinical Coordination Department and WCU faculty will prepare students for the clinical practicum experience through a variety of methods. Students progressing through the MSN-APRN programs must take and pass the prerequisite core courses and the 3Ps prior to advancing to the first clinical practicum course to ensure proficiency in advanced head-to-toe assessment, advanced physiology/pathophysiology knowledge, and advanced pharmacological knowledge. Students entering one of the APRN program tracks as Post-Master's Certificate students are evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine prior course equivalency in their master's program and will be provided with the WCU-required course sequence for their circumstances and program.

The clinical faculty will provide an orientation to the clinical practicum course during week one of the course term and the preceptor/clinical site staff will provide an orientation to the clinical site at the start of the practicum rotation.

On Site Intensives (OSI)

Students in all APRN programs are required to attend (two) 2-day on-site (on campus) intensives (OSIs). As nurses seek to advance their education, distance-based education has allowed nursing students the flexibility to fulfill this goal from locations across the country, without leaving their families or jobs. Attending the OSI provides the opportunity for practice and demonstration of essential hands-on skills and competencies needed by nurse practitioners through clinical training with high-fidelity simulators, standardized patients and clinical case studies.

OSI attendance provides an opportunity to collaborate with and receive support from peers and faculty as students prepare for a major professional role transition. OSI dates are communicated well in advance so students can make necessary arrangements for the mandatory attendance. Travel expenses associated with the required OSIs are the responsibility of the student. No make-up sessions are offered if the onsite intensive session is missed. Student who do not attend the mandatory OSI will receive a non-passing grade for the class and must retake the entire course to continue progression through the APRN program.

The OSIs are mandatory and no partial credit will be given for partial attendance. Students should refer to the Clinical Information Center (CIC) in Canvas for updated information and notifications.

Student Role

Students are expected to demonstrate accountability and professionalism throughout the clinical experience. Students are held accountable for parameters and standards for safe, high quality nursing practice as defined by: WCU Nursing Student Handbook, clinical site policy and procedures, professional standards of care, and the preceptor's determination of appropriate participation in clinical care activities.

General student expectations

WCU and clinical partners expect students to:

- Complete all required clinical placement paperwork prior to entering the clinical site.
- Create and complete the Compliance Tracking system and maintain compliance throughout the entire program.
- Contact their preceptor for orientation prior to the initiation of the actual clinical experience.
- Participate in clinical practice as a family nurse practitioner student only under the supervision and direction of an approved preceptor and WCU faculty members.
- Establish a mutually agreeable schedule for clinical time with the preceptor.
- Refrain from engaging in direct patient interaction if the clinical preceptor is not physically at the clinical site (unless otherwise specified)
- Maintain professional behavior in the clinical setting.
- Attend all scheduled clinical experiences on time and prepared, complete all required clinical hours for each clinical course.
- Arrive on time for all clinical rotation experiences; be well-rested, prepared, and free from substance use.
- Seek active learning experiences guided by the approved preceptor.
- Exemplify principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the provision of care.
- Incorporate evidence-based practice guidelines and follow clinical site policies.
- Submit clinical schedules to their clinical course faculty through the clinical tracking system.
- Perform only approved procedures under the direct supervision of an approved preceptor.
- Elicit a health history and perform a comprehensive physical exam in an appropriate and professional manner.
- Identify and respond appropriately to abnormal findings from the history, physical and other diagnostic data.

- Verify and discuss all findings, suspected diagnoses, recommended treatment, and plans of care with the preceptor prior to implementation.
- Document findings in a concise, organized, and accurate manner using correct medical terminology and agency guidelines.
- Develop a working diagnosis, differential diagnosis, or a problem list and a preliminary plan of care.
- Institute and provide continuity of care, and interact with the patient to assure understanding of and adherence to the therapeutic regimen.
- Provide instruction and counseling regarding health promotion, patient teaching, discharge planning, and family care, as appropriate, to the patient and/or family.
- Recognize when to refer to a physician or other health care provider.
- Consider the cost implications of the care provided.
- Always adhere to HIPAA laws: identifying patient information should never be transcribed, copied, pasted, photographed, written or removed from the clinical site.
- Provide health promotion and disease prevention education to patients across the lifespan in an appropriate manner.
- Recognize needs for care coordination and collaboration with other health care professionals.
- Recognize emergency situations and initiate effective emergency care when needed.
- Communicate effectively, professionally, and respectfully with preceptors, faculty, and other members of the health care team.
- Notify the clinical instructor immediately of any problems, issues, or concerns which arise in the clinical area.
- Refrain from attending their practicum or clinical if/when they experience any condition (regardless of cause) that impairs their judgment and ability to function.
- Always demonstrate safety in clinical practice.
- Complete all evaluations of the clinical site and preceptor prior to completion of the practicum course (failure to do so will result in a grade of *No Pass)*.
- Complete all clinical coursework on time.

