

Norwich University  
Master of Science in Nursing Program  
Student Handbook  
**2021**



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Dear Norwich University Master of Science in Nursing Student:

Congratulations on your acceptance to Norwich University (NU) and welcome to the Master of Science (MS) in Nursing program.

The College of Graduate and Continuing Studies (CGCS) and the School of Nursing strive to support every student in the successful achievement of academic and professional goals. Our team of dedicated faculty and program staff are here to support your success. The program and the curriculum are designed to build upon your academic and clinical practice foundation and to help you develop the skills and gain the knowledge necessary to practice as a master prepared Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Educator or a leader in Healthcare Systems.

The faculty and staff are committed to working with you and to help you on this journey. Our vision of excellence is achieved through an intellectually rigorous environment that challenges and supports accomplished and committed students like you. Nursing requires leadership, communication, and teamwork, and here at NU, you will experience a dynamic triad of nursing excellence formed by faculty, students, and clinical partners.

This handbook has been prepared to help you understand some of the important policies at Norwich University School of Nursing (NUSON) and CGCS and highlights those that are specific to the MS in Nursing program. This handbook should be used in conjunction with the NU Academic Regulations and the NU Handbook.

Periodically the policies and practices presented in this handbook change. It is necessary to update your handbook with changes as new information

becomes available.

Again, on behalf of the faculty and staff, welcome to Norwich and best wishes for your success in your program.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

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Professor and Director  
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## **Accreditation**

- ❖ Norwich University is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE)—formerly known as New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), through its Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. Inquiries regarding the accreditation status by the Commission should be directed to the administrative staff of the institution. Individuals may also contact:  
New England Commission of Higher Education  
3 Burlington Woods Drive, #100, Burlington, MA 01803  
[cihe@neasc.org](mailto:cihe@neasc.org) (781) 541-5414

- ❖ The Master of Science in Nursing program at Norwich University is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 655 K Street NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001, 202-887-6791.
- ❖ The Master of Science in Nursing program in nursing at Norwich University is approved by the Vermont State Board of Nursing.  
Vermont State Board of Nursing Office  
89 Main St., 3rd Floor  
Montpelier, VT 05620-3402  
(802) 828-1505

### **Disclaimer**

The information in this publication is accurate as of the time of publication. The provisions are subject to change without notice and do not constitute a contract with Norwich University. The University is not responsible for any misunderstandings of its requirements or provisions that might arise as a result of errors in the preparation of this publication. Norwich University and the School of Nursing reserve the right to change or withdraw courses; to change the fees, rules, and calendar for admission, registration, instruction, and graduation; and to change other regulations affecting the student body at any time.

## **Mission of the College of Graduate and Continuing Studies**

Through relevant academic programs, engaged faculty, and a personalized educational experience, Norwich University's College of Graduate and Continuing Studies has created a dynamic learning environment that empowers adult learners to effect positive change in their lives, the organizations in which they work and the communities where they live.

Underlying our mission is a set of shared values and beliefs that both informs our teaching and drives our growth as an institution:

**Leadership and service** - We believe that positive change begins with those who lead, and to be an effective leader, students must be willing and committed to serve a purpose greater than themselves. All of our programs emphasize the development of core leadership qualities: a strong ethical foundation, a strategic mindset, a global perspective, the ability to communicate with clarity and impact, and an overriding commitment to service.

**Thinking and acting** - Knowing what to do is important. Knowing how to do it is just as essential. Through a curriculum that balances theoretical knowledge with real-world experience and practice, we help our students become in-depth thinkers and strategic doers who bring tangible value to their workplaces and communities.

**Lifelong learning** - We believe the pursuit of knowledge should be an ongoing endeavor and offer a wide range of academic programs that meet students at various stages of their careers and lives. Whether students are seeking professional advancement or personal fulfillment (or both), our programs are designed to facilitate lifelong learning and continued self-improvement.

**Challenge and support** - We believe that most things worth doing require hard work - a belief summed up in our institutional motto: Expect challenge. Achieve distinction. Our goal as a college is to push our students to their personal best while providing them with the support they need to be successful. They will experience this

support as a student and beyond as a member of our Norwich alumni community.

### **Statement of Guiding Values**

Norwich University was founded in 1819 by Captain Alden Partridge, US Army, and is the oldest private military college in the country. Norwich University is a diversified academic institution that educates traditional age students in a Corps of Cadets or as civilians, and adult students. Norwich identifies the following as our guiding values:

1. We are men and women of honor and integrity. We shall not tolerate those who lie, cheat, or steal.
2. We are dedicated to learning, emphasizing teamwork, leadership, creativity, and critical thinking.
3. We accept the right to diverse points of view as a cornerstone of our democracy.
4. We encourage service to nation and others before self.
5. We stress being physically fit, and drug-free.
6. We live the Norwich motto, "I will try!" — meaning perseverance in the face of adversity.
7. We stress self-discipline, personal responsibility, and respect for law.
8. We hold in highest esteem our people and reputation.

