

Frequently Asked Questions – UTRGV-Post Masters Certificate- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Program

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley makes it easy for online students to ask questions and find the answers they need. Below are many of the most frequently asked questions about the Post- Masters Certificate Program-Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner.

Call (956-665-3661) or (956-882-6552) to speak with an Admissions Advisor

What are the admissions requirements for the online Post-Masters Certificate?

The online Certificate PMHNP program at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley is open to licensed nurses who hold a Master's Degree as a Nurse Practitioner in their state accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (**CCNE**) or Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (**ACEN**). The school must also be a regionally accredited institution. Having a Master's Degree with the 3P Courses (**Human Physiology Pathophysiology & Advanced Health Assessment & Advanced Pharmacology**) also qualify for admission.

Is this program accredited?

Yes. The Post-Masters Certificate program at UTRGV is accredited by the **Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)**. Information related to this accreditation may be obtained by contacting CCNE at One DuPont Circle, NW, Suite 530, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 887-6791. Additionally, UTRGV is accredited by the **Southern Association of Colleges and Schools**. The **Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)** is one of the six regional accreditation organizations recognized by the **United States Department of Education** and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

Am I required to take the Graduate Entrance Exam (GRE) to apply to this program?

No, we do not require a GRE score to apply to the Post masters Certificate Program-PMHNP. For more information about the admissions process, please see our Graduate Admissions page.

<http://www.utrgv.edu/graduate/>

I have been accepted Now What? Click on the site below

<http://www.utrgv.edu/graduate/for-new-and-current-students/newly-admitted-students/index.htm>

How do online classes work?

As an online student at the UTRGV Rio Grande Valley, you'll log on to a powerful online learning system to complete assignments and learning assessments, just like you would in a traditional graduate course. Through lively discussion forums, you'll also interact frequently with other students and professors. Coursework can be accessed online anytime, day or night, but assignments must be completed by the due dates set up by each professor.

How much time should I allow for doing homework and completing assignments?

Most students spend about 15-20 hours per week on their online studies. Of course, study time required per week and the time it takes to earn the online Post-Masters Certificate Program will vary based on your own study habits. Don't forget, the online Post-Masters Certificate program at UTRGV is designed for busy, working Graduate Prepared Nurses so you can adapt it to your current schedule.

Can I complete clinical hours at my present job?

No. The practicum cannot be completed at your place of work, Psychiatry Mental health is a very specific part of the profession that only a clinical Preceptored by a Board Certified Psychiatrist or an ANCC Certified Advance Practice Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse practitioner is allowed. The setting of the practicum should allow you to demonstrate high-level communication, professionalism, evidence-based practice, quality improvement.

What Transcripts are required? All transcripts from every college course taken are required to be sent directly to the Graduate College. NO Transcripts will be sent to the Program Director/Coordinator unless specifically requested.

What States have students been accepted from to UTRGV – PMHNP program in the past?

Ohio, Delaware, Arkansas, Florida, Nevada, California

Does UTRGV Rio Grande Valley assist in clinical placement? NO, the student is responsible for obtaining a clinical site approved by UTRGV Clinical Advisors in their state of Residence.

Can Tele-Psychiatry be utilized as a clinical? Yes but only 75 hours of the total 520 hours required of the program.

Is there a Capstone Requirement? NO

How many Clinical Hours are required for the certificate? 520 total hours

Is the Program at UTRGV accredited? Yes, to become a PMHNP, registered nurses must complete a PMHNP program that has been accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, or the National League for Nursing (NLN). RNs who complete an accredited PMHNP program and who wish to become nationally certified must apply to the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC),

which is the **only** organization that currently offers national certification in advanced practice psychiatric nursing. **Nurses who wish to obtain a License in their state or any other state must contact that States Board of Nursing of that State to see if they can obtain Licensure with the UTRGV Certificate.**

Is the Program at UTRGV completely on-line? Yes

Will I ever have to travel to UTRGV during the program? NO

What courses do I have to complete if I am not an APRN (Nurse Practitioner) prior to the start of the program?

Required Graduate Core Courses for UTRGV Online PMHNP Program **NO** exceptions:

- **Human Physiology and Pathophysiology:** The structure and function of the different organs and organ systems within the human body. The role and anatomy of different cells and tissues are also discussed. How a healthy human body functions across the lifespan, and how different factors (ex. environment, age, lifestyle) can affect human health at different life stages. Students will learn how to apply their understanding of human anatomy and physiology to health assessments and clinical decisions.
- **Advanced Health Assessment:** The methods and principles of taking accurate medical histories. How to collect, analyze, and synthesize information about patients' physical, emotional, and mental characteristics to create an actionable understanding of their health. How to also take cultural and social considerations into account when assessing patient health and developing an effective health care plan.
- **Advanced Pharmacology:** The different classes of medicines and their effect on the human body. Common diseases and conditions, and how various drugs act at the cellular, tissue, organ, and organ systems levels to treat different ailments. The principles of drug metabolism, dose-response relationships, pharmacodynamics, and pharmacokinetics.

If I do not complete the prerequisites, may I still be admitted and take the courses concurrently? No, the concepts and content in these courses are needed to succeed in the program courses.

What will I have to know about UTRGV'S Online Post-MSN PMHNP Program? We accept applicants who have already earned a master of science in nursing in a field other than psychiatry and/or mental health, and who want to gain training and certification as a PMHNP. Our Post-MSN-PMHNP certificate program requires **18 total credits and takes 12 month to complete**, Not negotiable.

When does the program start? Every June

How much does the program cost? Please click on this link below:

<http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/admissions/paying-for-college/tuition-fee-plans-summer/index.htm>

[Or call 1-888-882-4026](tel:1-888-882-4026)

*****Please do not call the PMHNP program to inquire about cost of the program. *****

Is there financial aid? NO

What are the settings and populations required for the clinical hours? State hospitals, Inpatient Psychiatric Hospitals, Private Psychiatric Practice, Public Mental Health Centers, Out-Patient clinics and limited Tele-Psychiatry are all excellent clinical sites to choose from. The agency should be interested in the education of Nurse Practitioners and value the role of the nurse practitioner. Staff should be friendly and welcoming to the student. The clinical site should be a successful clinic and respected by the health care profession. The clinic and preceptor should have a patient population through the lifespan.

Will I have to see pediatric/adolescent patients?

While we do not have a set number of hours for different populations it is a PMHNP program and students are encouraged to pursue hours in pediatrics/adolescent since there will be pediatric/adolescent/adult questions on the boards. I would recommend at least 120 hours devoted to adolescent/pediatric psychiatry for a well-rounded clinical experience toward the boards if possible.

Who can be a clinical Preceptor?

Only a Board Certified Psychiatrist with > 1 year experience post residency graduation certified by The American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, Inc. (ABPN) or a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Board Certified by the American Nurse Credentialing Center (ANCC) **ONLY** can be a preceptor **NO Exceptions**. Professionally, the preceptor must exhibit interest and involvement in the advanced nurse practitioner role. The preceptor serves as host, sponsor, teacher, and role model for the student at the clinical site. Professional qualities that are needed to preceptor the PMHNP student are: interest in professional growth and continued learning; involvement in the agency and community; secure in role; confident, knowledgeable, and competent; has respect of peers; and is able to deal with conflict. Students may contact a potential preceptor via phone, set up an interview time and go prepared with a CV. Helpfulness, caring, flexibility, and enthusiasm are personal qualities that students value. Enjoyment of teaching, commitment to students, and willingness to work with beginners are important characteristics in the development of a positive student/preceptor relationship.

Can hours I have spent doing clinical in my previous program or any program count toward this program? No.

Is there a GRE requirement for Admission? No.

Can I do clinical using Tele-Psychiatry? Yes but only for a total of 75 hours of the 520 hours in the program.

Can I take a semester off once I start? No, the program runs sequential if you're in good academic standing we can place you in the next cohort the following year if you are unable to complete during that time you must apply again for admission.

