



Program Guidebook

Master of Science, Nursing - Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

The Master of Science, Nursing - Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (MSNUPMHNP) program is a cutting-edge competency-based graduate program for nurses wishing to become advanced practice registered nurses (APRN) with the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) population focus. PMHNPs deliver cost-effective, holistic, high-quality mental health care to individuals, families, and communities across the lifespan and care setting. The MSNUPMHNP program will prepare graduates to excel in the assessment, diagnostic, prescriptive, and psychotherapeutic treatment processes of advanced practice, as well as in delivering disease prevention and health promotion. In addition to the clinical skills graduates will develop in the MSNUPMHNP program, graduates will be prepared to lead interprofessional healthcare teams, shape healthcare policy, and make business decisions in order to more efficiently deliver high-quality, cost-effective care to individuals, families, and communities across care settings. The MSNUPMHNP program is a blended program with the majority of the coursework delivered online, plus direct patient care clinical practice experiences occurring in the local community. Graduates of the MSNUPMHNP program are eligible to sit for the PMHNP national certification examination. Additionally, the MSNUPMHNP program will prepare graduates to successfully transition to clinical practice in delivering mental health care to individuals, families, and communities across the lifespan and care settings.

Understanding the Competency-Based Approach

Practically speaking, how do competency-based programs like those offered at Western Governors University (WGU) work? Unlike traditional universities, WGU does not award degrees based on completion of a certain number of credit hours or a certain set of required courses. Instead, you will earn your degree by demonstrating your skills, knowledge, and understanding of important concepts.

Progress through a degree program is governed not by the amount of time you spend in class but by your ability to demonstrate mastery of competencies as you complete required courses. Of course, you will need to engage in learning experiences as you review competencies or develop knowledge and skills in areas in which you may be weak. To help you acquire the knowledge and skills you need to complete your courses and program, WGU provides a rich array of learning resources. Your program mentor will work closely with you to help you understand the competencies required for your program and to help you create a schedule for completing your courses. You will also work closely with course instructors as you engage in each of your courses. As subject matter experts, course instructors will guide you through the content you must master to pass the course assessments.

The benefit of this competency-based system is that it enables students who are knowledgeable about a particular subject to make accelerated progress toward completing a degree, even if they lack college experience. You may have gained skills and knowledge of a subject while on the job, accumulated wisdom through years of life experience, or already taken a course on a particular subject. WGU will award your degree based on the skills and knowledge that you possess and can demonstrate—not the number of credits hours on your transcript.

Accreditation

Western Governors University is the only university in the history of American higher education to have earned accreditation from four regional accrediting commissions. WGU's accreditation was awarded by (1) the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, (2) the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, (3) the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and (4) the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The university's accreditation status is now managed by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), which reaffirmed WGU's accreditation in February 2020. The WGU Teachers College is accredited at the initial-licensure level by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and by the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP). The nursing programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The Health Information Management program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). The College of Business programs are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP).

The Degree Plan

The focus of your program is your personalized Degree Plan. The Degree Plan is a detailed blueprint of the courses you will need to complete in order to earn your degree. The Degree Plan also lays out the accompanying learning resources and assessments that compose your program. The list of courses in the Degree Plan is often referred to as the standard path. The amount of time it takes to complete your program depends on both the amount of new information you need to learn and the amount of time you plan to devote each week to study. Your program mentor and course instructors will help you assess your strengths and development needs to establish a study plan.

Students vary widely in the specific skills and information they need to learn. For example, some students may be highly knowledgeable in a particular subject matter and would not need to engage in new learning opportunities. Other students may find that portions of the program require them to learn new information and that they need to take an online class or participate in a study module to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to fulfill program competencies in that area. Some individuals may be able to devote as little

as 15–20 hours per week to the program, while others may need to devote more time. For this reason, pre-assessments are there to help your program mentor form a profile of your prior knowledge and create a personalized Degree Plan.

How You Will Interact with Faculty

At WGU, faculty serve in specialized roles, and they will work with you individually to provide the guidance, instruction, and support you will need to succeed and graduate. As a student, it is important for you to take advantage of this support. It is key to your progress and ultimate success. Upon your enrollment, you will be assigned a program mentor—an expert in your field of study who will provide you with regular program-level guidance and support from the day you start until the day you graduate. Your program mentor will set up regular telephone appointments (weekly at first) with you, which you will be expected to keep. The mentor will review program competencies with you and work with you to develop a plan and schedule for your coursework. Your program mentor will serve as your main point of contact throughout your program—helping you set weekly study goals, recommending specific learning materials, telling you what to expect in courses, and keeping you motivated. In addition to regular calls, your program mentor is available to help you resolve questions and concerns as they arise.