### **Mission of the School of Nursing**

The mission of Norwich University's School of Nursing is to prepare our students to be globally minded nurse leaders and scholars through innovative and diverse experiential education and research.

### **Purpose of the Master of Science in Nursing Program**

The purpose of the Master of Science in Nursing program is to prepare visionary nurse leaders and scholars who demonstrate advanced critical thinking, communication, and decision-making skills to ensure quality outcomes within the complex systems of the health care continuum. Graduates are prepared to initiate and effectively utilize

research findings to improve outcomes, as well as utilize knowledge of health promotion, health care policy and systems, change and finance to effectively manage available resources in the changing health care environment.

Masters prepared nurses utilize this knowledge base integrated with theories from nursing and related disciplines to create and implement ethical practices and policies to improve the environment in which health care is delivered.

The Masters prepared nurse engages in an expanded scope of practice that is characterized by critical analysis of problems and creative problem solving, and application of theories in the decision-making process. The graduate manages change effectively and utilizes effective communication skills and technologies to create collaborative partnerships within nursing and across health care disciplines across a variety of practice settings as a Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Leader or Nurse Educator. Graduate education prepares the nurse to identify and evaluate personal and organization values and to implement ethical decisions and strategies to improve outcomes.

The program is designed to achieve the following academic goals:

1. Prepare graduates with education and experience to meet eligibility for successful completion of national Nurse Practitioner certification examinations or national certification as Nurse Executives or Nurse Educators.
2. Provide a curriculum of study with logical course sequencing and concurrent didactic and clinical experience.
3. Provide high quality clinical track distance-learning opportunity for BSN prepared nurses to advance to Master's level/advanced practice competency.
4. Provide didactic and clinical population-focused education experiences meeting national education standards for advanced nursing education and core competencies.

### **Program Outcomes**

At the completion of the program, graduates will be able to:

1. Integrate knowledge from nursing, science, humanities, theory and research into evidence based, population focused advance nursing practice.

2. Demonstrate advanced practice nursing skills and clinical reasoning in providing evidence-based population focused health care for patients, consistent with the ANA's Scope and Standards of Practice for advanced practice nurses.
3. Manage population focused patient care within transforming and complex health care system.
4. Implement effective communication skills to create collaborative partnerships within nursing and across health care disciplines.
5. Contribute to advancing nursing research and quality improvement through evidence-based practice and leadership in practice, policy, and education.
6. Plan and manage change effectively.
7. Integrate knowledge from social determinants of health in providing ethical and culturally competent population-focused care across a spectrum of health care environments.
8. Integrate knowledge of health promotion, health policy, and systems, change, and finance to effectively manage available resources in the nursing environment.
9. Incorporate the knowledge and skills related to informatics and technology to improve nursing practice effectively.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Norwich University is committed to creating and fostering a learning and working environment based on open communication and mutual respect. This is an integral part of the University's academic mission to enrich our students' educational experiences and prepare them to live in and contribute to a global society. A student who encounters sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or discrimination based on race, color, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability, should contact Danielle Slauzis, NU Title IX Coordinator, at [dslauzis@norwich.edu](mailto:dslauzis@norwich.edu) or 802-485-2144.

<https://online.norwich.edu/about-us/non-discrimination-statement>

### **Student Services**

Students in online education programs require many of the same services as students in brick and mortar institutions. The need to dialogue with staff about program content and expectations, admission requirements, registration, transfer credits and learning resources are consistent across students in higher education. CGSC's model focuses on providing students with advisement and seamless technical support to facilitate the educational process. Each program has a team to assist students with various aspects of their academic experience. This team, which includes our Program Director, Student Services Advisor, Associate Program Director and our IT specialists, provides academic support, administrative support and technical support.

NU offers a wide range of student support services. Students are encouraged to use these resources to enhance their learning and support them through the program. Contact information can be found in the beginning of this handbook and at the link below.

<https://online.norwich.edu/current-students/getting-help>

### **Disability Services**

NU is committed to serving all students in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. To request an accommodation, please contact our ADA Representative in the College of Graduate and Continuing Studies:

Jennifer West

College of Graduate and Continuing Studies

Norwich University

158 Harmon Drive Northfield, VT 05663

Email: [jwest@norwich.edu](mailto:jwest@norwich.edu)

Phone: 1-802-485-3306

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<https://online.norwich.edu/student-experience/accessibility-services-and-ada-information>

### **Policies/Procedures**

Policies and procedures of Norwich University and the College of Graduate and Continuing Studies are designed to assist students and maintain the integrity of the program. Students are responsible for knowing all information provided in the MS in Nursing Handbook, including material linked to other sources. Students are also expected to meet all requirements outlined in these documents.

The program reserves the right to change professional requirements without prior notice to reflect advances in the profession. These changes will be communicated to students when they are made.

