**Patricia A. Chin School of Nursing Master of Science in Nursing**

Graduate Student Handbook



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**Compiled by the Faculty of the Patricia A. Chin School of Nursing 2021-2022**

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# SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

## Purpose of the Master of Science in Nursing

The Master of Science in Nursing program provides the opportunity to learn, evaluate, extend, and apply advanced theoretical and empirical knowledge in a selected area of nursing, while gaining advanced expertise in clinical practice. In addition, the program offers the opportunity for continued self-growth and development in the areas of critical thinking, creativity, accountability, collaboration, and research. Characteristic of advanced practice, the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree establishes a foundation for doctoral study. The MSN at California State University, Los Angeles (Cal State LA) is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), and the nurse practitioner options are approved by the California Board of Registered Nurses (BRN).

The Master of Science in Nursing program prepares professional nurses for careers as a nurse practitioner (NP) or nurse educator. Descriptions of each specialty area follow this introduction.

The program has four nurse practitioner specialties: Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (ANP), Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (ACNP), Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP), and Family Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (FPMHNP). Additional MSN specialties include Nursing Education. Post-master's certificate programs are available for all nurse practitioner tracks and for nursing education.

## Philosophy of the Patricia A. Chin School of Nursing (PACSON)

The Patricia A. Chin School of Nursing recognizes that nursing holds a distinctive and trusted position in health care. With this prominence comes a responsibility to improve the human condition in a diverse society. The concept of person, health, environment, and nursing therapeutics provides the synergism that defines the art and science of the nursing discipline and shapes health policy. We mindfully seek to improve the dynamic influence of social determinants of health, acknowledge human differences, and recognize implicit bias and reject stereotypes in order to provide safe and culturally sensitive care. We endeavor to create a learning environment that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusiveness, valuing the individual differences of students’ learning styles, challenges, and support systems. We believe that improvement in health care will be facilitated through the collaborative efforts with patients, family and community, and multidisciplinary health professionals to improve clinical judgment, patient outcomes, scholarship, and research.

### Mission

The Patricia A. Chin School of Nursing transforms lives and fosters healthy, thriving communities across greater Los Angeles, Southern California, and the nation by cultivating and amplifying our students’ unique talents, diverse life experiences, and intellect. Through engaged teaching, learning, scholarship, research, and public service the faculty, advisors, and staff support students’ overall success, well-being, and the greater good for the populations we serve.

### Vision

The Patricia A. Chin School of Nursing will be internationally recognized as the premier comprehensive program in greater Los Angeles offering baccalaureate, master’s, post-master’s, and doctor of nursing practice degree and certificate programs. We push boundaries and prepare graduates to be innovative leaders in their professional and civic lives. Faculty, students, and graduates will improve delivery of healthcare for the public good through partnerships that are inclusive of our local, regional, and global communities.

### Values

* Students First

We are student-centered, placing students’ academic success, career-readiness, and well-being as the driving force of our work.

* Pushing Boundaries

We promote innovation in healthcare through the Patricia A. Chin School of Nursing Simulation Center which provides a state-of-the-art environment that nurtures excellence in practice, research, and interdisciplinary innovation.

* Engagement, Service, and the Public Good

We foster meaningful, collaborative relationships through the Chin Family Institute for Nursing, which serves as a center for nursing excellence with an emphasis on caring for diverse and underserved populations.

* Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

We promote a welcoming environment for our students, faculty, staff, and the communities we serve. We understand the dynamic influence of social determinants of health while recognizing associated implicit biases and rejecting stereotypes.

* Engaged Teaching and Learning

We encourage our students to be partners in their own education, to value lifelong learning, to embrace new knowledge as they navigate their nursing career and throughout their journey from novice to expert.

* Academic Distinction through a Community of Scholars

We are a community of scholars that contribute to research and education through dissemination and global outreach. We incorporate evidence that supports nursing practice and improved well-being with a focus on health equity and justice in our surrounding communities.

* Transparent Collaborative Decision-Making

We include faculty, students, staff, and community advisors in a collaborative and transparent process using evidence to inform our decisions.

* Mutual Respect

We are committed to ensuring civility and mutual respect among faculty, staff, and students in all professional settings. We embrace diverse learners with varying backgrounds and respect different perspectives.

* Academic Freedom

We support academic freedom and promote professional ethics among students and faculty in accordance with University guidelines and our accrediting bodies.

## MSN Program Learning Outcomes

The MSN program’s student learning outcomes were derived from the PACSON’s philosophy, as well as *The Essentials of Master’s Education* as identified by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). Upon completing the program, the student should be able to:

1. **Knowledge**: Evaluate nursing research outcomes within the practice setting, resolve practice problems, work as a change agent, and disseminate evidence-based results.
2. **Scientific Inquiry and Critical Thinking**: Apply nursing research outcomes within the practice setting, resolve practice problems; work as a change agent and disseminates results.
3. **Ethical and Social Responsibility in a Diverse World**: Apply ethics in advanced nursing practice interventions that influence health care outcomes for diverse individuals, families, and communities.
4. **Communication**: Effectively collaborate with the inter-professional team to develop, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive health-care plan for diverse clients.
5. **Professional Development**: Advanced nursing practice interventions including both direct and indirect care components that influence health care outcomes for individuals, populations, or systems.

# SECTION II: ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

## Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Curriculum

The MSN degree program provides advanced study in selected areas. A total of 39 - 44 units in nursing are required depending on the option chosen. Students select from the following options:

* Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (44 units)
* Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (44 units)
* Family Nurse Practitioner (44 units)
* Family Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (44 units)
* Nursing Education (39 units)

The program consists of five components: (a) required core courses, (b) advanced nursing practice area courses, (c) electives, (d) option-specific courses, and (e) the culminating experience: either the comprehensive exam or thesis or project. Every student is required to take three graduate core courses (9 units). Students in the Nursing Education Option and the Nurse Practitioner Options are also required to take 12 units of courses in the Advanced Practice Core.

1. Required Core (9 units)
   * NURS 5020: Role, Health Care & Policy (3)
   * NURS 5800: Nursing Informatics (2)
   * NURS 5900: Theory, Research & Practice (4)
2. Advanced Nursing Practice Area (12 units)
   * NURS 5280: Advanced Pharmacology (3)
   * NURS 5660: Advanced Pathophysiology (3)
   * NURS 5720: Advanced Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning (3)
   * NURS 5730: Advanced Assessment Practicum (3)
3. Electives

Selection of the appropriate type of elective with advisor approval depends on the specialty area and choice of comprehensive exam, thesis, or project. Students electing to take the Comprehensive Examination will be required to take an approved elective (3 units) to complete their option program.

1. Options (Specialty Areas)

For coursework requirements within each of the above options, students should refer to the

*University Catalog* or their option program planning sheet.

1. Culminating Experience: Comprehensive Examination or Thesis or Project

Students obtaining a master’s degree can choose to complete a comprehensive examination or, if qualified, a thesis or a project as a culminating experience in their program. The culminating experience is a requirement of Cal State LA for all master’s programs. The comprehensive exam is the minimum requirement for the PACSON to complete the MSN degree. The thesis or project is an alternative choice for those students with demonstrated academic excellence and an interest in pursuing a particular area of interest through independent scholarship. There are 3 units of coursework associated with the project or thesis in addition to the required courses for each option.

Comprehensive Examination (0 units)

NURS 5960: Comprehensive Examination (0 units) is the required culminating experience for all MSN students unless a thesis or project is chosen. Students register for NURS 5960 in the semester that the comprehensive examination will be taken. Orientation session times and other details are emailed to those enrolled in the course using Cal State LA email addresses.

Comprehensive examinations are offered only during fall and spring semesters. Further, exams will only be administered on advertised days and times each semester. Refer to Appendix B for complete details. Students electing to take the Comprehensive Examination will be required to take an approved elective (3 units) to complete their option program.

Thesis or Project (3 units)

Students choosing the thesis or project option must take required unit credit NURS 5970: Graduate Research (1 unit), and for NURS 5990 Thesis or NURS 5995 for Project Research (2 units or one unit x 2. It is requirement that students have a thesis/project chair and an approved topic before registering for the NURS 5970 or NURS 5990/5995 courses. Refer to Appendix C and D for eligibility criteria and complete details.

1. MSN Exit Evaluation

Students graduating with an MSN or Post-Master’s Certificate complete the PACSON MSN Exit Evaluation as part of their culminating experience. All responses are anonymous. Electronic access link to the evaluation will be emailed to students. The MSN Exit Evaluation is part of the course evaluation criteria for all MSN students completing either Comprehensive Examination (NURS 5960) or for those in their last semester of their thesis/project (NURS 5990/5995).

## Master of Science in Nursing Admission Requirements

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) has the following admission requirements:

* + Bachelor of Science in Nursing from an NLN or CCNE accredited program at the time of admission as a graduate student;
  + Minimum *B* (3.0) grade point average in upper division nursing courses;
  + 3.0 grade point average in the last 60 semester units attempted;
  + Completion of an admission application to the University and a second and separate application to the Patricia A. Chin School of Nursing (includes 3 references and a personal essay);
  + Completion of a 3-unit (semester) or 4-unit (quarter) statistics course that includes inferential statistical content;
  + Undergraduate 3-unit (semester) or 4-unit (quarter) nursing research course or equivalent course;
  + Recent undergraduate physical assessment course (within 5 years);
  + Current, unrestricted California registered nursing license.

## Post-Master’s Certificate Programs

Credit certificate programs are also offered for nurses who have a master’s degree in nursing. Post- master’s certificate programs are available in the following specialties:

* + Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner
  + Adult Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner
  + Family Nurse Practitioner
  + Family Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
  + Nursing Education

## Admission Requirements

1. Post-Master’s (PM) Certificate Applicants

To be eligible for the Post-Master’s program, students must meet the following admission requirements:

* 1. Master of Science in Nursing from an accredited (NLN or CCNE) program
  2. Current, unrestricted license to practice nursing in California
  3. Minimum 3.0 MSN GPA
  4. The following core courses must be completed prior to starting the program:
     1. Graduate Nursing Research
     2. Role/Healthcare Policy
     3. Advanced Pathophysiology - including general principles that apply across the lifespan
     4. Advanced Pharmacology - which includes pharmacodynamics, pharmacokinetics, and pharmacotherapeutics of all broad categories of agents; and includes Schedule II updates as required by the BRN: <https://www.rn.ca.gov/pdfs/regulations/npr-b-59.pdf>
     5. Advanced Physical Assessment with lab - which includes assessment of all human systems, advanced assessment techniques, concepts and approaches.
     6. Eligible practicing nurse practitioners applying for the PM-NP program should have completed graduate-level courses specifically in advanced pathophysiology, advanced pharmacology, and advanced health assessment with a lab. Content must match that described above to be accepted.
     7. MSN PM applicants who are nurse practitioners, but do not have a valid furnishing number must take an advanced pharmacology course, that includes Schedule II medication updates, within **5 years** of starting the program.
     8. MSN RNs who are not nurse practitioners must take both advanced pharmacology and physical assessment courses within 5 years before entering our program.
     9. As appropriate, transcripts and course syllabi for core courses will be reviewed by a subcommittee of Cal State LA nursing faculty members.

## Required Courses for Post-Master’s Certificate Programs

Students enrolled in a post-master’s certificate program must complete the same second year program coursework as traditional MSN students. The students may petition to have up to 25% of applicable completed course credit from another post-master’s program accepted.

## Graduation Information for Post-Master’s Certificate Recipients

Upon successful completion of a post-master’s certificate program, students are awarded a certificate. Obtaining a certificate involves completing an application, paying a $25 application fee, and following the guidelines on the application. Applications are available in the Records Office, Administration Building Room 409, or from Cal State LA’s University Graduation Office website at <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduation>.

Student transcripts also provide evidence of coursework and hours of study/clinical practice. Those students completing nurse practitioner post-master’s certificate programs qualify to apply to the BRN to gain approval to function as a nurse practitioner within the State of California and are eligible to sit for the national certification in their specialty.

## The Decision Regarding Thesis or Project versus Comprehensive Exam

The student who chooses to complete the thesis or scholarly project versus taking the comprehensive exam is making an important decision. Faculty encourage this option for those who have followed a thoughtful, knowledgeable decision-making process. The thesis or scholarly project is an outstanding option for a student who has demonstrated academic excellence and wishes to independently pursue an area of predetermined interest. The graduate student may have developed a unique interest in an area based on previous course content or nursing/life experiences. Having a strong predetermined interest in an area greatly facilitates the process of developing the proposal.

