INTRODUCTION

The Graduate Student Handbook is designed to provide students with specific information that will assist them as they matriculate in the MSN Program.
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Liberty University
Master of Science in Nursing
General Information

THE UNIVERSITY
Founded in 1971 by Dr. Jerry Falwell, Liberty University provides a Christian, comprehensive, coeducational environment committed to serious scholarship at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The University is situated on a 160-acre campus complete with complete classroom, dormitory, study, leisure, and recreational facilities. Liberty University is approved by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award associate, bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees. There are more than 5,100 undergraduate and graduate students in the traditional resident program. The student body represents all 50 states and more than 74 countries.

THE DEPARTMENT OF NURSING
The Department of Nursing offers a generic Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree, RN to BSN track, and a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree in nursing. Liberty University’s undergraduate nursing programs are fully accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission and are approved by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and the Virginia State Board of Nursing. The 36-credit hour MSN program, based on the curriculum guidelines set forth by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and the CCNE, prepares graduates to function as clinical nurse specialists in a variety of acute care and/or primary care settings. Some examples of clinical specialties include emergent care, critical care, cardiac, gerontology, maternal/child, parish nursing, and community health. The master’s degree program is approved by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

ACADEMIC FACILITIES
Currently, 283,000 bound or microfilmed volumes are contained in the library, and the library participates in an area library cooperative program. The Arthur S. DeMoss Learning Center houses several large lecture halls, modern classrooms, and labs. The Department of Nursing is housed on the second floor of the DeMoss facility and includes general and critical care clinical learning laboratories, 4 large classrooms, study areas, and faculty offices.

Liberty has installed a comprehensive computer system structure that allows students to reach their professors, various campus offices, and the Internet from individual dorm rooms as well as from off campus sites.

LOCATION
The University is located in the heart of Virginia in Lynchburg (population 68,000), with the scenic Blue Ridge Mountains as a backdrop. The city is more than 200 years old and is noted for its culture, beauty, and educational advantages. Nearby are such sites as Appomattox Court House, Natural Bridge, Thomas Jefferson’s Poplar Forest, historic Lexington, and Washington, D.C., and other places of interest.

The city of Lynchburg offers a wide array of activities for recreation and entertainment. Excellent sport facilities and programs, cultural events at the Lynchburg Fine Arts Center, beautiful lakes and streams, and many other local attractions enhance the lives of Lynchburg residents. Lynchburg also has more that 2,000 hotel rooms, numerous outlets and malls, and a number of restaurants that serve a wide variety of cuisines. Lynchburg is accessible by air, train, and bus.
LIBERTY UNIVERSITY’S MISSION STATEMENT

To produce Christ-centered men and women with values, knowledge, and skills required to impact tomorrow’s world. The mission is carried out for resident students through a rigorous academic program and structured social environment. It is carried out for external students in a comparable academic program but without the structure of the resident community.

AIMS

In support of its Philosophy and Mission, Liberty University seeks to provide its students with intellectual and cultural pursuits that:

1. Contribute to a knowledge and understanding of other cultures and of international events.

2. Promote an understanding of the Western tradition and the diverse elements of American cultural history, especially the importance of the individual in maintaining democratic and free market processes.

3. Foster university level competencies in writing, speaking, reading, appreciation of the arts, analytical reasoning, computer literacy, and library research.

4. Convey the different ways of acquiring knowledge in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

5. Enable them to engage in a major field of study built on a solid foundation in the liberal arts.

6. Explore the moral dimensions and ethical implications in the disciplines offered by the University.

7. Assist in developing competence and determination in their approach to their vocation, including encouragement in choosing and following their vocation as a calling to do the will of God throughout all of life.

8. Promote the synthesis of academic knowledge and Christian values in order that there might be a maturing of spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical behavior.

9. Cultivate a sensitivity to the needs of others and a commitment to the betterment of humanity.

10. Encourage a commitment to the Christian life, one of actively communicating the Christian faith, personal integrity, and social responsibility which, as it is lived out, points people to Jesus Christ as the Lord of the universe and their own personal Savior.
OVERVIEW OF THE MSN PROGRAM

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Liberty University’s Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) 36-credit hour program is designed to prepare competent women and men to provide expert clinical care and related health care services and programs to individuals, families, and people groups across the lifespan in a variety of acute care and community settings from the perspective of a Christian worldview. Graduates will be equipped to practice as clinical nurse specialists with the critical thinking skills and knowledge needed to promote the profession of nursing through clinical practice, teaching, research, program development and implementation, and scholarship.

MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY OF NURSING AND ADVANCED PRACTICE

The MSN Program is consistent with the university’s mission statement, “To produce Christ-centered men and women with values, knowledge, and skills required to impact tomorrow’s world,” and the aim of Liberty University to provide students with “encouragement in choosing and following their vocation as a calling to do the will of God throughout all of life” (see University Mission Statement, p.4).

In keeping with the philosophy of the Department of Nursing, the Graduate Faculty support the following propositions based on the Bible and theorist Patricia Benner (1985).

- God, the infinite source of all things, has shown us truth through Christ in nature, history, and above all, in Scripture.
- Persons are spiritual, rational, moral, social and physical, created in the image of God. Persons are self-interpreted beings who become defined as they experience life, having the capacity to be in a situation in meaningful ways because of embodied intelligence.
- Nursing is a multiform activity that provides a wide range of health care to society. It revolves around the need for assessment, goal development, selection of interactions, delivery of care, and evaluation of responses. Nursing is a healing art communicated through the ministry of caring.

Further, the Graduate Faculty members believe that graduate education designed to prepare nurses for advanced practice builds upon the knowledge and skills acquired at the undergraduate level and clinical practice as a registered nurse. Advanced practice is defined by the American Nurses Association (1996) as follows:

Advanced practice registered nurses manifest a high level of expertise in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of complex responses of individuals, families, or communities to actual or potential health problems, prevention of illness and injury, maintenance of wellness, and provision of comfort. The advanced practice registered nurse has a master’s or doctoral education concentrating in a specific area of advanced nursing practice, had supervised practice during graduate education, and has ongoing clinical experiences.
Advanced practice registered nurses continue to perform many of the same to a interventions used in basic nursing practice. The difference in this practice relates greater depth and breadth of knowledge, a greater degree of synthesis of data, and complexity of skills and interventions.

The MSN Program prepares registered nurses for advanced practice as clinical nurse specialists as defined by Hamric and Spross (1989). Hamric and Spross define clinical nurse specialists as expert clinicians and client advocates who specializes in a particular area of nursing practice. As clinical nurse specialists, nurses provide comprehensive direct client care, pharmacologic (prescriptive authority varies by state) and nonpharmacologic treatment of health problems, health promotion and preventive care within their practice specialties. Education, research, and consultation are also identified as important sub-roles of clinical nurse specialist practice. In addition, clinical nurse specialists are involved in indirect practice activities with the goal of improving the quality of care and serve as change agents.

**CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES**

1. Prepare nurses for advanced practice roles as clinical nurse specialists based on a Christian worldview and Biblical principles.

2. Develop clinical expertise in the graduate students’ selected specialty areas of practice within each concentration (acute care and community health).

3. Educate graduate students to meet society’s health care needs by addressing the physical, psychosocial, emotional, and spiritual needs of the client: individual, family, and community.

4. Advance the profession of nursing by producing graduates who demonstrate leadership, initiative, clinical competence, and awareness of ethical, social, and spiritual issues relevant to health and nursing care, and are able to contribute to the improvement of practice through scholarship, research, and teaching.

**SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The following outcomes developed by the Department of Nursing Graduate Faculty Committee are based on the guidelines and criteria set forth by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. These outcomes and objectives fit with the stated curriculum objectives of the MSN program. Graduates of the MSN Program will be able to:

- Practice as a Clinical Nurse Specialist (advanced practice nurse) in either an acute care or primary care setting.

- Provide complex nursing care to individuals, families, and communities.

- Develop and implement health promoting disease prevention programs.

- Participate in research, scholarly activities, and teach in schools of nursing.
• Act in leadership roles within the health care arena, such as development and administration of, directing primary care, and case management.

• Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of treating the whole person by applying Christian principles to nursing care.

ADMISSION AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
(All policies and procedure as stated in the Liberty University 2001-2002 Catalog apply unless otherwise stated).

The following criteria are established to encourage applications from qualified students who are highly motivated, self-directed, and academically competent to ensure selection of individuals who possess abilities that will enable them to successfully pursue graduate study in nursing.

• Graduate of a nationally accredited nursing program/school or its equivalent. Accrediting bodies: American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) or National League of Nursing (NLN).

• Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) or a bachelor’s degree in another discipline. Non-BSN RN applicants may be admitted to the MSN program but must satisfy requirements for the following undergraduate bridge courses: NURS 440 Community Health, NURS 475 Research, and NURS 490 Leadership. (Students who wish to pursue this option must meet with a Graduate Faculty Advisor prior to submission of documentation/portfolio).

• Introductory statistics course (math preferred) and an undergraduate course in health assessment are required; must have earned a minimum grade of C in each course. These courses must be taken prior to admission.

• Minimum cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.0 on a scale of 4.0.

• Students for whom English is not their primary language must have a minimum TOEFL score of 600. TOEFL not required for students who obtained baccalaureate degree in the U. S. or Canada.

• Current license as a registered nurse (for practice in the state of Virginia).

• Minimum of one year of nursing practice as a registered nurse.

• Demonstrate satisfactory performance on the Graduate Record Examination (quantitative, verbal, and writing). Applicants must submit GRE test scores earned within 5 years from application date, with the exception of scores submitted by individuals who have completed a master’s degree at an accredited institution.

• Recommendations: two academic and one professional reference.

• Submit well-developed statement of professional and educational goals.

• Personal interview may be requested.
Degree Requirements

1. Satisfactory completion of all course and clinical requirements (minimum grade of B); total of 36 credit hours.

2. Students who receive more than one "C" are automatically dropped from the program. Any "D" grade results in dismissal from program without option to repeat course.

GRADING, TRANSCRIPT AND TRANSFER POLICIES

(All policies and procedure as stated in the Liberty University 2001-2002 Catalog apply unless otherwise stated).

Grading

The master’s student standing in each course will be indicated by the following letter grades: A (excellent); B (good); C (unsatisfactory); and D (failure). Students must earn a grade of “B” in all graduate-level courses. (Grading Scale: A = 90-100%; B = 80-89%; C = 79-70%; D = 78 – 69%)

Course Repeating Policy

Course repeat policy allows students to repeat only one course if they earn a grade of “C.” To successfully complete the program, students must earn a minimum grade of "B" for all graduate nursing courses.

Academic Dishonesty

Definition: During examinations, academic dishonesty shall include referring to information not specifically condoned by the professor. It shall further include receiving information from a fellow student, as well as stealing, buying, selling or transmitting a copy of any examination. Plagiarism shall include the following:

1. Omitting quotation marks or other conventional markings around material quoted from any printed source.

2. Paraphrasing a specific passage from a specific source without properly referencing the source.

3. Replicating another student’s or other’s work or parts thereof, submitting as a student original.

See the Liberty Way regarding Academic Dishonesty and related consequences.

Transfer Policy

With approval from the Department of Nursing Graduate Faculty Committee, students may transfer up to two graduate level courses (total of 6 credit hours) from an accredited institution. In order to transfer credit hours, the student must have earned the minimum grade of B. No correspondence or life experience study will be accepted for credit in the MSN program.
Special Student Status

Students who are not degree candidates, but who are able to meet the necessary academic requirements for admission to the University, may take up to 9 credit hours as a special student prior to being admitted to the MSN program. Special student status also enables students who may be able to successfully matriculate in the program but are not admitted because they do not fully meet admission criteria (i.e., borderline GPA, low GRE scores) to enroll in graduate courses.

Upon successful completion of a maximum of 9 credit hours under special student status, students must complete requirements for admission and be accepted as degree candidates to continue in the MSN program.

FINANCIAL AID

Deferred payment for tuition is available for students who qualify (Centra Health employees). Students who use the deferred payment plan through Centra Health, must complete the Deferred payment form, have it signed by a Centra Health representative, and submit signed form to the Liberty University Business Office, c/o Sandi Hines. Deferred payment forms are available from the Department of Nursing Office. Students may obtain these forms from the Department of Nursing secretary; forms may also be faxed or mailed to individuals upon request. Deferred payment forms must be submitted for each semester.

Students who have been accepted into the MSN program may qualify for scholarships or loans. Students who are considering applying for scholarships, grants, or student loans must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form by March 1 of each year in which financial aid is desired. The FAFSA form is available http://www.fafsa.gov. Liberty University school code is 010392.