Students in the MS in Nursing Program are expected to follow and adhere to all policies and procedures of Norwich University as written in the Course Catalog. The catalog contains University academic regulations as listed.

<https://catalog.norwich.edu/onlineprograms/catalog/academicpolicies/>

### **Curriculum and Admissions**

Curriculum plans and admission criteria for the MS in Nursing Program concentrations can be found online at:

<https://online.norwich.edu/academic-programs/masters/nursing/>

### **Progression and Dismissal**

To be eligible to enroll for classes, without restrictions, a graduate student must be in Good Academic Standing. To maintain Good Standing, degree-seeking MSN students must maintain a grade point average of 3.0, achieve a minimum of B in all clinical nursing courses, and a Satisfactory in clinicals.

Graduate students who have been placed on Academic Probation or Academic Suspension are not considered to be in Good Academic Standing. Graduate students placed on Academic Warning have no restrictions. Suspended students are eligible to enroll for classes only after approved readmission.

Master of Science in Nursing students may be suspended or dismissed for violations of the University Honor Code, violation of the ANA Code of Ethics, the MSN Code of Conduct, violation of the Academic Integrity or Academic Dishonesty policies, or for unsafe practice in a clinical practicum.

If a student wishes to challenge a progression issue or dismissal, they should follow the NU grievance procedure:

<https://online.norwich.edu/about-us/complaint-process>

### **Reinstatement in Master of Science in Nursing Program**

Any student separated from the MS in Nursing program for reasons other than dismissal from the program or University, including those unable to progress for academic reasons, may petition the Program Director to be reinstated in the program if they have met the criteria for reinstatement:

<https://catalog.norwich.edu/onlineprogramscatalog/academicpolicies/acadddishonesty/>

Nurse Practitioner students are required to demonstrate competency in previously learned didactic content and clinical skills before progressing in the program. If a student does not demonstrate competency in class content or clinical skills, they may be required to repeat prior courses.

### **Code of Professional Conduct**

Students in the Master of Science in Nursing program assume an obligation to conduct themselves in ways that are compatible with professional standards and reflective of Norwich University's Guiding Values. Behavior standards are based in academic integrity, personal integrity, and respect for others. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a civil manner that that represents professional behavior and contributes to a positive learning environment for all. Unprofessional or disrespectful behavior is uncivil and will not be tolerated. Uncivil behavior will result in a review of a student's behavior for determination of an appropriate action. This action may range from a warning to dismissal from the program.

Students are expected to:

- ❖ Comply with reasonable requests or directions of a University official acting in the performance of his/her duties.
- ❖ Demonstrate honesty, integrity, trustworthiness and respect in all interactions with faculty, program staff, colleagues and practicum site staff.
- ❖ Demonstrate accountability for own actions.
- ❖ Be respectful and professional in all correspondence and communication including verbal, non-verbal, and written. To do otherwise is uncivil behavior and will not be tolerated. Examples of uncivil behavior may include but are not limited to:
  - use of profanity or unprofessional offensive language.
  - use of sarcasm.
  - use of language that threatens or teases anyone in any way.
  - use of language that is racist, homophobic, misogynistic, hateful or otherwise offensive.
- ❖ Adhere to the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses.

Provision 1

*The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.*

Provision 2

*The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.*

Provision 3

*The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.*

Provision 4

*The nurse has authority, accountability and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to provide optimal patient care.*

Provision 5

*The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain*

*competence, and continue personal and professional growth.*

**Provision 6**

*The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.*

**Provision 7**

*The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.*

**Provision 8**

*The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.*

**Provision 9**

*The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.*

Source: American Nurses Association. (2015). Code of ethics with interpretative statements. Silver Spring, MD: Retrieved from: <http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/EthicsStandards/CodeofEthicsforNurses/Code-ofEthics-For-Nurses.html>

## **Technology Standards**

Students in the Master of Science in Nursing program are expected to be proficient in the use of technology. This is necessary for success in the healthcare environment where nurses need to be able to utilize and interact with technology in the workplace.

- ❖ Quizzes, tests, and examinations will be in Moodle. This is imperative in preparing students for the various computer based National Certification Exams after graduation.
- ❖ All exams are remotely proctored. Students are expected to adhere to all guidelines provided by remote proctoring company.

- ❖ Students must be able to access learning modules and resources that are assigned and available online.
- ❖ Students must be able to use electronic health records in the clinical setting.
- ❖ Students are expected to turn in all assignments by the due date specified in the syllabus.
- ❖ Students are accountable for all communications sent from program faculty and staff through the virtual classroom and via email.
- ❖ Students are expected to check NU email regularly and respond to faculty and staff in a timely manner.
- ❖ All program communication takes place via the Norwich email. The use of personal email for program related communication is not permitted.
- ❖ All written communication, including email, must be professional and respectful.
- ❖ If students need technical support, they are expected to reach out to the appropriate support services. This may include NU helpdesk and customer service/tech support for the program being used.

