



**Master of Science in Nursing: Nurse-Midwifery
Supplemental Handbook and Practicum Guide**

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Nurse-Midwifery Program Overview

Forward

Welcome to the Loyola University New Orleans College of Nursing and Health Nurse-Midwifery Program. This Nurse-Midwifery Supplemental Handbook is intended to be used as a reference for questions regarding policy, procedure and any other matters related to the nurse-midwifery program. It should be referred to on an ongoing basis as questions arise. In addition to the policies in this handbook, **students are expected to adhere to all policies in the Loyola University School of Nursing Student Handbook and University Bulletin.** Students will be held accountable for all information in this student handbook.

Accreditation

The Loyola University New Orleans College of Nursing and Health Nurse-Midwifery Program is pre-accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME), which is recognized by the US Department of Education (USED). The address is Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education, 8403 Colesville Road, Suite 1230, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Telephone: 204-485-1803. Email: acme@acnm.org. ACME Website: midwife.org/accreditation. The Master of Science in Nursing Program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and approved by the Louisiana State Board of Nursing (LSBN).

The Nurse-Midwifery Program Philosophy

Loyola University New Orleans College of Nursing and Health Nurse-Midwifery program is founded on the following core beliefs regarding the health care of women and childbearing families:

- Nurse-Midwifery care honors the unique psycho-social, emotional, spiritual, and cultural attributes of each individual woman. Every person is a unique, holistic, spiritual being who possesses dignity, worth, and purpose.
- Nurse-Midwifery care is built on a partnership with women to provide optimal, holistic, culturally sensitive care and promote empowerment to make informed decisions.
- Nurse-Midwifery care respects the normalcy of pregnancy and birth, life cycle stages, and transitions as a physiologic process.
- Nurse-Midwifery care is provided in an interdependent, multi-disciplinary collaborative model within the health care system to ensure family-centered comprehensive care using evidence-based practice.

- The nurse-midwifery faculty is committed to improving the health and well-being of all women, with a particular focus on the women and families of Louisiana.

The Curriculum is founded in the fundamental values of midwifery practice including patient autonomy, evidence-based practice and respect for physiologic birth. We prepare students to develop collaborative relationships with other healthcare providers, where patients are cared for in an environment of inclusion of patients' rights to dignity, autonomy, and self-determination. The students will attain these goals through didactic, simulation, and clinical experiences using an interprofessional approach to learning, developing critical decision-making and problem-solving skills, and being responsible for the needs of the community at large.

Philosophy of Education

Our program holds several beliefs regarding learning and education:

- Congruent with the mission of the College of Nursing and Health, the nurse-midwifery program students and faculty are part of a larger academic community that in entirety, is committed to educational excellence, scholarship, and service aligned with Ignatian values to foster health in mind, body, and spirit.
- The learning environment is based on mutual respect between faculty and students.
- Nurse-Midwifery education recognizes that adult students are self-directed and have primary responsibility for their learning. Faculty provide resources and promote an environment that fosters knowledge acquisition and skills necessary to safely enter beginning practice.
- Education and continuing competency are lifelong pursuits.
- Nurse-Midwifery education is enriched through the diversity of students and faculty and supports anti-racism in student education both in the classroom and clinical settings.
- Evaluation promotes learning through reinforcement and constructive feedback.
- Self-evaluation is crucial to the learning process; thus, students have the responsibility to engage in personal reflection, as well as to communicate their needs to academic and clinical faculty.
- Each faculty member has individual teaching styles just as students have different learning styles.
- Interprofessional healthcare education aids in the overall preparation of midwives to better function as part of a healthcare team.

The program will provide a supportive environment for preparing nurse-midwifery students as a shared responsibility between students and faculty. Students must be intensely committed to achieving their goals through a consistent demonstration of purpose, discipline, responsibility to patients and colleagues, independence of thought, creativity, and personal demeanor. Faculty, likewise, are committed to the responsibilities of competent resources, guidance, and professionalism.

