



2026 - 2027 MSN Student Handbook Supplement

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Welcome to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Student Handbook Supplement!

It is a pleasure to welcome you to Berkeley College. We are pleased that you have selected Berkeley College to assist you in achieving your educational goals. On behalf of the College and the entire Nursing Department, we wish you an enjoyable and productive educational journey.

This Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Student Handbook Supplement is intended to clarify policies and procedures specific to the MSN program and to serve as a reference guide for you about the program. The policies in this Student Handbook Supplement supersede any conflicting policies found in the general Berkeley College Student Handbook and the Graduate Catalog.

The MSN Student Handbook Supplement is regularly updated, and your input is valuable. We welcome your recommendations and suggestions for future revisions and invite you to communicate any of your ideas and suggestions to the Nursing Department.

The faculty of the School of Health Studies is committed to guiding and assisting you in your academic career. You, in turn, have a responsibility to familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures of the College.

Once again, welcome from the entire Berkeley College community. We look forward to assisting you in reaching your goals.

Overview

The policies and procedures outlined in this Student Handbook Supplement are specific to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program. By participating in this program, students agree to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the MSN Student Handbook Supplement. These program-specific policies and procedures supersede any conflicting policies found in the general Berkeley College [Student Handbook](#) and the [Graduate Catalog](#). That said, students should still refer to the Graduate Catalog and the general Berkeley College Student Handbook for all *other* College policies governing all graduate students.

Mission, Vision, and Goals

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Berkeley College Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program is to empower nursing students to achieve lifelong success by educating students at beginning and advanced levels through excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service. The program fosters a commitment to values, attitudes, and ethical dimensions including integrity, respect, collaboration, cooperation, and social justice that are hallmarks of professional nursing. The program is committed to upholding and maintaining both professional nursing standards and a code of ethics for nursing. The program's mission statement is related to the College's mission statement, which is, "Berkeley College empowers each student to achieve lifelong success."

Vision:

The vision of the MSN program is to prepare nurses for advanced practice nursing roles in leadership, education, public health, and family nurse practice.

The curriculum is structured to include theoretical concepts, values, and skills involved in health promotion, risk reduction, disease prevention, as well as illness and disease management. Knowledge of nursing theory, research, healthcare systems and policy, information, healthcare technologies, ethics in practice, human diversity, and global healthcare are included in the curriculum, which builds on the knowledge of the nursing profession while also preparing individuals to assume more advanced leadership roles in patient care.

Goals:

The goals of the MSN degree program are to:

- Educate qualified nurses to become professional advanced practice nurses and provide care in an equitable manner to a diverse patient population within the defined Scope of Practice for Professional Nurses by the American Nurses Association.
- Prepare students to meet the expectations and demands of the current healthcare workforce by working collaboratively with clinical healthcare providers and other communities of interest.
- Provide preparation for continued education in nursing.
- Respond to community needs by preparing skilled professional practitioners.

MSN Program Curriculum Design

- [Organizing Framework](#)
- [Philosophy](#)
- [Purpose](#)
- [MSN Program Graduate Learning Objectives](#)
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- [Learning Outcomes](#)

Organizing Framework

The organizing curriculum framework for the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program is derived from the mission, vision, and goals of Berkeley College and the objectives of the MSN program.

The organizing framework consists of interrelated concepts that guide the curriculum throughout the program. These include the metaparadigm concepts of nursing, patient, health, and environment supported by the integrating concepts of context and environment, knowledge and science, personal/professional development, quality and safety, relationship-centered care, and teamwork.

The organizing curriculum framework for the MSN program is divided into two (2) major components: Core Knowledge and Population/Specialization.

These two components include Global Health Systems, Health/Illness Management, Evidence-Based Practice, Scholarship & Research, and Professional Nursing; aligned with Ethics, Communication & Collaboration, Quality & Safety, Technology, Decision Making Process, and Cultural Competence.

Core Knowledge courses (NUR5000, NUR5005, NUR6000) are required courses for all MSN students.

Population/Specialization courses across the lifespan have been designed specifically for students enrolled in the Family Nurse Practitioner program enabling them to provide a wide range of preventive and acute health care services to patients.

Philosophy

The philosophy of the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program supports the mission of Berkeley College. Drawing upon established empirical knowledge of the nurse and to foster advanced nursing concepts in education policy, research, and theory, the faculty has defined the metaparadigm of nursing and the following theoretical concepts as a basis for our program philosophy:

Humans: Humans are unique, complex, continually changing, four-dimensional energy fields. Humans are open systems moving through space and time in continuous interaction with the environment. Humans are unitary beings within which physical and nonphysical systems are integral.

Patient: The patient is the recipient of nursing care. The patient may be a human, family, group, community, or population.

Environment: The environment consists of both external and internal energy fields in continuous interaction with the patient. Exchanges with the environment determine health status. Biological, chemical, physical, psychological, cultural, socioeconomic, and political forces within the environment have profound influences upon health.

Health: Health is participation in life through an optimal fulfillment of the patient's potential. Health and illness are a continuum and are integral to the functioning of the holistic human being in life events.

Nursing: The faculty believes that nursing is an art and a science and agrees with the American Nurses Association's (2010) definition of nursing as "the protection, promotion, and optimization of health and abilities, prevention of illness and injury, alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response, and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, communities, and populations." Nursing is an evolving profession built upon caring and using multiple types of knowledge in the provision of evidence-based practice. Nurses employ the nursing process, professional nursing ethics, professional standards, and a unique body of nursing knowledge and skills to develop a plan of care to promote, maintain, or restore patient health. The plan of care is developed and implemented in collaboration with the patient and the inter-professional healthcare team, and it is centered upon principles of quality and safety.

Caring: The faculty believes that caring is an essential metaparadigm concept for nursing. Caring is an inherent human process demonstrating universality among people and is exhibited in diverse patterns. The nurse incorporates reflection and authenticity into intentional nursing actions centered on promoting healing and wholeness within self and others.

