MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING

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The mission of the graduate program in nursing at California State University San Marcos is to provide superior graduate education to qualified students, leading to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree. Our objective is to prepare nurses in generalist and advanced practice roles for positions in the health care industry, community or public health agencies, and academia, and for continued study at the doctoral level.

The MSN program includes a strong foundation in theory and research inquiry. The School of Nursing acknowledges the responsibility to address the nursing and health care needs in populations and communities around the globe, including those who are underserved and vulnerable. The graduate program builds on the knowledge gained at the baccalaureate level and promotes nursing scholarship at the local, state, national and international level through research, service and practice. Values, ethics, and multicultural perspectives are heavily embedded within the graduate program. Cultural sensitivity and competence is emphasized in the curriculum as students interface with a diverse population both professionally and in the care of clients, families and communities.

The master's degree program is designed for two groups of students with different pathways. Students who have completed an associate degree program in nursing (ADN) at a community college and seek completion of their baccalaureate and master' degree follow the Accelerated RN-to-MSN option 1. Students who have completed a baccalaureate degree follow the MSN only option 2. Both options are designed as part-time programs; however, courses will be available for full-time students. The Accelerated RN-to-MSN program is designed to be completed part-time in 4 years (including summers). The (basic) MSN is designed to be completed part-time in 2.5 years depending on whether a summer session is elected. Full-time status and use of summers would shorten the program. If the student chooses full-time study, it is possible to complete the program in 2 years.

Students in both options have the choice of three concentrations. The first is the Nursing Education concentration which offers the student courses in the theories of adult learning, curriculum design and development, and classroom and online teaching strategies. The second concentration is Clinical Nurse Specialist which prepares the student for advanced practice nursing through courses in advanced assessment, advanced pathophysiology/pharmacology and advanced practice management of the chronically ill in the acute care and community settings. Students in the Clinical Nurse Specialist concentration are required to specialize in one of four tracks: Adult Health, Pediatrics,

Gerontology or Psychiatric/Mental Health. Students will complete 500 hours of advanced field study and will be eligible to sit for the National certification exam upon completion of the MSN program. The third concentration is Clinical Nurse Leader which prepares the student to be a leader, manager, and educator at the unit level. The Clinical Nurse Leader role is learned through courses in health systems leadership, quality improvement, evaluation and accreditation in nursing organizations, financial resource management, and management of patients in the acute care setting. Students in the Clinical Nurse Leader concentration may specialize in Gerontology or Education.

Student Learning Outcomes

The Master of Science in Nursing has been designed for nurses seeking careers as a nurse educator, advanced practice nurse in chronic illness management, or a generalist nurse responsible for leadership and management of patient populations at the unit level in an acute care facility.

Students who graduate with a Master of Science in Nursing will:

1. Gain theoretical and empirical knowledge from the discipline of nursing, the humanities, the natural, social, cultural, organizational and biological sciences, and education applicable to the practice of professional nursing at the advanced level.

2. Acquire communication, leadership and advanced clinical expertise which are essential for working with interdisciplinary teams and managing the care for culturally diverse individuals, families or populations.

3. Apply the nursing process at the advanced nursing level through critical thinking, diagnostic reasoning and sound clinical decision making in order to manage and evaluate the comprehensive, coordinated and culturally sensitive nursing care of individuals, families and communities.

4. Achieve proficiency in the application of new knowledge based on research to provide quality health care for a culturally diverse population, and initiate change to improve nursing practice (innovation) or generate new knowledge through conduct of research using a new application of ideas from prior research or from new, original ideas (thesis).

5. Master the ability to perform within the advanced nursing role as a clinical nurse leader, clinical nurse specialist or a nurse educator.

6. Enhance the ability to collaborate, consult and lead a health care team in the planning, implementation and improvement of health care services consistent with the health needs of an increasingly diverse and multicultural society.

7. Develop the ability to collaborate with nurse leaders and other health care professionals in the formulation of health care policy, provide leadership in the health care delivery system and integrate the principles of fiscal management, budgeting and health economics when managing health care in a variety of settings serving a diverse population.

8. Acquire the ability to become a successful generalist, advanced practice nurse or nurse educator in the health care industry or academic institutions of North County and other geographic locations that serve a diverse population.

9. Build on the baccalaureate foundation for continuing personal and professional self-growth, development and lifelong learning and the necessary educational background to enable the pursuit of a higher degree in advanced nursing practice (Doctor of Nursing Practice) or research (Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing).

10. Build on the ability to perform a self assessment of personal sociocultural values, ethics, and religious beliefs and evaluate how these factors correspond to those of one's own clients and professional nursing actions.

11. Master cultural assessment and global awareness to provide culturally sensitive nursing care to clients, families and communities from around the world who differ from the nurse by virtue of race, culture and/or ethnicity.