Professionalism

Students should provide the preceptor with a schedule of agreed upon planned clinical dates at the site and the student's personal clinical objectives, as well as course objectives. The student will provide their contact information as well as contact information for the student's clinical instructor and CCR. It is appropriate for students to ask for a brief orientation on the first day of clinical and learn the names of the staff. The preceptor and staff should always be treated with respect and courtesy.

Students should always show respect and gratitude for the preceptor's efforts in giving of their time and inviting students into their practices.

Demonstrations of gratitude during and after the clinical rotation are appropriate and typically well-received. Student provision of specific examples of useful clinical experiences or helpful staff give the site/preceptor feedback for future student experiences.

Student Behavior

Students are expected to arrive at their clinical practicum sites on their pre-arranged days, be punctual, not leave early, and check in and out with their preceptor. Students must notify the clinical site manager, preceptor, and course faculty if they cannot attend their clinical practicum site as scheduled or will be late. It is inappropriate for students to arrive on days that have not been pre-scheduled, and students may NOT be at the clinical site unless their preceptor is physically present. Students are to introduce themselves as a nurse practitioner student to patients and everyone in the clinical practicum setting.

Cell phones should be off preferably, or on vibrate, but should NOT make any noise in the clinic or exam rooms. Cell phone use during clinic hours is prohibited, except to serve as a medical resource. Students may use the cell phone for personal calls during lunch or established breaks but should be in a private area away from patients and staff.

Students should show interest in each patient and/or procedure. It is understood that students will have varying interests, but each experience provides valuable information. It is expected that the student will NOT be just an observer, or appear disinterested, but will voluntarily participate to the greatest extent that they are allowed. It is NOT appropriate to go to another area of the clinic to work on anything else. Students may be referred to conduct for professionalism issues reported by Preceptors or Clinical Sites.

Active Learning

As active learners, students do not just "follow" or "shadow" preceptors. Observation only is a passive activity that implies little learning. Working with and learning from preceptors is a more appropriate way to describe the clinical experience. Students are expected to actively participate in assessing, diagnosing, and managing the care of most of the patients seen in collaboration with and validated by the preceptor. All students are expected to demonstrate knowledge, critical thinking, and clinical reasoning skills within the practice setting.

These skills are considered essential abilities for the nurse practitioner role. Direct care is defined by the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF) as "Hours/time in which direct clinical care is provided to individuals, families, and groups in one (1) of the six (6) population focused areas of NP practice and in primary care or acute care as appropriate".

Observation/shadowing hours do not count towards clinical hours after the second week of the term. Students are expected to progress from initial observation/shadowing through active, independent patient management with preceptor validation during each term.

Communication

Students will have a designated clinical faculty member responsible for evaluating their performance in the clinical course. It is essential that students keep their designated clinical faculty member informed of any change in their clinical site, preceptor, or schedule, as well as any unanticipated events or problems that occur during the clinical experience. Students should notify the clinical instructor immediately of any problem during the clinical rotation. Students are expected to check their university email regularly and are responsible for all information sent to them via their WCU email address as outlined in the WCU Student Handbook. This is particularly important in the post-licensure nursing programs as students must recognize that certain communications related to clinical placement may be time sensitive. It is expected that students will monitor email on a regular basis and respond to all communications in a timely manner.