Teaching-Learning Process: The faculty believes that the teaching-learning process is unique, evolving, and varies among unique unitary humans; learner assessment and variations in learning plans are inherent in the educational process. The faculty believes in using principles of andragogy in which the teacher and learner collaborate to achieve learning goals. Human beings are autonomous and self-directed, and the teacher supports these characteristics of growth in nursing education. Mutual respect and acknowledgment of adult life experience and prior learning are incorporated into

the learning plan. The faculty believes that all levels of nursing education support a continuous lifelong process of personal and professional growth, leading to a positive influence on the nursing profession and society as a whole. Nursing education serves to socialize and advance the student's incorporation of professional knowledge, standards, and values into practice.

The Nursing faculty of the Berkeley College School of Health Studies acknowledges the pioneering work of nursing theorists Martha Rogers, Jean Watson, and Jacqueline Fawcett. From their theories, observations, and ideas, we have derived many of our philosophical explanations and definitions.

Purpose

The purpose of the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program is to prepare nurses for advanced nursing practice roles in leadership, education, public health and emergency management, and family nurse practice.

The curriculum is structured to include theoretical concepts, values, and skills involved in health promotion, risk reduction, disease prevention, as well as illness and disease management. Knowledge of nursing theory, research, healthcare systems and policy, information and healthcare technologies, ethics in practice, human diversity, and global healthcare are included in the curriculum, which builds on the knowledge of the nursing profession while also preparing individuals to assume more advanced clinical and leadership roles in patient care.

MSN Program Graduate Learning Objectives

In support of achieving the Berkeley College mission, six Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) College Graduate Learning Objectives have been identified. These objectives are designed to strengthen students' abilities to engage both disciplinary content knowledge and key 21st-century workforce skills. The Master of Science in Nursing curriculum supports the six Berkeley College MSN College Graduate Learning Objectives.

MSN College Graduate Learning Objectives

1. **Reading and Written Communication:** Students will demonstrate competent reading and writing skills throughout their program of study.
 2. **Oral Communication:** Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills in both general and major-specific contexts.
 3. **Critical Analysis and Reasoning:** Students will use critical analysis and reasoning, supported by knowledge and skills learned throughout their degree programs, to enhance personal and professional decision-making:
 - Quantitative analysis and reasoning
 - Analysis and reasoning in the humanities, sciences, social sciences, and arts
 - Ethical analysis and reasoning
 - Reasoning in career-related contexts
 - Evidence-based practice
 4. **Knowledge and Skills for Living in a Diverse Society:** Students will consider multiple perspectives (quantitative and qualitative, among individuals, from different cultural contexts, etc.) when making decisions independently or as part of a team.
 5. **Information Literacy:** Students will define and articulate their needs for information and access this information effectively and efficiently.
 6. **Integration of Learning:** Students will develop the ability to integrate their learning, making connections within their major, between fields, between/among curricular and co-curricular activities, and between academic knowledge and practice.
- Not all programs are offered for completion at each campus or through Berkeley College Online®. Please review the academic program pages (<https://berkeleycollege.edu/academics/index.html>) for information on where each program is offered. Additionally, all students may be required to take some courses at another campus or online.*

MSN Program Graduate Learning Outcomes

1. Students can demonstrate effective communication through competent writing and appraise scholarly literature, and conduct interprofessional interactions to foster lifelong learning.
2. Students can defend scholarly work related to their field of study and specific certification.
3. Students can apply critical thinking and ethical decision-making when providing quality health care to the population across the life span.
4. Students can formulate and appraise evidence-based practice when providing quality health care to various patient populations.
5. Students can construct and demonstrate interprofessional collaboration among faculty, collegiate activities, and advanced academic knowledge and practice.
6. Students can develop plans of care by implementing evidence-based clinical guidelines, as well as local and national practices.

Not all programs are offered for completion at each campus or through Berkeley College Online®. Please review the academic program pages (<https://berkeleycollege.edu/academics/index.html>) for information on where each program is offered. Additionally, all students may be required to take some courses at another campus or online.

Learning Outcomes

The mission of the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Program within the School of Health Studies is to graduate nursing professionals who will respond to the critical needs in the areas of leadership, nursing education, public health and emergency management, and advanced clinical practice.

These program outcomes are tied to the mission of Berkeley College and represent the belief of the nursing faculty and administration who strive to ensure that students graduate from the program with the same foundational knowledge and demonstrable skills and that graduates bring commensurate knowledge and practical skills to the workforce. Achievement of the program outcomes will provide all graduates of the MSN program the opportunity to develop comparable skill sets.

Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Program Learning Outcomes:

1. **Caring:** Graduates will demonstrate caring attitudes and behaviors in accordance with ethically responsible and legally accountable nursing practice with the goal of preserving dignity and aspirations of promoting health and wellness for individuals, patients, and self.
2. **Communication:** Graduates will demonstrate effective communication skills in therapeutic interactions, inter-professional information sharing, and scholarly dissemination to achieve quality client outcomes and lateral integration of care.
3. **Technological Aptitude:** Graduates will use technology competently to deliver and enhance care, to promote quality improvement, and to preserve safety, to integrate and coordinate care, to collaborate with interprofessional teams, and to continuously improve health care outcomes.
4. **Cultural Competence:** Graduates will analyze systems' responses to health and illness to improve the promotion, restoration, and maintenance of health that reflect respect across diverse cultures religions, value-systems, and many other aspects of life and living.
5. **Ethics:** Graduates will apply ethical analysis and clinical reasoning to assess, intervene, and evaluate advanced nursing care delivery.
6. **Lifelong Learning:** Exhibit ongoing commitment to maintain knowledge and nursing skills necessary to provide quality patient care by engaging into systematic inquiry, investigation, and new knowledge generation.
7. **Leadership:** Graduates will demonstrate the ability to effectively apply knowledge of leadership theory to synthesize organizational systems for cost-effective nursing practice that contributes to high-quality healthcare delivery, to utilize the nursing team resources, and to provide leadership when partnering with the interprofessional health care team.
8. **Evidence-Based Practice:** Graduates will integrate theory, evidence, clinical judgment, research, and interprofessional perspectives to evaluate health needs of diverse populations and to guide decision making that demonstrates best nursing practices for improvement of health services in a global society.