Transfer Students

For the returning RN student interested in the Accelerated RN-to-MSN track, it is anticipated that many of the required general education courses may have been completed at a community college. These students will be required to meet the same mandatory standards either by transferable course work, certification of general education requirements by previous academic institutions, or by completion of general education requirements at CSUSM. These courses will be included in the maximum transfer credit of 70 lower-division units from a community college. Imbedded in these 70 units are 32 units, which will be articulated for lower-division nursing courses from a regionally accredited community college nursing program which is Board of Registered Nursing (BRN) approved. Some prerequisite and required preparatory courses for the nursing major are also imbedded in the 51 units of required general education courses

Admission and Application Requirements

Admission to the Accelerated RN-to-MSN program requires an associate degree from an accredited community college, completion of all courses in the Pre-Nursing Core (or the equivalents of these courses) with an overall GPA of 2.75 in the Core and with no grade lower than a C (2.0). Nursing courses and Pre-Nursing Core courses for which the student earns less than a grade of C (2.0) may be repeated once with consent of instructor, but only on a space-available-basis. While in the BSN component of the program, the student

must maintain a 3.0 GPA. Those who do not perform at this level may elect to complete the baccalaureate via the RN-to-BSN program.

Admission to the Master of Science in Nursing program requires a baccalaureate degree in nursing from a Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) or National League of Nursing (NLN) accredited program, a minimum GPA of 3.0 for the last 60 semester hours of undergraduate course work, and evidence of satisfactory completion of physical assessment, inferential statistics and nursing research with a grade of C (2.0) or better at the baccalaureate level. For students enrolled in the Accelerated RN-to-MSN track, physical assessment and nursing research will be taken at the graduate level. One year of recent Registered Nurse experience is required for both tracks prior to advancement to candidacy.

Students should have computing skills sufficient to complete graduate work including word processing and statistical software programs. Admission decisions will be influenced by the strength of the undergraduate program, academic achievement, community service, and the educational goals of individual applicants.

Special Requirements

Students in the nursing program must carry their own malpractice insurance, pass a physical health examination, and demonstrate a sufficient immunization record consistent with that required of clinical placement in local health care agencies.

The academic advisor for the School of Nursing, working with the Office of Disabled Student Services, will assist students to determine what accommodations will be required for students to meet the standards of our program.

A complete application consists of:

- a completed application form
- one set of official transcripts from colleges and universities attended with indication of an undergraduate degree
- evidence of completion of an undergraduate or graduate level bioethics course
- proof of licensure as a registered nurse in California
- three letters of reference from person's qualified to assess the applicant's potential to succeed as a graduate student, with one letter from a nursing faculty in the student's baccalaureate program
- a resume
- a 2-3 page essay outlining professional and educational goals

Applicants will be admitted annually in the fall semester. To be considered for admission, all required applications must be received no later than March 1. Review of applications

will continue until all the openings for fall semester have been filled. Applicants are notified of admission decisions following this process.

Degree Requirements

Option 1: Accelerated RN-to-MSN

The total number of units required for the Accelerated RN-to-MSN nursing student is 165 to 178 semester units (depending on the concentration and track chosen) including 51 units of general education, 3 units transition RN-to-MSN courses, 9 units of upper-division general education units, 20 upper-division nursing units, 45-58 graduate nursing units, and all required courses that are prerequisite/preparatory to the major. These units may vary depending on units previously completed in a community college. Irrespective of the number of general education courses previously attempted, the RN-to-MSN students will need to complete the following courses or their equivalent(s):

Required Prerequisite/Preparatory Nursing Courses for the RN-to-MSN Student

Course Number	Course Title	Units
ANTH 200	Cultural Anthropology	3
ANTH 301*	Culture and Medicine – Healers and Healing Practices	3
CHEM 105	Organic and Biochemistry for Life	4
CHEM 105L	Organic and Biochemistry for Life Lab	1
BIOL 215	Experimental Design and Statistical Analysis	3
BIOL 160	Microbiology for Health Sciences	3
BIOL 175	Introduction to Human Anatomy and Physiology I	4
BIOL 176	Introduction to Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4
BIOL 323*	The Physiology of Nutrition and Disease	3
MATH 115	College Algebra	3
PHIL 345*	Bioethics and Medical Ethics	3
SOC 303*	Families and Intimate Relationships	3

*Upper division general education courses. MATH 125, 132 or 160 may be substituted for Math 115. This requirement may also be satisfied by any Lower-Division General Education Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning (B4) course taken before matriculation at CSUSM if students have already completed the equivalent of CHEM 105/105L.

Students will choose one course in growth and development across the life span:

PSYC 210	Introduction to Developmental Psychology	3
	or	
SOC 204	Human Relationships Across the Life Course	3

Students will complete the second language requirement.
Spanish is strongly recommended.

Students will choose one course in growth and development across the life span.

PSYC 210 **or** SOC 204

Students will complete the second language requirement. Spanish is strongly recommended.

The RN-to-MSN student is required to complete the following 23 units of nursing courses.

