

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

Program Contact: Kate Pfeiffer (katherine.pfeiffer@quinnipiac.edu), 203-582-7318

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

## MSN: Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Code	Title	Credits
NUR 501	Nursing Scholarship and Evidence-Based Practice	3
NUR 522	Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NUR 530	Advanced Pharmacology	3
NUR 520	Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan	3
NUR 520L	Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan Lab	2
NUR 502	Principles of Epidemiology and Biostatistics	3
NUR 700	Advanced Specialty Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning for the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Across the Lifespan	3
NUR 702	Psychopharmacology Foundations Across the Lifespan for Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner	2
NUR 704	Psychotherapy Foundations Across the Lifespan	3
NUR 705	Clinical Practicum and Seminar I for the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner	3
NUR 706	Psychotherapeutic Interventions Across the Lifespan I	3
NUR 503	Advanced Practice Nursing Leadership	3
NUR 707	Clinical Practicum and Seminar II for the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner	3
NUR 708	Psychotherapeutic Interventions Across the Lifespan II	3
NUR 504	Healthcare Technology and Innovation	3

NUR 709	Clinical Practicum and Seminar III for the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner	4
NUR 710	Psychotherapeutic Interventions Across the Lifespan III	3
NUR 669	Transition to Practice for the APRN	1
NUR 711	Clinical Practicum and Seminar IV for the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner	3
NUR 712	Psychotherapeutic Interventions Across the Lifespan IV	3
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>57</b>

## Curriculum Note

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

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

## Student Learning Outcomes

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

Specifically, graduates will be able to:

1. Synthesize information, evidence, and the decisions of individuals and teams to inform critical thinking to enhance decision-making.
2. Analyze adaptive thinking and apply when faced with challenges by exhibiting flexibility, creativity and critical analysis.
3. Incorporate ethical principles into evidence-based decision making in advanced nursing practice.
4. Design equitable, holistic, person-centered, and evidence-informed care coordinated to improve the health of diverse communities and populations.
5. Implement evidence-based and emerging principles of safety and improvement science to enhance care delivery at the individual, organizational, and systems level.
6. Demonstrate advanced use of informatics and healthcare technologies in data-informed decision-making and the enhancement of secure, efficient, effective, and regulated healthcare delivery.
7. Integrate holistic self-care practices that promote well-being, resilience, and lifelong learning to sustain clinical practice and promote well-being in care environments
8. Exhibit advanced leadership and advocacy by influencing care delivery and advancing the nursing profession through role modeling, collaboration, and policy engagement.

## Admission Requirements

- At least one year of full-time RN experience (approximately 2000 hours).
- Earned BSN with 3.0 GPA
- Undergraduate statistics with grade C or better (or conditional acceptance & take at Quinnipiac)

Applicants should submit the following to the Office of Graduate Admissions:

1. Official transcripts from all schools previously attended.
2. Official recent results of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS) for international applicants.
3. CV or resume.
4. Copy of unencumbered and unrestricted RN license.
5. Competitive applicants will provide a minimum of one reference from professional supervisors or faculty who can speak specifically to the applicant's professionalism, strengths and opportunities, and clinical experience in selected specialty.
6. Personal Statement (see application)

Applications for full-time and part-time study are accepted on a rolling basis. Final deadlines are generally two weeks prior to the start of classes. Applications are evaluated once all materials are received by Quinnipiac. Students are encouraged to submit their applications as early as possible for their desired semester. Class sizes are limited.

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

*The Nurse Practitioner programs at Quinnipiac University are currently accepting applications from students residing in the following states: Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, and Pennsylvania. Potential students residing in other states should contact Graduate Admissions to inquire further regarding future opportunities for applications from students in other states. Due to requirements of the New York Office of the Professions, students are unable to complete clinical requirements for APRN licensure programs in the state of New York. New York students should plan to complete clinical requirements in Connecticut or New Jersey.*

*At this time, the School of Nursing only makes clinical placements for students in Connecticut. Students outside of the state are required to identify their own clinical sites and preceptors. The School of Nursing provides guidance and recommendations to students for identifying potential preceptors in other states.*

*Any student who plans to relocate to a new state during their program must inform their program director immediately as this may impact the student's ability to continue their out-of-state clinical practice. If the school is not approved to place students in the new state, this may jeopardize student progression in the program unless they are able to complete clinical rotations in an approved state.*

## Progression Requirements

Students are expected to take courses in the order they are presented on the curriculum pathways. In order to preserve quality in our clinical placements, we are not able to accommodate a change in program specialty in the nurse practitioner programs.

