

# MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING: PSYCHIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH NURSE PRACTITIONER

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The Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) MSN program prepares nurses to diagnose and manage most common psychiatric mental health illnesses for patients of all ages and to assume the responsibility inherent in prescribing medications. After graduation, you'll be able to sit for the national psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner certification exam. This program can be completed part time or full time, and enables graduates to significantly expand their roles as advanced practice nurses. The program is online with three distinct, focused immersions on campus.

## MSN: Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Code	Title	Credits
NUR 500	Biostatistics	1
NUR 514	Epidemiology and Population Health	2
NUR 516	Health Policy and Organizational Systems	2
NUR 520	Advanced Health Assessment	3
NUR 520L	Advanced Health Assessment Lab	2
NUR 522	Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NUR 530	Advanced Pharmacology	3
NUR 602	Principles of Ethical Theory in Nursing	1
NUR 632	Health Promotion and Advocacy	3
NUR 656	Pediatric Assessment	1
NUR 660	Advanced Specialty Diagnostics & Assessment I	2
NUR 669	Advanced Specialty Diagnostics & Assessment II	2
NUR 702	Psychopharmacology	2
NUR 705	Introduction to Psychiatric Mental Health	3
NUR 706	Common Problems in Psychiatry and Mental	3
NUR 707	Psychiatric Mental Health Practicum	3
NUR 708	Psychiatric Mental Health for the Child	3
NUR 709	Psychiatric Mental Health Practicum	3
NUR 710	Common Problems in Psychiatry/ Mental Hea	3
NUR 711	Psychiatric/Mental Health Prac	3

NUR 712 Psychiatric Mental Health for Select Pop 3

### Curriculum Note:

The semester-by-semester Learning Pathway for this program is available in the School of Nursing.

The curriculum for this program is subject to modification as deemed necessary by the nursing faculty to provide students with the most meaningful educational experience and to remain current with professional standards and guidelines.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Graduates of the MSN program are prepared for higher level professional practice and leadership roles in a variety of healthcare settings, as well as advanced study at the doctoral level.

Specifically, graduates will be able to:

1. **Incorporate** knowledge from the sciences and humanities for improvement of health care across diverse settings.
2. **Demonstrate** leadership abilities encompassing ethical and critical decision-making that embraces a systems perspective.
3. **Apply** appropriate measurement and analysis methods related to organizational quality and safety.
4. **Apply** evidence-based findings to resolve practice problems, and serve as a catalyst for change.
5. **Use** informatics and healthcare technology to integrate and coordinate care.
6. **Participate** in policy development and advocacy strategies at the system level to influence health and healthcare.
7. **Collaborate** effectively on interprofessional teams to improve health outcomes.
8. **Integrate** principles of clinical and population health into care delivery and management.
9. **Deliver** direct and/or indirect nursing practice interventions at the master's level of practice.

## Admission Requirements

An applicant to the MSN program must be a registered nurse or NCLEX-eligible nurse and have a bachelor's degree in nursing or another field. An undergraduate cumulative GPA of 3.00 or better is required. Applicants should submit the following to the Office of Graduate Admissions:

1. A completed admissions application including a resume and a personal statement addressing the following:
  - a. professional goals and motivations
  - b. a nursing experience that has influenced or shaped your practice
  - c. rationale for choosing the specific nurse practitioner specialty.
2. Official transcripts from all schools previously attended.
3. Official recent results of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS) for international applicants.
4. Two letters of recommendation from persons with authority to evaluate your professional ability.
5. Proof of current licensure or eligibility for licensure as a registered nurse in the state of Connecticut.

Candidates applying for full-time admission for the fall term must submit a completed application by May 1. Candidates may be on a waitlist for the fall in the event a space becomes available. However, acceptances are not deferred and wait-listed candidates need to reapply for the following fall. Exceptions may be made in rare circumstances by the chair of the graduate nursing program.

All accepted students are required to complete a background check and urine drug screen following acceptance and before the start of classes. Acceptances are conditional until satisfactory completion of both.

