

# Graduation Policies

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## Graduation Requirements

### *All Students*

In addition to meeting academic requirements for graduation, all students are required to submit a degree application and are expected to attend College of Nursing Convocation and MUSC Commencement ceremonies. Permission to graduate in absentia must be requested in writing to the Dean of the College of Nursing.

A day will be set aside early in the semester of graduation to facilitate the process of completing degree applications, ordering caps and gowns, and having graduation photos taken for class composites. Undergraduate students will complete their application to take the NCLEX-RN licensure examination (those graduates who plan to take the exam in South Carolina). Students will be notified in advance of the dates and are expected to complete these activities within the established period. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the director of student services (room 216) where they plan to take the NCLEX-RN licensure examination.

**All graduation requirements need to be completed prior to participation in convocation and graduation.**

*Approved by GPC January 2007*

**Undergraduate:** Requirements for graduation and for the award of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree are as follows:

1. completion of a minimum of 121 semester credit hours, including 60 sh of prescribed prerequisite courses with a grade of “C” or above from a regionally accredited college or university and 60 s.h. of prescribed upper division course work within 5 years of initial enrollment in the College of Nursing
2. completion of the nursing and general education courses prescribed by the faculty
3. completion of nursing courses with a minimum grade of 2.0 in each course
4. attainment of a 2.0 cumulative GPA
5. completion of at least 25 percent of semester credit hours in residence at the MUSC College of Nursing or the online program, including enrollment in and successful completion of at least two clinical courses.
6. recommendation by the faculty

**It is the student’s responsibility to assure that all prerequisite and upper division requirements are met.** The College of Nursing appoints a faculty advisor for each student to assist the student with program planning and tracking of prerequisites and upper division requirements. **However, the responsibility for assuring that all requirements are met rests solely with the student.**

Upon successful completion of the program requirements and upon recommendation by the faculty, BSN (Accelerated BSN, BSN/MSN) graduates are eligible to take the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN) leading to the registered nurse (RN) license to practice nursing.

**Graduate:** To qualify for the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree, candidates must meet all scholastic requirements and complete all specified courses in their prescribed program of study with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 within 5 years of the initial registration. In addition, students must successfully complete a thesis or track specific scholarly product.

**It is the student’s responsibility to assure that all requirements for graduation are met.** The College of Nursing appoints a faculty advisor for each student to assist the student with program planning and tracking of requirements. **However, the responsibility for assuring that all requirements are met rests solely with the student.**

### ***PhD in Nursing:***

The PhD in Nursing is designed to be completed in three to four years of full-time study or five to six years of part-time study. The need to commute or to engage in part-time study is taken under consideration during program planning with students. All work to be applied toward the PhD must be completed within eight years of initial enrollment in the program. For more information visit: <http://www.musc.edu/nursing/departments/studentervices/currentdoctoral.htm>

## **Certification Examinations**

National certification is required for licensure, reimbursement, and /or as a job qualification as an advanced practice nurse (Nurse Practitioner, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Certified Nurse Midwife, or Nurse Anesthetist). It is expected that all graduates will take the

appropriate national certification examination. National certification examination is optional but encouraged for Nurse Administrators. To date, there is not a national certification for Nurse Educators.

### ***ANP, FNP, GNP, and PMHNP Students***

ANP/FNP/GNP/PMH students are encouraged to take the certification examination offered by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) upon graduation. Specific information concerning these examinations may be obtained at [www.nursingworld.org](http://www.nursingworld.org) or by calling 1-800-284-2378.

### ***Clinical Nurse Specialist Students***

Clinical Nurse Specialist students (adult, gerontological, pediatric, and psychiatric mental health) are encouraged to take the certification examination appropriate to their specialty focus offered by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) upon graduation. Specific information concerning these examinations may be obtained at [www.nursingworld.org](http://www.nursingworld.org) or by calling 1-800-284-2378.

