



# ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

*Mennonite College of Nursing*

## **Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Post Master's Certificate Preceptor Manual**

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**ILLINOIS STATE  
UNIVERSITY**



**MENNONITE COLLEGE OF NURSING**

Dear Preceptor,

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a preceptor for the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner post-master's certificate sequence of our graduate program. Mennonite College of Nursing at Illinois State University is committed to producing the "preferred graduate" and as such, maintains a strong clinical component for the program. This strength is based upon the quality of our experienced clinical preceptors, as well as that of our curriculum, faculty, and students.

This preceptor manual has been developed to provide you with information about the graduate certificate program and the clinical courses for which you might serve as a preceptor. It also includes guidelines related to your preceptor role. We ask that you read this manual prior to precepting the student and to use it whenever a question might arise related to the student's clinical practicum. We encourage you to contact the course faculty should you have any questions or concerns about the clinical practicum or any student practicing with you. Contact information for course faculty is provided to you in writing at the beginning of each semester in which you are serving as a preceptor.

We hope you will find your role as a preceptor both personally and professionally satisfying. And, again, we thank you for your contribution to the education of our future psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners!

Sincerely,

The Faculty

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner sequence

Mennonite College of Nursing Graduate Program

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Resources used to develop this manual:

Ball State University. Preceptor orientation manual.

National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (2000). *Partners in NP education: A preceptor manual for NP programs, faculty, preceptors, & students*. Washington, DC: NONPF.

“Nurse Practitioner Clinical Preceptor Guide” adapted from The Geriatric Interdisciplinary Team Training Program Nurse Practitioner Clinical Preceptor Guide.

**Mission Statement**

Mennonite College of Nursing promotes excellence and innovation in education while striving to improve health locally and globally through exceptionally well-prepared nurses.

**Vision Statement**

To be a community that sets the standard for excellence in nursing practice and education, changing the world one exceptionally well-prepared nurse at a time.

**Values**

We value life-long, curious learners and relationships with one another and our community. We strive to improve health; demonstrate excellence in our work; provide service to and care for others; and display empathy, openness, advocacy, and purposeful action, in an environment that welcomes diversity while promoting inclusion and the celebration of personal and professional accomplishments.

**Graduate Program: Purposes and Outcomes Objectives**

The Master of Science in Nursing degree program offered at Mennonite College of Nursing is designed to prepare nurses to function in selected advanced practice nursing roles, including as family nurse practitioners, psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners, and nursing leaders. The program builds on the generalist base of a baccalaureate program which focuses on nursing practice with individuals, groups, and community systems.

## Purposes

- Prepare nurses for advanced practice in health care as family nurse practitioners, psychiatric nurse practitioners, and nursing leaders;
- Prepare graduates to assume leadership roles within the health care system at the regional, state, and national levels;
- Prepare nurses who can identify researchable problems, participate in conducting research, and promote the use of research findings in practice; and
- Provide the foundation for doctoral study.

## Outcome Objectives

The graduate of the master's degree program will:

- Demonstrate advanced knowledge and skills in an area of nursing practice;
- Demonstrate excellence in nursing practice by utilizing the processes of scientific inquiry;
- Critically evaluate theories and models from nursing and related disciplines for application to nursing practice;
- Provide leadership which reflects an understanding of the health care delivery system;
- Demonstrate a commitment to compassionate, professional caring through collaborative endeavors with clients and other health care providers;
- Respond to the social, economic, political, ethical, and professional issues affecting nursing practice; and
- Demonstrate the ability to communicate a level appropriate for public speaking and professional writing.

## **Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) Post-Master's Certificate**

The Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) sequence, a 24 credit-hour post-master's certificate program, prepares graduates to function in a specialized advanced practice role. The certificate program builds on the knowledge and experience acquired by the Family Nurse Practitioner through education and clinical practice.

The PMHNP applies the nursing process to assess, diagnose, and treat individuals, families, and groups with acute and chronic psychiatric disorders or the potential for such disorders. The practice of the PMHNP is based on a synthesis of knowledge from the following areas: nursing theory, advanced pathophysiology, pharmacotherapeutics, epidemiology, diagnostic reasoning, advanced health assessment, research, roles, and legal/ethical issues, as well as content and clinical practice dealing with care across the lifespan.

The PMHNP utilizes the full scope of therapeutic skills, including psychopharmacology, psychotherapy, and psychoeducation. The role also includes participation in and use of research, development and implementation of health policy, quality evaluation and improvement, and education of individuals and groups. The PMHNP works in a variety of settings, such as hospitals, primary care, clinics, schools, telemedicine, public health facilities, private practice, and treatment centers. The role of the PMHNP addresses the shortage of qualified psychiatric professionals and expands access to mental health care.