## Progression Requirements

Students are expected to take courses in the order they are presented on the curriculum pathways. Any student wishing to take a course out of sequence must seek permission from the graduate program chair. To preserve quality in our clinical placements, we are not able to accommodate a change in program specialty except on a space-available basis. If a change is desired, students should speak with the graduate program director early in the curriculum to check on any opportunities for change and be placed on a waiting list, if necessary.

According to Quinnipiac University policy, all graduate students are expected to maintain a grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.00 on a 4.00 scale. Full-time graduate students are required to achieve a 3.00 GPA each semester. Part-time graduate students must have an overall GPA of 3.00 upon completion of 9 credits and must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 thereafter. The grading scale of the Graduate Nursing Program is consistent with that of the university.

A student who earns less than a B minus grade in any nursing course will not progress into the next semester. The student is allowed to repeat the course once at Quinnipiac University provided that the course and the subsequent curriculum sequence are offered and must achieve a B minus or better. The student must achieve a minimum grade of a B minus in all subsequent nursing courses. Failure to meet this requirement will result in dismissal from the program. A student who earns unsatisfactory grades (grade of less than B minus) in two or more nursing courses in any semester is not eligible to repeat the courses and will be required to withdraw from the program.

In clinical practica, students must receive a grade of B minus or better on the final faculty and preceptor clinical evaluations in order to pass the course and progress into the next semester. If a student is not performing satisfactorily in clinical according to the preceptor and/or faculty site visitor, a final faculty visit and evaluation of clinical performance will be made by a full-time faculty member, and this final grade must be B minus or better to pass the course.

A student who receives a grade of Incomplete (I) in any nursing courses or practica must meet all course requirements for conversion to a grade before the start of the subsequent semester.

For post-master's students, transfer students, or students returning from an elective leave of absence during their course of study, selected courses must have been completed within a specified period of time. For Pathophysiology, credit will be recognized if the course was taken during the previous five years. For Advanced Health Assessment, Pharmacology and any program specialty course, credit will be recognized if the course was taken during the previous three years. For any of these courses which do not meet the specified period of time, the course must be re-taken for credit. Students may be asked to audit courses

if the interruption to the continuity of their curriculum plan has been significant.

At the end of each semester, the chair of the graduate nursing programs reviews the cumulative GPA and academic record of graduate nursing students. The graduate nursing program chair will notify both the associate dean and the student, in writing, of the student's failure to meet the academic requirements. Students who are performing at an unsatisfactory level will be: a) placed on probation; b) suspended; or c) dismissed. Students placed on academic probation remain in their program but must take specified corrective action to meet program performance standards. Students should meet with their advisers to identify learning strategies to help them accomplish these goals and the student should draft a list or narrative of these strategies, which will serve as a learning contract. A copy of this contract will be placed in the student's folder and should be reviewed periodically with their adviser. Students must demonstrate a significantly increased GPA at the end of that semester in order to continue in the program. Students placed on suspension may also need to take specified actions as directed by the academic dean, graduate nursing program chair or academic adviser.

## Appeal Process

1. A student wishing to appeal a progression decision must write a letter via email to the chair of the graduate nursing program within one week of receiving notice of their inability to progress.
2. Appeals will be considered by a Progression Appeals Committee and chaired by the associate dean. Results will be communicated in writing to the student via email.
3. A student wishing to appeal a course grade should follow the grade appeal process (<http://catalog.qu.edu/university-policies/procedure-appeal-final-grade/>).

### **NUR 500. Biostatistics.**

**1 Credit.**

This biostatistics course is an introduction to probability concepts and statistical tests currently used in the biological and health sciences. The course covers the application of statistics to data analysis. An emphasis is placed on inferential statistics, which includes estimation, confidence intervals, means, variances and proportions.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, Fall and Summer Online

### **NUR 514. Epidemiology and Population Health.**

**2 Credits.**

This course introduces epidemiologic principles, methods and data used in advanced nursing practice. Data and evidence from research are used to: assess acute and chronic population health problems/topics, provide effective possible interventions; and address and examine outcomes.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, All Online

### **NUR 516. Health Policy and Organizational Systems.**

**2 Credits.**

This course provides an introduction to various social and political policy environments impacting advanced nursing practice and health care systems. Students examine issues that inform health care policy, organization and financing. Nursing's advocacy role in shaping policy in organizational, social and political venues is emphasized.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, Fall and Summer Online

