

MSN/FNP Curriculum Description

The curriculum of the Master of Science degree in nursing is designed to develop nurse practitioners with an advanced level of knowledge, skills and abilities to serve the nursing needs of the community and various healthcare environments. The design of the curriculum is based on the National League for Nursing's *Core Competencies for Graduates of Master's Programs* (NLN, 2010). Also considered in program development is the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resource Services Administration Bureau of Health Professions Division of Nursing competencies (HRSA, 2002). Upon completion of the curriculum, graduates will be fully qualified for national certification examination (either American Nurses Credentialing Center [ANCC, 2011] or American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Program [AANPCP, 2010]) to become licensed as an Advanced Practice RN in South Carolina.

The advanced practice curriculum in the Family Nurse Practitioner Program prepares nurses as FNPs for community-oriented primary care. FNPs provide comprehensive health promotion services to ambulatory clients; evaluate problems at the client's initial contact with the primary care system; and provide continuing care to clients with acute and stable chronic illnesses. In addition to clinical practice, there is an emphasis on epidemiological approaches to clinical problems, holism and caring, family and community systems, use of technology, cost effectiveness, collaboration, consultation, referral processes, theoretical frameworks, and evidence-based practice.

Students will engage in FNP practice with clinically active primary care practitioners in the specialty of the enrolled course. "Preceptors should have preparation and at least one year of clinical experience in their clinical areas of clinical supervision" (AANP, 2010, p.1). For example, the women's health practicum will be completed with a gynecologist or a women's health nurse practitioner. The final internship courses will be completed in a family practice outpatient setting and along with clinical practice, the senior NP student will develop a senior evidence-based project for the clinical site. This will be done by assessing the needs of the client population within the practice and developing an organizational or patient-centered care project of sufficient depth that can be implemented as an organizational or individual change to promote healthy lifestyles, systems improvement, or patient safety.