According to Quinnipiac University policy all graduate students are expected to maintain a grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.00 on a 4.00 scale. Full-time graduate students are required to achieve a 3.00 GPA each semester. Part-time graduate students must have an overall GPA of 3.00 upon completion of nine credit hours and must maintain a

cumulative GPA of 3.00 thereafter. The grading scale of the Graduate Nursing Program is consistent with that of the university.

A student who earns less than a 3.00 in a semester (after nine credits for part-time students) will be automatically placed on probation and must achieve both a semester and cumulative GPA of 3.00 or greater in the following semester in order to progress in the program. Failure to achieve and maintain a semester and cumulative GPA of 3.00 in all following semesters results in dismissal from the program.

The minimum passing grade in nursing courses is a B minus (B-). A student who earns less than the minimum passing grade in one nursing course, but who has a semester GPA of at least 3.00, will be required to retake the course when it is offered again at Quinnipiac University. The student may not proceed into courses for which the deficient course is a prerequisite. Thus, the student will be placed in another student cohort and the student's program completion date will be delayed. The student must achieve the minimum passing grade or better and must also achieve the minimal passing grade in all subsequent nursing courses. Failure to meet this requirement results in dismissal from the program.

A student who earns unsatisfactory grades in two or more nursing courses in any semester is not eligible to repeat the courses and will be dismissed from the program. At the end of each semester, the directors of the graduate nursing programs reviews the cumulative GPA and academic record of all graduate nursing students. The directors of the graduate nursing programs notifies both the senior associate dean and the student in writing, of the student's failure to meet academic requirements. Students who are performing at an unsatisfactory level will be: a) placed on probation, b) suspended, or c) dismissed in accordance with the terms of the Academic Progression Policy. Students placed on academic probation remain in their program but must also complete a learning plan to help them achieve the academic standards of the School of Nursing. A copy of this learning plan, signed by the director of the graduate nursing program and the student, will be placed in the student's file and should be reviewed periodically with the advisor. Students should meet with their advisors to identify learning strategies to help them accomplish the goals in the learning plan. In order to promote student success, students may be asked to audit courses if there has been an interruption to the continuity of their curriculum plan.

## Clinical progression policy

In addition to course grade requirements, unsafe clinical practice and/or unprofessional conduct are grounds for failure in any clinical course and may result in immediate removal from the clinical site. Students who demonstrate unsafe or unprofessional conduct in a clinical practice site will undergo academic review and may be dismissed from the program.

## Nurse practitioner students

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

## Appeal Process

1. A student wishing to appeal a progression decision must write a letter via email to the appropriate program director within 5 business days of receiving notice of their inability to progress.

2. Appeals will be considered by a Progression Appeals Committee and chaired by the senior associate dean. Results will be communicated in writing to the student via email.
3. A student wishing to appeal a course grade should follow the grade appeal process (<http://catalog.qu.edu/university-policies/procedure-appeal-final-grade/>).

**NUR 501. Nursing Scholarship and Evidence-Based Practice. 3 Credits.**

This course focuses on the principles and processes of evidence-based practice and relationships between theory, research, quality improvement, and evidence-based practice. Research topics such as ethical and cultural issues, methodological procedures associated with scientific investigation and potential barriers to evidence-based practice will be explored.

**Prerequisites:** None

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

**NUR 502. Principles of Epidemiology and Biostatistics. 3 Credits.**

This course introduces epidemiologic principles, methods and data used to advance nursing practice. Students learn how to examine data and evidence regarding population health including interventions leading to positive health outcomes. Key types of data analysis including descriptive and inferential statistics are covered.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, Fall and Spring

**NUR 503. Advanced Practice Nursing Leadership. 3 Credits.**

This course explores the concepts of leadership within the advanced practice nursing role. Leadership behaviors related to health policy, interprofessional and systems-based practice, and ethics are explored.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, All

**NUR 504. Healthcare Technology and Innovation. 3 Credits.**

This course will explore how nurses apply technology and innovation to clinical practice allowing nurses to streamline efficiencies, better manage workloads, and increase team communication resulting in more quality time to interact with their patients and involve them in their care and treatment.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, Spring and Summer

**NUR 520. Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan. 3 Credits.**

This course presents the principles of performing a comprehensive health assessment and reporting the findings in a professional format. Attention is given to assessment and physical examination across the lifespan within diverse communities. The processes underlying diagnostic decision making are introduced. A laboratory component enables the student to master the techniques of performing a holistic health assessment.