You will also be assigned to a course instructor for each course. Course instructors are doctoral-level subject matter experts who will assist your learning in each individual course. When you begin a new course, your assigned course instructor will actively monitor your progress and will be in touch to offer one-on-one instruction and to provide you with information about webinars, cohort sessions, and other learning opportunities available to help you acquire the competencies you need to master the course. Your course instructor can discuss your learning for the course, help you find answers to content questions, and give you the tools to navigate the course successfully. In addition, you will communicate with course instructors by posting in the online learning community and participating in live discussion sessions such as webinars and cohorts.

For many of the courses at WGU, you will be required to complete performance assessments. These include reports, papers, presentations, and projects that let you demonstrate your mastery of the required competencies. A separate group of faculty members, called evaluators, will review your work to determine whether it meets requirements. Evaluators are also subject matter experts in their field of evaluation. If your assessment needs further work before it “passes,” these evaluators, who review your work anonymously, will provide you with instructional feedback to help you meet evaluation standards and allow you to advance.

Connecting with Other Mentors and Fellow Students

As you proceed through your Degree Plan, you will have direct contact with multiple faculty members. These communications can take a variety of forms, including participation in one-on-one discussions, chats in the learning communities, and live cohort and webinar opportunities. As a WGU student, you will have access to your own personal MyWGU Student Portal, which will provide a gateway to your courses of study, learning resources, and learning communities where you will interact with faculty and other students.

The learning resources in each course are specifically designed to support you as you develop competencies in preparation for your assessments. These learning resources may include reading materials, videos, tutorials, cohort opportunities, community discussions, and live discussions that are guided by course instructors who are experts in their field. You will access your program community during your orientation course to network with peers who are enrolled in your program and to receive continued support through professional enrichment and program-specific chats, blogs, and discussions. WGU also provides Student Services associates to help you and your program mentor solve any special problems that may arise.

Orientation

The WGU orientation course focuses on acquainting you with WGU's competency-based model, distance education, technology, and other resources and tools available for students. You will also utilize WGU program and course communities, participate in activities, and get to know other students at WGU. The orientation course must be completed before you can start your first term at WGU.

Transferability of Prior College Coursework

Because WGU is a competency-based institution, it does not award degrees based on credits but rather on demonstration of competency. However, if you have completed college coursework at another accredited institution, or if you have completed industry certifications, you may have your transcripts and certifications evaluated to determine if you are eligible to receive some transfer credit. The guidelines for determining what credits will be granted varies based on the degree program. Students entering graduate programs must have their undergraduate degree verified before being admitted to WGU. To review more information in regards to transfer guidelines based on the different degree programs, you may visit the Student Handbook found at the link below and search for "Transfer Credit Evaluation."

[Click here for the Student Handbook](#)

WGU does not waive any requirements based on a student's professional experience and does not perform a "résumé review" or "portfolio review" that will automatically waive any degree requirements. Degree requirements and transferability rules are subject to change in order to keep the degree content relevant and current.

Remember, WGU's competency-based approach lets you take advantage of your knowledge and skills, regardless of how you obtained them. Even when you do not directly receive credit, the knowledge you possess may help you accelerate the time it takes to complete your degree program.

Continuous Enrollment, On Time Progress, and Satisfactory Academic Progress

WGU is a "continuous enrollment" institution, which means you will be automatically enrolled in each of your new terms while you are at WGU. Each term is six months long. Longer terms and continuous enrollment allow you to focus on your studies without the hassle of unnatural breaks between terms that you would experience at a more traditional university. At the end of every six-month term, you and your program mentor will review the progress you have made and revise your Degree Plan for your next six-month term.

WGU requires that students make measurable progress toward the completion of their degree programs every term. We call this "On-Time Progress," denoting that you are on track and making progress toward on-time graduation. As full-time students, graduate students must enroll in at least 8 competency units each term, and undergraduate students must enroll in at least 12 competency units each term. Completing at least these minimum enrollments is essential to On-Time Progress and serves as a baseline from which you may accelerate your program. We measure your progress based on the courses you are able to pass, not on your accumulation of credit hours or course grades. Every time you pass a course, you are demonstrating that you have mastered skills and knowledge in your degree program. For comparison to traditional grading systems, passing a course means you have demonstrated competency equivalent to a "B" grade or better.