### Web and Email Etiquette

All students using email should adhere to standard and professional behavior when communicating on the Internet. Some rules to remember:

- ❖ Be safe—never give sensitive personal information online, like your user ID or password.
- ❖ Be polite—always use an appropriate salutation and the person’s name to personalize your message; always use a digital signature at the end of an email to validate the message.
- ❖ Be clear—always use a descriptive subject header or title so recipients can easily identify the focus of your email.
- ❖ Be courteous—never flame or send insults, or respond to these types of emails; do not forward SPAM, chain letters, or other unsolicited advertising or messages.
- ❖ Be brief—if your email needs to be longer than several paragraphs, identify that in the opening lines so the recipient can be prepared to read a longer email, or save the email for later.

- ❖ Be smart—represent yourself intelligently by proof-reading and checking your spelling and grammar before sending your message.
- ❖ Be appropriate—do not use foul or inappropriate language; if you have a question as to whether your language is too strong or emotional, don't send your message.
- ❖ Be legal—obey copyright laws, and don't use other's content or images without permission.

## **Academic Integrity**

Upon entering a program of studies to become a masters prepared nurse, whether Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Educator or Nurse Leader, each student assumes the responsibility and trust which society places in the nursing profession, as well as the obligation to adhere to those values, standards, and ethical behavior set forth by the profession.

A basic principle of nursing practice at all levels is respect for the dignity and worth of each individual and the individual's right to privacy and confidentiality. Master prepared nursing students are accountable for the care or other activities they provide within the context of the program.

Truthfulness in all matters is necessary to ensure professional standards of nursing care. In addition, accepting responsibility for one's own actions and seeking consultation and direction from the faculty and or preceptor is expected.

Freedom from illegal, mind-altering, or addictive substances which can impair judgment is an imperative if the health, welfare, and safety of persons within the health care environment are to be protected.

All students are expected to carry out their academic responsibilities, both in the classroom and clinical practice, in a manner consistent with standards of the nursing profession, the philosophy Mission of the Master of Science in Nursing Program, legal guidelines according to the Nurse Practice Act in the state in which they practice.

## **Examinations**

Assessment of student learning in the program will occur through a testing process. This provides the opportunity for the student to prepare for taking national certification examinations. Examinations must be taken within the time frame established in the course syllabus.

Students who miss an examination must make up the examination by the deadline set by the course instructor. Failure to make up the examination will result in a grade of zero for the examination.

Any student suspected of giving or receiving information during an examination will be reported to the Academic Integrity Committee in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations.

### **Written Assignments**

Written assignments are turned in to the virtual classroom as a word document (.doc or .docx) by the date/time specified in the course syllabus. Students should retain an electronic copy of all written assignments. Students requiring an extension of the due date must submit a request to the professor a minimum of 24 hours before the assignment is due in order to be considered for an extension. Unexcused late assignments may be subject to point deductions for every day the assignment is late.

All written assignments must conform to guidelines of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, current edition. Faculty expect that all required papers prepared by students are carefully proof-read before submission, and that papers are well-written in terms of composition, grammar, and spelling. The proper citing of references, quotations, etc., is essential to satisfactorily complete written assignments.

Grading rubrics which detail these expectations appear in each course syllabus.

### **Evaluations**

All students must submit evaluations for each course at three weeks and at the end of each course through Moodle. Students are also asked to complete a program specific evaluation at Residency and at various intervals post-graduation. These are important to the program's accreditation and improvement efforts.

### **Clinical Experiences**

Clinical experience in the Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Educator tracks are designed to enable students to integrate the theoretical and clinical components of advanced practice nursing for focused populations. Patient visits include routine well care, episodic health problems and management of chronic conditions. Concepts from previous courses in advanced pharmacology, advanced pathophysiology, advanced health assessment as well as nursing theory and research contribute to the basis of decision making in the clinical environments. The didactic course that is concurrent with the clinical course provides a knowledge base for students to integrate new concepts into their practice and patient care.

During the clinical experience, students demonstrate knowledge through clinical performance and discussions of the professional role of the nurse practitioner. Students continue to formulate comprehensive patient assessments and make decisions regarding appropriate interventions for the advanced practice provider. Management plans are research-based and designed to promote optimal psychological well-being, physical health and functioning. Thorough documentation of the care with use of appropriate rationale for the diagnosis and treatment are stressed throughout the experience.

Each track has four clinical courses in which students need to complete 165 hours per term for a total of 660 hours.

Family Nurse Practitioner	Adult Acute	Geriatric	Psych/Mental Health
NR 612 FNP I Clinical	NR 622 AGACNP I Clinical		NR 632 PMHNP I Clinical
NR 614 FNP II Clinical	NR 624 AGACNP II Clinical		NR 634 PMHNP II Clinical
NR 616 FNP III Clinical	NR 626 AGACNP III Clinical		NR 636 PMHNP III Clinical
NR 618 FNP IV Clinical	NR 628 AGACNP IV Clinical		NR 638 PMHNP IV Clinical

It is recommended that students schedule 16 clinical hours per week with their preceptor to meet the required hours per course.