### Thesis

The thesis option follows the traditional research process and is an opportunity for the student to conduct a master’s-level research study from beginning to end. This study could be a pilot study, a replication study, or could be an independent “slice” of a study from a faculty research project.

### Project

The project is a scholarly project, not tied strictly to the research process, and is an opportunity for the student to investigate and demonstrate creative scholarship. Examples of recent projects include: writing a grant proposal, developing an innovative nursing education curriculum, creating nursing education videos, developing and writing a clinical manual for a vulnerable population, developing an online course, a scholarly website, and/or an extensive clinical brochure. All projects are based on scholarly review of the research evidence. Both the thesis and project require excellent writing and critical thinking skills. Students who select the thesis or project frequently say: “It was a lot of work, but I am really glad I did it!”

Factors that are important to consider when making the decision to write a thesis/project or complete comprehensive examinations include length of time available to the student, length of option, career choice following graduation, and grade point average (GPA). An additional factor is fiscal feasibility. If length of time in the program is a factor, the comprehensive examination may be a better option because it can be completed in one semester. In comparison, completion of a thesis or project usually takes two to three semesters. Students who have more intensive specialty option requirements, such as the FNP or Psych/MHNP option, may choose the comprehensive exam because the length of their program is already substantial. Career plans following graduation are other factors to consider. If the student plans to work in education or in a research-focused environment, a thesis may be the more valuable option. Research experience can enhance future teaching and advising ability and can serve as a foundation for possible future doctoral preparation, particularly if the student plans to teach in a four- year institution.

Grades are also a consideration. Thesis and project students must have a minimum 3.5 GPA following all required coursework, as well as an “A” grade in the research course. Appendix C and Appendix D contain detailed information regarding thesis and project requirements.

Fiscal constraints may influence choice of the thesis/project option. Thesis duplication, instrument purchase (rare), and statistical consultation (for thesis option students) may require additional funds by students. To address these issues, students should secure thesis committee members before beginning extensive work on the proposal. The thesis or project chair and members should have an interest and substantive or methodological expertise in the area that the student plans to study.

Finally, personality and study factors such as perseverance, resilience, self-discipline, independent working style, problem solving abilities, effective stress reduction, and coping styles are all factors for the student to consider when choosing the thesis or project option. Some faculty believe comprehensive examinations may be a better option if the student functions better with a high level of stress for a short time. If, however, the student functions better with a lower level of stress over a longer period of time, writing a thesis/project might be preferable.

### Thesis or Project Process

The student who chooses the thesis or project option should select an enjoyable topic especially because of the amount of time that will be invested. It would not be overstating the case to say that the student should have a passionate interest in the area being proposed for the project or thesis. In addition, the student should incorporate some aspect of the potential area of study in graduate course papers and presentations to increase familiarity with the topic, help with literature review, and assist with refining the idea. Study topics can come from early work in the program or from the student’s nursing knowledge and expertise.

In preparing for the thesis or project process, it is critically important to follow the thesis or project proposal guidelines in either Appendix C or Appendix D.

For thesis and some projects, securing an outside facility’s Human Subject approval is completed prior to applying for the California State University, Los Angeles’ Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. A copy of the outside facility’s approval must be provided as part of the California State University, Los Angeles application. Only after all Human Subject approvals are obtained can the student collect data and examine the results. The thesis chair and/or thesis members will assist with statistics and/or referral to someone with statistical expertise, as needed.

A student must enroll for a total of three units while conducting the thesis or project. One unit of NURS 5970, which can be taken as one unit per semester, are taken during thesis or project preparation followed by two units of NURS 5990 or 5995, which can be taken as one or two units per semester. Note that students must have IRB approval prior to starting NURS 5990.

Graduate students who complete research units (NURS 5970) and thesis (NURS 5990) or project units (NURS 5995) required for master’s degrees must be regularly enrolled during any semester in which they use University facilities or consult with faculty. This means that students must be enrolled during the term in which the student will defend the thesis/complete the project, file the thesis/project in the library, and graduate. To maintain residence requirements and continuing student registration privileges, graduate students who are not enrolled in credit-bearing coursework (e.g., NURS 5970, 5990 or 5995) must register for UNIV 9000.

Once officially accepted and processed, master’s theses and projects are made available to the public through ProQuest.

## Comprehensive Examinations

Students must register for the examination (NURS 5960, 0 units). The examination is generally taken during or after completing all required courses on the student’s classified program provided that the student is not enrolled in any core (e.g., research) courses. For students registering for the exam after all coursework has been completed, there is a COMP registration fee. The examination is graded on a

Credit/No Credit basis. Once a student has taken the comprehensive examination, switching to a thesis or project option is not allowed.

Orientation and help sessions for students are provided by faculty usually at prescheduled times that are emailed to students enrolled in NURS 5960. *Students are required to attend the Comprehensive Exam Orientation and Help Session in the semester that they take the exam*.

The complete guidelines of the comprehensive examination are detailed in Appendix B. Detailed content study guides for each option are provided during the semester of the exam.

Students taking the comprehensive exam are required to take an approved 3-unit elective as a requirement for graduation.

## Submitted Manuscript in Lieu of the Essay Portion of the Comprehensive Exam

The student who chooses the manuscript option, in lieu of the essay portion of the comprehensive exam, should select a topic of interest that will advance nursing knowledge. Examples are literature review, concept analysis, or unique case study exemplars. Student group papers do not qualify for journal submission. Once the student has attempted the essay portion of the comprehensive exam, they can no longer pursue completion of a manuscript.

In preparing for the manuscript submission process, it is critically important that the student first:

1. Select an appropriate topic for the manuscript.
2. Identify a faculty member who approves the manuscript topic and will mentor them during the process.
3. Complete the *Manuscript Approval Form* (Appendix F).
4. With faculty approval, submit the manuscript to an appropriate peer-reviewed journal (student as first author and faculty as second author) at least one month prior to the comprehensive exam orientation session date.
5. Obtain notification from the journal editor that the manuscript has been sent for peer review *by the last business day before the Comprehensive Exam*.
6. Submit the journal notification to the faculty mentor and the PACSON Graduate Advisor. The Graduate Advisor will notify the student and faculty member of the student’s essay exemption status.

# SECTION III: ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Cal State LA Publications Available to Students

Information about admission requirements, registration, courses, student activities, and government are available in several University publications. Students are urged to bookmark each of the following publications:

### University Catalog

The *University Catalog* contains official policies and regulations about admission, fees, refund policies, student services, policies and procedures for graduation, and other requirements for both the undergraduate and graduate programs. The *University Catalog* may be found online at [www.calstatela.edu/catalog](http://www.calstatela.edu/catalog).

### Schedule of Classes

The University Scheduling Office coordinates the publication of the Schedule of Classe, which can be found online at . The *Schedule of Classes* may be found online at <https://www.calstatela.edu/registrar/university-scheduling-office>. A calendar of important dates for the semester, as well as important academic information and general information not included in the *University Catalog* may also be found at this website.

### University Thesis/Project Guidelines

Complete information regarding thesis and project guidelines are located in the *Graduate Student Handbook* published by the University Graduate Studies Office. The handbook can be accessed online at [http://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/users/u50136/graduate\_student\_handbook\_2019-](http://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/users/u50136/graduate_student_handbook_2019-2020.pdf) [2020.pdf](http://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/users/u50136/graduate_student_handbook_2019-2020.pdf).

## Thesis and Project Requirements

Students who choose to write a thesis or project as their master’s degree culminating experience should consult the *Guide to Preparation of Master’s Thesis and Project Reports*, available at <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatethesis>. This link provides information about procedures, regulations, and responsibilities governing the master’s thesis or project, general requirements for thesis preparation and acceptance, format requirements for the thesis, and special instructions for projects and project reports. In addition, students must refer to the *MSN Graduate Student Handbook* for additional details.

Students must be advanced to candidacy and must obtain the approval of the Associate Dean before registering for research and thesis/project units. When all units for NURS 5970 and NURS 5990/5995 classes have been completed, a student must maintain continuous enrollment by registering for thesis or research units each semester until completion of the thesis/project. Furthermore, students must be officially enrolled during the semester they expect to graduate.

## Procedures and Regulations for MSN Students

### Admission Procedures

* 1. Students apply to the University and PACSON via [www2.calstate.edu/apply](https://www2.calstate.edu/apply). The PACSON application is included with the University application. Applications are accepted once a year for admission beginning in the Fall semester. Application dates are listed on the PACSON website <http://www.calstatela.edu/hhs/nursing/graduate-and-certificate-programs>.
  2. Because there are additional admission requirements associated with graduate nursing programs such as University requirements, a student may schedule an appointment with the primary graduate advisor before applying to obtain an overview of the program and to discuss qualifications and interests. Program Roadmaps are located online for all options at <http://www.calstatela.edu/hhs/nursing/graduate-and-certificate-programs>.
  3. Students who have voluntarily left the program and are applying to return to the same graduate option will be evaluated for readmission based on academic record and ability to successfully complete degree requirements for the program in a timely manner. Returning students are required to meet with the Option Coordinator and to submit an academic plan consistent with timely graduation policy in order to be considered for readmission.
  4. A student’s classified program cannot be finalized until one is formally accepted to the University. Students who do not meet the GPA requirements for admission will need to take qualifying courses before acceptance. For students with a GPA of 2.9-2.99, one course is required, for a GPA of 2.8-2.89, two courses are required, and for a GPA of 2.75-2.79, four courses are required.
  5. After receiving an acceptance letter from the University, new students must attend a mandatory New MSN Student Orientation Session which is usually held prior to the beginning of the Fall semester.

### Credit for Transfer Work

To receive credit toward a master’s degree for acceptable postbaccalaureate work taken at other colleges and universities, students must have official transcripts forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies and must file a “Request for Records” (Form GS-1A) with their major department/division/school. Cal State LA will allow credit for work taken at another college or university only when it appears on the student’s official transcript from that institution, is acceptable for master’s degree credit at the offering institution, and is deemed appropriate to the student’s master’s degree program by the major department/division/school at Cal State LA. The following limitations and exclusions apply:

* For master’s degrees that require 30 total semester units, no more than 9 semester units of acceptable transfer, extension, and/or special session courses may be included on a master’s degree study plan. For master’s degrees that require more than 30 semester units, up to 30% of the total required units may consist of acceptable transfer, extension, and/or special session courses, if approved by the appropriate graduate/departmental advisor.
* No master’s degree credit is allowed for directed teaching, 7000- or 8000-level courses, courses numbered below 4000, and courses taken at another accredited institution that would not be accepted toward a master’s degree at that institution.
* Six semester units of 5000-level or other graduate courses taken through extension are eligible for master’s degree credit.
* Transcripts and course syllabi for core courses will be reviewed by a subcommittee of Cal State LA nursing faculty members.
  + Equivalency of Courses: the specific transfer courses must be equivalent to the courses required in the student’s plan of study.
  + Courses older than 7 years from the projected Cal State LA graduation date will NOT be accepted.
* The MSN Chair will notify the student regarding the decision. All correspondence will become part of the student’s record.

Refer to the University Catalog Transfer Credit policy for complete details: <https://www.calstatela.edu/academicsenate/handbook/ch4c#transfer>.

### Deferment

In the event that an applicant is admitted and because of extenuating circumstances is unable to attend, a petition for a deferment must be submitted using the *PACSON Petition Form* (Appendix E). The MSN Chair will present the petition to faculty for approval.

## Advisement

MSN students are assigned to their option coordinator as their advisor. Option coordinators are available to assist students in selecting a program of study, setting up the program, clarifying coursework requirements, and identifying times courses are usually offered. It is the student’s responsibility to seek academic advisement initially and at least once a semester after the student’s classified program has been established, or more often as needed. Students will be introduced to their advisor/option coordinator during the New MSN Student Orientation session. Students are expected to consult with their advisor each semester to plan their program of study.

