



Beth-El College of
Nursing and Health Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO COLORADO SPRINGS

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM POLICY

The Comprehensive Examination in the Graduate Nursing Program is a requirement for completion of the MSN outcomes.

- Foster change in health care delivery systems through translation of evidence into practice
- Assume leadership in fostering collaborative intra-professional care teams to integrate care service across the health care system.
- Participate in lifelong learning to promote excellence and design innovative models of nursing practice

The Comprehensive Examination requires the student to demonstrate an integration of theory, research and practice at the advanced level in a scholarly oral presentation. The Comprehensive Examination is designed to be taken the last semester of the student's academic program.

Eligibility:

The student must successfully pass all coursework with a grade of B, maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher, and pass the Comprehensive Examination or thesis requirements in order to graduate from the MSN program. Students will be assigned 3 faculty members (one designated as chair, the other two as members) for their Comprehensive Exam committee. Students should be in contact with their Chair as soon as assigned to ensure readiness for the exam. If students are weak in a particular area, remediation work may be recommended. Dates and times for examinations are assigned to the student by the Department of Nursing.

Intention to take the Exam:

Students must contact the Graduate Nursing Program Assistant, Diane Busch (719-255-4424) or dbusch@uccs.edu, the beginning of the semester they intend to graduate to indicate their intention to do the Comprehensive Exam. Students can locate all Comprehensive Exam policy, instructions, questions and evaluation criteria on the Beth-El Website, under current students, Policy Updates.

Questions about the Exam:

Any questions regarding the Comprehensive Exam should be referred to the Student's Comprehensive Committee Chair. Use of books, articles and other references is allowed but the student must cite references using current APA format. The honor code is strictly enforced, including any academic dishonesty, plagiarism (including reference citations) and sharing or taking others' works.

Evaluation Policy on Comprehensive Exam:

All Comprehensive Examinations are evaluated by the student's Comprehensive Exam Committee. All examinations will be presented via audio/web enhanced conferencing. All Comprehensive Exams are graded on a pass/fail basis. In the event that the Committee determines that a critical part of the presentation is missing, faculty will ask questions designed to elicit the omitted information so that the student can demonstrate that he/she has the knowledge. If the student is unable to answer the question(s) sufficiently, the student will fail the examination and be required to retake the exam prior to the end of the next fall or spring semester. The Comprehensive Committee Chair will notify the student of the outcome of the Comprehensive Exam, including a summary of comments from the faculty evaluators immediately following your committee's discussion of the student's performance.

Grading Criteria:

The content areas of theory, research and practice are equally weighted, and students must pass all sections to pass the exam. Students will have points deducted for failure to follow APA citations, grammar, spelling and writing errors in the PowerPoint presentation slides. Honor code violations (academic integrity, plagiarism, failure to cite sources in text or references, cheating) will result in immediate failure and dismissal from the program. Students are encouraged to review grading criteria carefully as they prepare the exam.

Comprehensive Exam Failure:

If a student fails the examination on the initial offering (for reasons other than honor code violations), he/she has the opportunity to retake the exam. After the student is appointed ad faculty mentor the student will be required to register the following spring or fall semester for a one credit Independent Study. An independent study to retake the comprehensive examination cannot be done during the summer semester. The student will notify the mentor when they are ready to retake the Comprehensive Examination. A committee of two additional faculty members in addition to the mentor will evaluate the student's examination. If a student fails the exam a second time the student will be dismissed from the Program.

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

Graduate Nursing students who are completing an oral presentation for their comprehensive examination should follow the guidelines below:

- a. The oral presentation should be a scholarly presentation of the student's ability to integrate and synthesize theory, research and practice. Students need to address each area thoroughly. Students should use the MSN outcomes and evaluation template to guide their presentation.
- b. The student will prepare a professional power point presentation addressing the MSN outcomes outline in Evaluation Rubric on page 5 and 6 of this policy.
- c. You will be assigned a Committee of three faculty members. One member will be designated as the Chair of the Committee.
- d. You will be assigned a date and time for your comprehensive examination in the month prior to the end of the semester by the Nursing Department.
- e. Any handouts and power point slides for your comprehensive exam should be emailed to your Comprehensive Exam Committee at least one week prior to your presentation. Failure to complete this requirement may result in rescheduling the Comprehensive Exam.
- f. If you have questions about the examination, consult your Comprehensive Exam Chair.

Location of exam

- Exams are conducted online with the use of technology to bring the participants together.
- Examinations are recorded.
- Exceptions are considered if there are extenuating circumstances.
- Exceptions to an online exam format will be brought by the comprehensive examination Chair to the Graduate Nursing Admissions and Progressions Committee for review and agreement.

Timeframe

The expected length of time for the presentation is one hour.

- The student has 45 minutes to present. The student will be stopped at that time and be graded on the presentation up to that point.
- The Committee will have 15 minutes to ask the student for clarification or additional information related to the presentation.
- After the question and answer period, the committee will confidentially discuss how well the student addressed the points in the MSN outcomes and evaluation template.
- The members of the Committee will unanimously recommend either pass or fail.