Graduates are eligible to take the certification examination for Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioners (Lifespan) offered through the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). The program is fully accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

### **Program of Study**

<b>Course #</b>	<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Semester Hours</b>	<b>Clinical Hours</b>
NUR 420	Psychopharmacology	3	
NUR 421	Psychotherapeutics for Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing	3	
NUR 422	Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Practice I	7	180
NUR 423	Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Practice II	7	180
NUR 424	Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Practice III	4	180
	<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>540</b>

# **Clinical Course Descriptions & Objectives**

## NUR 422: Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Practice I

### **Course Description**

This course provides an overview of developmental theories, psychological growth and development, neurobiology, and the psychiatric diagnostic reasoning process. Emphasis is on the evaluation and treatment of common psychopathological disorders in adults.

### **Clinical Emphasis**

The practicum includes clinical preceptorship and clinical experience in the role and scope of the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner in various settings, including the opportunity to develop competence in the provision of psychiatric care to adults in a complex healthcare system.

### **Course Objectives**

At the successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Provide a supportive, confidential, caring, therapeutic environment in the psychiatric care of clients across the lifespan.
2. Demonstrate culturally sensitive attitudes and behaviors that facilitate client autonomy and participation in the treatment plan.
3. Use evidence-based screening and clinical evaluation tools in the assessment of adults with psychiatric health concerns.

## NUR 423: Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Practice II

### **Course Description**

Didactic and practicum expand on previous content, including evidence-based assessment and treatment of common pediatric- and geriatric-specific psychiatric disorders. This course provides an overview of the continuum of psychiatric care, including risk assessment, early intervention, crisis management, recovery, and resiliency. Issues relevant to special populations include trauma-informed care, adverse childhood experiences, stigma, legal and ethical concerns, and health inequity. Emphasis is on the evaluation and treatment of age-specific psychiatric disorders in the pediatric and older adult populations.

### **Clinical Emphasis**

The practicum includes clinical preceptorships and continuing clinical experience in the role and scope of the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner in various settings, including the opportunity to develop competence in the provision of psychiatric care across the lifespan in a complex healthcare system.

### **Course Objectives**

At the successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate appropriate diagnostic reasoning and critical thinking skills related to the identification, assessment, and treatment of common psychopathologic conditions across the lifespan.
2. Provide counseling and guidance to clients and families across the lifespan about expected and potential changes related to specific psychopathologic conditions and their treatments.
3. Manage the care of pediatric, adult, and geriatric clients based on evidence-based clinical practice guidelines and client goals, preferences, and socioeconomic factors.

## NUR 424: Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Practice III

### **Course Description**

Didactic and practicum focus on synthesis of advanced knowledge with emphasis on clinical competencies for advanced psychiatric mental health practice. This course provides an overview of issues surrounding transition to practice for the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, including scope of practice, certification and licensure, ethical considerations, and reimbursement.

### **Clinical Emphasis**

Practicum includes clinical preceptorship and emphasizes the application of advanced psychiatric mental health nursing knowledge and demonstration of the ability to provide comprehensive, evidence-based psychiatric care for clients across the lifespan.

### **Course Objectives**

At the successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Integrate knowledge from specialty psychiatric mental health courses as the basis for the delivery of evidence-based psychiatric care across the lifespan.
2. Demonstrate effective intra- and interprofessional collaboration when providing care for clients of all ages.
3. Perform evidence-based psychiatric examinations and develop a comprehensive problem list and treatment plan, using both pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatment modalities as appropriate.
4. Develop therapeutic relationships with clients and families across the lifespan, maintaining confidentiality, ethical practice, and appropriate professional boundaries.

## **Policies Related to Preceptors**

### **Criteria**

The following are minimum criteria which must be met by persons serving as main preceptors in clinical practicum of the graduate certificate program. The preceptor must:

- Be nationally certified in an area of advanced practice nursing appropriate to the goals of the graduate nursing program or be a board eligible/certified physician in an area appropriate to the focus of the student's area of study;
- Hold current licensure for the practice of medicine or advanced practice nursing in the State of Illinois or in the state in which the student is completing clinical.
- Possess at least one year of clinical experience following professional education as an advanced practice nurse or physician;
- Demonstrate a sincere interest in teaching and mentoring graduate nursing students enrolled in the clinical practica;
- Be able to allocate sufficient time and space resources to effectively fulfill the role; and
- Show willingness to collaborate with graduate nursing faculty and graduate nursing students in planning and evaluating clinical practicum experiences.