Program Mission

The mission of the Nurse-Midwifery Program is to prepare safe, beginning nurse-midwives who are eligible for certification by the American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB), and whose knowledge and clinical skills are in accordance with the Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice as defined by the American College of Nurse-Midwives. Graduates will be conscientious, service-minded nurse-midwives prepared to improve practice through sound clinical judgment, scholarship, research, formulation of health care policy, and provision of primary health care to women and newborns. The program seeks to promote lifelong learning. Our obligation to the profession is to prepare a nurse-midwife who will serve as an invaluable resource in support of the goals of the American College of Nurse Midwives and the advancement of the progression of nurse-midwifery.

Nurse-Midwifery Practice

The Loyola University School of Nursing BSN-MSN Nurse-Midwifery Program is committed to fostering excellence in nurse-midwifery education. We are committed to advancing the profession by preparing graduates to engage in evidence-based practice. The policies and procedures in the Nurse-Midwifery Supplemental Handbook are specific to Nurse-Midwifery students only. All information is subject to change without notice.

Professional Role

Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNMs) are Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) who plan and provide care to women across the lifespan. Independent practice, supervision, and collaborative practice requirements vary by state. Regardless, as healthcare professionals, CNMs collaborate with the patient and a variety of healthcare professionals in order to provide patient-centered, high-quality, holistic, evidence-based, and cost-effective care.

Education, Accountability and Leadership

CNMs enter the profession following successful completion of graduate or post graduate education from an accredited nurse-midwifery program and after passing the AMCB Examination. CNMs are accountable to the public for professional excellence through lifelong learning and practice, continued certification, continuous engagement in quality improvement and professional development, and compliance with the Standards for the Practice of Midwifery and Code of Ethics set forth by the American College of Nurse-Midwives.

Nurse-Midwifery Program Objectives

The program demonstrates that graduates have acquired the knowledge, skills, and competencies in patient safety, obstetrical management, critical thinking, communication, and the competencies needed to fulfill their professional role responsibility.

Upon completion of the MSN degree requirements in the Nurse-Midwifery Program, the graduate will be prepared to:

1. Competently and independently provide effective, evidence-based and safe midwifery care at the level of the Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice as defined by the American College of Nurse-Midwives.
2. Promote health equity by recognizing and eliminating disparities in the care of women and their families.
3. Provide the highest quality and seamless care within an interdisciplinary health care system of care that fosters collaboration among licensed, independent providers.
4. Commit to life-long learning, education, research, and service.
5. Be knowledgeable about basic concepts of public policy at the local, state, national, and international levels and the impact on midwifery practice and the women and families served.

American Midwifery Certification Board Core Competencies:

The ability of the MSN–Nurse-Midwifery Program graduate to assure patient safety through vigilant patient care will be demonstrated by the following quality indicators: formal testing; return demonstration; evidence-based care plan development; simulation; and patient outcomes. Students must take a comprehensive examination as a graduation requirement which will cover all coursework taken throughout the program.

Nurse-Midwifery Program Specific Policies

Academic Standards

All courses listed in the Nurse-Midwifery Program must be taken in the sequence established in the program curriculum, and as a full-time course of study. All nurse-midwifery didactic courses will be taught ONLY by Certified Nurse-Midwives. Permission to temporarily enroll on a part-time basis may be granted due to extenuating circumstances and is subject to approval by both the Director of the Nurse-Midwifery Program and the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health. All co-requisite courses must be taken during the same semester. The minimum acceptable grade in a graduate course taken at Loyola University New Orleans is 80% (B-). Students enrolled in the Nurse-Midwifery program are required to maintain GPA of 3.0 (B) or higher in all nurse-midwifery specialty courses in order to progress in the Nurse-Midwifery Program. A student who earns a single grade of a C+ may repeat the course but will not be able to progress in the program if that course serves as a prerequisite for the next semester. A student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation for one semester. A student on academic probation has one semester (fall, spring, or summer) to remove the academic deficiency. Pass/Fail courses do not count towards the students' GPA. If the academic probation is not removed in the allotted time, the student will not be allowed to finish the program.