**Corequisites:** Take NUR 520L.

**Offered:** Every year, Spring Online

**NUR 520L. Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan Lab. 2 Credits.**

This lab must be taken with NUR 520. (2 lab hrs.) An on-ground clinical residency is required.

**Corequisites:** Take NUR 520.

**Offered:** Every year, Spring

**NUR 522. Advanced Pathophysiology. 3 Credits.**

Essential concepts of pathophysiology are emphasized. Selected disorders are studied especially as they relate to homeostatic and defense/repair mechanisms. Where appropriate the course includes clinical correlations of disease states with symptoms and physical findings.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, Fall Online

**NUR 530. Advanced Pharmacology. 3 Credits.**

Students are introduced to pharmacological management across the lifespan and provided with advanced knowledge of pharmacokinetics. Selected categories of drugs commonly prescribed for management of healthcare problems and health promotion within diverse communities are presented. Controlled substances and the potential for abuse are discussed. The responsibilities and legalities of prescriptive authority in advanced practice are defined.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, Fall Online

**NUR 669. Transition to Practice for the APRN. 1 Credit.**

This course is designed to facilitate the nurse practitioner (NP) student with transition into practice. The course will provide a thorough review of the NP role, including the intersection with other healthcare professionals, the scope of practice of the nurse practitioner, and an overview of the professional components that shape practice. This course is designed to provide the student with opportunities to practice the professional skills required for success in their role including, personal, professional, and leadership development, interprofessional practice and partnerships, self-care practices, and use of informatics.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, Spring

**NUR 700. Advanced Specialty Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning for the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Across the Lifespan. 3 Credits.**

This course is designed to equip students with the advanced diagnostic reasoning and assessment skills necessary for evaluating and managing psychiatric and mental health conditions across the lifespan in diverse populations. Building on foundational knowledge of health assessment across the lifespan, this course emphasizes a comprehensive approach to mental health assessment and evidence-based practice for clinical decision making. The emphasis is not only on learning skills, but also on the appropriate use of these skills in a healing context. This course is grounded by a holistic approach, weaving together comprehensive mental health assessment and communication strategies across the lifespan while developing and sustaining therapeutic alliance. Students will apply concepts throughout the semester and during a required on-ground immersion.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 520, NUR 520L, and NUR 522.

**Offered:** Every year, Summer

**NUR 702. Psychopharmacology Foundations Across the Lifespan for Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner. 2 Credits.**

This course builds upon the previous advanced pharmacology course to prepare the PMHNP student for the prescribing of psychotropic medication to treat mental disorders in individuals across the lifespan. It provides the foundational knowledge of the major classes of psychotropic medication, the disorders they treat, and the neurobiology necessary to understand the actions of drugs on the brain.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 522 and NUR 530.

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**NUR 704. Psychotherapy Foundations Across the Lifespan. 3 Credits.**

This course provides psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner students with a comprehensive foundation in the theory and practice of individual and group psychotherapeutic interventions across the lifespan. Emphasizing the role of the nurse psychotherapist, students will explore theoretical models, evidence-based interventions and communication strategies while developing and sustaining the therapeutic self. Students will learn to compare therapeutic interventions from major schools of psychotherapy and apply interventions matched to client preferences, symptoms, and context. The course is grounded by a holistic approach to care, integrating experiential learning, ethical considerations, trauma-informed principles and self-care strategies for psychotherapists, preparing students for effective clinical practice.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 520 and NUR 520L.

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**NUR 705. Clinical Practicum and Seminar I for the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner. 3 Credits.**

This clinical practicum is the first in a series of four clinical courses providing an opportunity to integrate theory and practice in supervised clinical experiences with an approved site and preceptor. Students complete 150 clinical hours in psychiatric mental health settings across the lifespan. Students will use seminars and simulation to apply and integrate clinical skills while receiving feedback. Emphasis will be placed on defining the NP specialty role and scope, application of clinical and diagnostic reasoning, and the translation of evidence to safe nursing practice.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 520 and NUR 520L.

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**NUR 706. Psychotherapeutic Interventions Across the Lifespan I. 3 Credits.**

This is the first course in a series of four to prepare the PMHNP student for safe, reflective, and evidence-based practice of advanced psychiatric nursing across the lifespan. This course weaves together the application of prerequisite foundational principles of psychotherapy and psychopharmacology for treating commonly occurring psychiatric disorders across the lifespan with consideration for social and structural determinants of mental health. Students will explore the evidence-base for identifying and selecting psychotherapeutic and pharmacologic approaches for commonly occurring psychiatric disorders across the lifespan, while developing a biopsychosocial framework for clinical decision-making. This course is grounded by a holistic approach to patient and self-care as students establish a reflective practice that enhances self-awareness and therapeutic presence. The DSM-5-TR is used as the basis for diagnostic nomenclature.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 700, NUR 702, and NUR 704.