### **Role of Preceptors**

Preceptors assist students in the graduate nursing program by:

- Providing students with opportunities to apply and advance their ability in health assessment, maintenance, and education, and assisting with the care management of selected clients;
- Demonstrating collaborative physician-advanced practice nurse practice;
- Serving as a resource for the student at the clinical site;
- Providing rationale for own practice;
- Providing validation for assessment findings and clinical decision-making;
- Assisting with the evaluation of the student and the program.

### **Legal Liability for the Preceptor**

- The preceptor remains liable for the care of the patient.
- Legal and reimbursement guidelines require that preceptors validate assessment findings review laboratory tests, and confirm differential diagnosis and management plans with students for all patients they see.
- Review by the preceptor must be documented in the patient's record and the preceptor must co-sign all records in which the student has provided documentation.

### Record of Hours Served as a Preceptor

When you agree to serve as a preceptor, your demographic information is entered into the College's preceptor database. After the end of the semester, you will receive a letter from the College noting the number of clinical hours you precepted. These hours are also recorded in the database. Preceptorship hours are often useful for recertification purposes for the preceptor.

## **Expectations of Students & Preceptors**

### **Expectations of Students**

The student is responsible for:

- Obtaining preceptor's written verification of agreeing to serve as a preceptor;
- Verifying with Mennonite College of Nursing that a clinical contract is in place with the clinical site prior to beginning the clinical experience;
- Contacting the preceptor to arrange a mutually agreeable clinical schedule;
- Developing personal learning objectives and sharing these with the preceptor;
- Observing policies of the agency, including dress code;
- Adhering to all HIPAA requirements
- Notifying the preceptor of illness/absence and arranging to make up missed clinical time;
- Conferring with the preceptor to keep informed of progress;
- Conferring with the preceptor/faculty when the experience is not meeting the learning objectives;
- Completing and discussing with the preceptor a self-evaluation of clinical performance/abilities;
- Adhering to the standards and scope of professional practice.

### **Expectations of Preceptors**

The preceptor is expected to:

- Provide Mennonite College of Nursing with requested information, such as that related to the preceptor's licensure, practice, and education;
- Read this manual and review the information for the course in which the student is currently involved;
- Orient the student to the clinical site and applicable agency policies;
- Facilitate an informal, collaborative, and mutually respectful environment in which to learn;
- Be an expert role model;
- Provide valuable and evidence-based learning experiences with appropriate client populations;
- Allow and encourage "hands-on" assessment and care of clients in the clinical setting;
- Provide ongoing feedback to improve the student's assessment and management skills;
- Guide the student to pace the learning experience to meet client population and clinical site needs and student learning needs;
- Direct the student to resources, such as treatment guidelines;
- Notify faculty of any concerns about student behavior, clinical skills, and/or student progression, and provide written anecdotal documentation as appropriate;
- Complete and review with the student a final written evaluation of performance which is then maintained in student's file at Mennonite College of Nursing.

## Clinical Teaching Skills of the Preceptor

### Tips for Maximizing Student Learning Experiences

- **Students learn best by actually participating in client care**, not by simply observing. The preceptor needs to allow the student to provide “hands-on” care as much as possible with consideration for clients’ preferences.
- **Students may question a preceptor’s care which differs from textbook guidelines.** The preceptor may modify care guidelines based on experience as a health care provider and based on the unique client situation. It is helpful to discuss such modifications with the student and the rationale for such changes.
- **Students should not be expected to see every client seen by the preceptor.** Students need time to practice history-taking and assessment skills, to develop differential diagnoses, determine a plan of care, and document the client visit. Students should advance in the number of clients they see as they progress through the program, however, preceptors need to realize that even the student nearing the end of the program will not be able to, nor should they be expected to, carry the full patient load of an experienced preceptor.
  - Here is an example of how a student’s learning needs and the preceptor’s need for maintaining efficiency can both be met:

8:00-8:20 am	Student observes patient 1 with preceptor
8:20-8:40 am	Student assesses patient 2 with preceptor
8:40-9:00 am	Student charts on patient 2 while preceptor sees patient 3
9:00-9:20 am	Student observes patient 4 with preceptor
9:20-9:40 am	Student assesses patient 5 with preceptor
9:40-10:00am	Student charts on patient 5 while preceptor sees patient 6

- **Students need the opportunity to improve based on preceptor feedback.** Students benefit from critique of their performance throughout the clinical experience, not simply at the end of the experience. This allows the student the opportunity to continually improve in skills and helps to establish a supportive student-preceptor relationship.
- **Students view preceptors as role models for clinical skills.** Students benefit from initially observing the preceptor’s abilities in interviewing, assessment, critical thinking, communication, and patient and family education.