- NUR 520. Advanced Health Assessment. 3 Credits.**  
This course presents the principles of performing a comprehensive health assessment and reporting the findings in a professional format. Attention is given to assessment and physical examination across the lifespan within diverse communities. The processes underlying diagnostic decision making are introduced. A laboratory component enables the student to master the techniques of performing a holistic health assessment.  
**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 522 and NUR 530.  
**Corequisites:** Take NUR 520L.  
**Offered:** Every year, Spring Online
- NUR 520L. Advanced Health Assessment Lab. 2 Credits.**  
This lab must be taken with NUR 520. (2 lab hrs.) An on-ground clinical residency is required.  
**Corequisites:** Take NUR 520.  
**Offered:** Every year, Spring
- NUR 522. Advanced Pathophysiology. 3 Credits.**  
Essential concepts of pathophysiology are emphasized. Selected disorders are studied especially as they relate to homeostatic and defense/repair mechanisms. Where appropriate the course includes clinical correlations of disease states with symptoms and physical findings.  
**Prerequisites:** None  
**Offered:** Every year, Fall Online
- NUR 530. Advanced Pharmacology. 3 Credits.**  
Students are introduced to pharmacological management across the lifespan and provided with advanced knowledge of pharmacokinetics. Selected categories of drugs commonly prescribed for management of health care problems and health promotion within diverse communities are presented. Controlled substances and the potential for abuse are discussed. The responsibilities and legalities of prescriptive authority in advanced practice are defined.  
**Prerequisites:** None  
**Offered:** Every year, Fall Online
- NUR 602. Principles of Ethical Theory in Nursing. 1 Credit.**  
This course facilitates the student's formulation of a theoretical basis for ethical judgment at an advanced level of practice. Students analyze ethical theory and debate responses to ethical problems in advanced nursing practice.  
**Prerequisites:** None  
**Offered:** Every year
- NUR 632. Health Promotion and Advocacy. 3 Credits.**  
Health promotion, advocacy and mental health problems encountered in primary care settings are considered. A holistic approach to clients from adolescence to senescence is emphasized. Evidence-based guidelines and research are integrated to develop nursing strategies for health promotion and prevention.  
**Prerequisites:** None  
**Offered:** Every year, Spring Online
- NUR 656. Pediatric Assessment. 1 Credit.**  
This course discusses holistic health assessment of newborns, infants, children and adolescents. Assessment of normal growth and development is presented, as is assessment of common pediatric primary care problems.  
**Prerequisites:** None  
**Offered:** Every year, Spring Online
- NUR 660. Advanced Specialty Diagnostics & Assessment I. 3 Credits.**  
This course provides an overview of diagnostic tools, procedures, and exams in the assessment, diagnosing, and treating of individuals with illness. This course will be delivered in a hybrid format, with students completing online content relevant to their nurse practitioner speciality as an on-ground clinical residency where the emphasis will be on competence in a variety of procedures and techniques specific to the speciality role. The emphasis is not only on learning skills, but also on the appropriate use of these skills in a healing context.  
**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 520, NUR 520L, NUR 530 and NUR 522  
**Offered:** Every year, Summer
- NUR 669. Advanced Specialty Diagnostics & Assessment II. 2 Credits.**  
This course provides an overview of advanced diagnostic tools, procedures, and exams in the assessment, diagnosing, and treating of individuals with illness. This course will be delivered in a hybrid format, with students completing online content as well as an on-ground clinical residency where the emphasis will be on competence in more advanced procedures and techniques specific to the acute care nurse practitioner role. The emphasis is not only on learning skills and techniques, but also on the appropriate use of these skills in a healing context.  
**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 660.  
**Offered:** Every year, Spring
- NUR 702. Psychopharmacology. 2 Credits.**  
This course builds upon the previous advanced pharmacology course and specifically discusses medications used in psychiatry and mental health care. Students learn the use of medications, their interactions and polypharmacy issues that are specific to psychiatry and mental health.  
**Prerequisite:** NUR 530  
**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 530  
**Offered:** Every year, Fall
- NUR 705. Introduction to Psychiatric Mental Health. 3 Credits.**  
This course provides a theoretical and practical framework for the practice of a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner caring for patients with mental health problems across the lifespan. Students learn to apply diagnostic reasoning skills and critical thinking. Students complete 150 clinical hours (1.25 credits) in psychiatric/mental health settings where they demonstrate the ability to provide evidence-based care. An accompanying online clinical conference allows students to discuss the scope of a psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioner as well as management of psychiatric/mental health illnesses. Prereq: NUR 520, 520L, 530, 522.  
**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 520 NUR 520L NUR 530 NUR 522  
**Offered:** Every year, Fall
- NUR 706. Common Problems in Psychiatry and Mental. 3 Credits.**  
The first of two courses regarding common problems in psychiatry and mental health will focus on the psychopathology and management of common mental health illnesses across the adult lifespan. Evidence-based, multidisciplinary management approaches to selected health problems are discussed. The course is grounded by a holistic approach to care; case studies are used to promote clinical reasoning. Prerequisites: NUR 660, 702, 704, 705.  
**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 660 NUR 702 NUR 704 NUR 705  
**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**NUR 707. Psychiatric Mental Health Practicum. 3 Credits.**

