

Master of Science in Nursing, MSN

The College of Nursing offers the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) with three subprogram focus areas: entry into practice, clinical nurse leader (CNL), and nursing systems administration (NSA).

Learning Outcomes

Clinical Nurse Leader and Nursing Systems Administration

Graduates will be able to:

- lead unit-level teams to achieve nursing and organizational goals;
- collect, decipher, and analyze data to produce action plans to improve quality;
- promote the adoption, integration, and sustainability of evidence-based practices;
- pursue lifelong learning to support one's professional identity; and
- design innovative nursing practice environments for patient care and the workforce.

Entry Into Practice

Graduates will be able to:

- ensure delivery of safe quality nursing care to diverse individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations throughout the lifespan and across systems of care;
- integrate theoretical and scientific knowledge gained from natural and social sciences and culture, society, and the liberal arts into nursing;
- use leadership skills across systems of care to promote equitable, safe, and quality health care outcomes;
- use the best evidence from multiple ways of knowing to inform practice to make clinical judgments, solve problems, and address systems improvements;
- analyze how health care policy, regulation, technology, and economics impact nursing practice and the delivery of care;
- use effective interprofessional communication and collaboration strategies to promote quality health outcomes;
- apply health promotion and disease prevention strategies to diverse individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations to promote quality health outcomes;
- demonstrate professional values fundamental to the discipline of nursing; and
- apply evidence-based, person-centered care services across the health care continuum.

Requirements

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) requires 33, 39, or 66 s.h., depending on the subprogram students choose to complete. Students maintain a Graduate College program grade-point average of at least 2.75.

Graduate students in the College of Nursing must adhere to all Graduate College policies regarding academic standing,

probation, and dismissal. Transfer credit applicable to the MSN is limited and must be approved by the program director and College of Nursing associate dean for undergraduate/RN programs or associate dean for graduate practice programs. Coursework taken 10 years or more before the MSN final examination must be updated according to university policy.

MSN Subprograms

- Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) [p. 1]
- Entry Into Practice [p. 2]
- Nursing Systems Administration (NSA) [p. 2]

Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL)

The Master of Science in Nursing with a clinical nurse leader subprogram is not admitting new students for 2025–26.

The Master of Science in Nursing with a clinical nurse leader subprogram requires 39 s.h. of credit, including a core component of 21 s.h., which students take with College of Nursing doctoral students, and a specialization component of 18 s.h. that centers on the clinical nurse leader role. The clinical nurse leader subprogram focuses on improving the quality of patient care and helping professional nurses to thrive in the health care system. The clinical nurse leader role has demonstrated effectiveness in improving outcomes, elevating current evidence-based practice, enhancing quality, and providing continuous leadership in the microsystem.

Students must successfully complete a capstone immersion.

Two-Year Plan

The MSN with a clinical nurse leader subprogram requires the following coursework for a two-year plan.

First Year, Two-Year Plan

Course #	Title	Hours
NURS:5009	Evaluating Evidence for Practice	3
NURS:5017	Quality and Safety	3
NURS:5018	Clinical Education in the Care Environment (offered in summer odd years)	3
NURS:5021	Physiology, Pathophysiology, and Pharmacology I for the Clinical Nurse Leader	3
NURS:5022	Physiology, Pathophysiology, and Pharmacology II for the Clinical Nurse Leader	3
NURS:5636	Clinical Nurse Leader Seminar	3
NURS:5666	Leadership in the Microsystem	3

Total Hours 21

Second Year, Two-Year Plan

Course #	Title	Hours
NURS:5007	Applied Epidemiology	3
NURS:5010	Clinical Data Management and Evaluation	3
NURS:5016	Health Care Infrastructure and Informatics	3
NURS:5037	Health Promotion and Assessment for Clinical Nurse Leaders	3

NURS:5696	Clinical Nurse Leader Capstone Clinical Immersion	6
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Total Hours 18

Three-Year Plan

The MSN with a clinical nurse leader subprogram requires the following coursework for a three-year plan.

First Year, Three-Year Plan

Course #	Title	Hours
NURS:5009	Evaluating Evidence for Practice	3
NURS:5018	Clinical Education in the Care Environment (offered in summer odd years)	3
NURS:5021	Physiology, Pathophysiology, and Pharmacology I for the Clinical Nurse Leader	3
NURS:5022	Physiology, Pathophysiology, and Pharmacology II for the Clinical Nurse Leader	3
NURS:5636	Clinical Nurse Leader Seminar	3

Total Hours 15

Second Year, Three-Year Plan

Course #	Title	Hours
NURS:5007	Applied Epidemiology	3
NURS:5017	Quality and Safety	3
NURS:5037	Health Promotion and Assessment for Clinical Nurse Leaders	3
NURS:5666	Leadership in the Microsystem	3

Total Hours 12

Third Year, Three-Year Plan

Course #	Title	Hours
NURS:5010	Clinical Data Management and Evaluation	3
NURS:5016	Health Care Infrastructure and Informatics	3
NURS:5696	Clinical Nurse Leader Capstone Clinical Immersion	6

Total Hours 12

See the MSN course plan on the College of Nursing website for a semester-by-semester course schedule.