REGISTRATION

Once students have been enrolled in their first course(s), they are to register online for subsequent courses. Students may call the computer Help Desk, 582-2139 for assistance with establishing an account and accessing Liberty University’s website. Students may register online from their home computer (must have access to Internet) or may register in the computer lab while on campus. Each semester, students are required to notify the Registrar’s office of their current address; if this is not done registration will be blocked. Assistance for registering online is available from the Department of Nursing office and the Computer Lab. It is the student’s responsibility to review the student splash page for postings/messages related to registration protocols and deadlines. Any questions about registration are to be forwarded to the director of the MSN program or the Registrar’s office.
PROGRESSION THROUGH THE PROGRAM

1. Computer Competency
The MSN program does not require that a student pass a computer competency exam. However, students are expected to possess basic computer skills related to word processing, accessing the Internet, and use of e-mail communication. Students may learn additional skills, such as use of PowerPoint and the Excel program by seeking assistance from Liberty University’s Computer Lab. Also, software for computer programs, i.e. PowerPoint are available for student purchase, at a greatly reduced price, from Liberty University’s Bookstore.

2. Written Assignments/Scholarship
All formal papers and written assignments are to be formatted according to the latest edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA). The latest publication manual is the 5th edition published in 2001. Books may be purchased from Liberty’s Bookstore and are also available for purchase from online sources.

3. Transfer of Credit
Students may request transfer of graduate coursework (maximum of 6 credit hours) into the MSN program. Requests for transfer of credit are to be made in writing and sent to the director of the MSN program. All graduate transfer credits are subject to approval of the Graduate Faculty Admissions Committee. Courses must carry a grade of at least a ”B” and be comparable to Liberty University graduate courses. Transfer credit will only be considered from regionally accredited institutions or schools accredited by another accrediting agency approved by the U.S. Department of Education. Official transcripts for transfer coursework must be sent to Graduate Admissions (Dr. William Wegert) which will then be forwarded to the Registrar’s Office.

4. Elective Course
Students are required to enroll in one elective course. The course must be graduate level and three credit hours. It is the student’s responsibility to review available graduate level courses offered by Liberty University or another accredited institution. Graduate courses offered by Liberty University’s School of Education, Department of Psychology, School of Business, and Seminary may be of interest. To determine eligibility for enrollment in graduate courses in another school/department, students need to check with the administrator of the program or the course professor. Official transcript for elective course will be required if course is not taken at Liberty University (to be sent to Graduate Admissions Office).

5. Bridge Courses for Non-BSN Graduates
Non-BSN RN applicants who have baccalaureate degrees in another discipline must satisfy requirements for the following undergraduate bridge courses: NURS 440 Community Health, NURS 475 Research, and NURS 490 Leadership. These courses may be incorporated into the student’s graduate plan of study or the student may request that the bridge courses be waived (see p. 15 for Guidelines).

6. Full and Part-time Status
Students may enroll in the program on either a full or part-time status. Most students enroll in 6 credit hours per semester. Clinical specialties include an acute care OR
community health focus. Students will meet with their faculty advisors who will assist them as they develop their plan of study. All classes are offered once a year (subject to number of enrollees). Summer school offerings will vary. Refer to the Status Sheet, p. 16, for listing of courses by semester. Also, refer to p.17 for a suggested curricular plan for part-time study.

7. Christian/Community Service

Students who are enrolled full-time (9 credit hours or more) are required to register for Christian/Community service hours for a minimum of 20 hours per semester. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain the necessary form(s) from the Christian Service Office. Students may fulfill this requirement by serving in their local churches, mentoring undergraduate students, volunteer work within the community, etc.

8. Malpractice and Immunizations

Students must have malpractice insurance in place prior to enrollment in courses that require a clinical component. Immunizations, TB testing, etc. as required by both acute and primary care facilities must also be current. The Department of Nursing has an agreement with a specific company for undergraduate student purchase of malpractice insurance policies and is investigating insurance options for students enrolled in the graduate program.

9. Clinical Practicum Options

Master’s prepared nurses and/or health care professionals will serve as mentor/preceptors for the graduate clinical practicum experience, in either the acute care or primary setting. Students will meet with their faculty advisors to develop their clinical practicum experiences based on their clinical interests and specialty. The clinical practicum is fulfilled during the last semester of the program. Students are to complete the Student’s Individual Plan of Study (p. 18) and must meet with their faculty advisors to discuss their goals and objectives for their comprehensive clinical practicum experiences within one month after completion of 15 credit hours.