Role of Chairperson

- Meet with candidate when assigned either in person or by phone.
- Outline format of presentation and insure student understands that the date and time of the presentation will be assigned by the Nursing Department.
- Discuss selected case study for presentation and application of nursing theory to the case to insure student understands relevance.

- Review MSN outcomes and evaluation template with student to insure understanding of comprehensive nature of examination.
- Reinforce need for professional power point presentation. Suggest student follow 6 by 6 rules- no more than 6 bullets on a slide and no more than 6 words per bullet.
- Remind student not to read slides to Committee members during presentation.
- No more than 30 slides for the power point are recommended.
- The power point presentation must be completed no later than 1 week prior to the scheduled date and forwarded to the Committee Chair. The Chair will review the finished product to confirm the presentation meets expected the standard in length, and content addressing points of rubric.
- Slide review does not include edits or specific content review.
- Confirm candidate follows the Instruction for the Oral Comprehensive Examination.
- During the presentation, the Committee Chair assures that slides are not 'read' to committee and the time frame of one hour total is honored.

Pass/Fail of the Comprehensive Examination

- If the Committee does not pass the candidate, the student will be given an opportunity to repeat the exam one time during the following fall or spring semester.
- The repeat exam will be done during the following fall or spring semester and will be presented to a new faculty committee at a mutually agreed upon date and time.
- If the candidate fails the exam the following action plan will apply:
 - a. The candidate will have a faculty mentor appointed by the Chair of the Department of Nursing.
 - b. The mentoring must occur in the following fall or spring semester depending on the date of the failure. Mentoring will not occur during summer semester.
 - c. The mentor will work with the candidate on areas of concern during the following semester.
 - d. The candidate will enroll in one credit hour of Independent Study.
 - e. The mentor and candidate will agree on the remediation plan at the first meeting, the plan will be formal, with mentoring sessions and activities documented by the mentor and included in the candidate student folder maintained in the Graduate Nursing office.
 - f. The student will also maintain a log of activities, assignments and time.
 - g. The candidate will present to a new three person comprehensive examination committee at the end of the mentoring semester.
 - h. The student may request that the comprehensive examination be conducted in person on campus if so desired since repeating the comprehensive exam creates an extenuating circumstance.
 - i. The Chair of the Nursing Department and the Associate Dean of Research may not serve as a mentor or a member of the subsequent Comprehensive Examination Committee.

We, as individuals and a collective faculty, recognize that the time frame surrounding the Comprehensive Examination may be stressful for you. This examination can and should be a step towards your involvement as an advanced practice registered nurse, and it will help build your confidence and personal belief structure about your professional growth through education.

We wish you much success.
Nursing Faculty

MSN NP OPTION COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION QUESTION

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is to have the graduate nursing student demonstrate utilization and integration of theory, research and practice. While addressing the scenarios below, students should devote equal time to each section and use the MSN OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION RUBRIC as a guide to content areas.

1. Describe a client, family and community you have worked with in your clinical settings as an advanced practice nursing student. In the analysis of this case, address the following:
 - a. Medical Diagnosis
 - b. Assessment and Management
 - c. Pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions and rationale
 - d. Family and patient education and appropriate follow-up
 - e. Therapeutic, patient-centered communication
 - f. Policies and regulations that influenced your decisions, how they guide your practice, and ultimately your choice of care. These policies should be examined at the local, state, and federal levels.
 - g. Cost analysis of the care of this client/family. Specifically address insurance coverage and out of pocket expenses. Discuss the difference between billable services and reimbursement as it relates to care
 - h. Cultural and ethical implications of care
 - i. Utilization of technology in patient care

2. *Based on this clinical case:
 - a. Apply evidence based practice (EBP) to the client, family, community, and population scenario using the following guidelines:
 - 1) Present the problem and population
 - 2) Describe the process for identifying the evidence addressing the problem
 - 3) Summarize the results
 - 4) Critique and identify the gaps in the evidence
 - 5) Describe the types of evidence needed to solve the identified problem.
 - 6) Describe implications of research to advanced practice nursing and the identified problem

OR

- b. Present a research question or research article critique and describe its relevance to client, family, and/ or community scenario. Discuss the following as it applies to the research question or article critique:
 - 1) Design/methodology
 - 2) Sample
 - 3) Measurement
 - 4) Data collection methods
 - 5) Analysis Plan
 - 6) Describe implications of research to advanced practice nursing and the identified problem.

3. Identify a theoretical or conceptual framework applicable to your practice and care of the client, family, community, and population. Discuss the following as it applies to the clinical scenario:
 - a. Major concepts of the theory using the theorist's terminology
 - b. Relationship of the concepts within the theory and to the clinical scenario
 - c. Synthesis and integration of the theory into your practice.

4. Articulate your role as an advanced practice nurse
 - a. Include data on legislation, regulation or standards of practice at the local, state and national levels that guide decision making.
 - b. Include intra-professional collaboration, consultation, and resource utilization issues.
 - c. Articulate the role of technology in health care delivery systems

*** Note that you are required to do either Part A or Part B in #2 but not both.**

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