The 165 hours must be completed for each clinical course in order for a student to progress to the next clinical course. These hours are required; there will be no carry-over of extra hours or a deficit of hours.

Students are expected to maintain a professional appearance in the clinical site and to adhere to the dress and grooming policies of the site.

Students are paired with preceptors from a wide range of settings as they develop skills for managing patients and clients from their chosen population focus area. These supervised clinical experiences include settings for care across the continuum for each population. The clinical experiences provide supervision and mentoring as students develop skills in clinical reasoning, inter- and intra-professional communication, collaboration, leadership, quality improvement, evidence-based research and health policy.

**Adult Gerontology Acute Care** experiences include supervised experiences addressing complex high acuity and complex chronic health problems across the adult population. Clinical preceptors will be from a variety of sites including acute care, critical care, emergency departments, specialty services and long-term care.

**Family Nurse Practitioner** experiences include supervised experiences in settings addressing primary and acute/episodic care across the lifespan. These experiences include newborn care, well exams and episodic exams across the lifespan, women's health including maternal- child care, and adult and geriatric acute and chronic illness.

**Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner** experiences include supervised experiences in settings addressing mental health care across the lifespan. Such experiences include inpatient and outpatient settings and address psychiatric intakes and evaluations, crisis management, medication management, substance use disorder, seriously mentally ill, continuity of care, individual and group therapy, supervision and specialty care.

## **Roles and Obligations for Clinical Experiences**

### **Norwich**

- Provides experienced faculty to serve as instructor and facilitator of the clinical experience.
- Maintains student-faculty ratios consistent with national guidelines.
- Defines competencies as a foundation for each clinical course.
- Oversees clinical requirements and makes sure students are compliant.

- Facilitates the Preceptor Agreement and the Affiliation Agreement for each site.
- Obtains necessary documentation about the site and preceptor to ensure consistency with school guidelines. This may include, but not be limited to license, certification, resumes, site description, site specific demographics, etc.
- Maintains a directory of sites that are used by students in the clinical program.
- Investigates and responds to complaints from the clinical site preceptor or student.
- Maintains students' educational records.
- Refrains from unlawful discrimination on the basis of age race color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation or belief or disability.
- Ensures Norwich faculty attend teleconferences with clinical preceptors and students as needed.
- Maintains ongoing communication with Course Faculty, Clinical Faculty, Preceptors and Students.

Master of Science students work with a variety of Norwich University faculty and staff in both classroom and clinical courses. These include:

- Nurse Practitioner Program Coordinator
- NP Specialty Track Coordinator
- Didactic and Clinical Faculty
- Clinical Placement Coordinator
- Regional Site Visitor

### **NP Specialty Track Coordinator**

The NP Specialty Track Coordinator for each population focus area oversees the course and clinical experiences for students in that track. This includes approving specialty track clinical sites and preceptors.

### **Faculty**

Didactic and clinical courses are taught by University MSN Faculty. These faculty maintain communication with the Program Director and NP Specialty Track Coordinators to ensure students progression. NP Specialty Track Coordinators communicate regularly with the students' clinical preceptors to ensure course goals are met. University Faculty are responsible for final evaluation of a student in a course.

### **Regional Site Visitor**

Students in the Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Educator concentrations have clinical practicum experiences as part of their program. The Regional Site Visitor works closely with the NP Specialty Track Coordinator to support the clinical process by visiting and evaluating clinical sites and preceptors, facilitating the preceptor agreement process, and facilitating discussion to ensure the experience is meeting student and program goals.

Regions: (Based on US Census Bureau) (revisions to 5 - 7 regions if numbers of students require):

- Northeast: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey.
- South: Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, and Oklahoma.
- Midwest: Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas.
- West: Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, and Hawaii.

### **Preceptor**

The Clinical Placement Coordinator and Regional Site Visitor assist students in identifying qualified preceptors and appropriate clinical sites as needed. Students are expected to actively participate in identifying qualified clinical preceptors in their specialty and geographic locations.

Preceptors may be nurse practitioners, physicians credentialed as MD or DO, or may be qualified physician assistants. All preceptors must hold unencumbered licenses in the states in which they practice.

Physicians must be Board Certified in their area of specialty. Nurse practitioners must hold current National Board Certification – AANP or ANCC and hold at a minimum a Master of Science in Nursing. All preceptors must have at least one year (preferably a minimum of two years) of experience in their current specialty. A preceptor

- Collaborates with Norwich University program faculty and staff to promote student success in the clinical experience.
- Provides orientation for the student to the practicum site, policies and procedures.
- Identifies suitable educational opportunities that align with course objectives and outcomes.
- Serves as mentor for students for their professional development.
- Ensures students are provided a learning experience and do not replace paid staff.
- Provides supervision of the student's clinical experience and provides constructive feedback to enhance learning.
- Contributes the performance evaluation form at the midterm and conclusion of each clinical practicum and verifies the number of clinical hours completed.
- Maintains confidentiality of disclosure of personal student identifying information or participation except as put forth by agreement or required by law.
- Refrains from unlawful discrimination on the basis of age race color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation or belief or disability.
- Attends a minimum of three teleconferences with clinical faculty and student as requested.
- Communicates and contacts clinical faculty with any concerns.