9. **Global Health:** Graduates will assume accountability for health care outcomes, recognize systems influences on a specific group of clients; and assess, plan, and implement cost-effective healthcare strategies that reduce health disparities by patient/population advocacy for access to specialist nursing care.
10. **Health Educator and Advocate:** Graduates will use appropriate teaching/learning principles, strategies, and technologies to facilitate the learning of clients, groups, and the other health care professionals to influence health and health care.

Not all programs are offered for completion at each campus or through Berkeley College Online®. Please review the academic program pages (<https://berkeleycollege.edu/academics/index.html>) for information on where each program is offered. Additionally, all students may be required to take some courses at another campus or online.

Accreditation

The Master of Science in Nursing – Family Nurse Practitioner Specialization program at Berkeley College is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (www.aacnnursing.org/ccne-accreditation).

American Nurses Association (ANA) Scope and Standards of Professional Nurse Practice

The scope and standards of practice describe the services that a qualified health professional is deemed competent to perform and permitted to undertake – in keeping with the terms of their professional license.

The Nursing Scope and Standards of Practice describe the “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” “why,” and “how” of nursing practice:

- **Who:** Registered Nurses (RN) and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN) comprise the “who” constituency and have been educated, titled, and maintain active licensure to practice nursing.
- **What:** Nursing is the protection, promotion, and optimization of health and abilities; prevention of illness and injury; facilitation of healing; alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response; and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations.
- **Where:** Wherever there is a patient in need of care.
- **When:** Whenever there is a need for nursing knowledge, compassion, and expertise.
- **Why:** The profession exists to achieve the most positive patient outcomes in keeping with nursing’s social contract and obligation to society.

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The Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) lists nine Essentials that delineate the knowledge and skills all nurses prepared in Master's Nursing programs acquire. These Essentials guide the preparation of graduates for diverse areas of practice in any healthcare setting.

Students are encouraged to view the [Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing](#).

American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses

The following Code of Ethics for Nurses was developed by the American Nurses Association (ANA) as a guide for carrying out nursing responsibilities in a manner consistent with quality in nursing care and the ethical obligations of the profession. This Code is being reproduced with the express written consent of the ANA.

Provision 1

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

Provision 2

A nurse's primary commitment is to the recipient(s) of nursing care, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.

Provision 3

The nurse establishes a trusting relationship and advocates for the rights, health, and safety of recipient(s) of nursing care.

Provision 4

Nurses have authority over nursing practice and are responsible and accountable for their practice consistent with their obligations to promote health, prevent illness, and provide optimal care.

Provision 5

The nurse has moral duties to self as a person of inherent dignity and worth including an expectation of a safe place to work that fosters flourishing, authenticity of self at work, and self-respect through integrity and professional competence.

Provision 6

Nurses, through individual and collective efforts, establish, maintain, and improve the ethical environment of the work setting that affects nursing care and the well-being of nurses.

Provision 7

Nurses advance the profession through multiple approaches to knowledge development, professional standards, and the generation of policies for nursing, health, and social concerns.

Provision 8

Nurses build collaborative relationships and networks with nurses, other healthcare and non-healthcare disciplines, and the public to achieve greater ends.

Provision 9

Nurses and their professional organizations work to enact and resource practices, policies, and legislation to promote social justice, eliminate health inequities, and facilitate human flourishing.

Provision 10

Nursing, through organizations and associations, participates in the global nursing and health community to promote human and environmental health, well-being, and flourishing.

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Core Performance Standards

The Berkeley College Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program prepares students for advanced registered nurse practice in any clinical setting in accordance with the scope of nursing practice. Safe and competent nursing practice requires that graduates demonstrate competencies in knowledge, skills, and attitude guided by adherence to ethical and legal principles.

Nurse practitioners perform a wide range of healthcare services, and are responsible for evaluating patients, ordering and interpreting diagnostic tests, diagnosing, and initiating and managing treatment plans that may include prescribing medications.

The School of Health Studies is committed to providing reasonable accommodation(s) in its academic programs to qualified individuals with disabilities, including but not limited to learning disabilities. A reasonable accommodation is one that does not require a fundamental alteration to the nature of the program or lower academic and/or clinical standards.

Throughout the program, students must be able to perform in a reasonably independent and timely manner that does not affect the quality of care, the safety of patients and/or other individuals, and in a way that does not adversely affect the School of Health Studies, clinical affiliates, and/or any member of the healthcare team.

Students must be able to meet all of the performance standards outlined below, with or without reasonable accommodation, in order to be admitted and progress in the program. Individuals requiring accommodations while enrolled in the program are encouraged to speak with a representative of the College's Office of Accessibility Services before enrolling in clinical and/or laboratory courses. These performance standards are required skills in order to render safe nursing care to patients in various clinical settings.

Some chronic and/or recurrent illnesses and problems could interfere with patient care and safety and may be incompatible with nursing education and practice because they may lead to a higher chance of absences. Nursing students are not required to disclose any chronic and/or recurrent illness and/or disability; however, students with concerns about meeting the core performance standards outlined below are strongly encouraged to discuss the issues with the Department Chair and/or the Office of Accessibility Services. Deficiencies in knowledge, skills, judgments, integrity, and/or professional attitude may jeopardize patient care and, as a result, may be grounds for course failure and possible dismissal from the nursing program. Please see the Health Advisory section of this MSN Student Handbook Supplement for additional information.

Students must demonstrate aptitude and abilities in six areas: sensory ability and skills; fine and gross motor skills; strength, mobility, and physical endurance; the ability to communicate, comprehend, read, and write in English; behavioral stability; and cognitive ability and critical thinking skills.

It is the student's responsibility to understand the duties, responsibilities, skills, and abilities required to be a registered nurse. In addition to the technical standards

described below, students are encouraged to review the information regarding the nursing profession at the [O*NET website](#).

The following list is not meant to be all-inclusive, but instead it offers examples of required activities. Students are encouraged to review these standards carefully; if there are any questions or concerns, they should be discussed with the Chair of the Nursing Department and/or the Office of Accessibility Services.