Emphasis in this first of three clinical courses is to use diagnostic reasoning, critical thinking, and patient analysis to focus on assessment, identifying differential diagnoses, and managing acute and chronic mental health illnesses in individuals using clinical practice guidelines. Students complete 240 direct care clinical hours in the psychiatric/mental health care setting. In addition to clinical hours, students engage in a one hour weekly clinical conference to present patient problems including a holistic approach to patient needs, differential diagnoses and specific clinical issues. Prereq: NUR 660, 702, 704, 705.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 660 NUR 702 NUR 704 NUR 705

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**NUR 708. Psychiatric Mental Health for the Child. 3 Credits.**

This course focuses on providing mental health care to children and families. Strategies to assess wellness and illness in children and families will be discussed along with psychotherapy techniques and appropriate psychopharmacology. Students will design evidence-based care plans for children with mental health needs. The course is grounded by a holistic approach to care. Prereq: NUR 702 and 704.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 702 NUR 704

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**NUR 709. Psychiatric Mental Health Practicum. 3 Credits.**

In the second of three clinical courses, students will continue to progress using the knowledge learned in previous courses to begin building safe and effective evidence-based plans of care. They will complete 240 direct care clinical hours in the psychiatric/mental health care setting. Emphasis in this course is not only on refining assessment, differential diagnoses and management, but also building case load. Weekly one hour clinical conferences focus on presenting cases, discussing holistic approaches to mental health care and refining differential diagnoses and treatment plans. Prereq: NUR 706, 707.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 706 NUR 707

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**NUR 710. Common Problems in Psychiatry/Mental Hea. 3 Credits.**

The second course regarding common problems in mental care will continue to focus on the psychopathology and management of common but more complex mental health illnesses in individuals. Students will have an opportunity to refine differential diagnosis and management of challenging mental health concerns in diverse populations through the use of case studies. The course is grounded by a holistic approach to care. Prereq: NUR 706.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 706

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**NUR 711. Psychiatric/Mental Health Prac. 3 Credits.**

The final of three clinical courses requires students to use all of the foundational skills learned in previous courses to provide evidence-based care to promote healing in an increasing and varied case load in mental health care of acute or chronically ill patients. Students will build plans of care using the theoretical and clinical knowledge from other courses. Weekly clinical conferences serve to provide students opportunities to discuss challenging acute and chronic mental health care issues as well as provide opportunities to present data in a team like setting. Students complete 150 hours in direct patient care. Prereq: NUR 669, 709, 710.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 669 NUR 709 NUR 710

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**NUR 712. Psychiatric Mental Health for Select Pop. 3 Credits.**

This course focuses on providing mental health care to select populations such as veterans, childbearing families, LGBTQI, older adults, as well as other vulnerable groups. Strategies to assess wellness and illness in these populations will be discussed along with psychotherapy techniques and appropriate psychopharmacology. Students will design evidence-based care plans for the mental health needs in special populations. The course is grounded by a holistic approach to care. Prereq: NUR 710.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 710

**Offered:** Every year, Fall