Clinical Role and APRN Scope of Practice

The student is learning the role and scope of practice of the advanced practice registered nurse. All students must learn and abide by the applicable state nurse practice act and the national certifying body's regulations. Students are to adhere to the nurse practice act in each state in which they have an approved clinical site. It is the student's responsibility to read the applicable nurse practice act(s), understand the content, and abide by the act(s). If a student fails to adhere to a state nurse practice act, then the student will not be covered by WCU malpractice insurance carrier, and the student accepts sole responsibility for his/her actions, outcomes, and medical- legal ramifications. Students are also required to maintain an active unencumbered RN license in all states in which they have an approved clinical site.

Professional Liability Insurance

Professional liability insurance for clinical practice is required for all graduate students. Students are covered by WCU's professional liability insurance while students are in WCU approved clinical practicum sites for the duration of time they are enrolled in the MSN program.

Maintain Satisfactory Clinical Standing

Preceptors participate in the ongoing clinical evaluation of students through contact with WCU APRN faculty members and written evaluations. However, WCU APRN faculty members determine the student's clinical standing throughout the term and the final clinical and course grade.

Expectations outlined in the APRN Handbook and course and clinical objectives provided in each course syllabus will serve as the standards for student evaluation. WCU APRN faculty members evaluate student performance in various ways, such as clinically related assignments, site visits, evaluation of students by preceptors, consultation with preceptors, and clinical documentation.

The student who fails a sequenced theory and/ or clinical course may not continue to the next course in the sequence and will be required to repeat the failed clinical course successfully before progressing to the next course.

Chart Documentation

Appropriate preceptor validation of patient findings is essential to assure successful service and compliance. Students are expected to follow the facility's protocol for patient encounters/documentation. Students are expected to document patient encounters in the patient record whenever they are actively involved in the patient's care. When documenting in a patient's medical record, all students are required to ensure the legibility of their name and title as follows: First Name (no initials) and Last Name, RN, APRN Student, WCU University.

Coding and Billing Practice

It is essential students understand the relationship between clinical documentation and the assignment of a procedures code(s). Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) and ICD-10 (International Classification of Diseases) codes are assigned based on the time spent with patient(s), level of documentation, procedures performed, and medical decision-making. Patients and their insurance companies are billed according to these codes; therefore, accurate CPT and ICD-10 selection and documentation that supports their selection are essential. The process of establishing a diagnosis is also an important skill to be gained. Thus, students must understand how to participate in the identification and documentation of appropriate ICD-10 and CPT codes. Preceptors are responsible for assigning final diagnoses and coding in all medical records. Students can not bill for or receive any personal compensation for services rendered.

Clinical Area Illness or Injury

Students who are injured or become ill while providing patient care MUST:

1. Notify his/her assigned instructor immediately.
2. Follow the agency's policy and procedure for injury or illness, if appropriate.
3. Report to either personal physician or a WCU referred healthcare provider.
4. Stay **home if they are** ill, experiencing an elevated temperature, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or any other symptoms of illness; students are responsible for notifying the clinical instructor and clinical unit of illness.
5. Assume responsibility for medical care provided at/by clinical resources if they are injured or become ill during the clinical experience. Each student is required to carry personal health care coverage.

Leave of Absence

Please refer to the WCU catalog. Note that all APRN students who are on an LOA for six months or longer may be required to complete a remediation plan that is approved by Program Deans at least eight (8) weeks prior to their scheduled return. Please contact your Student Advisor for more information. Students returning from an LOA directly into a clinical or practicum course must notify the Student Advisor and Clinical Department no less than 8 weeks prior to the session or failure to do so may delay the student's re-entry status. Students who are on medical leave (except maternity leave) will need to obtain medical clearance prior to returning to the practicum environment.

Preceptor Responsibilities

Choosing a preceptor is important as this choice can impact the clinical and professional development of the student. The preceptor exemplifies the role students are preparing for and demonstrates the knowledge and skills required as a role model and supports student learning.

