Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in Ball State University’s Post-Master’s Certificate (PMC) program. We are excited you are interested in earning your PMC from Ball State University. We offer two certificates: Nurse Educator and Family Nurse Practitioner.

In this Information Packet you will find a variety of helpful information about the program including program expectations, clinical information, and frequently asked questions, etc. A separate Application Packet will be posted on the School of Nursing website closer to the start of the application cycle and will include information on the application process as well as the supplemental materials required for application.

There are a few things to be aware of about the PMC program:
- The PMC program is only available to Indiana residents who hold an active Indiana nursing license
- All clinicals for the PMC program must be completed within the state of Indiana
- The PMC program is not eligible for federal aid

Before starting the application process, all applicants need to read both the Fall 2017 Application Packet and the Information Packet. If after reviewing all of the information you still have questions about the program please do not hesitate to contact the Graduate Advisor, Shantelle Estes, at smestes@bsu.edu or by phone at 765-285-9130. **You will also want to save a copy of this packet for future reference.**

We look forward to working with you in the near future!

Sincerely,

The Post-Master’s Certificate Program Staff
* New for Fall 2017 *

**On-Campus Requirement**

Effective Fall 2017, all students admitted into the Master’s Nursing Program are required to attend an **on-campus orientation** prior to starting the program. *Students are responsible for any travel-related expenses incurred with attending the orientation.*

The orientation days for students admitted for the Fall 2017 semester are:

- **Friday, May 19, 2017**
- **and**
- **Friday, June 9, 2017**

Students are only required to attend **one** of the days. The specific times of the orientation will be announced at a later time. RSVPs for the orientation time will be done on a first-come, first-served basis after admission decisions have been made and all responses have been received. Students should plan to be available both days in case their first choice is full.

In the orientation students will benefit from:
- Meeting the Master’s Nursing program faculty and staff
- Learning about the resources available to online students
- Becoming acquainted with the Health Clearance procedures and software used for tracking compliance
- Becoming acquainted with the Community of Master’s Students
- Learning about the registration process for nursing students
- Learning more about the requirements for your specific concentration
- Touring the Ball State campus
- Networking with fellow classmates
- Asking questions of the program faculty and staff
Is the PMC Program Available in My State?

The PMC program is only available to Indiana residents who hold an active Indiana nursing license. Additionally, all clinicals for the program must be completed within the state of Indiana.

About the PMC Program

At this time the School of Nursing admits students into the PMC program every Fall semester. Our PMC program is online (we do not offer an on-campus program) and is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The program is designed to be completed through part-time study as we do not offer a full-time program. Students will earn a Certificate upon completion of the PMC requirements, however students completing the certificate program are not eligible to walk in the campus graduation ceremony.

Once admitted into the program each student will have a plan of study created for them by the Program Director and Graduate Advisor. Not all courses are offered every semester and the program operates under the Ball State University semester schedule in which the Fall and Spring semesters are 16 weeks and the Summer semester is 10 weeks.

For classes that have clinical components to them students will arrange their clinical experiences in their own geographic area and use an outside specialist (preceptor) in the student’s area of study who will provide supervised experience. Students are responsible for securing their own clinical placement as the School of Nursing does not assist with that process.

All students in the program must be in possession of a webcam and microphone for use throughout the program. Students will also need access to a computer with a high-speed internet connection.

Preference for admission will be given to applicants who graduated from the Ball State University School of Nursing Master’s Program (graduation from the Ball State University School of Nursing Master’s Program does not guarantee admission into the PMC program).

The post-master’s certificates offered by the School of Nursing are not eligible for financial aid.

PMC Admission Requirements

The PMC admission requirements are listed below. Applicants must also meet the admission requirements of the Graduate School. Applicants are not required to take the GRE.

Applicants must:

- Have graduated from a National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) now referred to as the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) or Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) accredited master’s program in nursing
- Have a minimum 3.0 graduate GPA on a 4.0 scale
- Have an unencumbered license as a registered nurse in the state of Indiana
- Attend a one day, on-campus orientation if admitted
**Competitiveness of the Program**

Admission into the PMC program is competitive and meeting or exceeding the minimum requirements does not guarantee admission into the program. Preference for admission will be given to applicants who graduated from the Ball State University School of Nursing Master’s Program (graduation from the Ball State University School of Nursing Master’s Program does not guarantee admission into the PMC program).