WGU assigns competency units to each course in order to track your progress through the program. A competency unit is equivalent to one semester credit of learning. Some courses may be assigned 3 competency units while others may be as large as 12 competency units.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is particularly important to students on financial aid because you must achieve SAP in order to maintain eligibility for financial aid. We will measure your SAP quantitatively by reviewing the number of competency units you have completed each term. In order to remain in good

academic standing, you must complete at least 66.67% of the units you attempt over the length of your program—including any courses you add to your term to accelerate your progress. Additionally, during your first term at WGU you must pass at least 3 competency units in order to remain eligible for financial aid. We know that SAP is complex, so please contact a financial aid counselor should you have additional questions. *Please note: The Endorsement Preparation Program in Educational Leadership is not eligible for federal financial aid.

Courses

Your Degree Plan includes courses needed to complete your program. To obtain your degree, you will be required to demonstrate your skills and knowledge by completing the assessment(s) for each course. In general there are two types of assessments: performance assessments and objective assessments. Performance assessments contain, in most cases, multiple scored tasks such as projects, essays, and research papers. Objective assessments include multiple-choice items, multiple-selection items, matching, short answer, drag-and-drop, and point-and-click item types, as well as case study and video-based items. Certifications verified through third parties may also be included in your program. More detailed information about each assessment is provided in each course of study.

Learning Resources

WGU works with many different educational partners, including enterprises, publishers, training companies, and higher educational institutions, to provide high-quality and effective learning resources that match the competencies you are developing. These vary in type, and may be combined to create the best learning experience for your course. A learning resource can be an e-textbook, online module, study guide, simulation, virtual lab, tutorial, or a combination of these. The cost of most learning resources are included in your tuition and Learning Resource Fee. They can be accessed or enrolled for through your courses. Some degree-specific resources are not covered by your tuition, and you will need to cover those costs separately. WGU also provides a robust library to help you obtain additional learning resources, as needed.

Mobile Compatibility:

The following article provides additional details about the current state of mobile compatibility for learning resources at WGU.

[Student Handbook article: Can I use my mobile device for learning resources?](#)

Standard Path

As previously mentioned, competency units (CUs) have been assigned to each course in order to measure your academic progress. If you are an undergraduate student, you will be expected to enroll in a minimum of 12 competency units each term. Graduate students are expected to enroll in a minimum of 8 competency units each term. A standard plan for a student for this program who entered WGU without any transfer units would look similar to the one on the following page. Your personal progress can be faster, but your pace will be determined by the extent of your transfer units, your time commitment, and your determination to proceed at a faster rate.

Standard Path *for* Master of Science, Nursing - Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Course Description	CUs	Term
Professional Presence and Influence	2	1
Advanced Pathophysiology for the Advanced Practice Nurse	4	1
Essentials of Advanced Nursing Roles and Interprofessional Practice	2	1
Quality Outcomes in a Culture of Value-Based Nursing Care	2	1
Informatics for Transforming Nursing Care	3	2
Advanced Pharmacology for the Advanced Practice Nurse	4	2
Leadership and Management in Complex Healthcare Systems	3	2
Advancing Evidence-Based Innovation in Nursing Practice	3	2
Advanced Health Assessment for the Advanced Practice Nurse	4	3
Foundations of Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Practice	3	3
The Assessment and Diagnostic Process of Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Practice	3	3
Psychopharmacology for Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Practice	3	4
Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Care of Adults and Older Adults Across Care Settings	3	4
Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Care of Children and Adolescents Across Care Settings	3	4
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Clinical Internship I	3	5
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Clinical Internship II	3	5
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Clinical Internship III	3	5

Changes to Curriculum

WGU publishes an Institutional Catalog, which describes the academic requirements of each degree program. Although students are required to complete the program version current at the time of their enrollment, WGU may modify requirements and course offerings within that version of the program to maintain the currency and relevance of WGU's competencies and programs. When program requirements are updated, students readmitting after withdrawal from the university will be expected to re-enter into the most current catalog version of the program.

Areas of Study for Master of Science, Nursing - Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

The following section includes the areas of study in the program, with their associated courses. Your specific learning resources and level of instructional support will vary based on the individual competencies you bring to the program and your confidence in developing the knowledge, skills, and abilities required in each area of the degree. The Degree Plan and learning resources are dynamic, so you need to review your Degree Plan and seek the advice of your mentor regarding the resources before you purchase them.