Entry Into Practice

The Master of Science in Nursing with an entry into practice subprogram requires 66 s.h. of credit. The subprogram is an innovative program located on the Iowa City campus. It can be completed in five sessions. The entry into practice subprogram leads to a MSN degree that prepares students who do not currently have a nursing degree an opportunity to enter the health care workforce quickly. Class sizes are small and offer unparalleled educational excellence and clinical practice.

The MSN with an entry into practice subprogram requires the following coursework.

First Year, Entry Into Practice

Course #	Title	Hours
NURS:3128	Health Assessment and Communication Across the Lifespan	3
NURS:3138	Nursing and Pharmacological Interventions I	5
NURS:3151	Introduction to Clinical Concepts for Nursing	2
NURS:3438	Nursing and Pharmacological Interventions II	5
NURS:3451	Basic Clinical Concepts for Nursing	1
NURS:3640	Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing	3
NURS:3645	Mental Health Nursing Practicum	2
NURS:3650	Community and Public Health Nursing	3
NURS:3651	Advanced Clinical Concepts for Nursing	1
NURS:5017	Quality and Safety	3
NURS:5210	Foundations of Professional Nursing	1
NURS:5215	Medical Surgical Care of Chronically Ill Adults	3
NURS:5220	Medical Surgical Care of Acutely Ill Adults	3
NURS:6808	Population Health for Advanced Practice	3
NURS:6811	Social Determinants of Health and Health System Inequities	3

Total Hours 41

Second Year, Entry Into Practice

Course #	Title	Hours
NURS:3620	Gerontological Nursing	3
NURS:3631	Nursing Care of Children and Families	2
NURS:3632	Nursing Care of Childbearing Families	2
NURS:4155	Nursing Internship	5
NURS:5002	Leadership and Management Essentials	3
NURS:5009	Evaluating Evidence for Practice	3
NURS:5015	Health Systems, Finance, and Economics	3
NURS:5225	Community Health Across the Lifespan Practicum	4

Total Hours 25

See the MSN course plan on the College of Nursing website for a semester-by-semester course schedule.

Nursing Systems Administration (NSA)

The Master of Science in Nursing with a nursing systems administration subprogram requires 33 s.h. of credit. It can be completed on a two-and-a-half year plan (five semesters).

The subprogram focuses on preparing nurse leaders to serve in a variety of managerial and leadership capacities in all practice environments. The program focuses on graduate-level practice in nursing and health care leadership and the interventions that influence health care outcomes for individuals, populations, or systems.

Students must successfully complete a graduate-level guided capstone program implementation project.

The MSN with a nursing systems administration subprogram requires the following coursework.

First Year, NSA

Course #	Title	Hours
NURS:5002	Leadership and Management Essentials	3
NURS:5009	Evaluating Evidence for Practice	3
NURS:6550	Advanced Leadership and Management	3
NURS:6553	Seminar on Innovations	4
Total Hours		13

Second Year, NSA

Course #	Title	Hours
NURS:5010	Clinical Data Management and Evaluation	3
NURS:5017	Quality and Safety	3
NURS:6551	Financial Management	4
NURS:6808	Population Health for Advanced Practice	3
Total Hours		13

Third Year, NSA

Course #	Title	Hours
NURS:5016	Health Care Infrastructure and Informatics	3
NURS:5697	Specialty Practice in Nursing Systems	4
Total Hours		7

See the MSN course plan on the College of Nursing website for a semester-by-semester course schedule.

Admission

Applicants to College of Nursing graduate programs must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; see the Manual of Rules and Regulations on the Graduate College website.

Applicants must have a grade-point average of at least 3.00. A criminal background check is required for all students upon admission. The College of Nursing has additional application requirements, as follows.

Admission to the MSN Program

Application requirements specific to the MSN program are:

- transcripts from institutions for all undergraduate and graduate coursework; and
- completion of an upper-level statistics course within five years of the application deadline (acceptable University of Iowa courses include BIOS:4120 Introduction to Biostatistics, PSQF:4143 Introduction to Statistical

Methods, STAT:3510 Biostatistics, and STAT:4143 Introduction to Statistical Methods).

Applications are reviewed once a year. To be reviewed, the application must be complete with all materials submitted.

Due to the level of web-based coursework required, international students in the MSN subprograms are not eligible for F-1 or J-1 student immigration status. Questions regarding visas and immigration documentation should be directed to International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS).