Will I be assigned an Instructor/Faculty to help me navigate the clinical component/paperwork? Yes we call those adjunct instructors "Clinical Faculty" and every student will have one assigned. You will be assigned to a clinical group several weeks before you begin NURS 6475 & 6476 you will stay in this group until you graduate and every attempt will be made for you to have the same Clinical Faculty.

How will my clinical encounters be recorded and graded? The students will use TYPHON Group you will quickly and easily enter all **Clinical Encounter** information on one page, including patient demographics, diagnosis and procedure codes, skills, medications, and clinical notes, without entering any HIPAA-protected health information. Using **Time Logs**, students are able to enter shift time and time spent in other daily activities. These logs can be monitored by faculty or preceptor / supervisors to ensure accuracy.

How are we graded in the program? The program will use Black Board LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor for secure on-line testing; all examinations are **closed** book examinations. Discussion boards are used weekly and assignments are turned in during the courses. All grades are based on 100%; please review the university grading policy.

<http://www.utrgv.edu/online/getting-support/student-support/respondus/index.htm>

Will there be group work? Yes, some of the courses have group projects.

Will there be a capstone project? No, a capstone project is not associated at this time with the program

What is the grading system at UTRGV Graduate Program? Please visit this website <http://www.utrgv.edu/ucentral/grades-and-transcripts/index.htm>

How do I find out if I have been accepted in the PMHNP program? You will receive notification **ONLY** from the graduate admissions office please **do not** call the PMHNP program to obtain this information.

What happens after I turn in my application to the graduate college? Your application once complete will be reviewed for acceptance by the PMHNP Program Director; please **do not** contact the PMHNP office or program director to see if you have been accepted.

When can I start registering for my classes? Once accepted you will receive notification from the graduate office **ONLY** and directions will be given with your acceptance letter for deadlines.

What courses should I register for? The graduate office will give you direction and this information can be found in the Degree Plan according to semester.

Degree Plan PMHNP:

http://www.utrgv.edu/nursing/files/documents/utrgv_pmhnp_%20degree%20plan_template_revised%20nov2017.pdf

When is the deadline to submit an application? MARCH 1st of every year only.

Is the program 100% online? YES

When does the program start? MAY every year

How long is the certificate program? One Year

Is the program full time? YES

When do I start my clinical hours? Semester 2 During NURS 6475 & 6476 which is the Fall Semester of the program every year.

Does UTRGV offer a DNP Program? No not at this time but we are working on it.

Can I work while I am going to school? The UTRGV- PMHNP program is a rigorous, full-time program. The program requires a significant commitment for successful completion of didactic and clinical course experiences. For this reason, students are strongly discouraged to maintain full-time employment while enrolled in the program. Each student has his/her own individual responsibilities. If employment is essential, students are encouraged to explore flexible part-time employment and utilize saved vacation or other leave that can afford more time to commit to the program.

How is a primarily online education different? Online education is very popular as it offers the student greater flexibility with location of learning sites. This flexibility can be more accommodating to your style of learning and lifestyle. Some online educational experiences are synchronized for classes to occur at a designated time. Online education takes discipline and self-motivation; it is not for everyone. Online education requires participative learning with much less traditional lecture-style teaching. Graduate course work entails significant quantities of reading and discussions among learners with guidance from the faculty. Good computer skills are essential. Strong grammar and writing skills are important. While online learning can be somewhat isolated, there are opportunities both online and during the on-campus weeks to be acquainted with your colleagues and develop strong professional relationships. Some students struggle with online learning and may find that it is not for them. The Faculty at UTRGV are highly skilled in online education and are leaders in using distance technology in teaching/learning.

What are some tips to enhance my educational experience? "Students are encouraged to ""shadow"" a PMHNP for a day or two. Learn as much as you can about the role by meeting APRNs, attending professional meetings, and/or reviewing the local and national websites.

Are international students eligible to apply for this program? At this time, the program is only open to United States Citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents (Green Card holders) and individuals who hold an H1-B Visa or other valid U.S. work visa.

Where can I find the Universities academic calendar?

https://www.utrgv.edu/_files/documents/admissions/utrgv-academic-calendar.pdf