General Preceptor Responsibilities

- Collaborate with WCU clinical faculty to promote student success in the practicum courses.
- Orient the student to the practicum site environment, policies, and procedures .
- Identify suitable experiential opportunities that align with the course outcomes.
- Serve as mentor and role model for students in professional development.
- Provide supervision of the student's clinical practice and constructive feedback about the student performance in the clinical practicum at mid-term and at completion of the course (Mid-Term Check & Final Evaluations).
- Provide suggestions that will assist and improve student performance to achieve course and clinical outcomes.
- Clinical faculty have the final determination of student performance and evaluation.
- Incorporate teaching and practice principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) to prepare graduates who are equipped to advance nursing practice within safer and healthier inclusive communities.
- Refrain from unlawful discrimination by gender, age, race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation or belief, or disability.
- Provide feedback to WCU clinical faculty as requested.
- Become familiar with course objectives and evaluation requirements as stated in the APRN Preceptor manual.
- Verify and sign off on direct care clinical hours completed.
- Maintain open communication with the Clinical Coordinator, Faculty, Site Visitor (if assigned), and Student.
- Provide current phone numbers, address and email.

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- Verify student identity via government issued photo identification (driver's license, military ID).
- Contact course faculty member concerning any issues that may arise

Clinical Evaluation – Midterm Check-In and Final Evaluation

Preceptors use a formal evaluation process to communicate student progress to the clinical instructor twice during the clinical—at midterm and at the end of the course. In addition, preceptors and clinical instructors will communicate throughout the course as needed by email and phone to meet the needs of the individual student. The clinical faculty determines the course grade for the clinical course. Students and preceptors must follow guidelines for submitting evaluations as posted in each course.

NOTE: Students who do not meet course objectives or who cannot demonstrate clinical competencies at the end of the term may be required to continue clinical hours above those required by the course at the discretion of the preceptor and clinical course instructor.

Course Faculty Role

Faculty identify clinical learning objectives specific to the program, course, and learning needs of the students. The faculty facilitate student achievement of the objectives through the provision of didactic instruction, identification of appropriate clinical facilities and preceptors, evaluation of students, and establishment of close working relationships with preceptors. In collaboration with the clinical team, the course faculty are responsible for ensuring that clinical sites are appropriate to the program of study, provide sufficient access to the patient population being studied, and assist the student in meeting core curriculum guidelines and program /track goals.

General Clinical Course Faculty responsibilities

- Maintains ultimate responsibility for the clinical course and student evaluation.
- Reviews preceptors and clinical sites approved by the clinical team.
- Are available to students and preceptors. Information regarding availability should be provided to students and preceptors at the beginning of the term and included on the course syllabus.
- Collaborate with students and preceptors regarding development of specific learning goals.
- Communicate with students regarding clinical experiences and progress via emails, phone, and/or video conferencing.
- Establish initial faculty communication with the approved preceptor by sending an introductory/thank you email attaching the most current version of the Preceptor Handbook, providing faculty contact information, and requesting the preceptor's preferred method of communication.
- Communicate with preceptors on a regular basis via phone, email, and/or videoconferencing for collaboration regarding student learning needs.

- Incorporate teaching and practice based on principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) to prepare graduates who are equipped to advance nursing practice within safer and healthier inclusive communities.
- Notify the student promptly if problems with the clinical experience are identified
- Communicate to the student any clinical deficiencies or concerns related to meeting clinical objectives that have been identified.
- Complete the midterm and final evaluation in conjunction with the preceptors evaluation of the student's progress based on the clinical objectives for the evaluation of student.
- Collaborate with preceptor and student during the course.

- Review and approve weekly clinical hour entries, providing feedback as necessary.
- Identify students at risk and notify the course lead and program dean by mid-term.
- Initiate and follow up on remediation plans as needed.
- Review preceptor and student evaluations.
- Maintain active communication with the student regarding classroom and clinical performance.
- Grade and provide substantive feedback on all student assignment submissions.
- Maintain responsibility for the final grade determination based on the grading rubric and the clinical performance evaluations.

Clinical Probation and Progression Policies

Preceptors participate in student clinical evaluations and provide ongoing clinical evaluation throughout each clinical course during the term, as well as a summative evaluation at the completion of the clinical rotation. However, faculty members determine the student's clinical standing throughout the term as well as the final clinical and course grade. Students are evaluated by their clinical instructors and must receive a satisfactory evaluation from the clinical faculty to successfully pass all clinical courses, independent of the students' overall didactic grades.