Students are eligible to enroll in NURS 609 Advanced Adult Care III and/or NURS 614 Advanced Community Health III after ALL other course work is completed. NURS 608 Adult Advanced Care II and NURS 613 Advanced Community Health II involve a “mini” clinical practicum that is designed to lead into the final clinical practicum experience. Clinical practicums for NURS 609/614 will require approximately 180 clinical contact hours. Students enrolled in the clinical practicum course(s) will meet periodically with course professor on an individual basis; in addition, students enrolled in NURS 609/614 courses will meet as a class for seminar type sessions as directed by the course professor(s).

Students may elect to enroll in the 6-credit hours clinical practicum OR they may they may opt to enroll in the 3-credit hour clinical practicum (NURS 610/615) and the 3-credit hour (NURS 611/616) directed research course. The 3-credit hour directed research option is recommended for students who may be interested in pursuing doctoral study.

10. Portfolio

Each student will be required to complete a portfolio as part of the course requirement for their clinical practicum experience. See page for guidelines, p. 19.
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

NURS 500  Research  Three hours  Spring
This course expands upon research knowledge acquired at the baccalaureate level and focuses on in-depth study of the research process, theory-based research, data collection and analysis methods, and application of nursing and related research findings to nursing practice. The importance of evidence-based practice is emphasized. Quantitative and qualitative methodologies are examined.

NURS 501  Health Policy/Ethics  Three hours  Fall
This course examines policy decisions and related issues that shape the organization, financing, and implementation of health care services and delivery systems. Ethical, social, and political issues that affect the provision of health care, nursing services, communities, and society are critically analyzed. Dynamics related to the roles and influences of health care providers and consumers, government, and law are discussed. Advanced nursing practice and its impact on policy decision-making and health care is emphasized.

NURS 502  Nursing Theory and Advanced Practice  Three hours  Spring
Emphasis is placed on the critique, evaluation, and utilization of nursing and other relevant theories that apply to advanced nursing practice and a comprehensive approach to care. Professional role development, interdisciplinary relationships, and issues relevant to advanced practice will be studied.

NURS 503  Health Promotion/Disease Prevention  Three hours  Fall
This course focuses on health behaviors of diverse populations and critical analysis of various theories of health promotion and disease prevention. Health behaviors of different cultures and age groups are addressed, relevant nursing research on health promotion and disease prevention is discussed, and new areas for nursing research are identified. Emphasis is placed on the promotion of health, prevention of illness, and environmental factors that impact health status. The importance of providing appropriate, individualized health care that is sensitive to the ethnic, racial, gender, and age differences within and across diverse populations is stressed and the role of the advanced practice nurse is emphasized.

NURS 504  Advanced Pharmacology  Three hours  Spring
This course is designed to expand the advanced practice student’s knowledge of pharmacotherapeutics, which includes the cellular response level, for the management of individuals in the acute care and primary care setting. Broad categories of pharmacologic agents are examined. Skills to assess, diagnose, and manage a client’s common health problems in a safe, high quality, cost-effective manner are emphasized.

NURS 505  Advanced Health/Physical Assessment  Three hours  Spring
Prerequisites: Undergraduate health assessment course. This course focuses on comprehensive physical assessment which includes in-depth health history, physical and psychological signs and symptoms, developmental stages, pathophysiologic changes, and psychosocial and cultural characteristics of the individual, family, and community as client. Enhancement of communication and observational skills are emphasized along with the development of sensitive and refined interviewing techniques.
NURS 506  Advanced Physiology and Pathophysiology  Three hours  Fall
System-focused content addresses the normal physiologic and pathologic mechanisms of
disease that serve as the foundation for advanced clinical assessment, decision-making, and
management. Physiologic changes are compared and contrasted over the life span and
developmental physiology, normal etiology, pathogenesis, and clinical manifestations of
commonly found/observed altered health states and responses to illness and treatment modalities
are examined.

NURS 507  Advanced Acute Adult Care I  Three hours  Fall
This course focuses on advanced nursing skills and assessment related to common
developmental, health, and illness changes of adults. The effects of acute illness on the individual
and family are also analyzed. In addition, pharmacological, nutritional, and psychosocial
management options are examined. Role development as a clinical nurse specialist is initiated.