MSN Core

Professional Presence and Influence

Professional Presence and Influence is a masters-level course designed to guide students towards an enhanced state of presence, where therapeutic relationships are built between nurse and patient. Students will learn techniques for self-care practices that result in enhanced mental and physical wellbeing and that ensure ethically-generated patient care. Presence is an intrapersonal and interpersonal quality that allows the nurse to relate to others and to be aware of the world around them. The characteristics of presence, which include holism, intimacy, sensitivity and adaptability, create a heightened sense of awareness that fosters therapeutic relationships between the nurse and patient. Developing a mindful, authentic presence is central to health and spiritual practices in several cultures and a major element of leadership. Students will intentionally develop a focused mindfulness practice that will influence patient outcomes and lead to conditions that create joy in the workplace.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner promotes a healthy work environment by demonstrating a professional presence that includes self-awareness characteristics.*
- *The learner develops solutions and strategies that build positive relationships and promote mindfulness in the workplace.*
- *The learner recommends social communication strategies and technologies to promote a sense of caring and belonging.*
- *The learner applies the principles of improvement science to solve the problem of hostility in the workplace and initiate organizational change designed to promote health and joy in the workplace.*
- *The learner implements the principles of academic writing to produce clear, concise, and evidence-based written communications.*

Essentials of Advanced Nursing Roles and Interprofessional Practice

Essentials of Advanced Nursing Roles and Interprofessional Practice explores essential characteristics of the advanced professional nurse in the role of leader, educator, practitioner, or informatics specialist. In this course, students will apply evidence-based strategies to facilitate interprofessional collaboration on teams. Students will explore the role of nurses in advocating for change at the bedside, as well as leading teams to advocate for health policy reform. Students will gather and analyze data to identify patients and populations at risk and recommend policy change to improve health outcomes in the community.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner recommends strategies for practicing lifelong learning skills to encourage the continuous improvement essential for practicing as an advanced nursing professional*
- *The learner recommends legal and regulatory policies that advocate for improved health outcomes in patients and populations.*
- *The learner analyzes the roles and interaction of interprofessional team members to assess the resulting impact on healthcare outcomes.*
- *The learner analyzes organizational performance data to guide recommendations for improving healthcare outcomes and disseminating results to a professional community.*

Quality Outcomes in a Culture of Value-Based Nursing Care

Quality Outcomes in a Culture of Value-Based Nursing Care incorporates current standards of quality and safety within the context of value-based care. In a value-based healthcare system, the benefits are derived from measuring health outcomes against the cost of delivering the outcomes. These benefits are then extended to patients, providers, payers, suppliers, and society as a whole. This course introduces new healthcare delivery models, which stress a team-oriented approach to patient care and sharing of patient data so that care is coordinated, and outcomes can be measured easily. Emphasis is placed on performance and quality improvement methods that underlie value-based nursing care. The nurse in advanced practice today must exemplify the standards of quality and safety and be prepared to lead the delivery of value-based patient-centered care.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner analyzes the culture of continuous quality improvement and the provision of value-based care to optimize patient outcomes using a systems-thinking analytic approach.*
- *The learner develops a systematic process that incorporates quality measures and benchmarks to assess organizational strengths and vulnerabilities.*
- *The learner integrates performance and process improvement methodologies to develop solutions for identified quality and safety gaps in the practice setting.*
- *The learner establishes measurable metrics and processes to evaluate the effectiveness of value-based care strategies and initiatives.*

Informatics for Transforming Nursing Care

Informatics for Transforming Nursing Care integrates nursing science with multiple information and analytical sciences to identify, define, manage, and communicate data, information, knowledge, and wisdom in nursing practice. Students will acquire knowledge and skills to apply informatics concepts, communications, and data that are critical to facilitating interprofessional data-driven decision-making. It is designed to build competence in the use of patient- and population-based applications that inform and support the transformation of nursing care delivery toward a future of value-based quality nursing care that improves health outcomes. This course aligns theoretical concepts with practical applications of informatics and is consistent with the functional areas and responsibilities of informatics nurses as defined by the American Nurses Association Scope and Standards for nursing informatics.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner analyzes the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of the nursing informatics scope and standards to improve patient experience and health outcomes.*
- *The learner determines how technology and informatics can be optimized to improve the patient experience and lower healthcare costs.*
- *The learner analyzes core administrative systems to support the management of safe, cost-effective, and high-quality healthcare.*
- *The learner analyzes data from population-based systems to mitigate public health threats and decrease incidence of disease.*
- *The learner designs data collection tools and processes to capture, analyze, and report health indicators and outcomes.*
- *The learner refines data to visually represent, forecast, monitor, and report progress in meeting healthcare outcomes.*