## Important Milestones During the MSN Program

Once a student has been admitted to the University, the student must complete the following steps to complete the MSN program:

1. Attend the New MSN Student Orientation Session to meet with the MSN chair and option coordinators. During this session, the faculty will review requirements for the master's degree.
2. A background check is required of all entering graduate students. This is to be completed during the second semester of coursework for all options. Specific information regarding the company used is provided in advance to students. All MSN and PM students must pass the background check to begin clinical rotations.
3. Any change in coursework must be approved in advance of course completion by the option coordinator. A maximum study load for graduate students is 16 units per semester. A student must complete all courses and other requirements for the degree within seven years. All courses must be completed with a grade of C or better, with an overall GPA of 3.0. Students are encouraged to see their option coordinator if they have any questions.
4. Writing Requirements
   1. Graduate students are exempt from UNIV 4000 or the course alternative, UNIV 4010, if they hold an earned bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited college or university where English is the primary language of instruction. Graduate students are also exempt from UNIV 4000 if they have a score of 41 or better on the writing portion of the California Basic Education Skills Test (CBEST) or a score of 4 on the analytic writing portion of the GRE or GMAT.
   2. International graduate students who graduate from universities where English is NOT the primary language of instruction and do not meet other exemption criteria identified above must pass the Writing Proficiency UNIV 4000 or UNIV 4010 within their first 12 units. Students may only take the WPE one time. Graduate students who take but do not pass the WPE should take University 4010 the following semester. Students who do not satisfy the GWAR requirement within their first 12 units may be subject to a registration hold. Students must satisfy this Graduate Writing Requirement in order to be Advanced to Candidacy.
5. After completing 12 units of coursework in the classified program of study with a 3.0 or better GPA, the student is eligible for advancement to candidacy.
6. Complete all coursework on one’s program with a minimum B average (3.0 grade point average) and minimum C grades in all courses. (A grade of C- is not considered passing). See grading scales below.
7. Pass the comprehensive examination or write a thesis or complete a culminating project.
8. Complete the Exit Evaluation.
9. Apply for graduation by the deadline announced on the Graduation Office website for the semester one wishes to graduate. This occurs approximately 1½ semesters before graduation. Graduation application forms are available on the Graduation Office website (<http://www.calstatela.edu/graduation>). A student must complete the Graduate Application Form and pay a $20 application and $10 diploma fee ($30 total). The student then returns the application form to the Nursing Office where a graduation check is performed. The Nursing Office will forward the application form and graduation check to the Graduation Office. It is recommended that students submit Graduation Application Forms two weeks prior to the university deadline to assure adequate processing time.

## Registration Procedures

In order to maintain continuing status, students must register online each semester after they are accepted into the University. Continuing students receive information regarding their registration appointment dates by logging into GET (Golden Eagle Territory): <http://www.calstatela.edu/registrar/get>. Online registration (GET) is available to all eligible continuing students. Additional information about registration procedures is provided on the University’s Scheduling Office website: <https://www.calstatela.edu/registrar/university-scheduling-office>.

Be sure to register early, as courses may be cancelled before the first class meeting if too few students have registered. If you are unable to register for a course because the class is filled, contact the PACSON

Administration Office. The student must attend the first class meeting to be considered for adding the class by the course instructor if space is available.

Absence for two consecutive semesters without an approved leave of absence will cancel continuing registration eligibility. See Leaves of Absence in this handbook.

## Eligibility for Classes

If a student has not completed required course prerequisites they will be dropped from the course.

## Adding/Dropping Classes

Students may add or drop a class through GET within the time period listed in the Dates and Deadlines for a particular semester: <http://www.calstatela.edu/registrar/university-scheduling-office>. After that time, the instructor's signature is required. Students who change enrollment in courses after these deadlines must obtain signatures from the Director of the PACSON and the Associate Dean of the Xu College of Health and Human Services. Students should decide early if their schedule permits successful course completion. Having academic difficulty in a course is not an acceptable reason for dropping a course at Cal State LA; however, extenuating circumstances are always taken into account for late drops or withdrawals. A student should discuss one’s needs with the instructor before adding or dropping a course. Once a student has been classified, adding or dropping a course from their program necessitates meeting with their option coordinator.

## Grading Scales

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Letter Grade  A | GPA | 4.00 | % | 93 -100 |
| A- |  | 3.7 |  | 90 -92.9 |
| B+ |  | 3.3 |  | 87 -89.9 |
| B |  | 3.0 |  | 83 -86.9 |
| B- |  | 2.7 |  | 80 -82.9 |
| C+ |  | 2.3 |  | 77 -79.9 |
| C |  | 2.0 |  | 71 -76.9 |
| C- |  | 1.7 |  | 70 -70.9 |
| D+ |  | 1.3 |  | 68 –69.9 |
| D |  | 1.0 |  | 63 –67.9 |
| D- |  | 0.7 |  | 60 –62.9 |
| F |  | 0.0 |  | 59 & below |

Thesis/project are graded with a CR/NC

## Incomplete Grades

An incomplete grade is an interim grade designed for students who are passing a course but who, because of extenuating circumstances, have not been able to complete a small portion of the work required for the course by the end of the academic term. An incomplete “I” grade shall be assigned at the discretion of the faculty member only when the faculty member concludes that a clearly identifiable portion of course requirements cannot be met within the academic term because of extenuating circumstances. It is the responsibility of the student to request a grade of incomplete (“I”) from the instructor and to determine from the instructor the remaining course requirements that must be satisfied to remove the incomplete (“I”). The conditions for removal of the incomplete (“I”) including the due date for remaining work shall be specified in writing by the instructor and given to the student. This “Incomplete Grade Agreement” must specify the outstanding course requirements and the final grade to be given based on the evaluation of the outstanding work. The signed “Incomplete Grade Agreement” will be placed in the student’s file and a copy will be given to the student. The maximum time allowed by the University to make up an incomplete grade is one calendar year. If a student does not remove the incomplete grade within the allotted time, the “I” will automatically be replaced with an “IC”, will remain on the student’s transcript, and be counted as an “F” in GPA calculations.

Please note that experiencing academic difficulty in a course is not an acceptable reason for a student to request an incomplete grade.

## Course and Program Continuation after Course Failures or Incomplete Grades

Any student who does not pass a course or receives an incomplete grade in a course must make and complete an appointment with their option coordinator before progressing in the program. Remediation options will be discussed.

Students who withdraw from or are not successful in passing a course in the MSN program with a minimum grade of C must repeat the course at Cal State LA. Once a student attempts to take a course in the MSN program at Cal State LA, substitutions will not be allowed from another college or university.

Students who receive two grades of C- or lower will not be allowed to continue in the MSN program.

## Auditing a Class

Students can officially audit a course by submitting an instructor-approved program change form at Administration 409. Audited courses are not recorded on the student's transcript. More information is available on the University Registrar website: <http://www.calstatela.edu/registrar/records-enrollment>. Students may also unofficially audit a course by emailing the instructor for permission.

## Credit by Examination

Students in good standing and officially enrolled in one or more residence courses may challenge courses by taking examinations developed by PACSON faculty. Credit shall be granted to those students who pass examinations that have been approved for credit in the PACSON. Credit by examination is

restricted to undergraduate and graduate courses listed in the *University Catalog*. Approval of the Director of the PACSON and faculty for the course is required. Credit by examination is without unit limit but does not count as residence credit. Such credit is not treated as part of the student’s workload during a regular semester and therefore does not require approval for excess study load. Grades received by examination are recorded as final grades on the permanent academic record and are designated as ‘earned through credit by examination.’

**Leaves of Absence**

Graduate students are expected to continuously enroll each semester. Students may petition for a leave of absence for health-related conditions, pregnancy, major surgery, and other family and financial circumstances. The Leave of Absence petition form may be found at [https://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/groups/University%20Registrar/Docs/leave\_of\_absence.](https://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/groups/University%20Registrar/Docs/leave_of_absence.pdf) [pdf](https://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/groups/University%20Registrar/Docs/leave_of_absence.pdf)

Students are expected to plan their time of return. In the case of medical or financial leaves, students must state how they plan to remain current with or advance in their academic field. Graduate students are granted a maximum of two semesters of leave of absence, subject to renewal for one additional year. An application must be filed to be considered for a renewal. Petitions must be filed and submitted to the Nursing Office before the proposed leave for vote and approval by the Faculty. Approval entitles students to continuing status for registration purposes if they return no later than the semester specified in the petition.

Students returning from a leave of absence in good academic standing or those who were on probation and *have not* attempted units at another college/university, or through the College of Professional and Global Education (PAGE), are considered a Returning Student.

## Petitions

Students must submit a petition using the PACSON Petition Form (Appendix E) to the Chair of MSN Programs for vote by the Faculty Committee. Results of the faculty vote are conveyed to the student in writing by the Chair of MSN Programs.

## Change of Option

Students are strongly encouraged to fully explore the option(s) they are interested in prior to applying. Your application is expected to reflect this thoughtful consideration of what is a best match for you.

Therefore, change of option is not allowed.

**Adding an Additional Option within the MSN Program**

Students who are currently enrolled in the MSN degree program may not concurrently complete an additional option under the same degree. We encourage you to apply for a Post-Master's certificate if you wish to obtain another specialty.

## Post-Master’s Certificate

MSN students cannot pursue post-master’s certificate programs concurrently with the master’s degree. All students pursuing a post-master’s certificate must have earned an MSN prior to the term of admission to the post-master’s certificate program. PACSON will check that the degree is earned or is in progress and will be completed prior to the admission term before entering an admission decision in GET. Admission to the post-master’s certificate program must follow the full application and admission process, including a full university admission application.

Students enrolled in the MSN program at Cal State LA must complete a full PACSON application and admission process required for any student to be considered for and admitted to the post-master’s certificate option. Internal and external applicants will be considered equally based on space available in the program.

Post-Master's certificate students may not take two different clinical and their related theory classes concurrently in any semester.

## Fees

Some graduate nursing courses require additional fees (e.g., NURS 5730). Information regarding additional costs may be found at <http://www.calstatela.edu/sfinserv>and via instructional faculty teaching the courses.

# SECTION IV: PACSON REQUIREMENTS

## Paper Format

The PACSON requires that students write papers according to the format of the American Psychological Association (APA). The latest edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* can be purchased in the University Bookstore. Additional assistance with APA can be obtained from the Cal State LA Library.

## Clinical Courses and Advanced Field Study

The Clinical Placement Office will identify qualified preceptors for students. Students who have identified preceptors that they would like to work with can give the information to the clinical placement coordinator to determine if a contract with the preceptor is feasible. The information should be transmitted to the clinical placement coordinator a minimum of 8 weeks before the start of the semester in which the student would like to work with the preceptor.

Preceptors may be assigned based on geographic location and/or educational preparation and credentials. The preceptors’ current practice setting must be congruent with the student’s MSN option. For example, nursing education preceptors must hold at least a master’s degree from an accredited school and be working directly in a role involving nursing education.

Preceptors for nurse practitioner students or nurse education clinicals may be nurse practitioners or physicians [i.e., Medical Doctor (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathy (DO)]. Most importantly, preceptors must currently practice in a clinical setting appropriate to their area of specialization and in the case of nurse practitioners, their national certification as well. For example, nurse practitioner (NP) preceptors for FNP and ANP students must be working in primary care and NP preceptors for ACNP students must be working in acute care. Note that while some FNPs or ANPs may be practicing predominantly in an acute care facility, such rotations may not be approved for FNP or ANP students. ANP and FNP students can request *extra* clinical hours with ANP and FNP preceptors in acute care settings if approved by their option coordinator or MSN Chair and as long as they still have clinical in primary care settings as well.

Preceptors must be present with the student during all clinical rotations.

## First Class Meeting

Many clinical courses meet on campus the first week of the semester. Times, places, and any announcements regarding the first class meeting are posted on the Canvas site of the course or emailed by the faculty teaching the course.