### **Student**

- Identifies potential clinical sites and preceptors.

- Meets deadlines for submission of clinical practicum site request applications for review and approval by the NP Specialty Track Coordinator.
- Assists Norwich University as needed to complete the required Affiliation Agreement.
- Becomes familiar with the policies and procedures related to practicum experiences.
- Meets deadlines for all assignments and learning activities.
- Submits clinical hours in the Clinical Documentation System.
- Demonstrates competence in the clinical practicum which is determined by midterm and final evaluations by the preceptor and evaluation by course faculty.
- Abides by practicum site rules and policies.
- Conducts oneself in a professional manner during each practicum rotation.
- Maintains communication about the clinical experience with course faculty.
- Maintains patient log according to program guidelines.
- Maintains HIPAA regulations with relation to patients seen in the clinical environment.

### **Obtaining a Clinical Site**

#### **Student**

- Begins identifying sites at the onset of the program.
- Identifies sites to meet competency and hour requirements.
- Submits clinical practicum site and preceptor requests two terms prior to the start of the clinical term.
- Assists with the Affiliation Agreement and Preceptor Agreement submission and approval at least 30 days prior to the start of the clinical term.
- Meets all the health requirements and site prerequisites at a minimum of 30 days prior to the start of the clinical practicum.
- Understands that clinical practicum hours cannot be completed prior to the start of the course or over term breaks.

#### **Clinical Placement Coordinator**

- Manages Castle Branch (health requirements and clinical compliance requirements).
- Administers Affiliation Agreement once approved by the Regional Clinical Visitor.

### **Practicum Sites**

**Adult Gerontology Acute Care** experiences include supervised experiences addressing complex high acuity and complex chronic health problems across the adult population. Clinical preceptors will be from a variety of sites including acute care, critical care, emergency departments, specialty services and long-term care. These sites include hospitals, long term care facilities and community practices among others.

**Family Nurse Practitioner** experiences include supervised experiences in settings addressing primary and acute/episodic care across the lifespan. These experiences include newborn care, well exams and episodic exams across the lifespan, women’s health including maternal- child care, and adult and geriatric acute and chronic illness. These sites include outpatient hospital practice sites, long term care facilities, urgent care and community practices among others.

**Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner** experiences include supervised experiences in settings addressing mental health care across the lifespan. Such experiences include inpatient and outpatient settings and address psychiatric intakes and evaluations, crisis management, medication management, substance use disorder, seriously mentally ill, continuity of care, individual and group therapy, supervision and specialty care. These sites include hospitals, long term care facilities and community practices among others.

### **Clinical Grading**

- Given as satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U).
- Must meet clinical hour requirements including competency related clinical practicum hours.
- Must meet clinical documentation requirements.
- Must meet weekly patient case posting requirement.
- Completion of clinical hours documentation using clinical tracking software:
  - Documentation of each patient visit includes the

- type of visit
- the student's involvement
- diagnosis, treatment and outcome
- competency
- Evaluation at midterm and course final.
- Participation in site visits as required.
- Clinical competency assessed using the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculty (NONPF) Student Assessment Documents.

### **Clinical Requirements/Policies**

Students in all of the concentrations have precepted practicum in their specialty concentration or in their population focused coursework. Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Educator students have direct care coursework as required to meet our accreditation standards. Students in the Healthcare System Leadership and Nursing Informatics also have practicum in clinical sites that support completion of program objectives. All Master of Science in Nursing students must be prepared to meet the technical and professional standards as well as the clinical rotation requirements identified below.

In collaboration with faculty, students select a clinical placement site and preceptor that will fulfill the goals of the course and program.

Clinical placements may occur across a variety of healthcare settings. Appropriate placements depend on the course and program in which the student is enrolled. It is imperative that the clinical placement ensures that students are able to meet the course and program objectives.

Preceptors are skilled providers with preferably a minimum of two years of experience. They should be viewed as experts in the field with experience in the focus area of the clinical practicum. Preceptors may be advanced practice nurses, physicians, or physician assistants. The preceptor serves as a resource to help students achieve the course and program outcomes during the clinical practicum.

Clinical placements and preceptors are established to provide student learning without conflicts of interest. Preceptors cannot be a family member, relative, or personal friend of the student. Additionally, preceptors cannot be in a supervisory role over the student as an employee. Conversely, a student cannot be in a supervisory role over the preceptor in the work environment.

