

**SONOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING
GUIDELINES FOR THE CULMINATING EXPERIENCE**

The culminating experience provides students who are about to graduate an opportunity to synthesize the theoretical knowledge they have learned throughout their masters program of study and apply it in their area of specialization. The culminating experience also provides an effective means of communicating theoretical knowledge and its application in nursing to academic peers and professional colleagues. Students are expected to demonstrate proficiency in the following areas to successfully complete the culminating experience:

1. Information content: The information presented must be accurate and current. Students must demonstrate mastery of the subject, appropriately apply theoretical knowledge to practice in the specialty area of nursing.
2. Synthesis of information: Students demonstrate their advanced practice skills of critical thinking by their ability to synthesize and apply theoretical knowledge.
3. Communication: The outcome of the culminating experience is presented in an organized logical manner. The outcome of the experience reflects the ability of the student to communicate clearly and competently. The APA format or the format of the publisher the written outcome is directed to, is the standard for a written outcome.

Students are expected to pass all three of the above areas to successfully complete the culminating experience. Students who choose options I. and II. are to submit their culminating outcome during the 12th week of class of the semester the student plans to graduate. One faculty member evaluates the outcome which will be graded Pass/Fail. If the outcome fails, a second faculty member will evaluate it, and that evaluation is final. A student who fails the second evaluation must successfully re-do the culminating experience in order to graduate.

Option I. CULMINATING PROJECT

- * Implement a project directly related to the student's research conducted during the masters program.
- * Implement a project that addresses a significant issue, or concern or problem that the student has identified in the clinical setting.

The project may be implemented in conjunction with other health care providers and/or masters students who collaborated on the research project. If the project involves other health care providers the student must take the lead role in the implementation of the project. The student submits a proposal of the project and intended outcomes and discuss how outcomes are measured.

Examples of projects include, but are not limited to: video tape production, development of training program and presentation to the staff of a clinical agency, development of program to enhance patient care in a clinical agency, development of instructional materials for staff or patients, development of software or graphic arts, an in-depth review of a primary care condition utilizing current guidelines and research findings, and such.

Option II. PAPER FOR PUBLICATION

- * Prepare and submit a scholarly paper that can be submitted for publication in a professional, refereed journal.

This scholarly paper may report findings from the student's research project or may be based on another topic of significance related to the student's practice. The student may co-author the paper with those they collaborated with on the research project in N503 A & B. The final paper must conform to, and be accompanied by, the publishers detailed instructions for publication.

Option III. COMPREHENSIVE CLINICAL SIMULATED EXAM

- * Comprehensive Clinical Simulated Exam

FNP students may take the Clinical Simulated Exam (CSE) to satisfy the culminating experience. The CSE will be based on a standardized client and will simulate a clinical encounter with a client.

There are three major parts to the exam.

Part I. Ability to gather subjective and objective data from client.

Part II. Ability to provide a logical assessment and plan for a client.

Part III. Ability to apply theoretical principles to client care

Grading Procedure: Students must pass each section to successfully complete the entire **culminating exam**. Grading will be based on a percentage that will be translated into a "pass/fail" grade.

OPTION I. CULMINATING PROJECT

Proposal Outline:

Student(s): Names of student(s) involved in the project. Graduate student must take lead role in the implementation of this project

Faculty Advisor(s): Name of the Dept of Nursing faculty, who have agreed to advise and sponsor you on this project

Project Description: Brief description (abstract) of what you propose to do, the need it meets, the population it addresses, and the overall expected outcome(s).

Project Goals: List the project goals. Also explain in your proposal how your project represents a culminating experience that reflects the learning objectives of the master's program.

Literature Review: Brief description of work that supports this project with proposed theoretical framework.

Resources and Budget: Describe resources needed to complete project and how you propose to access them. Budget presented in table format.

Timeline: The final paper must be submitted to the faculty advisor by Week 12 of the semester in which the student expects to graduate.

OPTION II. CULMINATING PAPER FOR PUBLICATION

Proposal Outline: (one page)

Student(s): Names of student(s) writing the paper.