Additional Application Requirements

- Admission to the Clinical Nurse Leader Subprogram [p. 3]
- Admission to the Entry Into Practice Subprogram [p. 3]
- Admission to the Nursing Systems Administration Subprogram [p. 4]

Admission to the Clinical Nurse Leader Subprogram

Additional application requirements specific to the MSN with a clinical nurse leader subprogram are:

- a bachelor's or advanced degree with a major in nursing from an accredited program;
- approximately one year of experience;
- satisfaction of the legal requirements for the practice of nursing;
- current written recommendations from three persons knowledgeable about the applicant's competence in the practice of nursing and potential for leadership and scholarship (forms required); and
- a current résumé, goal statement (statement of purpose), statement of disclosure, and supplemental/information form.

Applicant interviews are required, and in some cases, virtual interviews may be arranged.

Admission to the Entry Into Practice Subprogram

Additional application requirements specific to the MSN with an entry into practice subprogram are:

- a bachelor's or advanced degree in a discipline other than nursing from an accredited college or university;
- completion of natural sciences courses within 10 years and/or a combination of related experience and training that provides the knowledge and abilities necessary to meet the objectives of the courses;
- completion of prerequisite coursework at the time of application (on track to have no more than two natural sciences and one social science unfinished at the end of the application semester);
- successful background and abuse checks;
- current written recommendations from three persons knowledgeable about the applicant's potential for the practice of nursing and leadership and scholarship (required forms provided at the time of application by the Graduate College); and
- other forms, including a leadership and experiences form, a statement of purpose form (two essay questions), a

statement of disclosure form, and a justification form (if applicable).

Applicant interviews are required, and in some cases, virtual interviews may be arranged.

Applicants to the MSN entry into practice subprogram whose first language is not English and who do not meet the requirements for a waiver are required to submit English proficiency scores. For a complete list of accepted English proficiency exams, score requirements, and waiver eligibility, please refer to the English Proficiency Requirements on the Graduate Admissions website.

Prerequisites for Natural and Social Sciences

To be considered for admission, a maximum of two natural sciences courses and one social science course can be incomplete at the application deadline; all must be completed prior to enrollment in the MSN entry into practice subprogram.

Natural Science Prerequisites

Course #	Title	Hours
These are the courses that are considered prerequisites; applicants need equivalent coursework to these UI courses:		
BIOL:1141	Human Biology: Health Professions	4
CHEM:1070	General Chemistry I	3
CHEM:1080	General Chemistry II	3
HHP:2310	Nutrition and Health	3
HHP:2400	Fundamentals of Human Physiology	3
MICR:3164	Microbiology and Human Health	4
NURS:3518	Pathology	3
And one of these:		
ACB:3110	Principles of Human Anatomy	3
HHP:2100	Human Anatomy	3

Social Science Prerequisites

Course #	Title	Hours
These are the courses that are considered prerequisites; applicants need equivalent coursework to these UI courses:		
NURS:1030	Human Development and Behavior	3
And any two of these:		
ANTH:1101/IS:1101	Cultural Anthropology	3
PSY:1001	Elementary Psychology	3
SOC:1010	Introduction to Sociology	3-4
SOC:1030	Contemporary Social Problems	3-4

Admission to the Nursing Systems Administration Subprogram

Additional application requirements specific to the MSN with a nursing systems administration subprogram are:

- a bachelor's or advanced degree with a major in nursing from an accredited program;
- approximately one year of experience;

- satisfaction of the legal requirements for the practice of nursing;
- current written recommendations from three persons knowledgeable about the applicant's competence in the practice of nursing and potential for leadership and scholarship (forms required); and
- a current résumé, goal statement (statement of purpose), statement of disclosure, and supplemental/information form.

Applicant interviews are required, and in some cases, virtual interviews may be arranged.

Application Deadlines

Application deadlines for the MSN subprograms are:

- MSN with clinical nurse leader subprogram: Feb. 1 for fall entry.
- MSN with entry into practice subprogram: March 15 for spring entry.
- MSN with nursing systems administration subprogram: Feb. 1 for fall entry.

Career Advancement

The MSN clinical nurse leader and nursing systems administration subprograms prepare nurses to be equipped with knowledge and skills to lead change, promote health, and elevate care in various roles and settings. Graduates of these subprograms are prepared for critical action with complex, changing systems, including health, educational, and organizational systems.

The MSN entry into practice subprogram prepares non-nurse college graduates of all academic backgrounds to become practicing nurses. Upon graduation, students will be prepared to take the NCLEX-RN nursing licensure exam to be licensed as a registered nurse.

Academic Plans

Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

Nursing, MSN

Entry Into Practice

This sample plan is currently being reviewed and will be added at a later date.