## Admission to Clinical Labs/Practicums/Field Study

The faculty expects students to meet all placement facility requirements before the first day of the clinical course. All required documents must be uploaded to CastleBranch before clinical can begin. This

is a University, Chin School of Nursing, and clinical site requirement. If you are delinquent with CastleBranch requirements, you will either be dropped from the course or not allowed to begin the clinical rotation until it is completed. Inability to start clinical on time could result in an incomplete or failure of the clinical course. The student should discuss any issues with CastleBranch, and any questions or concerns with the Nursing Office staff or the clinical placement coordinators. CastleBranch information includes:

1. Personal Health Insurance: All students are required to show proof of individual health insurance coverage.
2. Student Liability Insurance: The University provides coverage (Medical Professional Liability and Educator’s Errors and Omissions Liability Insurance) for each nursing student for up to $1 million coverage per occurrence. The cost of the annual coverage is $20.00 and can be purchased through the Cashier’s Office on campus. This policy only provides coverage while in a student role in a CSU nursing course. The policy does not cover student workers or students working as nursing assistants. The insurance policy is good for one year only and must be renewed annually on July 1st. It is also recommended that graduate students carry their own personal malpractice insurance in addition to the student liability insurance.
3. American Heart Association CPR Card: All students must have current certification in CPR, referred to as BLS or CPR for Healthcare Providers. (Note that this is not the “Heart Saver” class). Students must obtain CPR training from any American Heart Association (AHA) approved provider. The Student Health Center on campus offers classes. Call (323) 343-3340 for fee schedules and class dates.
4. Background Checks: Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to carefully assess their personal criminal background before applying to the PACSON. Once admitted to the PACSON, students must have a cleared background check that is satisfactory in meeting the standards of clinical agencies. The Board of Registered Nursing (BRN) in the State of California makes the final determination on eligibility for licensure. An unacceptable background check may be a barrier to licensure, certification, and/or employment. The student accepts this risk upon entering the program. Background checks are confidential and are only viewed by the Director of the PACSON. Costs pertaining to acquiring background checks are the responsibility of the student. Students are referred to [https://mycb.CastleBranch.com](https://mycb.castlebranch.com/) for both the background check and drug screening if required by the agency.

If a student’s background check is not clear, it will be the student’s responsibility to meet with the Director of the PACSON and bring all appropriate relevant documentation for clearance (e.g., rehabilitation, counseling, etc.). The Director of the PACSON will counsel the student regarding the authority of the BRN, hospital standards related to background checks, and discuss possible outcomes. Clinical facilities have the right to refuse placement based upon information from background checks. If clearance is not possible, a student will not be able attend clinical rotations. Students are advised that if clinical placements are refused, completion of degree requirements will not be possible.

1. Driver’s License: Nursing students should have a valid California driver’s license and access to an automobile covered by appropriate automobile insurance so that they can access assigned clinical agencies independently.
2. HIPAA Certificate: Done once via <https://www.csudh.edu/son/info/hipaa-precautions/hipaa-quiz>.
3. **Health Clearance Requirements**: All new students are required to purchase a “Student Immunization Tracker” package from [https://mycb.CastleBranch.com](https://mycb.castlebranch.com/). You will be submitting all of your health data for collection and tracking purposes to CastleBranch. You pay the company directly (fee is listed on the website). A complete listing of requirements is outlined in detail in Appendix A. Tests and/or immunizations may be obtained through a private physician or the Student Health Center (SHC) on campus. Note that antibody titers (actual numerical values), which demonstrate immunity, are required for rubella, rubeola, mumps, varicella and Hepatitis B (not just documentation of prior immunization). Attach copies of all relevant laboratory tests for documentation. **All health clearance information must be signed and completed prior to any clinical experience.** Health clearance information is checked by several people prior to each clinical course and must also include the following:
   * A physical examination
   * An initial two-step Mantoux screening test (TB screening skin test) or Quantiferon Gold testing or chest X-ray if TB skin test is positive.
   * Students should make copies of their documentation prior to submission and retain for their records. **If you have not submitted your documents, a hold may be placed on your registration.**

Important Reminder: Students will not be allowed to participate in their clinical experience if the requirements discussed in this section have not been uploaded and approved by CastleBranch by the start of the clinical experience.

## Guidelines for Professional Image for MSN Graduate Students

Students are expected to demonstrate professionalism that includes appropriate conduct, communication and interpersonal relationships, legal and ethical behavior, and personal appearance. These behaviors are consistent with program expectations (e.g. no gum chewing, sitting on exam tables). Consult with preceptor regarding appropriate dress (street clothes with lab coat or uniform with lab coat). Students must wear nametags while in the clinical setting to identify them as students in the Patricia A. Chin School of Nursing graduate program at Cal State LA, e.g. Susan Jones, BSN, RN, CCRN, Graduate Student, Patricia A. Chin School of Nursing, Cal State LA. All student documentation is to be signed in a similar manner.

* Name Tags: Name tags must be worn at all times in the clinical setting.
* Dress: Cal State LA lab coats are to be worn as required by the clinical facility. Full-length lab coats should not be worn by students. Lab coats must be clean and wrinkle free at all times. Appropriate professional attire is to be worn under the lab coat and should not be clinging, see- through or low-cut. Under specified clinical requirements, scrubs may be worn as attire in the clinical setting.
* Footwear: Shoes should be clean and closed toe.
* Hair: Hair must be clean and neatly combed. Hair colors, outside of natural hair colors, may be asked to be toned down or covered. Hair at shoulder length or below should be combed back so that it will not fall forward over the face. Long hair must be tied back. Plain barrettes or combs are allowed. Neatly trimmed mustaches and short beards are acceptable.
* Makeup: Makeup should appear fresh and natural. Excessive makeup is not acceptable.
* Nails: Nails should be kept clean and smooth. If polish is used, it should be colorless with a natural finish. Nail polish should be unchipped and without adornment. Fingernail length should not exceed beyond the tip of the finger. Acrylic or other types of artificial nails are not permitted.
* Perfume: The use of perfume, cologne, and after-shave lotion is not permitted.
* Sunglasses: Sunglasses are not to be worn in the clinical setting. Transition lenses or those with a transparent tint are acceptable.
* Jewelry: Only one small ring, class ring, or wedding band set is acceptable. A small ring is defined as the same size or smaller than a class ring. Necklaces and neck chains may be worn inside clothing. Very large or long dangling earrings are not appropriate. Watches and nursing school class pins may be worn.
* Hygiene: Personal hygiene plays a major role in professional appearance. All students should pay particular attention to bathing regularly, ensuring absence of body and mouth odor, and a neat and clean appearance. Gum chewing is not allowed.
* Body Piercing and Tattoos: Students may have no more than two visible piercings and those must conform to the clinical agency’s dress code. All visible tattoos must be covered.
* Medical Exceptions: Any request for exception(s) to the dress/appearance code for medical or religious reasons must be signed by your personal physician or appropriate specialist. The request must then be given to the Director of the Patricia A. Chin School of Nursing for approval and updated annually.

# SECTION V: NURSE PRACTITIONER PROGRAMS

## Purposes

The primary purposes of the nurse practitioner programs at Cal State LA are to:

1. Prepare nurse practitioners as advanced practice nurses in the areas of adult acute care, adult primary, family, and psychiatric mental health nursing.
2. Increase the availability of master’s-prepared nurse practitioners who are culturally competent and are committed to working with underserved and vulnerable patients and their families.
3. Establish and maintain strong collaborative relationships and linkages with health professionals and health agencies providing primary and acute care health care services to clients and their families.

## Philosophy of Nurse Practitioner Programs

The faculty believes that patients are bio-psycho-sociocultural beings in constant interaction with a changing environment. Patients perceive and respond to actual or potential health problems in unique ways which are influenced by their age, gender, education, occupation, religion, health, and cultural identity. Patients are members of a family unit and of a community and experience varying degrees of health and illness throughout life. They have the capability to initiate and perform self-care to maintain their own health and well-being. The faculty believes that patients who actively participate in their health care management are more likely to reach an optimum level of health.

Nursing is a health care profession that assists patients to achieve and maintain health and health- related goals. The foundation for the practice of nursing is the scientific method of inquiry known as the nursing process which consists of the following steps: assessment, diagnosis, planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Using this foundation, the nurse practitioner functions independently and interdependently in an expanded nursing role after completing a study of relevant theories, research, and practice related to advanced nursing practice within the primary and/or acute health care setting. Building upon theory and practice from nursing, medicine, and other related disciplines, nurse practitioners acquire clinical expertise in primary and acute care. The faculty believes that the role of the nurse practitioner is to assess from a holistic perspective the bio-psycho-sociocultural status of patients, diagnose and manage health problems, promote wellness and disease prevention, and provide patient education and counseling. Moreover, as an advanced practice nurse, the nurse practitioner role entails exercising leadership skills in promoting the health of vulnerable populations and advocating for continuity of care and greater access to health care services.

The faculty believes that nurse practitioner students are adult learners. They are recognized as experienced nursing professionals who enter the program with unique characteristics and abilities. They are accountable and responsible for the health care they provide.

The role of the faculty is to assist students to acquire the competencies needed to function as a nurse practitioner. The faculty accomplishes this by serving as role models, resource persons, and motivators. Faculty also assist students in moving toward their career goals and achieving their potential.

To maintain competence in theory and clinical practice, nurse practitioners must assume responsibility for staying abreast of new developments occurring in the profession and in their areas of clinical expertise through both formal and informal continuing education. A commitment to lifelong learning is the mark of a true professional.

# SECTION VI: ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES RELATED TO NURSING AND THE UNIVERSITY

There are several nursing-related organizations that graduate students may be interested in joining. In addition, students are eligible to participate in the many student activities available on campus. There is an extensive array of clubs, interest groups, councils, and committees for student life. Interested students should consult the Campus Life link on the University web page at <https://www.calstatela.edu/campus-life>.

## Student Government

Enrollment at Cal State LA automatically entitles students to membership in the Associated Students, Inc., and students may wish to become involved in this group's activities. <https://asicalstatela.org/>.

## Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society, NU MU Chapter

The purposes of this society are to recognize superior achievement and leadership qualities, foster high professional standards, encourage creative work, and strengthen commitment to the ideals and purposes of the profession. Candidates for membership are selected from the master's program after completing at least 16 units of the required graduate classes with a GPA of 3.5 or above. Members pay an annual fee, and receive official publications, priority for educational programs and chapter-sponsored research funding, announcements, and may vote and hold office in local and/or national chapter.

## Alpha Tau Delta

Alpha Tau Delta (ATD) is a professional fraternity for nurses. The emphasis of this social and academic organization is service. Through the Cal State LA chapter, students have the opportunity to share information about the field of nursing and to participate in local service projects. Students who wish more information should inquire with the Nursing Administration Office in Simpson Tower 417.

## Committees

The PACSON committees function as fact-finding, advisory, and coordinating bodies consistent with University and College policies. Students are encouraged to send representatives to all PACSON standing committees. The committees meet at stipulated times during each semester, usually on Mondays.

Student representatives must be registered for a minimum of four units and be in good scholastic standing before and during their term on a committee. While student representatives are not voting members, input from a student’s perspective can be extremely valuable. Students interested in serving on a PACSON committee should email the Chair of MSN Programs or speak to a tenured or tenure-track faculty member.

## Special Events at the University

The University has several Special Events. Only a few are listed here. Please consult the *University Catalog* for further information.

### Annual Research Day

MSN students are strongly encouraged to attend the PACSON Annual Research Day continuing education offering. This event, involving the entire PACSON, is jointly sponsored by the PACSON and Sigma Theta Tau Nu Mu Chapter and serves to disseminate research on a given theme.

### Honors Convocation

Students with excellent academic performance will be recognized. Students achieving this honor will be notified by the College.

### Commencement

Commencement exercises are held at the end of the spring semester in May. Please refer to the *University Catalog* for more information. Students are encouraged to attend this event to receive final recognition from the University. Academic regalia is required for the ceremony. Caps and gowns may be rented or purchased from the University Bookstore.

## University Support Services for Students in Nursing and the University

### Graduate Advisor

The PACSON sponsors a formal student academic support program that consists primarily of referral assistance for academic or personal counseling from the graduate advisor. The graduate advisor primarily advises students who are having difficulty with successful completion of coursework or those disqualified from the nursing program and/or the University. Students with personal problems may be referred to the University’s Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS).

### Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides confidential and non-judgmental help with students’ personal growth and psychological wellness. CAPS specializes in mental health services which can help students express their thoughts and feelings, gain perspective, alleviate emotional symptoms, improve coping skills, and make healthy changes in their life. Additional information about CAPS can be accessed at <https://www.calstatela.edu/studenthealthcenter/caps>.

### Student Health Services

The Student Health Center offers health services to all currently enrolled students at Cal State LA, providing a number of health services for students for free or at minimum cost. Most of the cost for the primary care services are covered under student fees and include health screening, general medical care, mental health screening and counseling, preventative dental care, family planning, chiropractic care, optometry, and health education. For an additional fee, students can obtain primary dental care,

chiropractic services, optometry, and laboratory testing. For the PACSON, the Health Center provides free physical examinations and health screening tests that are required of Nursing students prior to clinical rotations in our affiliating clinical agencies.

