Graduate Certificate in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

The Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMH-NP) Graduate Certificate is available to nurses who already have a graduate degree in nursing and are certified as advanced nurse practitioners in fields other than psychiatric-mental health. The program expands their scope of practice to assist them to acquire the theory, knowledge and skills needed to provide psychiatric-mental health services to families. The curriculum includes didactic, seminar and clinical hours. Graduates of the PMH-NP option are eligible to write the national certification exam for psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner (across the lifespan) offered by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). This examination is given nationwide throughout the year. The Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Graduate Certificate program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN), formerly known as the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission (3343 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 850, Atlanta, GA 30326; 404-975-5000).

Scheduling of Courses

The PMH-NP clinical courses are in a hybrid format with some short face-to-face intensives required (usually 1-2 campus visits/semester). Additional course work is held throughout the semester at scheduled times, with distance students participating live via software programs such as Skype or Collaborate. All PMH-NP clinical must be completed in the state of Alaska and in most instances, clinical is done in the students’ own community. Decisions for clinical sites are based on there being adequate experiences and preceptors locally that allow the student to meet the course and program outcomes. Thus, it is possible for students who reside in Alaska, outside of Anchorage, to take advantage of the opportunity to pursue a graduate certificate at UAA. In addition, all students have the opportunity to take advantage of clinical learning opportunities throughout the state, including both urban and rural settings.

Admission Requirements

See Admission Requirements for Graduate Certificates (http://catalog.uaa.alaska.edu/academicpoliciesprocesses/admissions/graduate).

School of Nursing Admission Requirements

The following School of Nursing (SON) application submission deadlines are required to ensure full processing of the application:

1. December 1 for admission to the Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Graduate Certificate.

Additional information and the application forms are on the SON website (http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/schoolorfnsiging).

Graduate certificate applicants must:

1. Submit the SON application form.
2. Turn in resume (specific directions can be found in the application packet and should be followed carefully).
3. Submit documentation of the following requirements:
   • Graduate degree in nursing (master’s or doctoral) from a school of nursing accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) or the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN), formerly known as the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission.
   • Active unencumbered license as an advanced practice nurse in the state of Alaska. License must remain active and unencumbered while in the graduate certificate program. There are different reasons for a license to be encumbered and some may preclude admission to the program. Students with encumbered licenses should meet with the graduate program chair to determine program eligibility.
   • Documentation of national certification as an advanced nurse practitioner.
4. Provide three letters of professional recommendation (see form in application packet). Letters must be submitted directly to the SON from the person writing the reference. References may be contacted by a member of the admissions committee.
5. Academic plan of study based on a gap analysis done by faculty advisor.
6. Schedule interview once the above material is submitted and it is determined the student meets minimum program requirements. Accommodations will be made for distance students.

Applications are considered for program admission on a competitive basis. Meeting all admission criteria does not guarantee admission. Nor does prior acceptance into graduate study status guarantee admission into the clinical nursing tracks. Special consideration may be given to candidates with clinical expertise, proficiency in other languages, knowledge of other cultures, and a proven record of professional contributions. This information should be put in the resume as part of the SON application. To the extent that there are limited seats available in the program, preference may be given to residents of the state of Alaska as defined by the university’s policy on residency for tuition purposes.

Additional School of Nursing Requirements

All students enrolled in the PMH-NP Graduate Certificate program must provide:

- Documentation of continuous current certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for adults, infants and children;
- Evidence of satisfactory health status, including immunity to chicken pox, rubella, rubeola, and hepatitis A and B (by titer); documentation of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis) immunization within the past 10 years; annual PPD skin test or health examination
indicating freedom from active tuberculosis; documentation of an annual HIV test (results not required); and
• The results of the SON-sanctioned national level criminal background check.

*The above requirements may change based on the demands of the clinical facilities. Please check with the SON for the most recent list of requirements.

Students are required to provide their own transportation to clinical sites. They are also responsible for their portion of the cost of audio conferencing. Students must have access to a personal computer and reasonable Internet connectivity. All students are expected to have graduate-level writing and American Psychological Association (APA) referencing skills, as well as basic computer and typing skills prior to entry into the nursing program, for example:

• Word processing,
• Sending and receiving e-mail with attachments,
• Accessing and navigating the Internet/World Wide Web, and
• Basic understanding of hardware, software and operating systems.

Academic Requirements

Students enrolled in the PMH-NP Graduate Certificate program must make continuous progress toward completion of the certificate and remain in good standing with the SON. A detailed schematic of the SON good standing policy can be found in the SON Graduate Handbook (http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/schoolofnursing/studenthandbooks.cfm). Noncompliance with the good standing policy and academic progress expectations will result in probation and possible dismissal from the program. In order to remain in good standing students must:

• Maintain professional and academic standards at all times.
• Maintain continuous registration each fall and spring semester until certificate is granted.
• Earn a minimum grade of 3.00 (B) in all required coursework.

Graduation Requirements

• Satisfy the General University Requirements for Graduate Certificates. (http://catalog.uaa.alaska.edu/graduateprograms/gradcertrequirements)
• Complete the program requirements below.

Program Requirements

The program requirements are based on what type of nurse practitioner certification the individual already has; additional coursework may be required based on the transcript gap analysis that is done by the academic advisor.

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