Leadership and Management in Complex Healthcare Systems

Leadership and Management in Complex Healthcare Systems prepares graduate nurses to be thoughtful strategists and informed decision-makers who serve as strong leaders in high-performing healthcare systems. Students develop competencies for managing diverse teams in complex systems, monitoring and measuring organizational performance, allocating financial and human resources, and leading change towards a transformed healthcare system. Additionally, students acquire the knowledge and skills to become full partners with other healthcare professionals by demonstrating nurse contributions toward high-quality care to patients and populations, while working collaboratively with interprofessional teams. There are no prerequisites for this course.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner determines the effective leadership skills and approaches required to navigate a diverse staff in a changing healthcare environment.*
- *The learner creates communication and change management plans to foster a culture of innovation.*
- *The learner analyzes data to measure progress in meeting organizational performance indicators in complex healthcare systems.*
- *The learner determines system-level factors necessary to support and empower interprofessional teams.*
- *The learner validates key performance indicators to measure the impact of nursing care on patient and population outcomes.*
- *The learner proposes a strategic business plan to start a nurse-managed practice.*

Advancing Evidence-Based Innovation in Nursing Practice

Advancing Evidence-Based Innovation in Nursing Practice introduces students to the dynamic union of healthcare innovation and evidence. Core competencies and behaviors required to be a nurse innovator are discussed. Strategies for measuring innovation at various system levels are presented, as well as techniques for synthesizing and disseminating evidence to advance innovation in healthcare. The skills needed to appraise the quality of diverse sources of evidence are presented within the framework of evidence-based practice. This course focuses on identifying new and emerging sources of evidence that can inform, translate, and scale the complexity of leading innovation in healthcare organizations. Students will experience building communities of practice for collaboratively developing innovative practices and policies designed to improve the health of populations and enhance the patient experience of care.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner analyzes evidence from research, clinical expertise, and patient experiences to contribute to the innovation of healthcare practices and policies.*
- *The learner incorporates research strategies and processes to search and review relevant evidence from credible sources.*
- *The learner evaluates innovative best practices that support outcomes-driven healthcare practices.*
- *The learner incorporates new evidence from big data and emerging technologies to design innovative practices.*
- *The learner applies the theory of disruption when developing innovative strategies to improve healthcare outcomes.*
- *The learner synthesizes credible sources of evidence to propose innovative patient care practice guidelines, organizational goals and strategies, and population-based care policies.*

Nurse Practitioner Core

Advanced Pathophysiology for the Advanced Practice Nurse

Advanced Pathophysiology for the Advanced Practice Nurse prepares the graduate nursing student for the role of an advanced practice nurse with the competencies and skills needed to recognize disease states, identify disease progression, and assess and evaluate symptoms for patients across the lifespan. This course will help the graduate nursing student gain a deeper understanding of pathophysiology from the cellular to the systems level and will provide graduate nursing students with the knowledge and skills to determine the etiology, underlying physiological changes, and the human affective responses to alterations in health. This course will also prepare the graduate nursing student to communicate the pathophysiology of disease processes to providers and patients.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate evaluates foundational concepts of pathophysiology, including the genetic, immunological, and lifestyle factors associated with the development of disease, in order to improve patient education and health outcomes.*
- *The graduate evaluates the pathophysiology of diseases affecting the HEENT, neurologic, and endocrine systems, as well as the neurobiology of psychiatric disorders, to determine disease management and improve patient education*

and health outcomes.

- *The graduate evaluates the pathophysiology of diseases affecting the reproductive and pulmonary systems to determine disease management and improve patient education and health outcomes.*
- *The graduate evaluates the pathophysiology of diseases affecting the hematologic, cardiovascular, and lymphatic systems to determine disease management and improve patient education and health outcomes.*
- *The graduate evaluates the pathophysiology of diseases affecting the renal, urologic, and gastrointestinal systems to determine disease management and improve patient education and health outcomes.*
- *The graduate evaluates the pathophysiology of diseases affecting the musculoskeletal and integumentary systems to determine disease management and improve patient education and health outcomes.*