### Financial Aid, Scholarships, and Grants

In order to be considered for nursing grants, loans, scholarships, and other financial aid programs, distributed from university donors and implemented within the Cal State LA system, the following process must be followed:

1. Go to the Center for Student Financial Aid, located at Student Affairs Building, 124.
2. Apply for financial assistance, submitting a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to the Department of Education processing center. The priority deadline is March 2nd of each calendar year. Students must re-apply for financial aid every academic year. Students may apply on-line at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/index.htm>or obtain a paper form at the Center for Student Financial Aid.
3. Once approved for financial assistance, apply/file a General Scholarship Application. This is necessary to complete if you wish to apply for university nursing scholarships. The deadline for continuing students is in April, and monies are awarded for the upcoming fall semester. You will need to include one letter of recommendation (there is a recommendation form to be completed with a written letter of recommendation to be attached). Most undergraduate university nursing scholarship opportunities require a 3.0 GPA.
4. Send the completed application, letter of recommendation, and form to the Center for Student Financial Aid.
5. Check criteria and up-to-date nursing scholarship listings at <http://www.calstatela.edu/financialaid/scholarships>
6. Scholarship awards may be based on academic achievement, specific nursing program, level, campus, and/or community participation, financial need, gender, or ethnic affiliation, or a variety of other purposes.

Community, Organization, and Other Non-University Based Nursing Scholarships

Students are encouraged to check on-line for nursing scholarship opportunities. There are many available scholarships for both undergraduate and graduate nursing students offered nationally by government and professional organizations, as well as locally by various hospitals.

In addition, there are several scholarships which are periodically offered by local organizations and require a separate application. Application dates vary for these but are most often in the Spring or Fall semesters. Additionally, several nursing organizations offer modest scholarships on an annual basis, including Alpha Tau Delta and Sigma Theta Tau. Students who need additional financial support and are willing to make a long-term work commitment after graduation might consider applying to one of the military services, such as The Veteran’s Administration or the National Health Services Corps. The Army, Navy, and Air Force Nurse Corps all have programs which differ slightly but if accepted, require active duty after graduation. A similar program is offered by the Veteran's Administration. The National Health Services Corps provides both scholarships and loans to Advanced Practice Nurses who provide primary care in underserved communities. For further information, call 1 (800) 221-9393.

Notification of scholarship opportunities by campus email is sent to student organizations, class presidents, faculty, and students.

Questions regarding scholarships or financial aid may be addressed to the PACSON Scholarship Chair.

### Graduate Resource Center

The Graduate Resource Center provides academic support, professional development, and community- building opportunities in a space dedicated to graduate students. They guide students through writing, editing, and formatting the thesis and dissertation and assist in preparing work for publication; host workshops and presentations to support students’ academic and professional development; and act as a general resource for graduate student needs. Visit <https://www.calstatela.edu/graduateresourcecenter> for more information.

### Career Development Center

The Career Development Center provides counseling and assists students in the development of employment-seeking skills. The center keeps student files with letters of recommendation for forwarding to prospective employers and provides many other services.

### Library

The John F. Kennedy Library provides graduate students with numerous academic resources in addition to its books, periodicals, documents, etc. Students may access Library resources and services 24 hours a day online at <https://www.calstatela.edu/library>.

### Computer Assistance

The ITS Help Desk provides the campus community with friendly one-on-one technical assistance supporting campus email, network, wireless and Internet access, telecommunications, and more. Their home page is designed to provide 24-hour access to the self-service tools and self-help quick tips that assist students in solving common IT issues: <https://www.calstatela.edu/its/helpdesk>.

### Legal Assistance

Some legal services and emergency assistance are available through the Office of the Dean of Students: <https://www.calstatela.edu/deanofstudents/tenant-protections>.

### Transportation, Housing, and Parking

Refer to the University Catalog and the University Graduate Handbook for complete information.

### Academic Honesty

Refer to the Cal State LA policy for complete information: <https://www.calstatela.edu/academicsenate/handbook/ch5a>.

### Standards for Student Conduct

Refer to the Cal State LA policy for complete information: <https://www.calstatela.edu/studentconduct/policies-and-procedures>.

### PACSON Student Grievance Procedure

Before filing a grievance, the student should normally attempt to discuss with the named employee/faculty the student’s concerns or complaints about the named employee’s/faculty member’s conduct. This informal process may not be possible in all cases, particularly if the student believes that

he/she will be the victim of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. Barring these concerns however the student should make the effort to speak to the named employee/faculty.

If this communication does not resolve the problem, the PACSON Director must be informally consulted by both parties. During this consultation, the student will be given a copy of the grievance procedure. If all informal attempts have failed to resolve the problem, the student has the right to initiate the grievance procedure: <https://www.calstatela.edu/academicsenate/handbook/apph>.

### Informal Grievance Committee within the PACSON

According to the Grade Grievance Policy (<https://www.calstatela.edu/academicsenate/handbook/apph>), “The Director shall reasonably attempt to facilitate a resolution to the grade dispute. The involved parties are strongly encouraged to participate and cooperate with the Director’s attempt to resolve the dispute. The chair may consult an appropriate Department/Division/School committee to hear Grade Appeals or other Academic Grievances. This Department/Division/School committee shall recommend a resolution to the Director, who will share this information with the student and the instructor.” In the case that the Chair/Director opts to refer the informal grievance to a committee within the PACSON, the following criteria should be used to select the committee.

Committee Membership

Two faculty randomly selected from a pool of faculty who meet the following criteria:

1. Full-time Undergraduate or Graduate Faculty (as appropriate to the grievance) with Didactic and Clinical Instruction Experience regardless of specialty
2. No direct knowledge or involvement with the situation

One student and one randomly selected alternate from a pool of 4 graduating BSN or MSN students identified by the Chair of the BSN or MSN programs who meet the following criteria:

1. No direct knowledge or involvement with the situation
2. Students with current or past PACSON leadership experience

Guidelines

The Director should convene the committee within three weeks following the semester in which the student has indicated concern. The student and faculty should provide the committee with appropriate written documentation including:

1. Background: Provide the significant dates and the specific history of the grievance
2. Syllabus
3. Student Work in question with grades and comments of faculty member Procedure for finding facts: Issues before the committee.
4. What violations(s) are alleged by the grievant?
5. What evidence and support has the grievant presented to sustain the violation?
6. What does the committee find with regard to the issue(s) before it?
7. What evidence has the faculty presented to support the grade decision?

Findings

1. This Department/Division/School committee shall recommend a resolution to the Chair/Director in writing summarizing the above procedure and outcome, who will then share the outcome information with the student and the instructor.

# APPENDIX A: HEALTH CLEARANCE FORM

**California State University, Los Angeles Patricia A. Chin School of Nursing**

**Student Information and Health Clearance Form**

Upload this form along with required attachments to [https://mycb.CastleBranch.com/](https://mycb.castlebranch.com/) (see package code below). Information must be updated yearly or when current expiration dates are reached. Keep the originals of this form and all documents in your possession throughout the school year. You may be asked by clinical sites and/or faculty to present your documents.

Not completing all health clearance items for the PACSON and for the clinical site may prevent you from successfully completing course requirements.

**General Information**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Check One** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **PROGRAMS** | **BSN Basic** | **RN to BSN** | **MSN & Post Masters** | **ABSN** | **ADN**  **Collaborative** |
| **CODE** | **CQ83bsn** | **CQ84rnbsn** | **CQ85ms** | **CQ85absn** | **LH11adnbsn** |

Student Full Name CIN

\_

Student Telephone # \_ Student Email

\_

Address \_ City Zip Code

Emergency Contact Name Relationship

Emergency Contact Phone #

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION**  **(provide copies of all, for cards, front and back w/signature)** | | C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE14\Bullets\BD21301_.gif | |
| American Heart Association CPR (BLS) Cert. (Health Care Provider: 2yrs) |  | Every 2 yrs | |
| California Driver License |  | **once&**  **renewed** | **when** |
| Auto Liability Insurance | Students name must appear on policy | **once& renewed** | **when** |
| RN License  (ADN-BSN Program; Traditional BSN Program is exempt) |  | **once& renewed** | **when** |
| Health Insurance | Students name must appear on card | **once& renewed** | **when** |
| University Liability Insurance | Coverage July 1st through June 30th (available for purchase July 1st of every | yearly | |
| HIPAA certificate  *(Take quiz, print certificate and upload to CastleBranch)* | Date:  [https://www.csudh.edu/son/info/hipaa-](https://www.csudh.edu/son/info/hipaa-precautions/hipaa-quiz) [precautions/hipaa-quiz](https://www.csudh.edu/son/info/hipaa-precautions/hipaa-quiz)  **OR** for BSN: ATI skills module | yearly | |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Background Check  (included with CastleBranch purchase) | Purchase Date: | | | | once |
| Live Scan  (if required by clinical site) | Date: | | | | once |
| Drug Screening  (UGRD only - GRADS, if required by clinical site) | Date: | | | | yearly |
| Fire Card  (UGRD only - GRADS, if required by clinical site) | Date: | | | | **once &**  **when renewed** |
| Field Trip/Off Campus Activity/Transportation Form | Date: | | | | once |
| Covid-19 Waiver | Date: | | | | once |
| CSU LEARN COVID-19 TRAINING CERTIFICATE | Date: | | | | once |
| COVID-19 ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM | Date: | | | | once |
| **REQUIRED HEALTH SCREENING (Immunizations): Copies of all required (results should include lab values with immunity status)** | | | | | C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE14\Bullets\BD21301_.gif |
| MMR or Positive Titers  Measles(Rubeola) Mumps Rubella | Date: #1 Date: #2  Date: #3 | | | | once |
| Varicella (Chicken Pox) or Positive Titer ( ) | Date: #1 Date: #2 | | | | once |
| Hep B Series or Declination or Positive Titer | Date: #1 Date: #2  Date: #3 | | | | once |
| Tdap | Date: | | | | once |
| Influenza (Flu) Vaccination or Declination | Date: | | | | yearly |
| Physical Exam (see pg 3) |  | | | | yearly |
| *Please submit documentation of a current 2 step TB skin test or a past 2 step TB skin test along with a current 1 step TB or X-ray or QuantiFERON Gold Blood test. The renewal date will be set for 1 year. Upon renewal, one of the following is required: 1 step TB Skin test OR QuantiFERON Gold Blood test OR Chest X-Ray (if positive TB).* | | | | | |
| TB 2-step (once to be followed by yearly 1 step, X-ray or QuantiFERON)  Date: Result: | | Date: #1 Date: #2 (one to three weeks apart) | | | once |
| TB test date  Last 12 months: Result: **OR** | | | | | yearly |
| \*Positive TB provide a negative Chest X-Ray report  Chest X-Ray Date: Result: | | | **OR** |  | yearly |
| *QuantiFERON Gold Blood test:*  Date: \_ Result: | | |  | yearly |
| COVID-19 VACCINATION:  Date: | | | | | yearly |

**First 2 pages of this document must be completed and uploaded to CastleBranch under the “Medical History” requirement.**

**California State University, Los Angeles Patricia A. Chin School of Nursing**

**Student Information and Health Clearance Form**

Physical Exam:

was examined on the below date and I found her/him to be in satisfactory health and able to participate fully in the School of Nursing academic program.

Signature of Clinician \*

Printed Name

Date

\*This health examination is to be done by a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician’s assistant. MD/DO NP PA

Agency:

Clinician Comments:

# APPENDIX B: MSN COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION GUIDELINES

**Overview**

The Comprehensive Examination, Thesis, or Master's Project are the three terminal evaluative methods utilized by the PACSON to determine student program achievement and is the final performance for awarding of the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree. Each method provides an avenue for students to demonstrate proficiency in the skills and knowledge required of master's graduates.

Equivalent to the rigor of a Thesis or Master's Project, the Comprehensive Examination is a culminating experience of the MSN program and consists of two parts: (1) a written essay and, (2) a multiple-choice examination - 40 items core; 60 items option-specific. These components are reflective of the graduate student’s competency in analyzing, synthesizing, applying, and evaluating knowledge. The ultimate interface and application of master's nursing theory, research, and advanced clinical practice are delineated in this two-part examination.

NOTE: Dual option students will take two multiple-choice exams (one per option) and one essay examination or a thesis/directed project for one option and comprehensive exams for the other.