WCU faculty evaluate student performance in a variety of ways, such as clinically related assignments, consultation with preceptors, and clinical documentation.

Expectations outlined in this Nurse Practitioner Student Handbook, as well as course and clinical objectives provided in each course syllabus, will serve as the guide for student evaluation.

Students may receive a failing course grade or be administratively and permanently removed from the NP program without being placed on probation for offenses including, but not limited to:

- Practicing in an unethical or unprofessional manner
- Compromising patient safety
- Committing a felony
- Testing positive on a drug screen
- Performing clinical rotations without a completed and signed contract
- Providing false or inaccurate information related to a clinical preceptor or site
- Misrepresenting their clinical hours or providing any false documentation or other written or verbal inaccuracy related to clinical rotations and/or clinical hours
- Misrepresenting the role in which the student is functioning
- Performing or participating in any other action faculty deem as an infraction or breach of program policy
- Needing continuous specific and detailed supervision
- Violations or attempted violations of professional rules, expected behaviors, policies, standards, and regulations
- Disorderly and disruptive conduct in online classrooms and clinical settings, such as but not limited to verbal abuse, aggression, profanity, defamation, inflammatory language, coercion, or any behavior that poses a threat
- Failure to comply with directions or requests from the WCU administration and faculty.
- Failure to meet course objectives.

If a WCU faculty member determines that a student is not meeting course or clinical objectives, or standards as outlined in the syllabus and this Nurse Practitioner Student Handbook, or if a clinical issue arises related to patient safety or professional practice, a conference will be held with the student to further explore the issue. Preceptors and WCU faculty maintain the right to ask the student to leave the clinical site until any issue of concern is resolved. After the conference, in consultation with the clinical faculty and WCU leadership, the student may incur any of the following:

- Receive a written warning to be placed in the student's file.
- Be placed on academic and/or clinical probation.
- Be required to repeat completed theory course and/or clinical course/ hours in part or whole.
- Be administratively removed from the clinical site/preceptor and required to complete clinical hours at an alternate site or with an alternate preceptor.
- Receive an overall failing clinical course grade.
- Be permanently dismissed from the University's Nurse Practitioner Program.

If the student receives a written warning, a second offense will automatically result in a minimum of academic and/or clinical probation. If the student is placed on academic and/or clinical probation, a remedial action plan will be developed and a timeline for follow-up will be included in the action plan. If performance or conduct does not improve as outlined in the remedial action plan, the responsible course faculty will consult with WCU leadership and will make the judgment to assign a failing clinical course grade, or permanently dismiss the student from the program.

Each student is entitled to and will be given due process. Students should follow the complaint process as outlined in the current WCU Catalog and Student Handbook.

Clinical Probation

Clinical Probation is a period designed to remediate and evaluate the clinical performance of a student who has not satisfactorily met clinical objectives or who has had a significant issue arise related to their clinical performance or conduct.

When the student is placed on clinical probation, the remedial action plan will be completed, outlining the reasons for probation and the necessary actions to correct the stated deficiencies. More specific criteria will be outlined in the remedial action plan that will measure the improvement in student clinical performance over a specified period. A probationary clinical site may be assigned or arranged by the Clinical Team in collaboration with the student and clinical faculty.

Specific preceptors may be identified to work with and evaluate the student's performance.

At the end of the probation period, the student's performance will be re-evaluated by the clinical faculty and reviewed by WCU leadership to determine if the objectives of the remedial action plan have been successfully achieved. If a deficiency still exists, the student will receive a failing clinical grade and be required to repeat the course to progress.

NOTE: Please refer to the Graduate Nursing Progression Requirements located in the catalog.

Nurse Practitioner Certification and Licensure

Understanding the nurse practitioner licensing and qualifications for the national certification process are crucial both for success in the profession and for understanding how to apply for certification and licensure once the degree is conferred. The NP faculty in the student's final Culminating Experience course will be a resource in navigating this process. Students are notified at the time of enrollment that WCU Online graduate nursing programs are authorized to operate in some States, and the student is responsible for checking their State's requirements in order to be recognized as an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse. There are a few additional conditions that must be met to become nationally certified.