## **Malpractice Insurance**

The University carries malpractice liability insurance that covers the student during the clinical experience. If a clinical site requires coverage beyond the University levels, Nurse Practitioner students may need to carry their own liability insurance in addition to the University's policy.

## **Clinical Suspension**

When students have acted or performed in an unsafe or inappropriate manner, at the discretion and judgment of the clinical course instructor, they will be removed from the clinical setting. These situations include, but are not limited to, evidence of recent alcohol or substance use that could impair judgment, patient or agency request, inadequate preparation for assignment, inability to demonstrate technical competence in a skill (previously certified in the laboratory setting), inappropriate dress, illness that may be considered contagious or could impair student's judgment, client endangerment, or violation of the ANA Nurses Code of Ethics.

## **Clinical Placement Requirements**

### **1. Establish Clinical Placement Tracking ACCOUNT-**

Ensure all REQUIRED Health Documentation is uploaded into the establish Clinical Placement Tracking Account:

- RN license in state of clinical placement Y
- Immunizations Y
- Background check Y
- Urine drug test if required by the clinical site
- BLS (American Heart Association) Y
- Health Insurance Card Y

### **Required Health Documentation**

- ❖ Measles, Mumps & Rubella (MMR): 2 MMR vaccines AND a positive titer for Rubella OR positive antibody titers for all three components

- ❖ Varicella (Chicken Pox): Positive antibody titer (history of disease is *not acceptable*).
- ❖ Hep B titers: Titers must be positive before beginning NR 206. OR, if “in series”, documentation is required.
- ❖ Meningococcal Vaccine (mandatory for students living on campus): Documentation of a meningococcal vaccine received within the past *5 years*.
- ❖ Tetanus, Diphtheria & Pertussis (Tdap): Documentation of a Tdap booster administered within the past *10 years*
- ❖ Tuberculosis (TB) –Annual Renewal: Submit documentation of one of the following:
  - Negative one-step tuberculin skin test administered within the past 12 months OR
  - T-SPOT Blood test OR
  - QuantiFERON Gold Blood test OR
  - If positive, submit a clear chest x-ray report AND physician clearance documented on letterhead following the last positive test result within the past 12 months.

Upon annual renewal, submit one of the following:

- ❖ Tuberculosis (TB) –Annual Renewal: Submit documentation of one of the following:
  - Negative one-step tuberculin skin test administered within the past 12 months OR
  - T-SPOT Blood test OR
  - QuantiFERON Gold Blood test OR
  - If positive, submit a clear chest x-ray report AND physician clearance documented on letterhead following the last positive test result within the past 12 months.
- ❖ Current Annual Flu Vaccination: Current flu season vaccination. Must be updated by November 1 of each year.
- ❖ Other vaccines, such as COVID-19 vaccine according to Norwich or practicum site policies.
- ❖ Documentation of health insurance (yearly): Upload proof of health insurance through private means or the University.
- ❖ CPR Certification (good for 2 years): Basic Life Saving (BLS) through the American Heart Association must include adult, child, and infant CPR. Check expiration dates as BLS must be valid throughout the clinical rotation. \*Please complete the course listed

above – do not take this course through another organization such as the Red Cross.

- ❖ Background Check: Upload and share the background check.
- ❖ Child Abuse Registry and Vulnerable Adult Registry: Complete the Vermont Registry Request form and return to Clinical Placement Administrator.
- ❖ Drug Screen: When required by the clinical site. Screening must be done through the Clinical Placement Tracking system requirements. The drug screen tests for the following substances: Amphetamines, Barbiturates, Cocaine, Cannabinoids, Methaqualone, Opiates, Phencyclidine, Benzodiazepines, Methadone, Propoxyphene, Buprenorphine, Morphine.

Students are responsible for ensuring all required health records and clinical placement requirements are current in the Clinical Administrative Tracking System. Students will not be cleared to attend clinical without all required records submitted. Students must keep a copy of these records.

#### Exposure to Blood-Borne Pathogens

During clinical experiences, students are expected to follow appropriate precautions to minimize exposure to blood-borne pathogens. Students should report the incident to the clinical instructor and follow the facility policy and protocol.

([https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/bloodbornepathogens/gen\\_guidance.html](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/bloodbornepathogens/gen_guidance.html))

#### Latex Allergies

Latex allergies involve any physical reaction from the exposure to latex products (including rubber products). The symptoms may range from localized skin reactions to non-localized reactions. Students who believe they have the potential to be latex sensitive should seek the attention of their healthcare provider.

#### HIPAA

Students are expected to adhere to all HIPAA provisions and standards related to patient privacy. This applies to all clinical, simulation, and laboratory settings. Failure to do so may subject the student to disciplinary action under the Norwich University Student

Code of Conduct. Violation of HIPAA may result in dismissal from NUSON. (<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/index.html>)

### Pregnancy

Pregnancy is recognized as a special health need. Early notification to the faculty and preceptor is recommended so that consideration for appropriate clinical rotation and patient assignments can be planned.