**PMC Program Options Defined**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PMC Nurse Educator</th>
<th>The program prepares students in the role of nurse educator. Role courses provide a foundation in curriculum and program development; teaching and learning in nursing; and evaluation methods. During the last semester the student will take a 225 hour practicum (2 days/week) in an associate or baccalaureate on-campus nursing program. Students will have the opportunity to work with an experienced nurse educator both in the classroom and clinical setting.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PMC Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)</td>
<td>The program prepares students to provide health care across the life span in a family practice setting. In addition to the classroom requirements students will complete 690 supervised clinical hours in primary care settings caring for adults, children, women, and families. Students will find their own preceptors and clinical supervisors within their geographic area. Students are eligible to apply for the FNP certification exam (AANP and/or ANCC) on completion of the program.</td>
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**Who is the FNP Certificate Designed for?**

The FNP Certificate is designed for:

- Applicants who hold a Master’s Degree in Nursing, but are not Nurse Practitioners
- Masters prepared nurses who are Adult NPs or Adult-Gero NPs wishing to become eligible to sit for one of the FNP certificate exams.
How is an Online Program Different from an On-Campus Program?

Online programs are designed and structured differently from traditional on-campus programs. While online and on-campus programs both have unique sets of qualities that appeal to individuals for a variety of reasons not all individuals are successful in online programs.

Students who have been out of school for several years or who have never taken online courses may find an online program to be a big change from what they are accustomed to in a traditional, on-campus setting. Therefore, it may take those students more time to adapt to the different learning environment an online program presents.

Students in the PMC program are expected to come into the program and be or possess the following:

- **Computer literate** (Microsoft Office, email, access to and knowledge of how to use a webcam and microphone, Internet navigation, ability to scan and uploading documents to websites, etc.)
- **Able to read and follow detailed instructions**
- **Self-motivated & have strong time management skills**
- **Responsible for one’s own learning**
- **Able to adapt to new learning styles**
- **Critical thinking & problem solving skills**
- **Excellent writing skills** (APA format, professional email correspondence, etc.)

In an online environment your written communication acts as your voice and represents who you are not only as an individual, but also as a professional nurse to your classmates, course instructors, program officials, etc. Being able to think critically and then express your thoughts in a professional and kind manner is of high importance.

Online Classroom Structure

The PMC program does not have recorded or live lectures as you would expect from an on-campus program. Reading assignments, videos, group work, and discussion boards are some of the methods used by the course faculty to facilitate your learning.

Students are not required to log into a virtual class at a set time every day/week, instead, assignments will be given with due dates. Tests may be proctored by a third party via webcam and microphone and students will be required to sign up for a testing time during the timeframe given by the instructor.

Some students feel a benefit to taking online courses is it provides them freedom from the time constrains associated with attending an on-campus class one to three days a week. In an online program, while students are not required to physically be on campus each week for class, taking online courses does not eliminate the hours of instruction that would typically be gained from attending an on-campus class. Instead those hours of instruction are integrated into the course via additional readings, discussion board posts, homework, group projects, etc.
Many times students understate the amount of time that is required to be successful in an online PMC program. Because online courses do not physically meet it is easy for students to put off coursework because the weekly reminder of going to class is not there. We have found setting a weekly routine, with built-in study/homework time, and then disciplining oneself to stick with the routine can help students stay on top of the course requirements.

Students in the PMC program can expect to spend a minimum of 10-12 hours each week, per each 3 credit hour class, for homework, readings, discussion board posts, etc. When in clinical courses the 10-12 hours is in addition to the amount of time spent in weekly clinical rotations.

While the School of Nursing currently does not place any work restrictions on students in the program, as students get closer to graduation they will find the time demands for their courses increasing. Regardless of the amount of hours worked each week students are expected to complete all coursework as outlined on their plan of study. While every student’s situation is different, in the past some students have made the decision to cut back on their work hours, personal and non-academic commitments, etc. in order to complete their course requirements and the program within the time allotted by their plan of study.