**Offered:** Every year, Fall Online

**NUR 707. Clinical Practicum and Seminar II for the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner. 3 Credits.**

This clinical practicum is the second in a series of four clinical courses providing an opportunity to integrate theory and practice in supervised clinical experiences with an approved site and preceptor. Students complete 240 clinical hours in psychiatric mental health settings across the lifespan. Students will use seminars and simulation to apply, integrate, and apply clinical skills while receiving feedback. Emphasis will be placed on ethical and legal considerations and the translation to safe, evidence-based nursing practice for the most commonly occurring psychiatric problems across the lifespan.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 705.

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**NUR 708. Psychotherapeutic Interventions Across the Lifespan II. 3 Credits.**

This is the second course in a series of four to prepare the PMHNP student for safe, reflective, and evidence-based practice of advanced psychiatric nursing across the lifespan. This course deepens the student's ability to integrate advanced psychotherapeutic and pharmacologic approaches in managing complex psychiatric disorders across the lifespan and continuum of care with consideration for social and structural determinants of mental health. Students will examine specialized individual, family and individual therapy modalities while integrating pharmacologic management for treatment-resistant and higher risk contexts and complex psychiatric disorders. This course is grounded by a holistic approach to patient and self-care, as students refine self-awareness and emotional intelligence to enhance their therapeutic identity. The DSM-5-TR is used as the basis for diagnostic nomenclature.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 700.

**Offered:** Every year, Spring Online

**NUR 709. Clinical Practicum and Seminar III for the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner. 3 Credits.**

This clinical practicum is the third in a series of four clinical courses providing an opportunity to integrate theory and practice in supervised clinical experiences with an approved site and preceptor. Students complete 150 clinical hours in psychiatric mental health settings across the lifespan. Students will use seminars and simulation to apply, integrate, and apply clinical skills while receiving feedback. Emphasis will be placed on the clinical and leadership skills required for the interdisciplinary management of complex patients including those with comorbidities, and multiple problems.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 707.

**Offered:** Every year, Spring

**NUR 710. Psychotherapeutic Interventions Across the Lifespan III. 3 Credits.**

This is the third course in a series of four to prepare the PMHNP student for safe, reflective, and evidence-based practice of advanced psychiatric nursing across the lifespan. This course provides an in-depth exploration of multimodal approaches such as pharmacogenomic precision, novel psychotherapeutics, and neuromodulation to address co-occurring and treatment-resistant psychiatric disorders across the lifespan. Students will integrate skills of advanced diagnostic reasoning into the management of complex comorbidities, patient-centered treatment planning, and outcome monitoring while refining the therapeutic use of self to effectively navigate complex cases with patients and families. This course is grounded by a holistic approach to patient and self-care. The DSM-5-TR is used as the basis for diagnostic nomenclature.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 708.

**Offered:** Every year, Summer Online

**NUR 711. Clinical Practicum and Seminar IV for the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner. 3 Credits.**

This clinical practicum is the fourth in a series of four clinical courses providing an opportunity to integrate theory and practice in supervised clinical experiences with an approved site and preceptor. Students complete 240 clinical hours in psychiatric mental health settings across the lifespan. Students will use seminars and simulation to apply, integrate, and apply clinical skills while receiving feedback. Emphasis will be placed on complex patient management in the context of health systems factors.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 709.

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**NUR 712. Psychotherapeutic Interventions Across the Lifespan****IV.****3 Credits.**

This is the final course in a series of four to prepare the PMHNP student for safe, reflective, and evidence-based practice of advanced psychiatric nursing across the lifespan. This course synthesizes advanced psychotherapy and psychopharmacology knowledge with a focus on systems-level care, population health, and leadership in psychiatric nursing practice. Students will continue to advance skills of integrating evidence-based psychotherapeutic, pharmacologic, complementary and alternative approaches for managing complex psychiatric conditions across diverse populations and care settings. Emphasis is placed on advocacy, quality, interdisciplinary collaboration, and innovation in psychiatric care delivery. This course is grounded by a holistic approach to patient and self-care. The DSM-5-TR is used as the basis for diagnostic nomenclature.

**Prerequisites:** Take NUR 710.**Offered:** Every year, Fall Online