## **Clinical Teaching Skills for the Preceptor: Hints to Help Students Learn**

Advanced practice nurses and physicians may be novices in terms of serving as preceptors. Likewise, veteran preceptors may benefit from teaching hints. The following is provided to guide the preceptor in assisting the student to think critically and grow throughout the clinical experience.

<b>Clinical Teaching Skill</b>	<b>What the Preceptor Might Say</b>
Agree on the central clinical issue	"What do you think is going on?"
Get the student's opinion of the central issue	"I agree...." "Have you considered....?"
Ask targeted questions to define the student's learning needs	"What led you to that conclusion?"  "What part of the comprehensive assessment is most important in this situation?"  "Is the patient's primary concern the same as yours?"
Teach general clinical rules	"When this happens, you need to consider..."
Reinforce the principles of care whenever possible and discuss modifications when appropriate.	"The standard guidelines for treatment include...."  "The typical treatment for this problem is not appropriate for this patient because...."
Positively reinforce good clinical skills and appropriate professional behavior.	"You were thorough in your collection of the patient's history."
Review what needs to be improved. Correct mistakes.	"I noticed you did not assess for history of manic symptoms. Why is it important to include this when a patient presents with depression?"
Promote critical thinking skills.	"The patient reported urinary frequency. Given her current psychotropic medications, what do we need to be concerned about?"

## **Professional Development of a Nurse Practitioner Student**

It is expected that the student will grow in ability and confidence as the student progresses through the three sequential clinical courses. Students may vary somewhat in this progression based on their past clinical experiences. For example, a student whose past nursing experience was focused in an inpatient medical-surgical setting may feel unskilled in an outpatient psychiatric clinical site. Likewise, a student who is very comfortable in a psychiatric setting may do very well immediately in the first clinical course. Following are some general descriptions of students at various points in the clinical sequence.

### **The Beginning Student (enrolled in NUR 422 PMHNP I)**

- Student spends initial time observing preceptor.
- Student assessment skills should be validated by the preceptor.
- Student management plans need significant guidance.
- Student needs high level of direction, which decreases as skill level increases.
- As student progresses, preceptor allows student to take on more independent responsibilities.

### **The Intermediate Student (enrolled in NUR 423 PMHNP II)**

- Student becomes more proficient in analyzing data, is more skilled with assessing and formulating management plans.
- Student improves in use of time and resources.
- Student may require assistance in prioritizing and coordinating care.
- Student requires support and assistance for complex cases.
- Student is ready to demonstrate other nurse practitioner functions such as patient/family teaching and participating in teams.

### **The Advanced Student (enrolled in NUR 424 PMHNP III)**

- Student is expected to perform all role functions in an organized, efficient, skillful, and independent manner.
- Student is expected to engage in interdisciplinary role collaboration, consultation, and referral.
- Student and preceptor develop a more collegial relationship.

(Above from “Nurse Practitioner Clinical Preceptor Guide” adapted from The Geriatric Interdisciplinary Team Training Program Nurse Practitioner Clinical Preceptor Guide)

## **Clinical Evaluation: A Process and A Goal**

Evaluation should be a collaborative effort between the student and the preceptor. The student should develop and use personal learning objectives to discuss learning needs with the preceptor. The preceptor likewise can use these objectives, along with course objectives, professional standards/scope of practice, and standards of care to provide the student with constructive evaluative feedback.

### **Formative Evaluation**

Informal evaluation should occur throughout the clinical experience with the preceptor. This gives the student the opportunity to use the feedback in a positive manner in order to improve on performance.

- Feedback is best provided as soon as possible with consideration of patient needs being met first.
- The feedback should also be provided in privacy to avoid embarrassing the student in front of patients or staff.
- The preceptor should be descriptive in the feedback and help the student to analyze the cause of the problem and what might be done to avoid the problem in the future.
- The preceptor should also elicit feedback from the student as to how the preceptor might improve in providing feedback to the student.

### **Summative Evaluation**

At the end of the clinical experience, the preceptor is asked to provide a written summary of the student's performance on a standard form. The preceptor and student should review this evaluation together at the end of the clinical experience. If formative evaluation has occurred throughout the clinical experience and open communication between the preceptor and student has been maintained, the content of the summative evaluation should not be a surprise for the student.