Admissions Requirements

In addition to all of the general requirements for admission to all MSN specialties, described in the most current version of the Loyola University Graduate Student Handbook, the Nurse-Midwifery Program additionally requires of applicants for admissions:

- A Louisiana or multistate compact unencumbered license will be required prior to enrolling in any Nurse-Midwifery Course.
- Evidence of completion of Basic Life Support (BLS) and American Academy of Pediatrics Neonatal Resuscitation Program (NRP) that is current (and must remain current through the entire program and graduation). If NRP has not been completed by application, it will need to be completed (and maintained as current) prior to the beginning of Fall 2. The BLS course must be completed through the American Heart Association, the American Red Cross, or the US Military system. The Association of Women's Health Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) Basic & Intermediate Fetal Monitoring courses must be completed prior to the start of intrapartum practicum (Fall 2).

- A minimum of one complete year of full time, recent experience as a Registered Nurse in labor and delivery, birthwork or related experience.
- At least two current letters of recommendation from professional colleagues in leadership or academic positions supporting the applicant's critical thinking skills, experience and potential success in the nurse-midwifery program.
Recommendations from family, friends, or co-workers at the same or lesser level of the applicant will not be accepted.

If invited, candidates will participate in interviews in which the applicant has the opportunity to demonstrate to the admissions committee the extent of his/her knowledge, intelligence, critical thinking skills, professionalism, communication skills, dedication and character.

Clinical Attendance

The *minimum* clinical hours for each course as listed in course syllabi must be completed in order for the student to earn a passing grade. One single absence due to illness or emergency may be excused during a clinical course, provided that the student follows the procedure for notification of absence and documentation of illness or emergency. The student is responsible for rescheduling of clinical experiences and hours missed due to excused absence. A second absence from a scheduled clinical experience during a course may, at faculty discretion, not be eligible for rescheduling and may result in failure of the course.

Clinical hours are defined as hours spent in *direct contact* with patients, documentation or coordination of care. Due to the unpredictable nature of birth work, students should be prepared to take call for more hours than required in the course syllabus as *call hours that do not involve direct patient contact, documentation, or coordination of care, do NOT count towards the completion of clinical hours* for the course. In order to achieve competency for intrapartal skills, students will be required to take call shifts overnight, on weekends, and potentially on holidays if the preceptor's clinical schedule falls over such.

All clinical assignments are subject to the following limitations:

- Clinical experiences cannot be scheduled so as to conflict with didactic class meetings, examinations, or other required program activities.
- No clinical assignments including in house "on call" will exceed 16 hours in duration without a rest period of at least four hours
- A minimum of 8 hours of unscheduled work time will precede all clinical assignments and classroom activities.

Clinical Placements

Clinical site placements are provided by the Nurse-Midwifery Program. The Program Director will assign students to clinical sites each semester with aims to expose each student to a variety of practice settings and patient populations. Most clinical sites provided by the program are in Louisiana and primarily in the greater New Orleans area, but students *will be required* to travel to other cities for rotations. All costs associated with travel are the responsibility of the student.

Students may request to conduct a clinical rotation at a facility outside of Louisiana IF the student can provide a signed letter from a CNM or approved clinician stating they are willing to precept the student for any specific rotations. The letter must be provided to the Program Director a minimum of six months prior to the start of the clinical practicum course as affiliation agreements with clinical sites can generally take several months to obtain. Out-of-state clinical site requests must be approved by the Program Director.

Fatigue, Sleep Deprivation & Safety

In accordance with the ACNM statement on Fatigue, Sleep Deprivation, and Safety the Nurse-Midwifery Program is committed to maintaining safe working and learning environments for students. For this reason, students will sign a work attestation at the beginning of the program agreeing to the following:

- Students will not work a night shift immediately prior to a synchronous learning or simulation day and will not work an external job within the 8 hours immediately *prior to or after* a clinical practicum shift.
- Students will not attend clinical for longer than 16 consecutive hours without a 4 hour rest period. A rest period must be taken before returning to the classroom or the clinical setting, or before leaving the clinical site.

Preceptors will also be made aware of this policy prior to the start of the clinical practicum.

Work Attestation Form

Students must complete the following form within the first 7 days of the program:

Attestation of Work Hours Statement

Recognizing that practicing student midwives are also learners, and that learning cannot optimally occur in the setting of sleep deprivation, it is the position of Loyola University's Nurse-Midwifery education program that students attest to honoring the commitment of adequate physical rest in order to preserve the safety of themselves and the clients whom they serve.