**Guidelines**

1. Student Eligibility Criteria
   1. The Comprehensive Examination *may* be taken during the last term of course work; all core courses must be completed prior to taking the examination. The student may delay the comprehensive examination until after all required courses of their classified program are completed.
   2. Students must enroll for NURS 5960 during each term they plan to take the comprehensive examination.
   3. Students must not be on academic probation during the term they enroll to take the comprehensive examination. A minimum 3.0 GPA is required.
   4. Student are required to attend the Comprehensive Exam Orientation and Help Sessions in the term that they are enrolled to take the exam.
2. Components of the Comprehensive Examination
   1. Part I: Written Essay
   2. Purpose: To demonstrate the ability of the graduate student to critically analyze an advanced practice issue/scenario, formulate a plan/stance, organize, and write a coherent, succinct, graduate-level essay response.
   3. Format: Type written (PC computer) essay paper on a word document.
   4. Length: The body of the essay shall be no more than six double-spaced pages, not counting the title or reference pages.
   5. Time Allocation: Three hours
   6. Location: Large campus computer lab (one or two rooms) with all students attending at the same time and on the same day.
   7. Content: The essay will address a multi-part question related to a topic distributed at the MSN Comprehensive Examination Orientation.
   8. Additional Requirements:

2.17-1 Strict APA style format must be used. This is the latest edition of APA.

2.17-2 Correct APA citations must be used within the body of the paper and on the reference list.

* 1. A reference list is required. References: Six different references may be brought to the examination. Each reference source must be a scholarly published work (e.g., journal article). It is highly recommended that an original research article or articles related to the essay topics be included in the references. Two different types of references are required (e.g. book, journal publications, and/or professional websites). Only one reference *may* be a textbook or similar-sized published document/work, and the Essay grading criteria should be brought to the exam. Additional notes and/or writings within the references or margins are not allowed. No reference sources addressing APA format is allowed. In the event that the work is downloaded and the URL is not included on the document then the URL and other retrieval data may be written on the document.
  2. Part II: Multiple-choice Examination
  3. Purpose: (1) To objectively ascertain the depth and extent of the graduate student's knowledge in nursing research and nursing science; (2) To objectively ascertain the depth and extent of the graduate student's knowledge pertaining to advanced practice within one's clinical specialty option (i.e., nursing administration, nursing education, adult-gerontology acute care nurse practitioner, adult-gerontology primary care nurse practitioner, family nurse practitioner, or family psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioner)
  4. Format: Best-answer, multiple-choice examination
  5. Length: 40 items core; 60 items option specific (100 items)

Dual option students: 40 items core; 60 items per option (160 items)

* 1. Time Allocation: 3 hours

Dual option students: Time total for second multiple-choice exam is 1.5 hours

* 1. Location: Large university classroom with all students attending at the same time.

Dual option students: will take second multiple-choice exam the week following the first multiple-choice examination. The PACSON will provide the day and time of the subsequent exam.

* 1. Content: Best-answer, multiple-choice questions

2.26-1 Questions may be related to nursing research, theory, advanced role, issues, trends, vulnerable populations, health care policy, ethics, legalities, health care financing, reimbursement, and national standards including accreditation, among others (40 questions).

2.26-2 Option-specific questions pertaining to advanced practice within one's clinical specialty option (60-questions).

* 1. Additional Requirements: Apperson answer sheets if given face to face
  2. Closed book examination

1. Grading Criteria: Written Essay Component
   1. Grading criteria for the Comprehensive Examination written essay component are established by Full Faculty and used consistently across all MSN programs. Refer to the Comprehensive Examination Written Essay Component Grading Criteria document to prepare for the essay component of the Comprehensive examination. The grading criteria document can be used during the examination.
2. Student Preparation and Administrative Procedures
   1. All students enrolled in NURS 5960 are required to attend the MSN Comprehensive Examination Orientation which is usually held during the 3rd week of the term. A GPA of 3.0 and enrollment in NURS 5960 is required prior to attending the session. Students are required to attend the Help Session that is scheduled during the 4th week of the term to review essential content. Any student who does not attend the MSN Comprehensive Examination Orientation and the Help Session will be ineligible to take the examination during that term.

4.11 Students who are repeating the examination are required to register for NURS 5960 and attend both the Orientation and Help Session again.

* 1. At the MSN Comprehensive Examination Orientation, each student will: (1) obtain a copy of the topic selected by faculty to be researched and studied in preparation for the written essay component, (2) be given the content study guide for the "All Options" content, and (3) be given the content study guide for the student's specialty option. Students should carefully consider their intent to take the examination prior to accepting a copy of the essay topic. **At the end of the orientation session, a student who accepts a copy of the essay topic is considered to have taken the examination. If the student does not follow through with taking either the**

**multiple-choice or essay examination components they are considered to have taken the exam. A non-passing grade will be entered.**

* 1. Part I of the Comprehensive Examination, the Written Essay Component, is administered on one day of the term approximately four weeks after the Comprehensive Examination Help Session (i.e., approximately week seven of the term). The multiple-choice examination (all option content and specialty content) will be administered approximately the eighth week of the term. Comprehensive exam dates are posted the semester prior to the exam.

The Comprehensive Examination will not be offered on dates other than the scheduled examination dates. Students taking the examination for the first time must complete both components. If a student is unsuccessful in passing the Comprehensive Examination, only the component(s) which was unsatisfactory must be repeated on the assigned Comprehensive Examination day(s) during a future term.

* 1. A code name, which the student selects, will be used in lieu of actual student names as an identifier on both components of the comprehensive examination. To maintain anonymity and "blind" evaluation by the faculty, the student's name or other identifying information should not appear on any of the two examination components. A code list will be formulated on the day of the Comprehensive Examination Orientation and placed in a sealed envelope. No faculty will have access to student codes until final grades have been determined.
  2. Comprehensive Examinations are only given on announced/posted designated dates and times on the PACSON webpage and/or the MSN Board in front of the PACSON Administration Office. No make-up dates or times are allowed.

1. Evaluation of the Comprehensive Examination
   1. Comprehensive Examinations are reported as pass/fail. As such, a grade of CR (credit) or RP (report in progress) will be assigned for NURS 5960. Students must achieve a total of 80% out of a possible 100 % on each examination.
   2. A student who does not pass the Comprehensive Examination on the first attempt is allowed to retake the examination one additional time. The student need not retake all components of the exam, only the exam failed. However, the student must first meet with their Option Coordinator to establish and document a remediation plan (this form is available in the PACSON Graduate Office). This plan should include carefully reviewing the failed examination to identify areas for improvement. Additional remediation activities may be required by the Option Coordinator or Graduate Advisor. **All remediation activities must be completed and filed in the student’s record before the student attempts to repeat the Comprehensive Examination.** If a student is unsuccessful on the second attempt, one third and final chance to successfully pass the examination ***may*** be granted by the Full Faculty in the case of extenuating and compelling circumstances. The previous petition and remediation processes mentioned above must be followed. Any additional petitions will not be allowed. Petitions received by email are not acceptable. The MSN Chair will notify the student of the Committee's decision after their meeting.
   3. The written essay component of the Comprehensive Examination paper is assigned to two faculty readers who will independently read and score the paper. If there is a disagreement with the earned score, the two readers will consult with each other. If the difference cannot be settled, the student's essay will be assigned to a third faculty reader. The final essay grade will be determined by the majority rule.
   4. Refer to the Comprehensive Examination Written Essay Component Grading Criteria document.
2. Reporting of Results
   1. Upon completion of the grading process, a PACSON administrator (e.g., Chair of MSN Programs or Director of the PACSON) shall notify students of their results through Cal State LA email and via the regular electronic Cal State LA grading system. Grades will be posted during the usual grade reporting time frame as CR (credit) denoting a Pass or NC (no credit) representing a failure of the Comprehensive Examination.
   2. Students will be allowed to review their examination results **one time *prior*** to the next Comprehensive orientation session either on their own by scheduling an appointment with the PACSON Office and/or with the Graduate Advisor, Director, or option coordinator by appointment. Additionally, the student may review with the faculty graders to determine areas for improvement.

**Comprehensive Exam Written Essay Component: Grading Criteria**

Points

\*MASTERY OF CONTENT/SUBJECT: (62 points)

1. \*Must pass this section (at least B- = 49.6 total points) to pass the exam!

Accuracy of content (42 points)

* + Answers all parts of the question
  + Substantive content demonstrating depth of knowledge
  + Succinctness

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A+ = 42 | B+ = 37.3 | C+ = 33.1 | D+ = 28.9 | F = Below |
| A= 39.9 | B = 35.7 | C = 31.5 | D = 27.3 |  |
| A- = 37.8 | B- = 33.8 | C- = 29.4 | D- = 25.2 |  |

Application of constructs/concepts (20 points)

* + Critical synthesis of constructs/concepts
  + Clarity of thoughts/points
  + Provides examples when appropriate to facilitate comprehension of concept/constructs

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A+ = 20 | B+ = 17.8 | C+ = 15.8 | D+ = 13.8 | F = Below |
| A= 19 | B = 17 | C = 15 | D = 13 |  |
| A- = 18 | B- = 16 | C- = 14 | D- = 12 |  |

STRUCTURE: (25 points) (25)

* + Organization
  + Use of headings
  + Grammar/sentence structure
  + Includes introduction and summary
  + Logical flow of ideas

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A+ = 25 | B+ = 22.25 | C+ = 19.75 | D+ = 17.25 | F = Below |
| A = 23.75 | B = 21.25 | C = 18.75 | D = 16.25 |  |
| A- = 22.5 | B- = 20 | C- = 17.5 | D- = 15 |  |

USE OF REFERENCES/APA FORMAT: (13 points) (13)

* + Includes title page with code and specialty track
  + Appropriate APA format:
    - Within the paper
    - Reference list
  + Cites at least two, different APA reference styles
  + Cites and references all sources appropriately
  + Appropriate # of double-spaced pages (Body of paper: At least 4 pages; no more than

6 pages)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A+ = 13 | B+ = 11.5 | C+ = 10 | D+ = 8.75 | F = Below |
| A = 12.25 | B = 11 | C = 9.5 | D = 8.5 |  |
| A- = 11.75 | B- = 10.5 | C- = 9 | D- = 8 |  |

PASS or FAIL (circle one) MASTERY OF CONTENT/SUBJECT Section

TOTAL POINTS = 100

# APPENDIX C: PACSON THESIS PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

The following URLs contain information that is required reading for every student who is selecting the thesis.

* Information on APA including online tutorials. PACSON uses the most current edition of APA, 7th ed.: <https://libguides.calstatela.edu/WriteAndCite/APA>
* Information on Thesis workshops held by the Graduate Resource Center every semester: <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatethesis/workshops>
* Information on guidelines and application forms for the Institutional Review Board <http://www.calstatela.edu/orsca/research-human-subjects-irb>
* University Graduate Student Handbook: [http://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/users/u50136/graduate\_student\_handbook](http://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/users/u50136/graduate_student_handbook_2019-2020.pdf)

[\_2019-2020.pdf](http://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/users/u50136/graduate_student_handbook_2019-2020.pdf)

* Office of Graduate Studies and Research Forms: <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatestudies/student-forms-and-petitions>

1. Philosophy

The thesis experience is viewed as a unique student-faculty experience. It requires a highly motivated student who has the time, desire, and ability to study a particular research problem in an independent fashion. The student should enter the process with competent writing skills. Ideally, the thesis topic is such that the faculty and student involved can engage in a reciprocal learning experience. This type of experience is more likely to occur if the thesis topic is of mutual interest and/or is an outgrowth of the student's work.

The graduate faculty believes that varied approaches to research are appropriate in the study of the broad spectrum of questions/issues germane to nursing. Experimental, exploratory, descriptive, correlational, case study, and evaluation are examples of approaches that are acceptable to use in theses.

The following PACSON Project Guidelines are in addition to and/or clarification of the Cal State LA University Guidelines. Students are required to follow all university criteria as listed in the *Guide to Preparation of Master’s Theses and Project Reports* found at <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatethesis>. Specific project instructions are found in Chapter 4 of that document.

1. Student Eligibility Criteria

Because completing a thesis requires a student to be skilled in written expression, the ability to conceptualize, and the research process, students must fulfill the following criteria to qualify for the thesis option:

* 1. Achieve an “A” grade in NURS 5900 – Theory, Research, and Practice.
  2. Minimum 3.5 GPA in all graduate course work (up to enrollment in NURS 5970).