NURS 608  Advanced Acute Adult Care II  Three hours  Spring
Prerequisites: NURS 507, (NURS 504, 505, 506 may be taken concurrently). Designed to
enhance the ongoing development of knowledge and critical thinking skills for the advanced
practice role of clinical nurse specialist. Nursing care of the person with complex health needs,
especially chronicity, is emphasized. Clinical experiences reinforce theory and evidence-based
practice and provides students with opportunities to develop and implement advanced nursing
interventions for selected complex client situations.

NURS 609  Advanced Acute Adult Care III: Practicum  Six hours  Summer
Prerequisites: NURS 508. Focuses on advanced nursing practice as a clinical nurse specialist
within the acute clinical setting. Faculty will work with preceptors from a variety of clinical sites
to design a practicum tailored to each student’s individual preference, professional goals, and
objectives for future practice as a clinical nurse specialist.

NURS 610  Advanced Acute Adult Care III: Practicum  Three hours  Summer
Students who elect to conduct directed research, they will enroll in 3-credit hour practicum
instead of the 6-credit hour practicum.

NURS 611/616  Directed Research  Three hours  Summer
Prerequisites: Optional course Completion of all core course requirements, concurrent
enrollment in NURS 610 or NURS 615. Provides experience of developing a research proposal
and conducting a research project designed to improve patient outcomes within the acute care
environment. Mentored study, emphasis on writing final paper of publishable quality.

NURS 512  Advanced Community Health I  Three hours  Fall
Provides theoretical foundation for advanced community health nursing practice with special
emphasis on epidemiology, biostatistics, and management of population based health care.
Examines and integrates public health science, nursing theories, and community practice models.
Role development as a clinical nurse specialist is initiated.

NURS 613  Advanced Community Health II  Three hours  Spring
Prerequisites: NURS 512 (NURS 504, 505, 506 may be taken concurrently). Provides the
student with clinical opportunities to apply theories and community health models of care to
families and community groups in the advanced practice role of clinical nurse specialist.
Economic, ethical, and political issues relevant to health care delivery to multicultural
populations within a variety of community settings are examined. Emphasis on theoretical and
evidence-based practice, collaboration, and current health care climate.
**NURS 614  Advanced Community Health III: Practicum**  Six hours  Summer
Prerequisites: NURS 513. This course focuses on advanced nursing practice within the community clinical setting. Faculty will work with preceptors from a variety of clinical sites to design a practicum tailored to each student’s individual preference, professional goals, and objectives for future practice as a clinical nurse specialist.

**NURS 615  Advanced Community Health III: Practicum**  Three hours  Summer
Students who elect to conduct directed research will enroll in this 3-credit hour practicum instead of the 6 credit hour practicum.

**BRIDGE COURSES**

**NOTE:** Graduate students who need to enroll in any of the bridge courses will register for the courses that are offered for RN-BSN students.

**NURS 440  Strategies for Community Health Care**  Five hours  Spring
This course focuses on the application of the nursing process to a population or community group. Emphasis is placed on community assessment process and the development of nursing strategies to assist multi-problem families, considering health on a continuum, throughout the lifespan. Family systems theory, theories of adaptation and educational needs of various populations are addressed. The clinical focus is on the development of a broader perspective of the nurse’s role in a variety of clinical and environmental settings. In addition, the nurse’s role on the community health team and an understanding of health care needs of different cultural groups is studied (course has a 6 hour per week clinical component).

**NURS 475  Research in Nursing**  Three hours  Summer
This course provides a comprehensive overview of the research process including methodology, design, and interpretation of findings. It focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and skills essential for critical evaluation of research reports as well as guidance in developing a formal research proposal. Previous learning related to theories of adaptation, nursing, human growth and development, education, health on a continuum, systems, caring, and environment are incorporated into the research process with an emphasis on client care.

**NURS 490  Leadership/Management in Nursing**  Three hours  Summer
Health Care organizations and the leadership/management skills required in various nursing care delivery systems are explored in this course. Emphasis is on the leadership roles of the nurse as an individual and a group member. While caring for groups of patients and individuals, students will explore a variety of nursing roles such as associate nurse, primary nurse, medication administrator, and patient caregiver. Students are expected to synthesize previously learned knowledge in complex nursing situations and to expand their abilities to use the problem solving and decision making processes (course has a 6 hour per week clinical component).
Liberty University
Department of Nursing
Master of Science in Nursing Program

Guidelines: Request for Waiver of Bridge Courses

Students who desire enrollment in the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program, who have a non-nursing baccalaureate degree, may request to have the following undergraduate bridge courses waived: NURS 440, Community Health; NURS 475, Research in Nursing; and NURS 490, Leadership (see enclosed syllabi).