### ***Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Students***

NNP students are required to take the certification examination offered by the National Certification Corporation for Obstetrics, Gynecological, and Neonatal Nursing Specialties (NCC) upon graduation. Specific information concerning this examination may be obtained at <http://www.nccnet.org> or by calling 1-800-367-5613.

### ***Nursing Administration Students***

Although optional, Nursing Administration students are encouraged to take one of the certification examinations offered by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). The certification examinations offered include the Nursing Administration Exam and the Nursing Administration Advanced Exam. Specific information concerning these examinations may be obtained at [www.nursingworld.org](http://www.nursingworld.org) or by calling 1-800-284-2378.

### ***Nurse-Midwifery Students***

Students are required to take the certification examination offered by the American Midwifery Certification Board *formerly known as American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) Certification Council, Inc.* upon graduation. Specific information concerning this examination may be obtained at <http://www.acnm.org> or by calling 1-220-485-1800.

### ***Parent-Child Nursing Students***

PNP students are strongly encouraged to take the certification examination offered by the National Certification Board of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners and Nurses (NCBPNP/N) upon graduation. Specific information concerning this examination may be obtained at [www.pncb.org](http://www.pncb.org) or by calling 1-888-641-2767. If preferred, graduates may take the national certification examination offered by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). Specific information concerning these examinations may be obtained at [www.nursingworld.org](http://www.nursingworld.org) or by calling 1-800-284-2378.

## **Specialty Track Notes**

### ***Adult Nurse Practitioner/Family Nurse Practitioner/Gerontological Nurse Practitioner***

ANP, FNP or GNP students are required to pass an initial and final Clinical Competency Evaluation. The Clinical Competency Evaluations are designed to highlight areas in which students are achieving and areas that require substantial work. Students enrolled in their first preceptored practicum course must pass the Initial Clinical Competency Evaluation to progress to the next practicum course. Students enrolled in the final practicum course, NURSM 764: Advanced Practice Nursing Role Residency must pass the Final Clinical Competency Evaluation to graduate. Students with less than a passing grade on the Initial or Final Clinical Competency Evaluations will not be given the opportunity to repeat the Clinical Competency Evaluation until the following semester. Four hours release times from practicum are granted for the Clinical Competency Evaluation. A Clinical Competency Evaluation may be repeated only one time; failing the repeated Clinical Competency Evaluation will result in dismissal from the program.

The Clinical Competency Evaluation involves a simulated patient encounter. Live, patient-based simulations provide students with real-life challenges in an environment that mirrors reality. Standardized patients also provide an opportunity to observe performance under controlled and standardized conditions. Clinical performance is measured objectively because the simulated patient performance, the instructions given and tasks assigned to the student, and the scoring of the examination are standardized.

### ***Parent-Child Nursing***

PNP students are expected to join the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP) at the reduced student rate. Pediatric CNS students are encouraged to join NAPNAP or the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists (NACNS). Membership in either national organization will not only allow attendance at national conferences, but student members will receive valuable documents and information related to professional issues and certification.

### ***Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing***

PMHNP students are expected to join the American Psychiatric Nurses Association (APNA) at the reduced student rate. Membership will not only allow attendance at the national APNA convention at students rates, but student members will receive a packet of valuable documents related to professional issues and certification, and will receive the *Journal of American Psychiatric Nurses Association* and *APNA News*.

### ***Nurse Midwifery***

Nurse Midwifery students are expected to join the American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM) at the reduced student rate. Membership will not only allow attendance at the national ACNM convention at student rates, but students members will receive a packet of valuable documents related to professional issues and certification, and will received the *Journal of Nurse-Midwifery* and *Quickening*.

### ***Licensure of Advanced Practice Nurses in South Carolina***

State regulations provide for a mandatory registry of advanced practice nurses (nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, certified nurse midwives, and registered nurse anesthetists). The process for registration is subject to change. Upon graduation, the student should obtain current procedures and forms from the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation Board of Nursing at <http://www.llr.state.sc.us/POL/Nursing> or by calling 1-803-896-4550.