The ACNM Sleep and Safety Taskforce & Clinical Practice & Documents Section of the Division of Standards and Practice published a Position Statement *Fatigue, Sleep Deprivation, and Safety* in 2017 well supported by the wealth of literature on the negative effect of sleep deprivation. Based on the science, it is the position of ACNM that midwifery students should be well-rested before scheduled call times, have a period of 4 hours of uninterrupted rest after 16 hours of active on-duty time, and/or take rest breaks before working more than 16 hours.

Loyola University College of Nursing and Health fully concurs with the ACNM Position Statement requiring that students are well rested prior to a clinical shift, whether an outpatient or inpatient clinical shift, and regardless of the length of the clinical shift. As such, the Nurse-Midwifery education program *requires* that students are not engaged in outside employment of any kind (nursing or otherwise) *within 8 hours* of having to report for duty as a student nurse-midwife to the clinical practicum site.

Clinical preceptors at all sites utilized by Loyola nurse-midwifery students will be informed of the clinical hours guidelines and requested to comply. By signing below, I attest that I will abide by this programmatic requirement for my own safety as well as that of the clients whom I will serve.

Name _____

Date _____

Clinical Standards

Students must be enrolled in a clinical nurse-midwifery course and satisfy all prerequisites and corequisites as described in the course syllabus in order to participate in the clinical practicum. Students enrolled in Nurse-Midwifery Program clinical courses are required to maintain the highest standards of behavior.

Infractions that may result in dismissal from the Nurse-Midwifery Program include:

- Failure to adhere to all applicable state and federal laws and regulations; all Standards of Practice and Guidelines of the American College of Nurse-Midwives; and all Loyola University, College of Nursing and Health, School of Nursing, Nurse-Midwifery Program and clinical site policies.
- Illegal or unethical behavior and/or any action or omission that jeopardizes patient safety constitutes grounds for course failure and dismissal from the Nurse-Midwifery Program.
- Any drug use by students. All students must adhere to the SON Nursing Student Drug Testing policy, which can be found in the SON Nursing Student Handbook. The illegal use or abuse of controlled substances is prohibited and is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. This includes use of any legal substance with potential to affect judgment or performance in the clinical setting. Students may be required to undergo additional drug testing if mandated by affiliate clinical sites. If a student is taking any medication for which they have a prescription with potential to affect judgment or performance in the clinical setting, the Program Director must be informed by the student prior to participating in any clinical practicums. If, in the opinion of the clinical preceptor or Program Director, the situation presents potential for patient harm then the student will not be allowed in the clinical practicum.
- Failure to conform to any clinical affiliate site dress codes or having inadequate personal hygiene
- Exhibiting bullying, harassing, or violent behavior
- Using contrary, disrespectful, threatening, foul or offensive language, gestures or actions
- Failure to have the clinical instructor or preceptor present in the room when a student-nurse midwife participates in a birth or procedure.

Conviction of a felony is grounds for failure of the clinical course and dismissal from the program.

Progression in the Program

No student may progress in the Nurse-Midwifery Program course of study without receiving a passing grade (80% or higher) in each clinical course. In order to receive a passing grade, the student must successfully and consistently meet course objectives and outcomes specifically described in course syllabi. The final clinical course grade is a composite of the criteria-based ratings received from all assigned clinical preceptors throughout the semester and the faculty evaluation of the student. In order for the student to pass, the composite rating must meet or exceed the specific benchmarks described in each course syllabus. If a student is identified by faculty as being at risk of failure due to unsatisfactory evaluations, the student will, in collaboration with the clinical faculty and/or Program Director, develop a remediation plan based upon the individual needs of the student. Students with remediation plans will be allowed to continue in the clinical course unless it is determined by consensus opinion of the clinical preceptor, course faculty and the Program Director that the student presents a risk to patient safety, in which case he/she will receive a failing grade prior to the end of the semester.