Core Performance Standard	Definition of Core Performance Standard	Examples of Required Activities (not all inclusive)
Critical Thinking Ability	Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment.	• Identify cause/effect relationships in clinical situations • Analyze and use assessment findings to plan and implement care for clients and their families • Manage and respond to multiple priorities in stressful situations and make informed decisions utilizing relevant data • Make rapid decisions in emergency situations • Exhibit arithmetic competence that allows student to read, understand, and perform calculations for prescribing medication dosage
Visual Ability	Optical ability to sufficiently observe a patient and gather data accurately from a distance as well as close up	• Observe client responses (level of consciousness, respirations patterns) and recognize subtle physical changes • Detect changes in color, size, and continuity of body parts • Collect data from patient

Core Performance Standard	Definition of Core Performance Standard	Examples of Required Activities (not all inclusive) care equipment, monitoring devices, and measuring equipment used in the care of clients • Read fine print, either on paper or on a computer screen, in varying levels of light • Hear normal speaking level sounds • Detect sounds related to bodily functions with the use of a stethoscope, or detect audible alarms generated by mechanical equipment used to monitor patient's physiologic status • Detect signs of fire and initiate emergency actions • Hear call bells and/or cries for help
Auditory Ability	Auditory ability sufficient for physical monitoring and assessment of patient healthcare needs	• Detect odors of bodily fluids, such as foul-smelling drainage, spoiled foods, and/or smoke from burning materials • Detect smoke
Olfactory Ability	Olfactory ability sufficient to detect significant patient and environmental odors	• Detect unsafe temperature levels of solutions or heat-producing devices used in patient care • Detect anatomical abnormalities like edema, swelling, or nodules and masses
Tactile Ability	Tactile ability sufficient for physical monitoring and assessment of healthcare needs	

Core Performance Standard	Definition of Core Performance Standard	Examples of Required Activities (not all inclusive)
Communication Ability	Communicate therapeutically, both written and verbally, with clients, their families, and other members of a healthcare team	• Feel vibrations such as palpable pulse, feel differences in size and shape needed to identify bodily landmarks or skin surface signs such as rash or skin turgor • Document client data and nursing care completely and accurately using correct medical terminology • Interpret nonverbal cues and behaviors
Gross and Fine Motor Skills	Gross and fine motor skills sufficient to provide the full range of safe and efficient nursing care	• Gather data by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic methods • Calibrate and use equipment (i.e. syringes, vials, ampoules, medication packages, manual blood pressure cuff, etc.) • Grasp small objects with hands (i.e. IV tubing, pencil, etc.). • Pinch/pick or otherwise work with finders (i.e., manipulate a syringe, eye dropper, etc.)
Physical Ability	Physical abilities sufficient to perform the full range of required patient care activities	• Push and/or pull 250 pounds • Lift and/or move heavy objects weighing between 25 and 50 pounds

Core Performance Standard	Definition of Core Performance Standard	Examples of Required Activities (not all inclusive)
Emotional/Behavioral Stability	Emotional stability and appropriate behavior sufficient to tolerate rapidly changing conditions and environmental stress while assuming responsibility and accountability for actions	• Stand, walk, sit, bend, lift for the duration of a work assignment (may be a six, eight, or 12-hour shift) • Provide clients with emotional support • Adapt to changing environment and stress while maintaining professional conduct and standards without displaying hostility, agitation, rudeness, or belligerence • Focus attention on task • Monitor own emotions and be able to keep emotions under control
Professional Attitudes and Interpersonal Abilities	Present professional appearance and demeanor; demonstrate ability to communicate with clients and other members of the healthcare team to achieve a positive and safe work environment. Follow instructions and safety protocols	• Maintain empathetic, flexible, culturally sensitive, therapeutic relationships with others • Accept accountability and responsibility for one's actions • Comply with both the ethical and legal standards of the nursing profession • Express compassion, empathy, and a caring concern for others • Demonstrate initiative, motivation, and diligence • Display integrity, honesty, and responsibility

Core Performance Standard	Definition of Core Performance Standard	Examples of Required Activities (not all inclusive)
Emotional/ Behavioral	Emotional stability and appropriate behavior sufficient to assume responsibility and accountability for actions	• Display respect, sensitivity, and tolerance for diverse populations • Deal with the unexpected, such as frequently changing client status • Handle strong emotions • Be flexible with changing environments and schedules in both classes and clinical settings • Be able to work in close quarters with clients, classmates, nursing faculty, and members of healthcare teams • Focus attention on task • Monitor own emotions and be able to keep emotions under control in classroom and clinical environments • Establish a therapeutic relationship and communicate in a supportive manner
Professional Attitudes and Interpersonal Skills	Present professional appearance and demeanor; demonstrate ability to communicate with patients, supervisors, and other members of a healthcare team to achieve a positive and safe work environment.	• Maintain empathetic, flexible, culturally sensitive, therapeutic relationships with others • Accept accountability and responsibility for one's actions

Core Performance Standard	Definition of Core Performance Standard	Examples of Required Activities (not all inclusive)
	Follow instructions and safety protocols	• Comply with both the ethical and legal standards of the nursing profession • Express compassion, empathy, and a caring concern for others • Demonstrate initiative, motivation, and diligence • Display integrity, honesty, and responsibility • Display respect, sensitivity, and tolerance for diverse populations • Demonstrate comfort with close physical contact in the care of clients
Cognitive/Quantitative Abilities	Reading comprehension skills and mathematical ability sufficient to understand documents written in English and solve problems involving measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis	• Read graphs • Legibly write or type in client physical or electronic records • Effectively converse with client and members of a healthcare team • Find/subtle differences in medical words or medications • Give and understand verbal directions
Conceptual/Spatial Abilities	Conceptual spatial ability sufficient to comprehend three-dimensional and spatial relationships	• Comprehend spatial relationship needed to properly administer parenteral medication such as intramuscular, subcutaneous, intradermal, or

**Core Performance
Standard**

**Definition of Core
Performance Standard**

**Examples of
Required Activities
(not all inclusive)**
assess wounds of
varying depths

Academic Policies

- [Academic Progression and Grading Criteria](#)
- [Add/Drop Policy](#)
- [Attendance and Participation](#)
- [Certification Examinations](#)
- [Class Hours](#)
- [Graduation Requirements](#)
- [Transfer Credit](#)

Academic Progression and Grading Criteria

Passing Grade

The minimum passing grade required for all courses in the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program, which includes courses with NUR and MED designations, is a B (80 percent). Any grade below a B (80 percent) is a failing grade. In order to pass a Nursing course that consists of both didactic and clinical/laboratory portions, students must receive at least a B (80 percent) for the didactic portion of the course and a P (Passing) for the clinical/laboratory portion. A failure in either the didactic or clinical/laboratory portion of a nursing course will result in a failing grade for the entire course.