Nurse Practitioner Board Certification

The WCU MSN-NP program prepares students for national board certification. Nurse practitioner certification is obtained by taking an examination through organizations that provide examinations based on NP specialization and are not State based (this is often referred to as "national" certification). Because no graduate program can guarantee that graduates will achieve national certification, WCU encourages you to consult the appropriate credentialing center for the specific requirements. For more information about the certification process, please access the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) at www.nursingworld.org/ancc or the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners National Certification Board (AANPCB) at https://www.aanpcert.org/

To Apply for an APRN License - RN Licensure Status

The MSN NP specializations are designed to academically prepare graduates with an active registered nurse (RN) license to apply for licensure as nurse practitioners. However, each State Board of Nursing has its own requirements and issues its own credentials for an RN to be permitted to practice as a nurse practitioner in that state. No graduate program can guarantee that graduates will be permitted to practice as a nurse practitioner upon graduation. WCU encourages students to consult the appropriate Board of Nursing or nursing regulatory authority in the states or jurisdictions in which they reside or intend to seek licensure or other authority to practice to determine specific requirements. State-specific changes can be tracked through the National Council of State Boards of Nursing at www.ncsbn.org/aprn.htm.

To practice as an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (ARPN), students must have an active Registered Nurse (RN) license in the state in which they practice and must be certified by their State Board of Registered Nursing (BRN). Students must have a United States issued Social Security Number, meet educational requirements, pass a criminal background check, and pass a National Certification Examination for Nurse Practitioners.

Index

Definitions - [Order of Adoption - CCR 1483.1, 1483.2, 1486, 1480-1484 (ca.gov)](#)

1480. Definitions.

(a) "Nurse practitioner" means an advanced practice registered nurse who meets board education and certification requirements and possesses additional advanced practice educational preparation and skills in physical diagnosis, psycho-social assessment, and management of health-illness needs in primary care, and/or acute care.

(b) "Primary care" means comprehensive and continuous care provided to patients, families, and the community. Primary care focuses on basic preventative care, health promotion, disease prevention, health maintenance, patient education and the diagnoses and treatment of acute and chronic illnesses in a variety of practice settings.

(c) "Clinically competent" means the individual possesses and exercises the degree of learning, skill, care and experience ordinarily possessed and exercised by a certified nurse practitioner providing healthcare in the same nurse practitioner category. The clinical experience must be such that the nurse received intensive experience in performing the diagnostic and treatment procedures essential to the provision of primary care.

(d) "Acute care" means restorative care provided by the nurse practitioner to patients with rapidly changing, unstable, chronic, complex acute and critical conditions in a variety of clinical practice settings. (e) "Category" means the population focused area of practice in which the certified nurse practitioner provides patient care.

(f) "Advanced health assessment" means the knowledge of advanced processes of collecting and interpreting information regarding a patient's health care status. Advanced health assessment provides the basis for differential diagnoses and treatment plans.

(g) "Advanced pathophysiology" means the advanced knowledge and management of physiological disruptions that accompany a wide range of alterations in health.

(h) "Advanced pharmacology" means the integration of the advanced knowledge of pharmacology, pharmacokinetics, and pharmacodynamics content across the lifespan and prepares the certified nurse practitioner to initiate appropriate pharmacotherapeutics safely and effectively in the management of acute and chronic health conditions.

(i) "Nurse practitioner curriculum" means a curriculum that consists of the graduate core; advanced practice registered nursing core, and nurse practitioner role and population-focused courses.

(j) "Graduate core" means the foundational curriculum content deemed essential for all students pursuing a graduate degree in nursing.

(k) "Advanced practice registered nursing core" means the essential broad-based curriculum required for all nurse practitioner students in the areas of advanced health assessment, advanced pathophysiology, and advanced pharmacology.

(l) "California based nurse practitioner education program" means a board approved academic program, physically located in California that offers a graduate degree in nursing or graduate level certificate in nursing to qualified students and is accredited by a nursing organization recognized by the United States Department of Education or the Council of Higher Education Accreditation.

See the Clinical Information Center for additional forms, instructions, and contact information

- Post-Licensure Nursing Clinical Information Center (westcoastuniversity.edu)

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