To apply for a waiver, it is the responsibility of the student to complete and submit a portfolio that provides documentation of academic work and experiences that demonstrates fulfillment of the bridge course objectives. Examples of evidence for waiver include course syllabi, papers and presentations, practicum experiences, etc. Students are also encouraged to develop and document rationale as to why they believe specific courses should be waived.

There is no set format for the portfolio. Information should be typed and presented in a professional manner. The Graduate Faculty Committee reviews portfolios and determines waivers. If any questions arise regarding preparation and submission of the portfolio, please contact Hila Spear, Department of Nursing, 582-2556; E-mail: hspear@liberty.edu.

If students do not qualify for waiver of any of the bridge courses, they may still matriculate in the MSN program by including some or all of the baccalaureate bridge courses into their plan of study.
Master of Science in Nursing (36 hours): Program of Study for Full-time Student

### Acute Care Track

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Course Description</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall (12 credit hours)</td>
<td>NURS 502 Nursing Theory and Advanced Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NURS 503 Health Promotion/Disease Prevention</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>NURS 506 Advanced Physiology/Pathophysiology</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>NURS 507 Advanced Acute Care I</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring (12 credit hours)</td>
<td>NURS 500 Research</td>
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<tr>
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<td>NURS 504 Advanced Pharmacology</td>
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<td>NURS 505 Advanced Health Assessment</td>
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<td>NURS 608 Advanced Acute Care II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer (12 hours)</td>
<td>NURS 501 Health Policy/Ethics</td>
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<td>NURS 609 Advanced Acute Care III Practicum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Or</td>
<td>NURS 501 Health Policy/Ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NURS 510 Advanced Acute Care III Practicum</td>
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<td>NURS 611 Directed Research</td>
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### Community Track

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Course Description</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fall (12 credit hours)</td>
<td>NURS 502 Nursing Theory and Advanced Practice</td>
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<tr>
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<td>NURS 503 Health Promotion/Disease Prevention</td>
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<td>NURS 506 Advanced Physiology/Pathophysiology</td>
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<td>NURS 512 Advanced Community Health I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring (12 credit hours)</td>
<td>NURS 500 Research</td>
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<tr>
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<td>NURS 504 Advanced Pharmacology</td>
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<td>NURS 505 Advanced Health Assessment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>NURS 613 Advanced Community Health II</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer (12 hours)</td>
<td>NURS 501 Health Policy/Ethics</td>
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<td>NURS 614 Advanced Community Health III Practicum</td>
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<td>NURS 615 Advanced Community Health III Practicum</td>
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<td>NURS 616 Directed Research</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Elective:</td>
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</table>
Student’s Individual Plan of Study

Name: ________________________    Faculty Advisor: ________________________

Area of clinical specialization: ____________________________________________

Brief overview of objectives and goals for clinical practicum: ____________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Summary of goals for graduate study (areas of knowledge you wish to acquire to prepare you for advanced practice in your clinical specialty area): ____________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
As part of course requirements for the Clinical Practicum III courses (Advanced Acute Care and Advanced Community Health), senior graduate students are required to complete a portfolio that highlights components of their coursework, special projects, and clinical practicum experiences. It is recommended that each student include materials that demonstrate knowledge and expertise in their particular areas of clinical expertise and practice. Students are encouraged to begin collecting materials for portfolio as they begin matriculation in the program.

**Suggested Format**

**Introduction:** Provide statement of philosophy of nursing practice and career objectives.

**Well-developed Summary of Professional and Clinical Expertise:** This section provides information relevant to what students have to offer as advanced practice nurses within their particular field of specialty (some students may choose to market their skills and abilities by developing a job description that fits with an area of practice they wish to pursue).