1. Qualifications of the Thesis Committee Chair and Members

The faculty recognizes the Thesis Chair and members as the persons responsible for decision- making in the thesis process. The Thesis Committee Member possesses skills that supplement and/or complement those of the thesis chair. It may be appropriate to select an alternate member when either the Chair or Committee Member is on academic leave. The member and the alternate can be faculty members from other departments within the University.

* 1. Qualifications of the Chair of the Thesis

Earned doctoral degree, expertise in the research methodology that the student proposes to use, e.g., quantitative, qualitative; and appointment as a full-time faculty member in the Cal State LA PACSON. The Chair must agree to serve as Chair.

* 1. Qualifications of the Member and Alternate Member of Thesis Committee Expertise in theoretical or methodological area of the proposed thesis or an earned

doctoral degree/ status. If chair of this committee does not have the requisite content

(theoretical background), the second member must possess this expertise; if the second member and the alternate do not have a doctoral degree or doctoral candidate status, they must have completed a thesis as part of a master's degree program or completed an equivalent research project. Sometimes, a student will request permission to designate a committee member who is from another discipline within the university or an external expert who might be affiliated with a clinical agency. While this is supported by the PACSON, the student should consider the expert’s time and ability to consult on a regular basis. The student must be aware that the Committee Member must sign off on the thesis/project in a timely manner. If the external expert is not available as desired, the student might consider having that expert act in a consultant capacity. In that case, a committee member would still have to be identified. The Chair and the Committee Member would need to agree to the consultant’s participation. The consultant would need to meet the qualifications of the Committee Member.

1. Steps in the Proposal Process

Students are encouraged to complete the entire thesis experience, from writing a proposal to having a thesis signed off, in four semesters or less. This means that students take NURS 5970 once (for two units) or twice (one unit the first and one unit the second semester) and NURS 5990 three units total (one or two units each semester). Before enrolling in NURS 5970, students must have a plan for a thesis. This can be a research proposal from NURS 5900. It should be presented to the student's potential Thesis Chair.

Students who enroll in NURS 5970 and who do not show progress will be required to discontinue this option and should seek advisement to change to the comprehensive examination option. If students anticipate demands on their time such that they cannot meet the written proposal requirements for NURS 5970, they should not enroll in NURS 5970.

Students may not enroll in NURS 5990 until their thesis proposal has been approved by the Institutional Review Board. A student who has obtained a Chair should select one Committee Member. The Chair and Committee Member should review and critique the student's proposal before it is submitted to the Institutional Review Board. IRB protocol submissions are done electronically via [IRBNet](http://www.irbnet.org/) in order to streamline the submission, review, and approval processes. The IRB.net User’s Guide may be found at

[https://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/groups/Office%20of%20Research%2C%20Scho](https://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/groups/Office%20of%20Research%2C%20Scholarship%2C%20and%20Creative%20Activities/read_me_first_irbnetguide_cal_state_la_revised_spring_2020.pdf) [larship%2C%20and%20Creative%20Activities/read\_me\_first\_irbnetguide\_cal\_state\_la\_revise](https://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/groups/Office%20of%20Research%2C%20Scholarship%2C%20and%20Creative%20Activities/read_me_first_irbnetguide_cal_state_la_revised_spring_2020.pdf) [d\_spring\_2020.pdf](https://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/groups/Office%20of%20Research%2C%20Scholarship%2C%20and%20Creative%20Activities/read_me_first_irbnetguide_cal_state_la_revised_spring_2020.pdf)

The student fills out and acquires signatures for the GS 12 form prior to registering for NURS 5990 (see end of the project section for a sample of this form). These forms are located on the Graduate Studies' website under forms. The proposal should not be submitted until both the Chair and Committee member(s) believe it is ready.

1. Format for Presentation of Qualitative and Quantitative Thesis Proposals

The purpose of the thesis proposal is to acquaint the faculty members with the nature of the student's proposed areas of research. Therefore, the length of the typed document, excluding appendices and references, should not exceed 20 pages.

* 1. Title: In a quantitative thesis proposal, the thesis title should include the variables being addressed as well as the target population to be studied. If the title is later modified, the Chair of the Graduate Program must be informed, since new forms need to be processed. For a qualitative study, the title should minimally include the major focus of the study.
  2. Statement of the Problem and Purpose of the Study

This section is an introduction prior to the problem and purpose statements that reviews pertinent literature that identifies gaps in the area(s) of the proposed study. A clear, concise indication of the problem to be studied is required in a thesis proposal. It should be followed by a statement of the purpose of the study, in either a declarative or interrogative format.

* 1. Significance of the Study

The student must briefly state the significance of undertaking the proposed research. The student should also suggest the possible outcomes of both positive and negative findings from the proposed study.

* 1. Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

A quantitative study should include a brief description of the theoretical or conceptual model on which the study will be based. The model should specify in conceptual terms the type of relationships one would expect between the variables of interest. For instance, if the student proposes to study the effect of preoperative teaching on stress, he/she should detail a model that would allow one to predict the effect of this nursing intervention on stress. For a qualitative study, the proposal must contain a description of the interpretive framework through which the study findings will be analyzed.

* 1. Hypothesis(es) or Research Questions

For a quantitative thesis proposal, the student should briefly state the hypothesis(es) or research question(s) in terms of the theoretical or conceptual model of the study. The hypothesis or research question details the expected relationship between the variables. In a qualitative thesis proposal, no hypotheses are generated, but general research questions are included.

* 1. Definition of Terms

In a quantitative thesis proposal, the major theoretical variables or concepts which are operationalized within the hypothesis(es) are defined, i.e., both conceptual and operational definitions need to be included. Within a qualitative thesis proposal, the primary concepts need to be defined in terms of their generally accepted meaning consistent with the literature review.

* 1. Summary of a Review of the Literature

Due to the need for brevity, only a summary of the literature review is to be included in the proposal, although a comprehensive review should be completed prior to the presentation of the proposal. The summary is to include a synopsis of the areas that were surveyed, as well as a brief statement of the findings and/or the current status of previous work. The literature review summary should include a statement explaining how the proposed research study differs from, extends, or replicates previous research efforts. For a qualitative study, the student will need to summarize their review of the general problem area(s) related to the study's research questions.

* 1. Methodology

The student must briefly describe the research design, the sample, and the setting, including the instruments to be employed in testing the hypothesis(es) with consideration given to instrument reliability and validity (complete instruments should be attached to the thesis proposal and as applicable, permission to use the instrument(s)). The student must report data in support of the content validity and one appropriate method that estimates reliability. Following this is a data collection procedure that summarizes each step expected in the execution of the investigation.

The data collection procedure is followed by a data analysis section, which includes a description of the sample and study variables and a statistical analysis plan for testing hypothesis(es) or addressing the research questions. Limitations of the study, including internal and external validity concerns, are required in the proposal submitted to the Institutional Review Board.

* 1. Ethical Considerations and Informed Consent

When the proposed study involves human subjects, whether these are patients, students, or nursing staff, one must include a section of ethical considerations and attach a consent form in the appendices. Guidelines for the process may be found at: <http://www.calstatela.edu/orsca/research-human-subjects-irb>. For a qualitative study that uses participant observation methodology, informed consent from the appropriate agency administrator as well as selected informants must be obtained.

The proposal narrative should include the following:

* 1. Potential risks

Any physiological, psychological, social, or economic risks that might be anticipated, even minimal risk. These might include discomfort or slight anxiety due to the number and/or type of questions, fatigue from length or participation, and other related risks.

* 1. Risk management procedures

Minimal risk is defined as the risks people encounter in everyday life. Any risk above this level should be specified. As appropriate to the study, the following actions should be taken:

* + - Obtain informed, witnessed consent before data collection.
    - Inform the participants of their right to withdraw at any time without jeopardy.
    - Describe how anonymity/confidentiality of data will be preserved by use of codes on questionnaires or other data collection tools and by group analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of the research results.
    - Describe how key to code numbers, raw data, and consents will be stored and locked.
    - Describe how privacy will be maintained during data collection.
    - Describe expertise to be used or consulted for problem resolution related to study or potential participant risks. This includes information in proposal about how compensation (if appropriate) will be provided for harm or injury (physical or psychological).
    - Discuss what provisions are made to preserve self-determination and voluntary participation, including non-coercion.
    - Indicate reading level (using Fry and Smog tests) of consent form. (See next page for references.)
  1. Potential benefits

This section gives a description of direct or indirect anticipated benefits (physical, psychological, social, legal, economic, etc.) to participants and/or populations to which findings will be applied.

* 1. Risk/Benefit ratio

A comparison of the potential benefits to the anticipated risks. It must be indicated if benefits are expected to outweigh the risks.

* 1. Expense to participants

A description of any financial impact on the sample, including gas for mileage.

* 1. References

A list of those references mentioned in the text of the proposal using current APA style throughout.

* 1. Writing the Thesis Proposal

The thesis proposal must follow the guidelines provided in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) latest addition.

* 1. Variance Procedure

Any variance from the above criteria must be petitioned through the Graduate and Post Baccalaureate Studies Committee.

* 1. University Guidelines for Theses

Students should be aware that the University has general guidelines for theses.

In the library, the Health and Human Services Thesis Coordinator assures that each thesis submitted meets the approved university format guidelines and assists in verifying the fulfillment of department degree requirements. It is required that students attend one of the special thesis workshops offered each semester to learn about the format and submission requirements and to verify deadlines for submission. It is advised that students attend this workshop the semester before the semester they intend to graduate.

# APPENDIX D: PROJECT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

The following URLs contain information that is required reading for every student who is selecting the project.

* Information on APA workshops held by the library every semester: <https://libguides.calstatela.edu/WriteAndCite/APA>
* Graduate Thesis, Project, and Dissertation Guidelines: <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatethesis>
* Office of Graduate Studies Web Page: <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatestudies>

1. Philosophy

The project experience is viewed as a unique student-faculty experience. It requires a highly motivated student who has the time, desire, and ability to develop and complete an appropriate project in an independent fashion. The student should enter the process with competent writing skills. Ideally, the project topic is such that the faculty and student involved can engage in a reciprocal learning experience. This type of experience is more likely to occur if the topic is of mutual interest and/or is an outgrowth of the student's work.

The MSN faculty believe that varied approaches to projects are appropriate in nursing. Projects must be innovative, original, significant to nursing and the student’s MSN specialty option, and have a product as an outcome. Examples include writing a grant proposal, developing an innovative nursing education curriculum, creating nursing education videos, developing and writing a clinical manual for a vulnerable population, developing an online course, a scholarly website, and/or a clinical brochure.

The following PACSON Project Guidelines are in addition to and/or clarification of the Cal State LA University guidelines. Students are required to follow all University criteria as listed in *Guide to Preparation of Thesis, Project Reports, and Dissertations (2013).* Specific project instructions are found in chapter 4 of that document. See the following URL: [http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatethesis/guide-preparation-theses-project-reports-and-](http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatethesis/guide-preparation-theses-project-reports-and-dissertations) [dissertations](http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatethesis/guide-preparation-theses-project-reports-and-dissertations)

Students are also required to follow the preparation information and university format requirements found at <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatethesis/format-guidelines>.

Student should also refer to previous discussions in this handbook and Appendix C.

1. Student Eligibility Criteria

Because completing a project requires a student to be skilled in written expression and creativity, students must fulfill the following criteria to qualify for the project option:

* 1. Student must achieve an A grade in the graduate research course (NURS 5900).
  2. Minimum 3.5 GPA in all graduate course work prior to enrollment in NURS 5970.

1. Qualifications of the Project Committee Chair and Members

When a student opts to complete the project, they need to select a Chair of the committee and one Committee Member.