Clinical Supervision

Certified Nurse-Midwives, Obstetricians/Gynecologists (OB/GYN), Nurse Practitioners and Physician's Assistants are permitted to participate in teaching nurse-midwifery students in the clinical setting. Greater than 50% of clinical practicum hours must be completed with a CNM. All preceptors must maintain current licensure and certification. Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) and senior nurse-midwifery students can neither supervise nor precept nurse-midwifery students, but may be part of the team employed in the clinical setting with which the nurse-midwifery students interact. The clinical instructor/preceptor MUST be present in the room for a student-nurse midwife to participate in a birth or procedure. Failure of students to adhere to this supervision policy may result in failure of the clinical course and dismissal from the Nurse-Midwifery Program.

Professional Dress

Professional dress is required for all lab and clinical interactions during which you have contact with a patient. Dressing professionally during skills-intensives will help you take on the role of the Nurse-Midwife as you rehearse your interactions with standardized patients and other professionals in the lab.

The following components of professional dress are expected:

- Loyola ID visible at all times
- Closed toed shoes (an OSHA requirement) that are *business* appropriate (i.e. flats, wedges, loafers, dress boots, danskos – not high heels)
- Long hair pulled back so that it cannot touch the patient
- Fingernails clipped to a short length, either flush with the fingertip or below; no artificial nails or nail polish (infectious disease concern)
- No jeans, shorts, capri pants, skorts or short skirts; knee length skirts or dresses are appropriate. Skinny jeans, even if they are a color other than denim, are not considered professional attire.
- Modest makeup and jewelry is permitted. Avoid large or long earrings, necklaces and/or fake eyelashes as they pose a safety concern and are not appropriate for the clinic or intrapartum setting.
- Only rings that are flat bands with no mounted stones may be worn, even on the non-dominant hand.
- Facial piercings should be plugged with clear spacers
- Visible tattoos must be covered when in the clinical setting, which may require wearing long sleeves/slacks, if necessary, to cover them.
- You must wear a wristwatch with a second hand in lab and clinic; many FHR dopplers do not have automatic count function and you must be able to count FHR manually.
- Meticulous personal hygiene is a must as you will be working very closely with patients and preceptors. Avoid strong smelling perfumes, use deodorants, etc. as many pregnant patients are extremely sensitive to scents.

When practicing skills in the lab that do not involve patient care, students are permitted to wear scrubs. Scrubs should be clean and neat (not excessively wrinkled).

If you have any financial difficulty providing for professional clothes, please reach out to your faculty to connect you to resources. There are many second hand shops that serve this purpose.

Skills Kits & Materials

Skills kits will be issued to students during the second, third and fourth semesters. All skills materials must be returned to the Program Director by the end of the semester of use. Failure to return all materials in good condition will result in the student covering the replacement cost of materials.

Employment of Student Nurse-Midwives

Because of the rigor of the Nurse-Midwifery Program course of study and its mandatory full-time enrollment, outside employment by students is strongly discouraged.

Employment obligations will not be considered valid reasons for lack of attendance/absence to any program lecture, event, or clinical experience. Additionally, class and practicum schedules, and posted exam dates and times will not be altered to accommodate a student's work schedule.

Professional Activities Attendance

Students are strongly encouraged to participate in educational and professional activities of the American College of Nurse-Midwives and other similar professional organizations. Each student is required to attend two professional meetings per year and submit appropriate documentation of proof of attendance during their enrollment in the Nurse-Midwifery Program. These meetings can include, but are not limited to, state-affiliate ACNM meetings, national conferences, and virtual professional development workshops. Cost of attendance at professional meetings is covered by the student. Additional excused absences from the clinical practicum may be approved at the discretion of the Program Director for the student nurse midwife's (SNM) attendance at professional organization meetings and/or workshops beyond the required two per year of the Nurse-Midwifery Program that have appropriate educational benefit. Students must be in good academic and clinical standing, not on probation, and not in danger of failing current courses to take advantage of this privilege. The Program Director will only approve excused time for this purpose when it is requested in writing or via email 30 days prior to the scheduled event. Students will be required to submit proof of attendance to any professional meetings.

Withdrawal From Course

The Nurse-Midwifery Program is offered only on a full-time basis with as many as four courses in a semester. If approved by both the Nurse-Midwifery Program Director and Graduate Program Director, a student may withdraw from all courses taken during one semester without penalty of dismissal from the School of Nursing. Approved withdrawal from multiple courses is limited to one instance and must be associated with either a leave of absence or transfer to another specialty program.