The MSN program upholds strict academic integrity standards and enforces a policy regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and similarity limits on the Turnitin platform. AI-generated content in assignments must not exceed 20% as detected by Turnitin's AI detection tool. Additionally, all submitted work must maintain a similarity score of 20% or lower.

Note: Berkeley College faculty are responsible for assigning final grades for all clinical courses (NUR6035, NUR6045, NUR6055, NUR6056, NUR6065, NUR7035, and NUR7036). Grades are based on the cumulative number of clinical hours completed, mid-term and final preceptor evaluations, and compliance with all other course expectations as outlined in the applicable course syllabus.

Repeating Courses

Nursing students who receive a grade of C+ or below in any course in the MSN program must repeat that course. A minimum grade of B in the repeated course is required to remain in the program.

Note that failed courses may lead to repeat fees and may also delay graduation. Repeating courses may affect financial aid awards and completion of major requirements. Students should consult with Financial Aid and the Director of the MSN program for advice related to these issues.

Automatic Dismissal

Students who earn a second failing grade in a Nursing (NUR) or MED course, whether in the course they are repeating or in a different course, will be automatically dismissed from the MSN program. Students may not appeal their academic standing; however, they may appeal a course grade consistent with the procedures and rationale within the policy on Course Grade Appeals. Additional information regarding grade appeals can be found in the Graduate Catalog.

Add/Drop Policy

Students interested in adding a course or courses to their schedule must meet with the Academic Advisement Department to obtain approval prior to the start of the second week of the term. Requests will be considered only if appropriate arrangements can be made to make up missed class time from the first week of the term. Clinical courses cannot be added to a student's schedule after the start of the term.

Attendance and Participation

Every student is expected to participate in each of their courses through regular attendance at lecture and laboratory sessions. Students are responsible for notifying the instructor in advance of any expected absence and arranging to make up any missed work. The Nursing Department expects that its students will recognize that they are in a profession in which commitment to full participation in the learning environment is an essential component of life-long learning and professional standards.

Outside conflicts need to be avoided; for example, students must not schedule work hours or other obligations during synchronous class sessions, which could be in person or online. Students should not schedule leisure activities/vacations during the scheduled academic session course dates. It is expected that every student will be present, on time, and prepared to participate when scheduled class/laboratory/clinical sessions begin.

It is the belief of the Graduate Nursing faculty that as a graduate student, you are joining a community of learners and scholars. Your timely presence for all course sessions and/or activities is crucial for your own learning and the learning of your classmates.

Class participation is expected in order to foster a learning experience for all students. Class participation is defined as introducing new ideas, stimulating discussion, and utilizing information from assigned reading and other resources.

Students wishing to request a Leave of Absence must follow the policy outlined in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

To the extent possible, electronic devices should be turned off or placed in silent mode while in the classroom, laboratory, and/or clinical settings.

Certification Examinations

For the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) specialization track, graduates must pass one of the following certification examinations:

- American Nurses Credentialing Center Board Certification (ANCC)
- The American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board (AANP)

Class Hours

Generally, classes are conducted online in a synchronous format. Practicum rotation schedules are determined by the schedule of the clinical site and clinical preceptor.

Graduation Requirements

To qualify for graduation, students enrolled in the MSN program must fulfill the following requirements:

- Pass each course in the program with a minimum grade of a B (80 percent)
- Successfully complete the prescribed number of clinical practicum hours
- Successfully complete the prescribed courses of study with a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00
- Meet the credit-hour requirements for the major
- Discharge all financial obligations to the College

Additional information regarding graduation can be found in the [2026-2027 Graduate Catalog](#).

Transfer Credit

Students enrolled in the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program who wish to have credits considered for transfer must follow the MSN policies outlined in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

Students wishing to transfer coursework must make a written request by filling out the **Request for Transfer of Graduate Credits** form and providing a transcript and a syllabus or other description of the course they wish to have considered for transfer credit. This form is available from the MSN Admission Department.

Note that transfer credit will be evaluated on a course-by-course basis, based on the recommendation of the MSN Program Director and/or School Dean. Additional information regarding transfer credit can be found in the [2026-2027 Graduate Catalog](#).

Clinical Requirements and Responsibilities

- [Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation \(CPR\)](#)
- [Clinical Clearance Requirements](#)
- [Clinical Site and Preceptorship Requirements](#)
- [Latex Sensitivity](#)
- [Malpractice Insurance](#)

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

Students in the MSN program must complete an approved Healthcare Provider CPR course prior to participating in clinical rotations. The approved course must include Adult, Child, and Infant CPR as well as automated external defibrillator (AED).

The original, valid BLS card must be submitted via EXXAT by Friday of week 12 of the term prior to the first clinical course. An active copy of the BLS card must remain on file throughout all clinical practicums. Students will be responsible for the cost of this certification as well as for ensuring the certification remains current. Only certification from the American Heart Association will be accepted.

Clinical Clearance Requirements

In preparation for their clinical experience, students enrolled in the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) specialization are strongly encouraged to review the Clinical Clearance Requirements forms, which are available from the Graduate Nursing Department. Clinical affiliates are becoming more stringent regarding health clearance documentation, and the absence of required documentation could delay or prohibit clinical placement.