* 1. Qualifications of the Chair of the Project Committee
     + Earned doctoral degree
     + Expertise in the research methodology that the student proposes to use (e.g., quantitative, qualitative)
     + Appointment as a full-time faculty member in the Cal State LA PACSON
     + Willing and available to serve as Chair
     + Congruence between the Chair’s and the student’s working style and timetable
  2. Qualifications of the Committee Member and the Alternate Committee Member (when necessary to designate)
     + Expertise in theoretical or methodological area of the proposed thesis (if chair of this committee does not have the requisite content/theoretical background, the second member must possess this expertise)
     + Earned doctoral degree or candidate status (if the second member and the alternate do not have a doctoral degree or doctoral candidate status, they must have completed a thesis as part of a master's degree program or completed an equivalent research project)

Sometimes, a student will request permission to designate a committee member who is from another discipline within the university or an external expert who might be affiliated with a clinical agency. While this is supported by the PACSON, the student should consider the expert’s time and ability to consult on a regular basis. The student must be aware that the committee member must sign off on the thesis/project in a timely manner. If the external expert is not as available as desired, the student might consider having that expert act in a consultant capacity. In that case, a committee member would still have to be identified. The Chair and the Committee Member would need to agree to the consultant’s participation. The consultant would need to meet the qualifications of the committee member.

1. Roles of the Chair and Committee Member

The nursing faculty recognizes the project chair as the principal contact person for the student and the principal decision maker in the project development process. The Chair and the student should initially develop clear objectives and outcomes for the NURS 5970 and NURS 5990 courses and a timeline associated with each course. This should be shared with and approved by the Committee Member. The Chair should schedule regular meetings with the student to provide guidance, direction, and feedback to the student scholar. The project committee member possesses skills that supplement and/or complement those of the project chair. The committee member should be involved at the very least as a reader of the proposal and final complete project. The committee member also gives final approval to

both the proposal and the project. The input of the committee member is greatly valued and this input may be shared with the project Chair or in a joint meeting with the chair and the student. Ultimately each committee should work out their communication methods with the student. Clear communication channels should be discussed at the beginning of the project development so that recommendations for revisions are clear to all members. It may be appropriate to select an alternate member when either the chair or second member is on academic leave. The member and the alternate can be faculty members from other departments in Cal State LA.

NOTE: The student should submit the GS-12 form to the Director of PACSON with signatures as specified on the form after selecting the committee Chair and Member. This form is on the Graduate Studies website under forms: <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatethesis/templates-forms>

1. Steps in the Proposal Process

Listed below is a short summary of the steps the student needs to complete when selecting the scholarly project as their culminating project.

Summary of Steps:

* Thoroughly read all recommended information about the comprehensive exam, the thesis, and the project as identified in this handbook
* Identify an initial idea for the project or thesis
* Commit to the project or thesis option
* Make an appointment with a potential chairperson to discuss your idea
* Validate with the chair their commitment to serving as chair
* Select a committee member and make an appointment and confirm their commitment
* Submit Form GS 12
* Enroll in NURS 5970, develop a plan, including workshop attendance as agreed (APA, thesis workshops) and timeline
* Complete the proposal part of the project for credit in NURS 5970
* Enroll in NURS 5990, implement the project methodology and write up and complete the project report and the outcome
* Submit completed report and submit GS 13 and 14 for signatures

Students who enroll in NURS 5970 and who do not show progress will be required to discontinue this option and should seek advisement to change to the comprehensive examination option. If students anticipate demands on their time such that they cannot meet the written proposal requirements for NURS 5970, they should not enroll in NURS 5970.

Students may not enroll in NURS 5990 until they have completed the project proposal (NURS 597).

1. Format for Project Proposals

The following proposal format is consistent with the university guidelines and should be followed flexibly and yet meet the university standards for the proposal. The proposal is a required component of all projects. The purpose of the project proposal is to acquaint the faculty with the nature of the student’s development of a product. In order for the faculty to give consideration to the suitability of the problem of interest to the student, a full clarification of the nature of the proposed project should be made by the student. The proposal should not exceed twenty (20) pages in length. The following should be included. The proposal becomes the foundation for the final project report.

* 1. Title: This may be a temporary title and should convey the major intent of the project to be carried out.
  2. Identification, Background, and Justification for Project Development:

This requires a clear, concise identification of the project, including specific reasons for development of the project. Justification should be supported by an extensive survey of the literature published in the area of interest, although the complete survey need not be submitted as part of the proposal. That is, the student may formulate the justification by summarizing the current status of previous work, relevant arguments in the field, or basic difficulty. In this section, demonstration must be made of the originality and uniqueness of the project.

* 1. Purpose: Simple statement of the purpose of the project
  2. Significance of the Project:

Specify how the project will make a general contribution to nursing and how it can be utilized in, or applied to, a specific area of nursing. It should be clearly stated how this project will benefit the student, nursing education, nursing practice, nursing research, and/or patient care.

* 1. Methodology:

Describe the proposed project, placing emphasis on the process of developing the project and the expected outcome. Summarize each step in the development of the project, including a timetable. Evaluation of the final product must be included.

* 1. Results or Findings of the Study
  2. Discussion of the Significance or Relevance of the Results/Findings
  3. References:

Provide a list of those references cited in the text of the proposal using the current edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* throughout.

1. The Project Outcome
   1. The scholarly project is submitted as a written report and the scholarly product. The written report follows the same guidelines as the proposal with the addition of

discussion about the outcome and recommendations. The student is directed to the *University Guidelines for Thesis and Project*, particularly Chapter 4. See URL at the beginning of this appendix. Refer to Guide to Preparation of Master's Theses and Project Reports at <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatethesis/format-guidelines>.

# APPENDIX E: PACSON PETITION FORM

The MSN chair will contact the student regarding decision. Attach a letter in support stating the reason for your request (no more than one page) & current resume.

***NOTE:*** Petition will not be submitted for vote by the faculty without approval signatures from option coordinator(s)

Reason:

Name:

CIN #: Cell/Contact #:

Email: Current term/year:

Current Courses I/A:

Undergraduate GPA Current GPA

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Print Name | Signature | Recommendation |
| 1. | Option Coordinator: |  |  | Date:   * Recommend * Deny |
| 2. | Option Coordinator I/A: |  |  | Date:   * Recommend * Deny |

Final Decision:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Print Name | Signature | Recommendation |
| MSN Chair: |  |  | Date:   * Granted * Denied |

# APPENDIX F: MANUSCRIPT APPROVAL FORM

**Date:**

**Student Name: Option:**

Current GPA (3.0 minimum):

**Manuscript title/topic: Faculty Mentor**

**Faculty**

Name Signature

**Approved:** Yes No

**MSN Chair:**

Name Signature

**Approved:** Yes No

This manuscript must be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal. In order to be acceptable in lieu of the essay for comprehensive exams, the student must receive notification from the journal editor that the manuscript has been received and sent for review. The notification must be attached to this completed form and submitted to the grad advisor no later than the day of the Comprehensive Exam orientation session.

**Name of Journal:**

# APPENDIX G: California BRN Definitions & Regulations for NP Students

**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.

(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.

(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 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.

(m) “Clinical practice experience” means supervised direct patient care in the clinical setting that provides for the acquisition and application of advanced practice nursing knowledge, skills, and competencies.

(n) “Direct supervision of students” means a clinical preceptor or a faculty member is physically present at the practice site. The clinical preceptor or faculty member retains the responsibility for patient care while overseeing the student.

(o) “Lead nurse practitioner faculty educator” means the nurse practitioner faculty member of the nurse practitioner education program who has administrative responsibility for developing and implementing the curriculum in the nurse practitioner category.

(p) “Major curriculum change” means a substantive change in a nurse practitioner education program curriculum, structure, content, method of delivery, or clinical hours.

(q) “National Certification” means the certified nurse practitioner has passed an examination provided by a national certification organization accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies or the American Board of Nursing Specialties, as approved by the board.

(r) “Nurse practitioner education program director” means the individual responsible for administration, implementation, and evaluation of the nurse practitioner education program and the achievement of the program outcomes in collaboration with program faculty.

(s) “Non-California based nurse practitioner education program” means an academic program accredited by a nursing organization recognized by the United States Department of Education or the Council of Higher Education Accreditation that offers a graduate degree in nursing or graduate level certificate in nursing to qualified students and does not have a physical location in California. Preparation at the graduate level must be comprehensive and focus on the clinical practice of providing direct care to individuals.

(t) “Clinical field related to nursing” means a specialized field of clinical practice in one of the following categories of nurse practitioners as recognized by the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF), which are: Family/Individual across the lifespan; Adult-gerontology, primary care; Adult-gerontology acute care; Psychiatric-mental health across the life-span, Pediatrics primary care; Pediatrics acute care, Neonatal, Women’s health/gender-related; Psychiatric mental health across the life-span.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 2715, 2725 and 2836, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Sections 2725.5, 2834, 2835.5 and 2836.1, Business and Professions Code.

**1481. Categories of Nurse Practitioners.**

(a) Categories of nurse practitioners include:

(1) Family/individual across the lifespan;

(2) Adult-gerontology, primary care or acute care;

(3) Neonatal;

(4) Pediatrics, primary care or acute care;

(5) Women's health/gender-related;

(6) Psychiatric-Mental Health across the lifespan.

(b) A registered nurse who has been certified by the board as a nurse practitioner may use the title, “advanced practice registered nurse” and/or “certified nurse practitioner” and may place the letters APRN-CNP after his or her name or in combination with other letters or words that identify the category.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 2715 and 2836, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Sections 2834, 2835.5, 2836, 2836.1 and 2837, Business and Professions Code.

**1482. Requirements for Certification as a Nurse Practitioner.**

(a) To obtain certification as a Nurse Practitioner, an applicant must hold a valid and active license as a registered nurse in California and possess a master's degree in nursing, a master's degree in a clinical field related to nursing, or a graduate degree in nursing and one of the following:

(1) Successful completion of a nurse practitioner education program approved by the Board;

(2) National certification as a nurse practitioner in one or more categories listed in Section 1481(a) from a national certification organization accredited by the National Commission on Certifying Agencies or the American Board of Nursing Specialties.

(b) A nurse who has not completed an academically affiliated nurse practitioner education program shall provide evidence of having completed equivalent education and supervised clinical practice, as set forth in this article.

(c) Graduates who have completed a nurse practitioner education program in a foreign country shall meet the requirements as set forth in this article. The applicant shall submit the required credential evaluation through a board-approved evaluation service evidencing education equivalent to a master's or doctoral degree in Nursing.

Note: Authority cited: Section 2715, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Sections 2835, 2835.5 and 2836, Business and Professions Code.

**1483. Evaluation of Credentials.**

(a) An application for evaluation of a registered nurse's qualifications to be certified as a nurse practitioner shall be filed with the board by submitting the Application for Nurse Practitioner (NP) Certification (Rev. 03/2019), which is hereby incorporated by reference. A temporary Nurse Practitioner (NP) certificate shall be obtained by submitting the Application for Temporary Nurse Practitioner (NP) Certificate (Rev. 03/2019), which is hereby incorporated by reference. In order to furnish drugs or devices in California as a Nurse Practitioner, the certified nurse practitioner must be issued a Nurse Practitioner Furnishing Number by submitting the Nurse Practitioner Furnishing Number Application (Rev. 03/2019), which is hereby incorporated by reference, for approval. Submission of each application shall be accompanied by the fee prescribed in Section 1417 and such evidence, statements or documents as therein required by the board.

(b) The Application for Nurse Practitioner (NP) Certification, the Application for Temporary Nurse Practitioner (NP) Certificate and the Nurse Practitioner Furnishing Number Application shall include submission of the name of the graduate nurse practitioner education program or post-graduate nurse practitioner education program the required number of supervised direct patient care clinical practice hours.

(c) The Application for Nurse Practitioner (NP) Certification shall include submission of an official sealed transcript with the date of graduation or post-graduate program completion, nurse practitioner category, credential conferred, and the specific courses taken to provide sufficient evidence the applicant has completed the required course work including the required number of supervised direct patient care clinical practice hours.

(d) A graduate from a board-approved nurse practitioner education program shall be considered a graduate of a nationally accredited program if the program held national nursing accreditation at the time the graduate completed the program. The program graduate is eligible to apply for nurse practitioner certification with the board regardless of the program's national nursing accreditation status at the time of submission of the application to the Board.

(e) The board shall notify the applicant in writing that the application is complete and accepted for filing or that the application is deficient and what specific information is required within 30 days from the receipt of an application. A decision on the evaluation of credentials shall be reached within 60 days from the filing of a completed application The median, minimum, and maximum times for processing an application, from the receipt of the initial application to the final decision, shall be 42 days, 14 days, and one year, respectively, taking into account Section 1410.4(e) which provides for abandonment of incomplete applications after one year.

Note: Authority cited: Section 2715, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Sections 2815 and 2835.5, Business and Professions Code.