Course Number	Units
NURS 350	2
NURS 351	1
NURS 370	3
NURS 440	3
NURS 441	3
NURS 442	3
NURS 443 or NURS 445	3
NURS 450	3
NURS 451	2

Additionally, the graduate program outlined in Option 2 is required for completion of Option 1. By completing these requirements, students in Option 1 earn the 120 units required for the BSN and 45-58 units required for the MSN.

Option 2: Master of Science in Nursing

Students in Option 2 must complete the 45-58 units required for the MSN. In addition, students in both Option 1 and 2 will write a 15-20 page concept analysis paper in the NURS 500 and this paper will be used to conduct a writing assessment in keeping with the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR).

The following core courses are required for the MSN. NURS 503A is required for all concentrations and NURS 503B is required for the CNS concentration in order to meet the required clinical hours for graduation. The NURS 598 and NURS 599 courses can be taken with variable units but must total 3 units required for completion of the program.

Graduate Core (24-25 Units)

Course Number	Units
NURS 500	3
NURS 502	3
NURS 503A	3
NURS 503B (CNS concentration)	1
NURS 504	3

NURS 506	3
NURS 508	3
NURS 510	3
Three units taken from NURS 598A (1), 598B (2) or 598C (3) **or** NURS 599A (1), 599B (2) or 599C (3)	3

Nursing Education Concentration (24 Units)

Course Number	**Units**
NURS 570	3
NURS 571	2
NURS 572	2
NURS 573	2
EDUC 608	3
EDST 641	3

Students should select a clinical course and advanced field study (NURS 532A or 532B and NURS 533A or 533B **or** NURS 534A or 534B and NURS 535A or 535B). For the clinical course and corresponding advanced field study students may focus on adult, pediatric, gerontology or psychiatric/mental health nursing. Students will select one additional education course relative to nursing education. The following courses are recommended electives:

Course Number	**Units**
EDUC 624	3
EDUC 626	3
EDST 631	3
EDST 635	3
EDST 636	3

Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) Concentration (32-33 Units)

	Units
NURS 530	3
NURS 532A or 532B	3
NURS 533A or 533B	3
NURS 534A or 534B	3
NURS 535A or 535B	3
NURS 536	3
NURS 539	3
NURS 554	3

Students in the CNS concentration are required to choose a specialty track and take additional courses totaling 57-58 units. This includes 500 hours of advanced field study

required for the National certification exam. Students will be prepared to sit for the exam upon graduation from the MSN program.

CNS in Adult Health Track (9 Units)

NURS 540	3
NURS 570	3
EDUC 608	3

CNS in Pediatrics Track (8 Units)

NURS 520	3
NURS 570	3
NURS 572	2

CNS in Gerontology Nursing Track (9 Units)

NURS 560	3
NURS 570	3
EDUC 608	3

CNS in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing Track (9 Units)

NURS 580	3
NURS 570	3
EDUC 608	3

Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) Concentration (21 Units)

Course Number	**Units**
NURS 550	3
NURS 552	3
NURS 554	3
NURS 556	3
NURS 557	3
NURS 558	3
NURS 559	3

Students in the CNL concentration may choose to specialize (not required) in Gerontology Nursing (12 units). The additional courses required:

Course Number	**Units**
NURS 536	3
NURS 560	3
NURS 539	3
EDUC 608	3

Students in the CNL concentration may specialize in nursing education (10 units). The additional courses required:

NURS 570	3
NURS 572	2
NURS 573	2
EDUC 608	3

Continuation

Students must maintain a 3.0 GPA and a grade of C or better in all classes. If the GPA falls below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters, the student will be dropped from the program. Students must be continuously enrolled or request a leave of absence if time is needed away from studies. Students who are not continuously enrolled or have a leave of absence for longer than two semesters must petition the School of Nursing for continuation. All requirements for the degree must be completed within five years of beginning any coursework in the MSN program.

Students will receive advisement from the School of Nursing's advisors until they have reached candidacy and form a thesis or project committee. The thesis or project committee will be comprised of at least two tenure-track School of Nursing faculty. The third member may be faculty from the School of Nursing, the wider University or the general community. Advisors will work closely with students in selection of courses and research or project topics.

Advancement to Candidacy

A draft of the thesis or project proposal will be completed as part of the requirement for the graduate level research course (NURS 510). The students will form a thesis or project committee during the course and meet with members following completion of the course. Committee members will review and approve thesis or project proposals. Students will advance to candidacy once they have successfully passed an oral defense of their thesis or project proposal. The thesis or project committee will assist with refinement of the proposal and with the research for the thesis or evaluation of the project and will serve as the committee for the oral examination once the thesis or project is completed. To advance to candidacy, a student must:

1. Be in good standing with an overall GPA of at least 3.0;
2. Have completed 21 units (22 units for the CNS concentration) of the core courses toward the graduate degree; and
3. Have successfully proposed his/her thesis or project to the faculty.