FNP students are responsible for providing all clinical clearance forms to the MSN Program Director by Friday of week 12 of the semester preceding their first clinical course. Students who fail to submit health forms in their totality by this due date will be withdrawn from the clinical course, and a course designation of Withdrawal Failing (WF) will be assigned.

All students are encouraged to retain copies of all documentation presented to the Clinical Coordinator. The Graduate Nursing Department reserves the right to make administrative changes to clinical placements as necessary.

- [Criminal Background Check](#)
- [Health Requirements](#)

Criminal Background Check

A criminal history background check is required for all students in the MSN-FNP program prior to participating in clinical rotations and may be conducted annually or at the discretion of clinical affiliates. Not passing a background check may prohibit the student from progressing in the program and from becoming certified to work in the field.

In instances where a student's criminal background check contains information related to past criminal activity, Berkeley College cannot guarantee that the College will find suitable clinical placement(s) because the decision to allow students to complete clinical rotations is at the sole discretion of the clinical affiliate. If the student is denied clinical placement by the clinical affiliate due to criminal history information, that student will not be permitted to continue in the program. If the offense is expungable, the student is encouraged to seek legal counsel. If the student's record is cleared, and the record shows as "clear," the student is eligible for progression, provided all other clinical eligibility requirements are met.

If a charge, arrest, and/or conviction occurs while a student is enrolled in the MSN program, it is the student's responsibility to inform the MSN Program Director. This notification must be in writing and must occur within two business days after the event occurs. The required notification must include a description of the circumstances surrounding the charge, arrest, and/or conviction. Subsequent to this notification, the student should make an appointment with the MSN program Director to discuss options. Failure to notify the MSN Program Director of a charge, arrest, and/or conviction may result in the student being removed from the MSN program.

Health Requirements

Students enrolled in the MSN program must submit a complete physical assessment by a licensed physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant prior to enrolling in clinical courses.

In addition to meeting any general immunization requirements applicable to admission, students also must also provide appropriate proof of immunity as follows:

- Blood titers for measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella
- Immunization records or blood titers for hepatitis B
- A two-step PPD skin test administered within the last year or a negative chest X-ray within three months
- A tetanus shot administered within the past 10 years

Clinical affiliates require all clinical students to have a yearly influenza vaccine. A COVID-19 vaccine and available boosters are strongly recommended. Please note that some clinical sites may also require weekly PCR testing in addition to the COVID-19 vaccination series. Failure to comply with these immunization requirements may prohibit students from attending clinical courses. Clinical affiliates also may require students to provide proof of individual health insurance or be an eligible dependent or beneficiary of another person's accident and health insurance policy. Students not able to meet this requirement may find it difficult to complete the required clinical rotation(s) and/or progress in the program.

A negative 12-item, pre-clinical urine toxicology screening for the following is also required:

- Amphetamines
- Barbiturates
- Benzodiazepine
- Cannabinoids
- Cocaine
- Meperidine
- Methadone
- Opiates
- Oxycodone
- Phencyclidine
- Propoxyphene
- Tramadol

If emergency medical treatment is required while on campus or while participating in the clinical experience, the cost of treatment will be the responsibility of the student receiving the medical attention/treatment.

Upon readmission, reinstatement, or returning from a Leave of Absence, a student must repeat the drug screening outlined above prior to participating in any clinical rotations. If during the course of study, students are suspected of drug use, they may be asked to

provide an updated urine toxicology screening. The cost associated with these repeat drug screenings will be borne by the student.

A negative drug screen is required to progress in the MSN program. Students with a positive result will be required to meet with the MSN Program Director and/or School Dean to discuss continuation in the program. A student's drug screen is not considered positive until a determination is made that the results are not due to legally prescribed and appropriately taken prescription medications and the student has been offered the opportunity to have their original sample retested at the student's expense. If the positive drug results are not due to legally prescribed prescription medications, the student will be removed from the program and will not be eligible for reentry. If during the course of study, students are suspected of drug use, they may be asked to provide an updated urine toxicology screening. The cost associated with this repeat drug screening will be at the student's expense.

By submitting the results of a urine toxicology screening to the College, the student thereby authorizes the College to share those results with any individual clinical facilities that request such information.

Health Advisory

The Berkeley College MSN program is physically and mentally challenging. During the laboratory and clinical portions of the program, students will be exposed to healthcare situations where there is an increased risk of exposure to strenuous activity, communicable diseases, radiation, and toxic substances.

Nursing students may be exposed to a variety of other situations and substances that could potentially affect those with medical conditions that include, but are not limited to, asthma, allergies, immunocompromised disorders, and/or treatments, and pregnancy. If a student has a health condition or becomes pregnant while enrolled in the program, these exposures can harm the student and/or the unborn baby. If you have a health condition, or as soon as you learn you are pregnant, you should consult with your healthcare provider to ensure you are able to safely complete all program requirements and meet all relevant technical standards outlined in this Handbook. Neither Berkeley College nor its affiliating clinical agencies shall be responsible for any harm that might occur to an immunocompromised student, a pregnant student, or an unborn baby, as a result of continuing in the program.

Berkeley College supports pregnant and parenting students. Parenting students, as well as those who become pregnant while enrolled in the program, are strongly encouraged to contact the College Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator for more information regarding pregnancy and parenting-related issues. Contact information for the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator can be found on the Berkeley College website (<https://berkeleycollege.edu/about/title-ix/index.html>).

Berkeley College also supports students experiencing a medical condition and/or who are undergoing medical treatments. Students experiencing non-pregnancy related medical conditions, as well as those who are undergoing medical treatments, are encouraged to reach out to the College's Accessibility Services representative to discuss potential services and resources that may be available (<https://berkeleycollege.edu/admissions/accessibility-services/index.html>).

The Nursing Department understands that life events may occur during a student's academic journey. Nursing students will be asked to medically clear prior to returning to nursing courses should any life-changing event occur, which includes, but is not limited to:

- Births
- Motor vehicle accidents
- Surgeries
- Acute medical conditions
- Mental health crises
- Chronic illness diagnoses

The Nursing Department works closely with the Department of Accessibility Services, Student Development and Campus Life, and the Personal Counselors. Therefore, students are encouraged to keep open and honest communication with the Nursing Department to ensure the applicable accommodations are granted, thereby promoting academic success.