Advanced Pharmacology for the Advanced Practice Nurse

Advanced Pharmacology for the Advanced Practice Nurse prepares the graduate nursing student for the role of an advanced practice nurse with the competencies and skills for prescribing and monitoring medication safely and effectively. This course will prepare the graduate nursing student to apply pharmacotherapeutics in primary care settings by utilizing the pivotal basis of pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics. This course will also prepare the graduate nursing student to select the correct medication, describe the rationale for that selection to the patient, family, and other providers, and to effectively monitor the patient to promote positive drug outcomes.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate integrates the practice of evidence-based medicine and pharmacology principles to effectively, safely, and responsibly make decisions to improve patient care and address underlying health concerns.*
- *The graduate analyzes how the nervous system is affected by neuropharmacology to improve quality of life and health outcomes.*
- *The graduate analyzes how pharmacology affects the pulmonary and cardiovascular systems to inform decisions that improve quality of life and health outcomes.*
- *The graduate synthesizes pharmacological changes for patients in the transition of care to improve the overall patient experience.*
- *The graduate analyzes how pharmacology affects wellness, nutrition, and women's and men's health to improve quality of life and health outcomes.*
- *The graduate analyzes how pharmacology affects the gastrointestinal and endocrine systems, as well as obesity, to improve quality of life and health outcomes.*
- *The graduate analyzes how pharmacology affects infectious diseases, allergies, and musculoskeletal disorders to make evidence-based decisions to improve quality of life and health outcomes.*

Advanced Health Assessment for the Advanced Practice Nurse

Advanced Health Assessment prepares the graduate nursing student to perform the role of an advanced practice nurse with the essential competencies necessary to provide primary health care to patients and families of diverse populations. Students will develop the skills needed for systematically collecting and analyzing subjective and objective patient data. Through simulation and clinical experiences, students will use data to determine current and ongoing patient health status, predict health risks, and identify health-promoting activities for patients across the lifespan. Advanced Health Assessment will prepare the nursing graduate with the critical thinking, clinical reasoning, and advanced diagnostic skills required for advanced practice nursing. Upon completion of Advanced Health Assessment, the graduate will be able to synthesize individual and systems level subjective and objective data to facilitate the differential diagnosis processes. Also, the graduate will be able to clearly describe to patients and providers the pertinent health assessment findings and rationale supporting the diagnostic process.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate generates a comprehensive patient health assessment using subjective and objective data.*
- *The graduate evaluates the head, eyes, ears, nose, and throat (HEENT), lymphatic, central nervous, and psychiatric systems using a holistic assessment approach to document normal and abnormal findings and incorporate lifespan considerations.*

- *The graduate evaluates the pulmonary, cardiovascular, and peripheral vascular systems using a holistic assessment approach to document normal and abnormal findings and incorporate lifespan considerations.*
- *The graduate evaluates the gastrointestinal and urinary systems using a holistic assessment approach to document normal and abnormal findings and incorporate lifespan considerations.*
- *The graduate evaluates the female and male reproductive systems using a holistic assessment approach to document normal and abnormal findings and incorporate lifespan considerations.*
- *The graduate evaluates the musculoskeletal, integumentary, and peripheral nervous systems using a holistic assessment approach to document normal and abnormal findings and incorporate lifespan considerations.*

Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Specialty

Foundations of Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Practice

Foundations of Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Practice guides students through the process of learning about mental health and mental illness. This course presents the history of psychiatric care, along with cultural components that influence individual attitudes and behaviors. This course introduces conceptual models and theories related to practice that provide the basis for understanding the development of psychopathology to apply appropriate therapeutic strategies. This course includes clinical practice guidelines using the DSM-5-TR (Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) as a basis for diagnostic consistency across the lifespan. This course also includes relevant advanced practice issues, legal and ethical components, and barriers to practice that a mental health psychiatric nurse practitioner may encounter. Various psychological responses to stress are also discussed. The following courses are prerequisites: All MSN Core courses, Advanced Pathophysiology for the Advanced Practice Nurse, Advanced Pharmacology for the Advanced Practice Nurse, and Advanced Health Assessment for the Advanced Practice Nurse.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner analyzes policies related to the individual practice and advocacy of rights, health, and safety of patients and populations.*
- *The learner applies principles of effective communication, collaboration, and cultural sensitivity when working with diverse populations in behavioral healthcare delivery.*
- *The learner analyzes evidence-based data for effective psychotherapeutic treatment modalities.*
- *The learner applies logic and reasoning skills to understand the relationship between patients' behaviors and their intentions or motivations.*
- *The learner evaluates evidence-based therapeutic relationship strategies to reduce emotional distress, facilitate cognitive and behavioral change, and foster personal growth in individuals and communities.*
- *The learner explains how to use self-reflective practices and stress management techniques that build relationships, promote behavior change, and mitigate professional stress.*

The Assessment and Diagnostic Process of Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Practice