Faculty Advisor(s): Name of the Dept of Nursing faculty, who has agreed to advise and sponsor your publication preparation.

Description of Paper: Brief description (abstract) of the work you will publish, ie what is the problem you are addressing, what is the population it addresses, and what publisher you will submit the finished article? Explain in your proposal for the paper how your paper represents a culminating experience that reflects the learning objectives of the master's program.

Literature Review: Brief description of work that supports your proposed article. Describe why your article will add something new to the literature. What is your proposed theoretical framework.

Timeline: The final paper must be submitted to the faculty advisor by Week 12 of the semester in which the student expects to graduate.

OPTION III. CULMINATING EXPERIENCE COMPREHENSIVE CLINICAL SIMULATED EXAM

Detailed description of CSE

Beginning Fall 1998, FNP students will have a third option by which they can meet the culminating experience. This option is the Clinical Simulated Exam (CSE). The CSE will be based on a standardized client and will simulate a clinical encounter with a client. There are three major parts to the exam.

Part I. Ability to gather subjective and objective data from client.

One of the FNP faculty will serve as the standardized client who presents to the provider (the student) with a presenting complaint. All faculty have the same presenting problem and use the same script. The student will be observed and graded by a second FNP faculty. The whole experience will simulate a clinical encounter and will take place in the Center for Health Maintenance and will be audio-taped. The student will work-up the "client" as they would in the clinical setting, proceeding to do a focused and pertinent history and physical, and making a preliminary assessment/diagnosis and plan. The student will then present the encounter to the faculty observer much as they would present a client to their preceptor in their clinical site.

Part II. Ability to provide a logical assessment and plan for a client.

The student, using only the appropriate reference material, will provide a write-up of the visit using the standard SOAP format, including a problem list, a health maintenance list, and a medication list. The write-up, may have an assessment/diagnosis and plan that may be refined differs from the original oral preliminary assessment and plan because the student consulted with their reference books and materials.

Part III. Ability to apply theoretical principles to client care

The two other areas the student must address these include: a succinct, scholarly discussion, using APA format with necessary referencing of:

- A. Description of a theoretical perspective that is logically applied in the care of the particular client seen in the encounter. Consideration must be given for the client's ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status and pertinent demographic characteristics in detailing how the theoretical perspective is an appropriate choice.
- B. Description of the ethical and economic principles to consider in the care of the particular client seen in the encounter.

Grading Procedure: Students must pass each section to successfully complete the entire culminating exam. Grading will be based on a percentage that will be translated into a

"pass/fail" grade. One faculty member evaluates the outcome which will be graded Pass/Fail. If the outcome fails, a second faculty member will evaluate it. The second evaluation is final. This is an individual exam, the use of published references is acceptable and encouraged, but students **must not consult other persons in the preparation of parts II. and III.**

Part I.

At the end of the oral part of the exam (Part I.) the faculty observer will review with the student his/her ability to have gathered the pertinent subjective and objective information based on a standardized scoring system. If a student does not pass part I. he/she will be offered the opportunity to retake the exam at another time, by "seeing" another patient.

Parts II. and III.

The original and 2 copies will be returned to the nursing office to the mailbox of the Faculty observer within one week of the exam. Part II & III will be graded according to the standardized criteria established by the FNP faculty.

Format:

Part II. Must be presented in a succinct, scholarly manner using correct clinical terms and descriptions. Must document references/resources using APA format and be limited to two (2) pages, excluding references.

Part III. Must be presented in a succinct, scholarly manner utilizing APA format with the appropriate documentation of references used. Each part of Section III. must be no more than three (3) pages in length (total for part III = 6 pages), excluding references.

Reporting of Results

In the event of a failing grade, a second faculty will read unmarked copies of parts II. and/or III. Failures in part II. will only be read by FNP faculty but failures in part III. may be read by other graduate faculty. One faculty member evaluates the outcome which will be graded Pass/Fail. If the outcome fails, a second faculty member will evaluate it. The second evaluation is final. The results of the exam will be posted in the nursing office students will be identified by their social security number. If a student fails part II. and/or III. they may, after consultation with faculty, rewrite parts II and/or III. within one week of the consultation.