In addition to the time commitments for classroom and clinical hours listed above students will also need to schedule time to work on securing clinical placements for each of their clinical courses. This may mean taking time to attend professional organization meetings to build networking connections, making in-person visits to facilities to inquire about clinical placement opportunities, and making return visits to facilities to collect completed clinical paperwork, etc. More information about clinical requirements is found in the “Clinical Information” section of this packet.
Students are responsible for securing their own clinical placements within their geographic area. The School of Nursing **does not** assist students with clinical placement. To assure students select and receive the appropriate clinical experiences, faculty have established requirements for the clinical courses within each certificate. The requirements will be made available to students once they start the program.

Clinicals are done in your geographic area with a preceptor you select based on the requirements of the course. A clinical supervisor will be a second person you select to evaluate you onsite for advanced role courses. The Family Nurse Practitioner certificate is not an acute care program, so clinicals for the FNP certificate will be done in primary care and clinic settings.

Often students find there is competition for clinical preceptors and supervisors, so planning early may help in securing a spot. It is recommended students start planning clinical experiences at least one year in advance of when they are scheduled to take the course. Waiting until a month or two before the clinical paperwork is due will likely result in not securing an appropriate clinical site, clinical supervisor, and preceptor.

Clinicals can not be done in your unit or clinic and the School of Nursing **does not** assist students with clinical placement, so it is recommended you start your search for clinical placement early. Students who live in rural areas may have limited options in securing clinical placement and students who live in an area that is saturated with graduate nursing programs may have more competition in securing clinical placements.

### Clinical Hour Requirements by Certificate

Both certificates in the PMC program have clinical requirements. Below is a break down of the required clinical courses and clinical hours for each certificate. Courses with 45 clinical hours are designed differently than those with 60+ hours and specific information about the requirements for these courses will be provided after being admitted into the program.

**PMC Nurse Educator**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NUR 609 - Assessment Clinical Practice</td>
<td>45 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>NUR 672 - Practicum</td>
<td>225 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Clinical Hours</strong></td>
<td><strong>270</strong></td>
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**PMC Family Nurse Practitioner**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Average days per week in clinicals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NUR 681 - Primary Care of Adult 1</td>
<td>120 hours</td>
<td>1 day per week average</td>
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<tr>
<td>NUR 682 - Primary Care of Children</td>
<td>120 hours</td>
<td>1 day per week average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUR 683 - Primary Care of Adult 2</td>
<td>120 hours</td>
<td>1 day per week average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUR 684 - Primary Care of Women</td>
<td>90 hours</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NUR 673 - Practicum</td>
<td>180 hours</td>
<td>1.5 - 2 day per week average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Clinical Hours</strong></td>
<td><strong>630</strong></td>
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*If required to take NUR 634 students will have an additional 60 clinicals hours, averaging 1 day per week in clinicals*
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<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>ANSWER</th>
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<tr>
<td>Is the GRE required?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Are there required trips to campus?</td>
<td>No, all of your coursework will be done online and your clinicals will be done in your geographic area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the School of Nursing place me in my clinical rotations?</td>
<td>Please refer to the “Clinical Information” section in this packet.</td>
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<td>Once I finish one class can I start on the next class immediately?</td>
<td>No, courses are taught on a semester basis and follow a curriculum sequence.</td>
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<td>Do I work at my own pace in the program?</td>
<td>The program is structured on a semester basis with assignments due at certain times. You may work at your own pace during the assignment period, usually every week.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you offer a full-time plan of study?</td>
<td>No, our program is designed to be completed on a part-time basis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the cost of the program?</td>
<td>Information about Graduate tuition and fees, financial aid, payment options, etc. can be found on the Online and Distance Education website.</td>
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<td>What is the program’s pass rate for the FNP certification?</td>
<td>There are two national certification exams a student can take once they graduate. (The American Academy of Nurse Practitioner (AANP) &amp; the American Nurse Credentialing Center (ANCC)) The 2014 pass rates for each of the exams are listed below.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>AANP</strong></td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>92%</td>
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<td>When will I receive my Ball State username and password?</td>
<td>Shortly after applying to the School you will receive a couple of emails from the Graduate School and the <a href="mailto:HelpDesk@bsu.edu">HelpDesk@bsu.edu</a> which will contain information about your username and password. These emails will be sent to the email address you provided on your Graduate School application. <strong>It is important you set up your username and password within 30 days of receiving the Help Desk email. You will need to retain your username and password for future use as it is needed for those admitted into the School of Nursing.</strong></td>
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