



## **Frequently Asked Questions: Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Program Southern Connecticut State University**

- **What specialty tracks do you offer at SCSU?**  
We offer Family Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Educator, and Clinical Nurse Leader tracks. If you already have an MSN, all of the above specialties may be obtained through a post-master's certificate program.
- **What are the application deadlines for admission?**  
Application deadlines are October 1<sup>st</sup> for Spring admission and February 15 for Fall admission.
- **What are the requirements for admission to the MSN program?**  
Applicants need to have completed courses in Statistics, Nursing Research, and Health Assessment (with lab) and have achieved a grade of a C. Bridge Program applicants need a C+ in these courses. In addition, applicants need to submit 2 letters of recommendation (one from a former faculty member/educator and one from a supervisor), the application essay, all transcripts following high school, and a copy of their CT nursing license. **All materials for admission are submitted via the application portal of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies, not the Nursing Department.**
- **I graduated several years ago. Do I need a letter of recommendation from my BSN program?**  
Most applicants have graduated from undergraduate nursing programs within ten years of beginning their graduate studies. It is helpful for the admissions committee to receive information from a faculty member who has had direct experience with the applicant to provide feedback about specific academic attributes, which may not be as apparent to a professional supervisor or other colleague. However, in rare circumstances, if this is not possible, please have an individual who would know your educational abilities, which may not be apparent to a supervisor, complete the academic reference.
- **Once I apply to the MSN program, when will I hear of acceptance into the program?**  
All applicants who meet initial criteria for admission are offered an interview by a member of the MSN Curriculum Committee. Upon completion of all admissions materials and the interview, applicants will receive notification about their acceptance before the end of that semester, typically by December 1<sup>st</sup> and April 15<sup>th</sup>.
- **Am I able to take courses as a non-matriculated student?**  
Applicants may take up to 3 courses as a non-matriculated student as space permits. Eligible courses would only include the Core courses, and generally would not include NUR 526 (Advanced Health Assessment). Students require departmental permission to register for any course in the MSN program.
- **What courses will I take in the MSN program?**  
All MSN students are required to take the Core Nursing classes:
  - ✓✓ NUR 500 (Fall)
  - ✓✓ NUR 516 (Fall)
  - ✓✓ NUR 519 (Fall)
  - ✓✓ NUR 521 (Fall)
  - ✓✓ NUR 514 (Spring)
  - ✓✓ NUR 524 (Spring)
  - ✓✓ NUR 526 (Spring)
  - ✓✓ NUR 540 (Spring)

These may be taken in any order, although many students prefer to take NUR 521 (Advanced Pathophysiology) prior to both NUR 524 (Advanced Pharmacology) and NUR 526 (Advanced Health Assessment). It is recommended to take NUR 500 (Nursing Theories and Conceptual Models) prior to taking NUR 519 (Nursing Research). One to two Summer session courses are generally offered each year on a rotating basis. The above Core courses are offered every year during the semesters indicated.

All MSN students are required to complete a graduate capstone, either a Special Project or thesis, in addition to the Core and specialty courses. Post-MSN students do not need to complete a graduate capstone. These courses may be taken before, during, or after specialty courses. Track specialty courses are only begun upon completion of the Core courses. FNP specialty courses begin in the Fall, and they continue for three semesters, ending in the Summer session. Nurse Educator courses are generally offered in 3 sequential semesters after Core courses. CNL courses are offered on an as-needed basis, generally completed in one year after Core courses.

- **Is the program on-line?**

Most of the MSN courses are taught online. The classes generally have a synchronous component, where classes will "meet" virtually, every other week for approximately 2 hours. The Role courses (specialty courses for each track) are taught as "hybrid" courses because the practicum component is required on ground with a preceptor. The didactic portion of these classes generally meets every other week, synchronously online.

- **When are the classes held?**

Classes all meet on Tuesdays. While class times may begin as early as 8:10 am, most of the courses begin in the afternoon (starting at 2:10 or later) and in general, do not go later than 7:30pm. The exception is Summer Session courses, which meet according to faculty and student needs in a condensed schedule format.

- **How long does it take to complete the MSN program?**

Students who are part-time take one or two classes each academic semester, and are generally able to complete the Program of Study in approximately three years. Full-time students who take at least three courses each semester are able to complete the Program of Study in no less than two and a half years.

- **May I transfer in a class from another university?**

Up to three (3-credit) classes from another university are acceptable, upon receiving permission from the MSN Program Director by submitting course syllabus and official transcripts from the university where course(s) were taken. Final decisions about acceptance of course alternates rests with the MSN Program Director.

- **Who will be my Academic Advisor for the MSN Program?**

The MSN Program Director serves as the Academic Advisor for all students in the MSN program, and advises non-matriculated students regarding their specific academic needs as well.

- **Will I be expected to complete clinical hours?**

All three MSN programs have required clinical hours. The FNP program requires a minimum of 660 supervised clinical hours, or approximately 16 hours per week for 45 weeks (3 semesters). These include 410 hours of adult/gerontology, 150 hours of pediatric, and 100 hours of women's health. Both the CNL and the Nurse Educator clinical practicum courses require 12 or more hours per week of supervised clinical time for two semesters.

- **Who will be my preceptor for the Role courses?**

Faculty and students work in partnership to obtain appropriate clinical site preceptors each semester. FNP students are expected to begin inquiring among appropriate agencies and professional organizations to develop a strong network of potential individuals who may be willing to serve as preceptors.

**For more information, including the links for application materials, please go to:**

<https://www.southernct.edu/grad> for application materials and School of Graduate & Professional Studies information; <https://inside.southernct.edu/nursing/graduate-programs> for links to each graduate nursing track.