### Grooming and Attire

An MSN student is expected to maintain a clean, neat, and well-groomed appearance in all clinical experiences.

- Students should dress in accordance to their clinical placement sites guidelines and in the same manner as their preceptor.
- All attire, regardless of type, should be clean and pressed.

### Hygiene and Grooming

Students should follow the Hygiene and Grooming policies of the clinical placement. This may include but is not limited to:

- ❖ Hair style and color.
- ❖ Jewelry – rings and earrings.
- ❖ Piercings – face or tongue
- ❖ Tattoos
- ❖ Fingernails – length and color
- ❖ Perfumes, colognes, aftershaves and scented lotions

## **Technical and Professional Standards**

A Master of Science in Nursing student must have abilities and skills in the following areas: communication, observation, evaluation, motor function and endurance, and behavioral. Reasonable accommodations may be made for students with documented disabilities in accordance with state and federal law requirements. Students needing accommodations should contact the Jennifer West for more information at: [jwest@norwich.edu](mailto:jwest@norwich.edu). phone: 1-802-485-3306. Students must be able to perform minimum technical standards in a reasonably independent manner, with or without reasonable accommodations.

- ❖ *Communication*

- Must be able to communicate effectively with patients, families, and members of the healthcare team through oral, written, and interpersonal means.
- Must be able to obtain information, describe patient situations, and perceive both verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Must be able to speak, comprehend, read and write in English at a level that meets the need for accurate, clear, and effective communication; examples include but are not limited to: giving clear oral reports, detecting the passage of time to the level of seconds, interpreting graphs, understanding documents printed in English, communicating legibly in printed English, discriminating subtle differences in medical terminology.
- Must be able to utilize information technology-based systems in the classroom and clinical environment, including computers, iPads, electronic health records, electronic monitoring systems and other internet and technology-based equipment and systems.
- Must be able to write orders and patient documentation, under the supervision of a preceptor.
- Must be able to communicate with all members of the interdisciplinary team involved in the patient's care.

❖ *Observation*

- Must be able to observe a patient accurately; examples include but are not limited to: detecting heart and breath sounds; interpreting the appearance of a surgical wound; detecting bleeding, unresponsiveness, or other changes in patient status; detecting the presence of foul odor; and palpating an abdomen.
- Students are expected to notify preceptor of any abnormalities noted during patient interview or physical examination.
- Must be able to detect and respond to emergency situations, including alarms (e.g., monitors, call bells, fire alarms).

❖ *Evaluation*

- Must be able to evaluate subjective and objective patient data and develop a plan of care under the direction of a preceptor.
- Must be able to identify patient diagnoses, under the supervision of a preceptor.
- Must be able to identify appropriate treatments and interventions for patients based on evidence.
- ❖ *Motor Function and Endurance*
  - Must have sufficient strength and mobility to work effectively and safely with patients.
  - Must be able to complete assigned periods of clinical practice, including up to 12-hour shifts (including days, evenings, nights, weekends, and selected holidays).
  - Must be able to respond at a speed sufficient to carry out patient assignments within the allotted time.
- ❖ *Behavioral*
  - Must possess mental and emotional health required for total utilization of intellectual abilities.
  - Must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads.
  - Must be able to respond and function effectively during stressful situations.
  - Must be capable of adapting to rapidly changing environments and respond with flexibility in uncertain situations.
  - Must be able to interact appropriately with others (patients, families, members of healthcare team) in various healthcare contexts and settings.
- ❖ *Physical Requirements in Clinical Setting*
  - Clinical agencies may have additional or agency-specific technical standards, which take precedence over NUSON technical standards. If a student meets NUSON standards, but not those of the clinical agency, the student may be moved to a comparable environment if one is available.

## **Residency**

The culmination of the program is a one-week residency at the Norwich University campus. This residency is an opportunity for all students to come together to participate in further learning and leadership

experiences. Master of Science in Nursing students disseminate their nursing scholarship and engage with program faculty. Residency is a celebratory week with Academic Recognition Ceremonies Honor Society inductions and is capped with graduation. If a student cannot attend Residency due to extenuating circumstances, s/he will be provided an alternative culminating assignment to meet the residency goals. Residency exceptions are approved by the Dean of College and Graduate and Continuing Studies.

## **Honor Society**

### Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society for Nursing (STTI)

#### Omega Mu At-Large Chapter

Omega Mu is the Norwich University and Vermont Technical College at-large Sigma chapter. Sigma, the only Honor society for Nursing, was founded to advance knowledge, learning, and service, and has over 135,000 members and more than 515 chapters around the globe. Becoming a member is an honor that provides students with many professional opportunities including leadership, service, and scholarship.

Master of Science in Nursing students with a GPA of 3.5 are invited to join and participate in the induction ceremony as well as all future chapter events. Community Nurse Leaders are also eligible to apply for membership.