The Assessment and Diagnostic Processes for Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Practice guides students when examining determinants to the role of the psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner. This course guides students in building a therapeutic relationship with patients through interviewing skills, conducting a structured assessment, milieu, types of therapy, and various care strategies, including technology usage. This course guides students through exploring their leadership role in collaborating with the interprofessional community as a mental health nurse practitioner. Pathways of quality improvement, practice evaluation, and healthcare reform are also considered. The following courses are prerequisites: All MSN Core courses, Advanced Pathophysiology for the Advanced Practice Nurse, Advanced Pharmacology for the Advanced Practice Nurse, and Advanced Health Assessment for the Advanced Practice Nurse.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner applies holistic evidence-based mental health strategies to promote disease prevention and optimal mental health across the life span.*
- *The learner conducts a structured assessment of a patient's behavioral and cognitive functioning to guide safe patient care.*

- *The learner develops individualized mental health plans of care that reflect current comprehensive treatment planning methods, tools, and techniques.*
- *The learner collaborates with interprofessionals or care team members to achieve quality patient care outcomes through shared decision-making.*
- *The learner determines psychotherapy techniques that promote well-being, health maintenance, and positive health outcomes.*

Psychopharmacology for Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Practice

Psychopharmacology for Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Practice explains the knowledge of advanced pharmacotherapeutics and why it is important to safely and appropriately prescribe agents to manage common chronic and acute mental health problems of diverse populations. This includes differences between experimental and clinical psychopharmacology. This course covers the principles of pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics in administration, along with patient education. This course discusses factors of addiction and substance use, including prevalence, clinical manifestations, and treatment of various disorders. Collaborative clinical services, such as group counseling, therapeutic communities, and medication support, are explored. The foundational information in psychopharmacology in this course guides students in planning individualized mental health drug management for individuals across the life span based on setting, context, and professional ethics. The following courses are prerequisites: all MSN Core courses, Advanced Pathophysiology for the Advanced Practice Nurse, Advanced Pharmacology for the Advanced Practice Nurse, and Advanced Health Assessment for the Advanced Practice Nurse.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner assesses a patient's mental health status to safely prescribe appropriate pharmacologic agents.*
- *The learner incorporates best practices when caring for patients who present with signs of substance abuse or addiction issues.*
- *The learner recommends appropriate and effective medications used to treat various mental health conditions and psychiatric disorders.*

Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Care of Adults and Older Adults Across Care Settings

Advanced Psychiatric Care of Adults and Older Adults Across Care Settings prepares students to provide evidence-based mental healthcare for adults, older adults, and families. This course guides students through the application of age and developmentally appropriate advanced practice health assessment knowledge and diagnostic reasoning skills for adults, older adults, and families experiencing complex mental health issues. This course helps students develop treatment plans using psychotherapeutic treatment modalities, psychopharmacology, and community resources to manage specific mental health disorders for adults, older adults, and families. This course also includes the influences of family dynamics and societal norms on mental health progression and recovery. The following courses are prerequisites: All MSN Core courses, Advanced Pathophysiology for the Advanced Practice Nurse, Advanced Pharmacology for the Advanced Practice Nurse, and Advanced Health Assessment for the Advanced Practice Nurse.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner diagnoses acute and chronic mental conditions in adults and older adults across care settings using the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5-TR).*
- *The learner synthesizes patient-centered treatment plans including Psychotherapeutic and/or Pharmacological treatments for adults and older adults across care settings.*
- *The learner incorporates mental health best practice approaches, therapeutic interventions, and health teaching into the care of adults, couples, and families across care settings.*
- *The learner incorporates mental health best practice approaches and therapeutic interventions into the care of older adults throughout the developmental life stage and across care settings.*

Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Care of Children and Adolescents Across Care Settings

Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Care of Children and Adolescents across Care Settings prepares students to provide evidence-based mental healthcare for children, adolescents, and families. This course guides students through the application of age and developmentally appropriate advanced practice health assessment knowledge and diagnostic reasoning skills for children, adolescents, and families experiencing complex mental health issues. This course helps

students develop treatment plans to manage specific mental health disorders through the use of psychotherapeutic treatment modalities, psychopharmacology, and community resources. This course also covers the influences of family dynamics and societal norms on mental health progression and recovery. The following are prerequisites for this course: all MSN Core courses, Advanced Pathophysiology for the Advanced Practice Nurse, Advanced Pharmacology for the Advanced Practice Nurse, and Advanced Health Assessment for the Advanced Practice Nurse.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner diagnoses acute and chronic mental conditions in children and adolescents across care settings using the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5-TR). (4, 5.2)*
- *The learner synthesizes patient-centered treatment plans including psychotherapeutic and/or pharmacological treatments for children and adolescent patient populations across care settings.*
- *The learner incorporates mental health best-practice approaches, therapeutic interventions, and health teaching into the care of children, adolescent patients, and their families across care settings.*