Any student who is unable to continue in clinical courses based on the recommendation of their healthcare provider will be afforded the opportunity, once medically cleared, to return to the program, pending course availability.

Students enrolled in the MSN-FNP program are strongly encouraged to review the clinical clearance requirements found elsewhere in this Student Handbook Supplement.

Clinical Site and Preceptorship Requirements

For the clinical component of the program, students are required to secure preceptors and complete their rotations in a primary care setting such as a physician's office or clinic that is located in the State of New Jersey. At least 60 days prior to enrolling in any clinical course, each MSN student must show proof of possessing a New Jersey RN license or an RN license from a state that is included in the Nurse Licensure Compact of the Interstate Commission of Nurse Licensure Compact Administrators (ICNLCA).

All clinical rotations must be approved by the Graduate Nursing Department and must be completed at a facility located within the State of New Jersey. Preceptors must meet the criteria consistent with the requirements as specified by the accreditor and as outlined by the MSN Program Director. To ensure the correct facility and preceptor are selected, students are encouraged to speak with the MSN Clinical Coordinator or the Program Director before finalizing their preceptor agreement. Preceptors must be a licensed medical doctor, such as an MD or DO, or a Nurse Practitioner with a minimum of one year of experience.

All clinical clearance documentation and preceptorship agreements must be submitted to the Graduate Nursing Department by the established due dates to prevent a delay in progressing to clinicals.

Latex Sensitivity

Hospitals and other clinical settings have numerous items that have a natural latex rubber component. Unforeseen exposure and sensitivity may result from repeated exposure to the protein associated with natural latex rubber (commonly found in powdered gloves). True allergies are rare, but latex sensitivities can be seen in approximately eight to twelve percent of healthcare workers.

Students with known latex sensitivity and/or allergies must provide the College's ADA Coordinator with documentation of the specific sensitivity/allergy along with suggested safety guidelines from the healthcare provider in order to request a reasonable accommodation. Information regarding the student's latex sensitivity/allergy will be shared with clinical affiliates as applicable.

Students with documented latex sensitivity/allergies are responsible for carrying their own medication to counteract the allergy. Any costs related to the allergy screening and/or treatment will be borne by the student.

If a student has a suspected reaction, they must report it to the clinical site as well as to the College's Clinical Coordinator and ADA Coordinator.

Berkeley College cannot guarantee a latex-free environment, including in its classrooms, laboratories, and/or during clinical rotations.

Malpractice Insurance

Students enrolled in the MSN program are required to purchase their own active, individual malpractice insurance with the minimum amounts of one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) per occurrence and three million dollars (\$3,000,000.00) in the aggregate and must provide the Chair of the Nursing Department with evidence of coverage prior to enrolling in clinical courses. Students should be sure to choose *Nurse Practitioner Student* insurance when selecting coverage.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

- [Complaints and Grievances](#)
- [Conduct](#)
- [Confidentiality](#)
- [Copyright Policy](#)
- [Professionalism](#)

Complaints and Grievances

For policies and procedures regarding student complaints and grievances, including grade appeals and other academic grievances, please see the [Student Complaint Procedures](#).

Conduct

Students are expected to abide by all public laws; to comply with the policies, procedures, and rules of the College; to obey any lawful directive of an authorized member of the Berkeley College faculty or administration; to provide true and complete information to the College when called upon to do so; to promote the safety of the College community; and to demonstrate a positive attitude, diligence, and courtesy toward faculty, staff, and fellow students.

The College reserves the right to take disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or dismissal, against any student who violates any public law or any College rule, policy, or procedure; disobeys such lawful directive; knowingly provides false, incomplete, or deceptive information to the College, including but not limited to inaccurate financial information or work-study time records; harasses, intimidates, and/or defaces College property; endangers the safety, security, or welfare of the College or any member of the College community; or otherwise interferes with the orderly and continuous administration and operation of the College or any of its units.

Click to see the complete [Conduct and Safety Policy](#).

Confidentiality

Berkeley College students are required by law to maintain the confidentiality of all patient information encountered at any clinical internship and/or practicum site. While the requirements of patient confidentiality are emphasized throughout the student's coursework, all students are encouraged to visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website (<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/index.html>) to review the entire Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) policy before beginning the clinical component of the program. In addition to complying with all federal regulations, Berkeley College students must comply with any specific confidentiality requirements, policies, and/or procedures established by the assigned internship and/or clinical site.

A patient's right to confidentiality regarding their medical information, which includes confidentiality of personal and social information, is a fundamental healthcare tenet. Accordingly, students must remain mindful of the following basic requirements:

- Patients must not be described in any identifiable way for purposes other than the provision of direct patient care. When discussing experiences involving patients with third parties for legitimate educational purposes, using patient initials, exact descriptions, or locations of patients – either on paper or online – is strictly prohibited. Students are to use generalities only, so that no patient can be clearly recognized.
- While participating in clinical rotation(s) students shall not videotape, photograph or make audio recordings of themselves, their fellow students, their instructors, or their patients for any reason.
- The public discussion of any patient who is identified by name or whose identity can be derived from other circumstances (or the condition of such patient) without consent violates patient confidentiality and ethical principles. This includes any discussion held in public areas such as elevators, hallways, and cafeterias. It also includes any discussion held in any media forum (such as print media) or any virtual forum (such as websites or social networking sites). Classrooms, pre- and post-conferences, and/or laboratory settings may be used for such discussions, but only for legitimate educational purposes.
- Students should only obtain information about those patients who are assigned to their care for that clinical day. At no time should students use their position in the clinical setting to seek information about a patient other than the patient(s) to whom they have been assigned.
- Copying, scanning, and/or removing any portion of a patient's medical record or printed patient information from the healthcare facility is strictly prohibited.