**Examples of Work/Projects:** Students are to include materials that demonstrate knowledge and experiences related to area of expertise. For example:

- Sample papers
- Presentations
- Clinical practicum (experiences/related projects)
- Elective course(s)
- Continuing Education/Workshops

**Professional Resume**
FULL-TIME GRADUATE FACULTY

Deanna Britt  
MSN, University of Virginia  
PhD, Virginia Tech  
Clinical Focus: Pediatrics  
Research Interests: Child development, stress and coping, children’s health issues

Cynthia Goodrich  
MSN, University of Virginia  
EdD, University of Sarasota  
Clinical Focus: Adult health, gerontology, community health  
Research Interests: Administration and leadership, gerontology, pain management, women’s health

SoonBok Park  
MSN, Radford University  
PhD, Medical College of Virginia  
Clinical Focus: Acute care, gerontology  
Research Interests: Women’s health issues, breast cancer, health promotion

Lynne’ Sanders  
MSN, University of Virginia  
EdDc, University of Sarasota  
Clinical Focus: Acute Care, Critical Care  
Research Interests: Stress and coping, mental health; psychosocial aspects of nursing

Hila J. Spear  
MSN, University of Virginia  
PhD, University of Virginia  
Clinical Focus: Maternal/child, community health  
Research Interests: Adolescent health behavior, teenage pregnancy and related issues

Jean St. Clair  
MSN, FNP  
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill  
PhD, Medical College of Virginia  
Clinical Focus: Adult health, acute care  
Research Interests: Women’s health, spirituality and health, theory development

SUPPORT FACULTY

Lucinda Drohn  
MSN, NP  
University of Texas Health Science Center  
Clinical Focus: Emergent Care  
Research Interests: Acute care, trauma

Cynthia Hudson  
MSN, FNP  
University of Pittsburg  
Clinical Focus: Community Health  
Research Interests: Family, community health
Sharon Kopis  
MSN, Medical College of Virginia  
FNP, Old Dominion University  
Doctoral Student, Liberty University  
Clinical Focus: Adult and family health care  
Research Interests: Community health promotion  

**CLINICAL AFFILIATIONS**

Lynchburg General Hospital is a 270-bed private, non-profit hospital offering a full range of diagnostic and treatment services and facilities. The hospital has the city’s only Emergency Department and is staffed 24 hours a day by Emergency Room physicians and nurses. Special treatment areas include: Coronary Care, Intensive Care, Neurological Intensive Care, Orthopedic Unit, Diabetic Unit, Post-Surgical and Surgi-Care Units, Radiation, Oncology, and Cardiac Treatment Center.

Virginia Baptist Hospital is a private, non-profit hospital with 329 beds and 39 bassinets. Special Care Units include: Coronary Care, Intensive Care, Pediatrics, Maternity Services, Neonatal Intensive Care, and Adult and Adolescent Psychiatric Units.

Also serving Lynchburg and the surrounding area:

The Lynchburg City Health Department is located adjacent to Lynchburg General Hospital and provides a multitude of health services including environmental sanitation, public health nursing, public health information and a variety of clinics including family planning and well-child services. In addition to the city Health Department, the Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, and Campbell County Public Health Departments provide health care services to regional rural communities.

**PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT**

American Nurse’s Association  
Virginia Nurse’s Association  
Sigma Theta Tau Honor’s Society (Honor’s Society beginning at LU; sister chapter to Lynchburg College)  
Southern Nursing Research Society
### Suggested Curricular Plan for the Master of Science in Nursing – for Part-Time Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 yr Plan</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>N502: Nursing Theory</strong></td>
<td><strong>N500: Research in Nursing</strong></td>
<td><strong>N501: Health Policy/Ethics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3 credits)</td>
<td>(3 credits)</td>
<td>(3 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>N506: Advanced Pathophysiology</strong></td>
<td><strong>N504: Advanced Pharmacology</strong></td>
<td><strong>Elective</strong></td>
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<td>(3 credits)</td>
<td>(3 credits)</td>
<td>(3 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Year 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>N503: Health Promotion/Disease Prevention</strong></td>
<td><strong>N505: Advanced Health Assessment</strong></td>
<td><strong>N614: Advanced Community Health III</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(3 credits)</td>
<td>(3 credits)</td>
<td>(6 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>N512: Advanced Community Health I</strong></td>
<td><strong>N613: Advanced Community Health II</strong></td>
<td><strong>OR</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(3 credits)</td>
<td>(3 credits)</td>
<td><strong>N615: Advanced Community Health III</strong></td>
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<td><strong>N616: Directed Research</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 yr Plan</th>
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<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>(3 credits)</td>
<td>(3 credits)</td>
<td>(3 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Year 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>N512: Advanced Community Health I</strong></td>
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<td>(6 credits)</td>
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**Note:** Advanced Community Health I, II, and III would be replaced with Advanced Acute Care I, II, and III for Acute Care focus. Course prefix NURS is abbreviated to “N.”