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Clinical Internship I

Through precepted clinical experiences, the learner will develop the competencies needed to provide comprehensive and holistic mental health care to individuals, families, and communities across the lifespan. In the precepted clinical setting, the learner will combine competencies developed in preparatory advanced practice coursework to deliver consumer-centered mental health care. Therefore, the learner will conduct advanced mental health assessments and utilize the competencies of advanced pathophysiology, psychopharmacology, psychotherapy, and health promotion for individuals and populations across the life span to build self-efficacy in individuals and groups, to determine correct diagnoses, and to establish mental health plans of care that include consumer and population preferences. All MSN Core Courses, NP Core courses, and PMHNP Specialty courses must be completed before taking this course.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The learner gathers patient mental health data in the care of individuals, families, and populations across the lifespan and care settings as a novice.*
- *The learner synthesizes subjective and objective data from individuals, families, and populations across the lifespan in order to provide accurate mental health diagnoses in a range of care settings as a novice.*
- *The learner creates evidence-based individual-, family-, and population-centered mental health plans, including guidelines, clinical expertise, consumer preferences and values, organizational context, and resource limitations in a range of care settings as a novice.*
- *The learner evaluates the effectiveness of individual-, family-, and population-centered mental health plans in order to modify the plan, offer additional mental health education, or refer patients to other providers to improve quality outcomes in a range of settings as a novice.*

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Clinical Internship II

Through precepted clinical experiences, the learner will develop competencies needed to provide comprehensive and holistic mental health care to individuals, families, and communities across the lifespan. In the precepted clinical setting, the learner will combine competencies developed in preparatory advanced practice coursework to deliver consumer-centered mental health care. Therefore, the learner will conduct advanced mental health assessments and utilize the competencies of advanced pathophysiology, psychopharmacology, psychotherapy and health promotion for individuals and populations across the life span to build self-efficacy in individuals and groups, to determine correct diagnoses, and to establish mental health plans of care that include consumer and population preferences. All MSN Core Courses, NP Core courses, and PMHNP Specialty courses must be completed before taking this course.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The learner gathers patient mental health data in the care of individuals, families, and populations across the lifespan and care settings as an advanced beginner.*
- *The learner synthesizes subjective and objective data from individuals, families, and populations across the lifespan in order to provide accurate mental health diagnoses in a range of care settings as an advanced beginner.*
- *The learner creates evidence-based individual-, family-, and population-centered mental health plans, including guidelines, clinical expertise, consumer preferences and values, organizational context, and resource limitations in a range of care settings as an advanced beginner.*
- *The learner evaluates the effectiveness of individual-, family-, and population-centered mental health plans in order to*

modify the plan, offer additional mental health education, or refer patients to other providers to improve quality outcomes in a range of settings as an advanced beginner.

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Clinical Internship III

Through precepted clinical experiences, the learner will develop competencies needed to provide comprehensive and holistic mental health care to individuals, families, and communities across the lifespan. In the precepted clinical setting, the learner will combine competencies developed in preparatory advanced practice coursework to deliver consumer-centered mental health care. Therefore, the learner will conduct advanced mental health assessments and utilize the competencies of advanced pathophysiology, psychopharmacology, psychotherapy and health promotion for individuals and populations across the life span to build self-efficacy in individuals and groups, to determine correct diagnoses, and to establish mental health plans of care that include consumer and population preferences. All MSN Core Courses, NP Core courses, and PMHNP Specialty courses must be completed before taking this course.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The learner gathers patient mental health data in the care of individuals, families, and populations across the lifespan and care settings as a competent provider.*
- *The learner synthesizes subjective and objective data from individuals, families, and populations across the lifespan in order to provide accurate mental health diagnoses in a range of care settings as a competent provider.*
- *The learner creates evidence-based individual-, family-, and population-centered mental health plans, including guidelines, clinical expertise, consumer preferences and values, organizational context, and resource limitations in a range of care settings as a competent provider.*
- *The learner evaluates the effectiveness of individual-, family-, and population-centered mental health plans in order to modify the plan, offer additional mental health education, or refer patients to other providers to improve quality outcomes in a range of settings as a competent provider.*

Accessibility and Accommodations

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Student Services team members also assist with unresolved concerns to find equitable resolutions. To contact the Student Services team, please feel free to call 877-435-7948 or e-mail studentservices@wgu.edu. We are available Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., mountain standard time. Closed Sundays.

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