Social networking has become one of the main sources of communication in today's world. However, its use can have major legal and ethical implications for healthcare workers with regard to patient privacy and confidentiality. Students must comply at all times with the requirements of the HIPAA and must be especially mindful of patients when using social media. For instance:

- References to patients, patient data, or clinical experiences involving patients and/or their family members are not to be included in any part of the social networking environment. Social media breaches include, but are not limited to, posting/texting confidential or proprietary information about clinical facilities and/or rotations and taking selfies while participating in clinical rotations and posting them on social media sites.
- Students are strictly prohibited from posting any information pertaining to or descriptive of a clinical site, instructor/preceptor, patient, employee, fellow student, or procedure. This includes revealing the location of a clinical site either by posting or by providing content with GPS locator evidence (such as digital photographs).

Students who disclose restricted patient information may face serious consequences. For example, federal law provides for fines up to \$250,000 and imprisonment up to 10 years for misusing protected patient information for commercial advantage or malicious harm. Students found in violation of the Berkeley College Confidentiality Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate suspension or dismissal from the College. For additional requirements concerning the use of social media in connection with Berkeley College matters, go to the [Social Media Policy](#).

Copyright Policy

Original "works of expression," such as writings, graphics, photographs, and music, may be protected from unauthorized use by the federal copyright laws. Copyright laws govern whether — and to what extent — one is permitted to copy, upload, download, transmit, or distribute such works, or to create new works derived from them without first receiving permission from the holder of the copyright (often the author or publisher of the original). The copyright laws are complex. Under some circumstances, copying information from websites, downloading music or video from or uploading it to a peer-to-peer application, or even mere photocopying, faxing, or cutting and pasting substantial portions of copyrighted materials may constitute infringement. The Berkeley College community is expressly prohibited from using the Berkeley College network or computing resources to access peer-to-peer sites that permit unauthorized copying of copyrighted music, photographs, video, or other legally protected materials. Such activities will be treated as violations of the Student Electronic Information Policy. Certain limited copying of published materials without permission may be allowed under the "Fair Use" doctrine.

Berkeley College students and associates are required to comply with copyright laws. Failure to do so may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, and may subject the infringer to significant legal consequences. Penalties for copyright infringement may include civil and criminal penalties. In general, anyone found liable for civil copyright infringement may be ordered to pay either actual damages or statutory damages affixed at not less than \$750 and not more than \$30,000 per work infringed. For willful infringement, a court may award up to \$150,000 per work infringed. A court can, in its discretion, also assess costs and attorneys' fees. For details, see Title 17 United States Code, Sections 504, 505. Willful copyright infringement can also result in criminal penalties, including imprisonment of up to five years and fines of up to \$250,000 per offense. For more information, please see the website of the U.S. Copyright Office at copyright.gov.

Click for more detailed [policy information](#).

Professionalism

Students are expected to present themselves in a professional manner at all times by demonstrating integrity, respect, and compassion. While participating in the clinical portions of the program, students should realize that their behavior may positively and/or negatively affect the reputation of Berkeley College. Students are expected to be thoughtful and professional when interacting with faculty, patients and their families, nurses, attending physicians, preceptors, affiliated institutional staff, other students, other members of the healthcare team, and the general public.

It is expected that students will:

- Abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages or any substances in the academic and clinical setting that impair judgment (unprescribed drugs or other legally controlled substances).
- Uphold school policies and regulations related to academic and clinical performance.
- Refrain from performing any technique or procedure for which they have not been adequately trained.
- Refrain from any deliberate action or omission of care in the academic or clinical setting that creates unnecessary risk of injury to the client, self, or others.
- Provide care for the client in a timely, compassionate, and professional manner.
- Communicate client care in a truthful, timely, and accurate manner.

Professional demeanor is also required while students are in virtual sites, such as online social networking sites. Students are required to comply with the Berkeley College Social Media Policy, which governs the use of College and personal social media sites with respect to matters related to the College.

Under no circumstances are students permitted to engage in personal phone conversations or text messaging while participating in the didactic, laboratory, and/or clinical portions of their program. Students are required to familiarize themselves with, and follow, the clinical sites' policies and procedures regarding cell phone use. Students are in a profession that serves the public – a public that expects a high standard of professionalism.

If, while enrolled in a clinical course, a student's level of professionalism and/or performance presents a potential harm to the welfare of clients, the faculty will determine, based on written and/or oral documentation, whether or not the student will be permitted to continue in the course. If a student's performance presents an immediate potential harm to either the student or their clients, the program faculty and/or preceptors have the responsibility to remove the student immediately from the clinical setting. A student who recognizes that they have made a clinical error is obligated to report the situation to their preceptor and faculty immediately and to take necessary measures to ensure subsequent patient safety.

In addition, students enrolled in the MSN program may be suspended or expelled from clinical studies for reasons associated with academic misconduct. These reasons include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Failure to follow Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Guidelines by maintaining the confidentiality of patient information and records.
- An act of dishonesty involving clinical work.
- Falsification of credentials.
- Inappropriate use of electronic devices such as, but not limited to, photographing, recording, or transmission of patient information or photographs.

If a student is dismissed from the clinical site for cause, Berkeley College is not obligated to place the student at another clinical site. The student will bear the sole responsibility for timely replacement. Should the student not secure prompt placement, the student will be subject to dismissal from clinical training and will fail the course. Students will be rescheduled for the particular clinical rotation in the course's next available rotation. In such circumstances, a student's graduation will be delayed.

****A course failure may result in program dismissal based on the maximum number of course failures allowed for the program.**

As members of the nursing profession, it is imperative that MSN nursing students recognize their responsibility to society and their patients and exhibit behavior representing high standards, polite etiquette, compassion, and respect for human dignity in both the classroom and clinical settings.

Professionalism will be a graded (expected) component of all core MSN courses via the completion of the Professional Development Achievement Tool (PDAT). This form is included as part of the course syllabus. Students must achieve 90% or higher on each PDAT form. Those scoring less than 90% on their first PDAT will receive remediation and a verbal warning; scoring less than 90% on two PDATs will result in a written warning; and scoring less than 90% on the third PDAT will result in automatic dismissal from the program.

Click for more general [conduct](#) requirements applicable to all Berkeley College students.