Online MSN Terminal Outcomes

The terminal outcomes for the online Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program at the University of Mount Olive reflect all nine of *The Essentials of Master’s Education in Nursing* (AACN, 2011) through the attainment of an advanced professional nursing role. Our online MSN graduates demonstrate competencies in evidence-based practice, leadership and management skills, academic nursing education practices and effective communication.

1. **Evidence-Based Professional Nursing Practice**
   a. Provide comprehensive and ethical nursing care to complex families and aggregates, utilizing a synthesis of knowledge gained from multiple theoretical models of sciences and health behavior.
   b. Incorporate evaluation methodology, research processes, and database systems into problem solving and decision-making.
   c. Respond to complex social, legal, and ethical issues using appropriate models and decision-making strategies.
   d. Demonstrate professional values in advanced practice roles, including the responsibility for continuing professional growth and development.

2. **Effective Communication**
   a. Utilize an array of skills, techniques, and new technology to effectively develop, design, and evaluate nursing and healthcare education programs in a variety of settings.
   b. Incorporate principles of change, conflict, and negotiation in a variety of workplace, community, and patient or nursing student situations.

3. **Leadership and Management Skills**
   a. Critically analyze the economic, legal, and regulatory issues that impact nursing and healthcare to influence the healthcare policy process.
   b. Demonstrate professional and leadership behaviors that foster improvement and innovation within healthcare environments and support the advancement of the nursing profession.
   c. Incorporate knowledge and skills in nursing management models, healthcare finance, human and material resource allocation, delivery paradigms, quality and technology management, and productivity.

4. **Academic Nursing Education Practices**
   a. Integrate adult learning theories and research from nursing education and related disciplines to facilitate learning, through the creation of learning environments, that facilitate learners’ self-reflection, personal goal setting, and socialization to the role of the nurse.
   b. Use assessment and evaluation data to enhance the teaching-learning process that is ethical and sensitive to the needs of a culturally diverse population.

Reference:
c. Design program assessment plans that promote continuous quality improvement, and maintain, reformulate or refine systems of healthcare education that are effective, efficient, and responsive to the needs of all people.

5. **Health Assessment, Physiology/Pathophysiology, and Pharmacology (3PPP’s)**

A program preparing individuals for a nurse educator role, in addition to focusing on the competencies in all nine Essential areas, should include course work in curriculum design and development, teaching methodologies, educational needs assessment, and learner-centered theories and methods. The master’s prepared nurse educator differs from the baccalaureate nurse in depth of his/her understanding of the nursing discipline and nursing practice in addition to the added pedagogical skills. Further, to teach students, patients, and caregivers regarding health promotion, disease prevention, or disease management, the master’s curriculum for the nurse educator builds on baccalaureate knowledge with **graduate-level content in the areas of health assessment, physiology/pathophysiology, and pharmacology** to strengthen the graduate’s scientific background and facilitate his/her understanding of nursing and health-related information. In addition, the master’s student who is being prepared for the educator role needs additional content in an identified area of nursing practice and opportunities in the practice environment to integrate this new knowledge and skills into one’s nursing practice. Those master’s students who aspire to faculty roles in baccalaureate and higher degree programs will be advised that additional education at the doctoral level is needed (AACN, 2008).

6. **Nursing Education Clinical Experiences/Activities (NUReD Clinical)**

The **AACN Preferred Vision of the Professoriate in Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs (2008)** states that “courses in the nursing program will be taught by faculty with graduate-level academic preparation and advanced expertise in the areas of content they teach” (p. 1, item 3). There is national recognition, however, of the growing shortage of nursing educators to fill faculty and other educator roles within the healthcare delivery system. Master’s programs that prepare graduates for nurse educator roles are designed to meet these needs. Nurses with a master’s degree may teach patients and their families and/or student nurses, staff nurses, and a variety of direct-care providers. As outlined in Essential IX, all master’s-prepared nurses will develop competence in applying teaching/learning principles in work with patients and/or students across the continuum of care in a variety of settings. However, as recommended in the Carnegie Foundation report (2009, as cited by Benner, Stuphen, Leonard, & Day, 2009), **Educating Nurses: A Call for Radical Transformation**, those individuals who choose a nurse educator role, as do all master’s graduates, require preparation across all nine Essential areas, including graduate-level clinical practice content and experiences in an area of nursing practice.

The **Master’s Essentials** (AACN, 2011) specify that all students in MSN programs complete advanced clinical educational activities that include supervised clinical experience. Students in tracks that prepare them for the clinical educator role need clinical experiences that provide them the opportunity to integrate new learning and
expand one's own area of nursing practice. In addition to these clinical or practice experiences, the student may have opportunities within the program to supervise students in the clinical area or teach in the practice or academic environment. Curricular design is the purview of faculty at each school and reflects numerous variables, including philosophy, local considerations, decisions about role preparation, and others. Faculty preparing students for roles as educators should determine the types of experiential learning they think are most appropriate to meet program outcomes in addition to advanced clinical experiences.

The National League for Nursing (NLN) has identified specific competencies related to the educator role as well as tasks associated with each of these competencies. These competencies can be accessed at [http://www.nln.org/professional-developmentprograms/competencies-for-nursing-education/nurse-educator-core-competency](http://www.nln.org/professional-developmentprograms/competencies-for-nursing-education/nurse-educator-core-competency)

A certification for academic nursing educators is also available; additional information regarding the certification criteria can be found at [http://www.nln.org/professional-development-programs/Certification-for-Nurse-Educators](http://www.nln.org/professional-development-programs/Certification-for-Nurse-Educators)

Our MSN degree program students have supervised nursing education practice experiences that are sufficient to demonstrate mastery of the Master’s Essentials (AACN, 2011). The nursing education learning experiences are accomplished through diverse teaching methods, including face-to-face (video) or simulated methods. In addition, development of clinical nursing education proficiency is facilitated using focused and sustained faculty-guided course room clinical experiences designed to strengthen patient care delivery skills, as well as system assessment and intervention skills, which will lead to an enhanced understanding of organizational dynamics. Our nursing immersion experiences afford the student an opportunity to focus on a population of interest, or may focus on a specific role. The nursing immersion research experience occurs throughout the program as a culminating graduate thesis experience.

7. Student Profile (SP)

The student profile assessment module in Moodle collects selected samples of our students’ work to form a compilation of academic work and other forms of educational evidence assembled for the purpose of (1) evaluating coursework quality, learning progress, and academic achievement; (2) determining whether students have met our terminal program outcomes or other academic requirements for courses, and graduation; (3) helping students reflect on their academic goals and progress as learners; and (4) creating a lasting archive of academic work products, accomplishments, and other documentation. The division of nursing faculty feel that compiling, reviewing, and evaluating our students’ work over time can provide a richer, deeper, and more accurate picture of what our students have learned and are able to do than more traditional measures, such as standardized tests, quizzes, or final exams, that only measure what students know at a specific point in time.

Reference: