

Culminating Experience Student Handbook

SFSU School of Nursing

Master of Science in Nursing

Clinical Nurse Specialist, Nursing Administration, and Nurse Practitioner

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Culminating Experience Process

Background

The Culminating Experience (CE) is the School of Nursing (SON) Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program's capstone event. The CE provides you with the opportunity to demonstrate that you have achieved the program expected student learning outcomes. By demonstrating achievement of the program expected learning outcomes, you also show that you have achieved the competencies within your concentration, either Clinical Nurse Specialist or Family Nurse Practitioner. Over time, graduate programs have measured student achievement in various ways including oral and/or written comprehensive exams, thesis or applied research projects. All graduate programs are required to have a culminating experience to measure student achievement of expected program learning outcomes. The SON revised the MSN curriculum in 2011 for implementation in fall 2012. A major change incorporated in the revised curriculum was a change in the culminating experience.

Expected Program Learning Outcomes

- Applies and integrates broad organizational, client-centered, and culturally appropriate concepts in the planning, delivery, management, and evaluation of evidence-based clinical prevention and population care and services.
- Demonstrates nursing and inter-professional collaboration that facilitates open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision-making to achieve quality patient care.
- Creates collaborative programs and educational approaches that address health promotion and disease prevention needs of culturally-ethnically diverse individuals and populations.
- Demonstrates a professional leadership role to promote quality and safe clinical patient care that incorporates ethical and critical decision-making approaches, fiscal accountability, effective working relationships, and systems perspectives.

- Assimilates nursing knowledge and expertise through research utilization, informatics literacy, and generates educational, leadership, or clinical approaches to advance professional nursing practice.
- Utilizes information technology to communicate effectively, manage knowledge, mitigate error, and to support decision-making.
- Designs evaluation strategies for nursing care outcomes to assess, manage, and determine resource allocation for evaluation of nursing care outcomes.
- Evaluate methods, tools, performance measures, and standards related to quality improvement within a healthcare organization.
- Applies research outcomes within the practice setting to resolve identified practice problems.
- Organizes interventions at the health care system level utilizing policy development processes, economic principles, and employing advocacy strategies to influence health and health care services for individuals, families, aggregates/identified diverse populations and communities.

Description of the Culminating Experience

Course work in the MSN program is designed to give you the skills and knowledge necessary to successfully complete the culminating experience. There are two components to the culminating experience. You will demonstrate achievement of expected program learning outcomes by writing a final paper and completing your electronic portfolio (ePortfolio). The written paper demonstrates integration of advance nursing concepts in a written document such as an intervention plan, a grant proposal, business plan, focused review of the literature, clinical protocol or analysis paper. The final paper demonstrates achievement of advanced practice nurse competencies. The final paper is a way for you to also demonstrate application of research to practice. You will be required to study your selected topic in a systematic and comprehensive fashion to generate the evidence for your proposed interventions and your evaluation plan. This manual is designed to provide you with guidance regarding the culminating experience and expectations for performance.

The culminating experience is designed to integrate knowledge and skills you have acquired from coursework into a final paper and ePortfolio that together demonstrate mastery of MSN competencies. The culminating experience draws upon knowledge generated from the course work, and reflects the growth in knowledge and skills required of advanced practice nurses. Each student must address the same specific requirements for the Culminating Experience (outlined below) but there is opportunity for you to choose the form and focus of the paper. The Culminating Experience contains both formative and summative evaluation components, which are demonstrated in the final paper, presentation, and the ePortfolio contents.

Formative Evaluation

Beginning with the first semester, in your core nursing courses you will complete course assignments that require mastery of various competencies as described in the *Essentials of Master's Education for Advanced Practice Nursing* (AACN, 2011), *Statement on Clinical Nurse Specialist Practice and Education* (NACNS, 2004), and *Core Competencies for Nurse Practitioners* (NONPF, 2012). Course assignments are designed by the instructor to allow you to demonstrate achievement of course student learning outcomes. Each course student learning outcomes are aligned with expected program learning outcomes. Thus, as you complete course assignments you are beginning to demonstrate achievement of expected program learning outcomes. Course assignments may be completed individually or in groups depending on how the course is organized. Once completed, course assignments will be the basis for your reflective statements about your experience(s) that are uploaded to your ePortfolio. As you move through the nursing course work, you need to reflect on the relationship between the student learning outcomes, advanced practice nurse competencies, the content learned in each course, and your topic for the culminating experience. This process allows you to integrate content and competencies from individual courses into your final paper and the ePortfolio. For example, you will integrate the following competencies and/or content into your culminating experience:

1. Theoretical basis for the intervention:

- a. What theories are commonly used in the nursing?
 - b. How can you use theory in your current or future work settings?
 - c. What theoretical framework supports your proposed intervention?
2. Research and Evidence-based Practice:
- a. How is research integrated with theory to influence practice?
 - b. How will you identify practice discrepancies in your work setting?
 - c. What are the criteria used for evaluating the credibility of the evidence?
 - d. What evidence supports your proposed intervention?
3. Epidemiology:
- a. How have epidemiological methods or studies been used address the topic of your culminating experience?
 - b. What broad ecological, global and social determinants of health are factors in patients outcomes relative to your topic?
 - c. What is the role of epidemiology in policy development and program planning?
4. Health Systems Management:
- a. What organizational systems need to be considered to assure successful implementation of your proposed intervention?
 - b. What impact will your proposed intervention have on safety and/or quality of care?
 - c. What are there political, legal or ethical factors are influencing the care setting or patient population you are working with?
 - d. What quality improvement strategies would be appropriate for you to implement in your care setting to improve patient outcomes?
5. Policy:
- a. What are the overarching policy issues involved in this topic?
 - b. How has political process or political pressure been implicated in causing/maintaining/solving this problem?
6. Program Planning:

- a. How do the principles of program planning assist you to understand programmatic barriers or solutions to the problem?
- b. Which finance principles are key to successful implementation of your proposed intervention?

Nursing courses throughout the curriculum incorporate concepts that will be key to you being able to write a final paper that demonstrates achievement of program learning outcomes. The courses include NURS720 Epidemiology (behavior change theories), NURS702 Health Systems Management (management Theories), NURS721 Program Planning & Financial Management (completing a needs assessment and developing goals and objectives), NURS703 (education theories), NURS717 (development of a clinical protocol), and NURS794 (literature review and critique, translation of theory and research to practice). Not every course assignment will be directly applicable to your culminating experience topic. Since the nursing curriculum integrates some concepts across courses you will be expected to incorporate those concepts into your culminating experience. Integrated concepts include: 1) patient-centered care and cultural appropriateness; 2) evidenced-based practice; 3) health promotion and disease prevention; 4) advanced practice nurse competencies; and 5) health disparities and social equity. Course assignments are designed so that you will address at least one of each of these core concepts in each of the course assignments you complete. Additionally, beginning in your first semester you are expected to provide a summary of how you are integrating core advanced practice nurse competencies into your nursing practice in your ePortfolio.

At the beginning of your first semester in the MSN program, you will participate in a 2-hour workshop to get you started in building your ePortfolio. You will continue to receive guidance about the ePortfolio in each of your graduate courses. There are assignments in each course that you will upload to your ePortfolio and that demonstrate that you have achieved the course learning outcomes. During your last semester in the graduate program, you will enroll in a 3-unit course, NURS895. This course is designed to give you one-on-one support from your first and second reader as you complete the final written paper.

Summative Evaluation

You will enroll in a 3-unit course either NURS895 Applied Research in Nursing or NURS898 Master's Thesis in Nursing. The course focuses on writing the final paper. The final paper will need to meet the following requirements:

1. Meets graduate-level writing proficiency standards for the department.
2. Demonstrates integration and application of expected program learning outcomes as described above.
3. Includes the core graduate nursing competencies of patient-centered care and cultural appropriateness, evidence-based practice, health promotion and disease prevention, advanced practice nurse competencies, health disparities and social equity.
4. Involves an in-depth examination of the topic, with a minimum of 20 scholarly citations and a critique of at least 10 peer-reviewed scholarly works.

Successful completion of the culminating experience includes:

1. A written paper of 20-25 pages (**maximum = 30 pages**);
2. Reflective statements in your ePortfolio about how you achieved the expected program learning outcomes.

Both the two products (the final paper, and your ePortfolio) will be included in the final review process by your first and second readers.

Sample Formats for the Culminating Experience Paper

The Culminating Experience project options have been designed as broadly as possible so that you have maximum flexibility in choosing a topic and format that works best for you. You may choose from:

1. An analysis paper: This paper requires you to take a strong position and defend it via use of the existing literature. Position papers may be used to support programmatic changes or to advocate for policy change.
2. A grant proposal: You may develop the literature review and methodology for an applied research study or request for additional services. Methods sections for a grant proposal include details about sampling or target audiences, instruments, procedures, data analysis, budget, and timeline.
3. A business plan: The first step of a business plan is a detailed understanding of the target population and the issue or problem. The plan includes a literature review as well as a needs assessment of the target population. The plan includes evaluative criteria that will be used to assess plan success.
4. An intervention plan: This format will also include a literature review about the intervention that is being proposed, and a detailed methods section about focused on implementation and evaluation of the intervention.
5. A clinical protocol: Assuring that quality, patient-centered care is provided is dependent on the development of evidence-based clinical protocols. This format requires you to complete a literature review and a detailed clinical protocol including assessment and evaluation criteria.
6. Development of an educational program. This type of paper will provide a literature review about the general topic as well as a review of existing educational programs that address the topic. A rationale for why a new educational program is needed is required. The paper will also include details regarding implementation and evaluation of the educational program.

The guidelines for each of these formats for the culminating experience are included later in this document.

The Role of the First and Second Reader

You will select your first reader for your culminating experience during the semester before the semester you intend to graduate. Selection of your first reader is based on the

focus of your field study. You should select a first reader who is a content expert in the focus area of your field study. As part of the selection process, you will meet with the faculty member you would like to be your first reader. You will determine the best format for your culminating experience from those listed above in collaboration with your first reader. You will follow the same process to select your second reader. At the beginning of the semester in which you are enrolled in NURS895, you must meet with your first reader to develop a plan for completion of the final paper. The first and second readers will review all written work as you write your final paper including outlines, drafts of the paper, abstracts, etc. You will need approval of the final written paper and ePortfolio from both of the first and second reader. You will not be eligible to graduate if you do not get final approval from both your first and second reader.

The ePortfolio Component

Upon completion of all graduate course work, your ePortfolio will contain elements that demonstrate how you have achieved the expected program learning outcomes.

Additionally, the ePortfolio can be used to demonstrate to employers that you have gained the competencies required of advanced practice nurses or serve as evidence that you are prepared for doctoral work. The ePortfolio takes the place of a written comprehensive exam. The final ePortfolio will contain:

1. Welcome Page
2. Professional Development
 - a. Career Goals/Professional Philosophy
 - b. Lifelong Learning (including CEUs, academic course work, etc)
 - c. Credentials
 - d. Certifications
 - e. Résumé
3. Advanced Practice Nursing Competencies
 - a. Scientific Background
 - b. Leadership

- i. Organizational
 - ii. Systems
- c. Quality Improvement/Safety
- d. Evidence-based Practice
- e. Informatics
- f. Collaboration
- g. Population Health
 - i. Clinical prevention
 - ii. Health promotion

You will enter information into the ePortfolio as you move through your coursework, with the final products to upload to the Portfolio being the Culminating Experience paper

Selecting a Topic and Format

You have the freedom to choose a topic that is interesting to you. The only requirement is that it be related to nursing. The biggest challenge will be to identify a project that is narrow enough to complete within the timeframe, but broad enough to keep you interested in it. You will spend many hours on your final paper, so choose the topic wisely.

First you will want to start with a general idea of what your topic will be. Most often, you will start with a broad topic area. The table below demonstrates how a broad topic can be narrowed to a specific project idea.

<i>Broad Topic</i>	<i>Specific project ideas</i>
Diabetes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intervention plan to increase exercise in school-aged children 2. Educational plan for elders who were recently diagnosed with diabetes to prevent neurological and circulatory disorders 3. Clinical protocol for the management of patients who have consistent HgA1C levels that are elevated
Health promotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grant proposal for a community organization to implement a program to use lay health workers to do outreach into the community 2. Focused literature review to identify gaps in knowledge about

	effective health promotion activities in low-literacy populations
Health disparities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An analysis paper that identifies political, social and economic barriers to health and wellness in a specific community 2. A grant proposal focused on increasing access to care for members of a specific target population.

You should start identifying your topic by jotting down 4-5 broad topic areas that you find interesting using the template below. Once you have identified broad topic areas, start listing possible project ideas.

<i>Broad Topic</i>	<i>Specific project ideas</i>

Evaluating Your Project Ideas

Before you start working on your culminating experience you should evaluate your specific project ideas using the following guidelines:

1. Passion/Enthusiasm for the project

- a. How strongly do you feel about this project?
- b. Are you excited about the project?
- c. How interested are you in knowing more about this topic area?
- d. Is this a topic you may be working with for years to come?

2. Relevance of the idea

- a. Is the topic of high significance to nursing?
- b. Does the project encompass the core graduate nursing competencies of patient-centered care and cultural appropriateness, evidence-based practice, health promotion and disease prevention, advanced practice nurse competencies, health disparities and social equity?
- c. Will the skills you learn doing this project help you in your nursing practice?
- d. Will conducting this project help you apply the knowledge and skills you learned in your coursework?

3. Practicality of the idea

- a. Can you do this project in a reasonable amount of time (4-5 months)?
- b. Can you do this project with limited or no financial resources?
- c. Is the project concrete and narrow enough to accomplish?

Note on practicality: By the time you start on your project, you could only have 4 months to complete it. Keep in mind what your other commitments are and choose a project that will not be too stressful or does not extend your time in school. Of course, you may choose to take longer to do the culminating experience and complete it you complete all the other graduate nursing courses. Be advised that faculty guidance will not be available to you during the summer, as most faculty members are not available from the end of spring semester to the beginning of fall semester.

Rate each of your project ideas on these three criteria, giving a score of 0 to 10 to each criterion, whereby 0 = very low and 10 = very high on the criterion.

<i>Idea #</i>	<i>Passion/Enthusiasm</i>	<i>Relevance</i>	<i>Practicality</i>
1			

2			
3			
4			
5			

Building the Case for the Specific Project Idea

The format you choose for our culminating experience will determine the language used to build the case for the importance of the project. For example, if you are developing a program plan or an educational program, you will have goal statement. If you are writing a grant or business plan, you will have a problem statement based on a needs assessment. If you are doing a focused review of the literature or an analysis plan, you will have a hypotheses or research questions. This one-sentence statement is critical to developing a clear and concise proposal. Everything else will flow from this sentence

Choose the two ideas that you rated the highest in the last exercise, and turn these into a one-sentence statement that fully describes the purpose of the project. The statement describes what you want to do in a concrete fashion. Using some of the project ideas in the example above, a one-sentence statement that describes the project could include:

1. Intervention plan to increase exercise in school-aged children.
 - The proposed intervention will increase physical activity among 3rd and 4th grade students by providing a structured after school regimen.
 - Intervention plan to implement a telephone follow-up program to assist cancer patient self-care after discharge.
 - Intervention plan to implement a DVT prevention protocol for post-operative patients.

- Intervention plan to implement a screening tool for postpartum depression during postnatal visits.
 - Intervention plan to implement a vascular access algorithm for patients with long-term vascular access.
 - Intervention plan to implement a stress reduction program for staff RN to decrease stress and burnouts.
2. Clinical protocol for the management of patients who have consistent HgA1C levels that are elevated.*
Effective management of patients with consistently high HgA1C levels through the use of a clinical protocol decreases the likelihood of adverse sequelae from diabetes.
 3. A grant proposal focused on increasing access to care for members of a specific target population.
The purpose of this grant proposal is to increase access to primary care services for low-income seniors living in the Tenderloin.

Try to create at least two statements for each project ideas you rated highest (for a total of 4 statements). Now review these research questions in terms of enthusiasm, relevance, and practicality. Can you select the focus area for your culminating experience yet? If not, repeat the process as many times as it takes to come up with an idea that meets the criteria.

Selecting a Format

Now that you have a topic idea, you need to choose a format for the project. This section provides more detail about the formats to aid you in selecting one that best fits your project idea. Some culminating experience formats are more appropriate for groups of students and other are more appropriate for individuals. When selecting a format for your culminating experience you will need to consider if you would like to work on the project with another student(s). If you would prefer to work on your own be sure to select a format identified for completion by an individual student not a group.

* Note: this option is only available to FNP students.

Grant Proposal (Group only - 2 to 3 students)

The written proposal should be formatted using the following outline:

- I. Cover page
 - a. Title
 - b. Person(s) submitting
 - c. Date submitted
 - d. Institutions represented
 - e. Funding agency submitted to
- II. Table of contents
- III. Abstract (maximum of 250 words, double spaced)
 - a. Summarizes body of the proposal
 - b. No new concepts introduced
 - c. A brief statement includes:
 - i. The problem,
 - ii. It's significance/importance,
 - iii. Goals and objectives,
 - iv. Expected results/impact,
 - v. Methods to achieve results,
 - vi. Identification of applicant (agency or individual),
 - vii. Total cost,
 - viii. Funds already available
 - ix. Funds requested
- IV. Project description (maximum of 20 pages does not include e, f, g, h, and i)
 - a. Problem addressed (can use the need assessment)
 - i. Clear, explicit statement of the problem and target population
 - ii. Background of the specific problem relative to the community
 - iii. Presents problems expressed as needs of the community (not the applicant)
 - iv. Relates to goals/purposes of funding agency
 - v. Makes no unsupported assumptions
 - vi. Supported by statistical evidence/expert opinion
 - vii. Is brief and interesting to read
 - viii. Appropriately targeted to identified funding source
 - b. Review of the body of knowledge (a minimum of 10 peer-reviewed scholarly works should be cited/critiqued in section)
 - i. Exhibits understanding of the conceptual basis for the problem and the intervention
 - ii. Presents key existing studies/interventions
 - iii. Uses reliable and valid sources of information
 - c. Project goals and objectives
 - i. Clear, unambiguous statement of goal(s)
 - ii. Objectives reflect overall goal(s)
 - iii. Stated in quantifiable, measurable terms

- iv. Include timeframe for accomplishment of objectives
- v. Realistic and attainable in the allotted timeframe in the proposal
- vi. Lend themselves to evaluation of impact
- d. Methods and procedures (based on the work plan)
 - i. Provided a brief description of the methods (intervention)
 - ii. Defines important terms and, if necessary, operationalizes terms
 - iii. Explains procedures, activities, and instruments that method(s)/intervention(s) entail
 - iv. Has a logical flow from goal(s) and objectives
 - v. Identifies targeted population
 - vi. Selected methods and instruments are appropriate for the problem and objectives
 - vii. Briefly describes organizational structure within which the activity is to be carried out
 - viii. Presents brief but comprehensive chronological description of activities
 - ix. Describes how data will be handled
 - 1. Collection
 - 2. Sources
 - 3. Processing
 - 4. Analysis
 - x. Presents a plan for evaluating accomplishment of objectives
 - xi. Presents a plan for evaluating and modifying methods over the course of the intervention
 - xii. Defines criteria for success in terms of quantifiable/measurable products (or, if qualitative, in terms of interpretation)
 - xiii. Tells who will be responsible for the evaluation
 - xiv. Defines when and how often evaluation will take place
 - xv. Planned activities are sequenced logically
 - xvi. Logistic consideration (e.g. transportation, coordination of sites, hiring) are addressed for each activity
 - xvii. Responsibility for activities are delineated in terms of personnel, agencies, or institutions
- e. Work plan**
- f. Timelines**
- g. Monitoring and data collection plan**
 - i. Use the table to identify specific data that will be collected during the project and timelines for collection
 - ii. Reflects methods described in the methods section of the narrative
- h. Qualifications of the applicant/organization
 - i. Describes the agency resources, personnel, capabilities, programs in service that will support accomplishment of the goal(s) of the proposed program

- ii. Delineates experience and accomplishments of the agency which will establish its expertise and creditability relevant to this project
 - i. Qualifications of principal investigators and key personnel
 - i. Includes:
 - 1. Training
 - 2. Education
 - 3. Area of expertise
 - 4. Experience and accomplishments related to the project
 - j. Plan for continuity
 - k. Confidentiality of records (if appropriate)
 - l. Interagency cooperation and coordination (if applicable)
 - i. Reflects participation and cooperation among participant agencies
- V. Budge Information
- a. Budget
 - i. Personnel
 - 1. Salaries and wages including units of time required to complete activities (e.g. % of effort or number of hours needed)
 - 2. Fringe benefits
 - 3. Consultants and contract services
 - ii. Non-personnel
 - 1. Space costs
 - 2. Rental, lease or purchase of equipment
 - 3. Consumable supplies
 - 4. Travel (number of trips, cost per trip)
 - 5. Communications, including phone, fax, mail, etc.
 - 6. Other costs
 - iii. Includes funds being requested including in-kind contributions
 - iv. Realistic and adequate to carry out all the planned activities
 - b. Budget justification (maximum 2 pages)
 - i. Brief justification of the elements included in the budget including:
 - 1. Basis for cost determination (e.g. salary range for position within agency)
 - 2. Rationale for specific budget items (e.g. percent of time for personnel, travel, need for consultation)
- VI. Appendices (optional)
- a. Letters of Support
 - b. Biographical sketches of the investigators
 - c. Other (as appropriate)

** These are graphic representations of material that are presented in the narrative section of the proposal. No new concepts should be introduced in these tables. These are appendices and not considered in the maximum page count for the grant proposal.

Intervention Plan (Individual student only)

- I. Introduction
 - a. Background
 - b. Significance
 - c. Problem Statement
 - d. Study Purpose and Objectives
 - e. PICO question
- II. Literature Review

The literature review must include a minimum of 5 peer-reviewed scholarly works for each of the areas – conceptual/theoretical, clinical, and research. This is an integrated review of a minimum of 15 peer-reviewed scholarly works.

 - a. Conceptual/Theoretical Framework
 - b. Research Literature and Evidence
 - c. Clinical Literature and Evidence
 - d. Summary
- III. Implementation Plan
 - a. Intervention
 - (i) Components of Intervention
 - (ii) Feasibility
 - (iii) Usefulness
 - b. Targeted clients
 - c. Implementation team members
 - d. Proposed timeline
 - e. Proposed budget
- IV. Evaluation
 - a. Outcome indicators
 - b. Data collection plan
 - c. Evaluation timeline
- V. Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

Business Plan (Group only - 2 to 3 students)

1. Critical Elements of a Business Plan
 - a. Cover Page
 - b. Name of the Company
 - c. Principals
 - d. Business demographics
 - e. Address/Telephone
 - f. Fax
 - g. E-mail/Web-site
2. Table of Contents
 - a. Numbered sequentially
 - b. Tabbed sections

3. Mission Statement & Company Description

- a. A clear statement of your company's long-term mission. Try to use words that will help direct the growth of your company, but be as concise as possible.

4. Survey of the Industry

This section must include the most current evidence to support what is happening in the industry.

- a. Overview of the present situation
 - i. Who are the consumers of your product or service at the present?
 - ii. Who are the providers at present?
 - iii. Where is the primary source of financing coming from at present?

5. Market Research Analysis

This section must include the most current evidence to support what the market analysis.

- a. Market: past, present, & future:
 - i. Description of the competition, market size and industry trends, identification of target populations, market share and projected sales

A minimum of 10 current articles must be included in sections 4 and 5 of the business plan. They do not necessarily need to be peer-reviewed. However, they do need to be from reliable sources. You will need to provide information regarding the sources of all information included in these two sections of the business plan.

6. Competition

- a. Summarize competition
- b. Outline your company's competitive advantage

7. Opportunities

- a. Problems and opportunities:
 - i. State consumer problems, and define nature of product/ service opportunities created by those problems.
 - ii. Be specific! Generalities such as "better quality of care" will not translate to successful operations, but "reduction in inpatient readmissions within 72 hours" will

8. Business Concept

- a. Summarize key technology, concept or strategy on which your business is based
- b. Be specific! Does your company intend to provide a better
 - i. Product?
 - ii. Service?
 - iii. Information Management?
 - iv. Outcome?

9. Goals & Objectives

- a. Five-year goals
 - i. State specific measurable objectives
 - ii. State market share objectives
 - iii. State revenue/profitability objectives

10. The Management Team
 - a. List CEO and key management by name
 - b. Include previous accomplishments to show these are people with a record of success
 - c. Summarize number of years of experience in this field
11. Resource Requirements
 - a. Technology requirements
 - b. Personnel requirements
 - i. Includes attorneys, accountants, bankers, insurance agents
 - c. Resource requirements
 - i. Financial, distribution, promotion, etc.
 - d. External requirements
 - e. Products/services/technology required to be purchased outside company
12. Operations Plan
 - a. Linear timetable for startup
 - b. Include parallel development tasks
 - c. Include chain of command
 - d. Plan should dovetail with projected financial milestones
13. Research & Development
 - a. What needs to be developed before project can move forward?
 - b. Examples:
 - i. Cost management of product production
 - ii. Packaging
 - iii. Different unit size for products
 - iv. Government regulation, e.g., Federal Toiletries and Cosmetics, FDA, OSHA, Bureau of Transportation, etc.
14. Key Timing Issues
 - a. Near term
 - i. Isolate key decisions and issues that need immediate or near term resolution
 - b. Long term
 - i. Isolate issues needing long-term resolution
 - ii. State consequences of decision postponement
 - c. If you are seeking funding, state specifics
15. Risks & Rewards
 - a. Risks
 - i. Summarize risks of proposed project
 - b. Addressing risk
 - i. Summarize how risks will be addressed
 - c. Rewards
 - i. Estimate expected pay-off, particularly if seeking funding
 - d. Troubleshooting
 - i. Internal and external threats to the business
16. Financial Plan

- a. High-level financial plan that defines financial model, pricing assumptions, and reviews yearly expected sales and profits for the next three years.
 - b. Use several pages and diagrams or tables to cover this material appropriately.
17. Proposed Financing
- a. Be very specific
 - b. Who is funding how much at what time?
 - c. At what intervals is the funding to take place and what triggers the next round of funding?
18. Legal Structure & Regulation
- a. The legal entity: Subchapter S, C Corp, LLC, etc.
 - b. What regulatory agencies must be cleared?
 - c. What is the ownership distribution? Stock?
19. Percentage ownership?
- a. Who is legally responsible for company?
 - b. Errors and Omission Insurance
 - c. Bonded employees
 - d. Copyright & Trademark
 - e. Protection of IP - Patents
20. Appendices
21. Supporting Documents
- a. Maps
 - b. Government Surveys
 - c. Literature bibliography
 - d. Tables
 - e. Charts
 - f. Photographs
 - g. Testimonials

Analysis Paper (Individual student only)

In this paper, the author argues a minimum of two sides of an issue. There may be more points of view around a particular issue and you may chose to present more than two sides.

1. Cover page
 - a. Title
 - b. Person(s) submitting
 - c. Date submitted
 - d. Institutions represented
2. Table of contents
3. Abstract (maximum of 250 words, double spaced)
 - a. Summarizes body of the proposal
 - b. No new concepts introduced
 - c. A brief statement includes:

- i. The problem,
 - ii. It's significance/importance,
 - iii. Goals and objectives,
 - iv. Expected results/impact,
 - v. Methods to achieve results,
- 4. Project (maximum of 20 pages)
 - a. Analysis entails the breaking apart of a thing to identify its constituent parts and components
 - b. Introduction: Define the concept of interest
 - i. Critical attributes, Set of conditions both necessary and sufficient to define the issue and its boundaries
 - ii. Clear, explicit statement of the problem and target population
 - iii. Background of the specific problem
 - iv. Makes no unsupported assumptions
 - v. Supported by statistical evidence/expert opinion
 - vi. Is brief and interesting to read
 - c. Review of literature: Review of the body of knowledge
A minimum of 10 scholarly works that support each side of the argument are required.
 - i. Will involve the discovery of the attributes of the concept
 - 1. This will involve the collection of data in some manner
 - 2. This also involves a focus on analysis in a written form
 - 3. Is conducted to generate a picture of what is known and not known about a particular situation
 - ii. Refers to relevant sources that are important in providing in-depth knowledge
 - 1. Uses reliable and valid sources of information
 - 2. To provide evidence for concept analysis
 - 3. Presents key existing studies/interventions
 - 4. Gain a broad background or understanding of the information that is available related to a problem
 - d. Problem addressed
 - e. Exhibits understanding of the conceptual basis for the issue under analysis
 - f. Analysis of the issue
 - i. Thesis Statement
 - ii. Delineation of specific problems related to the issue.
 - g. Methods and procedures
 - i. Identifies specific population
 - ii. Categorizes detailed concerns related to the issue
 - iii. Provides a discussion of recommended intervention(s) to address specified concerns. Discuss all options
 - iv. Defines important terms and, if necessary, operationalizes terms
 - h. Qualifications of key personnel

- i. Includes:
 - 1. Training
 - 2. Education
 - 3. Area of expertise
- 5. Summary
 - a. Review of issue and recommended intervention(s)
 - b. Suggestion for evaluation of intervention
- 6. Appendices (as appropriate)

Clinical Protocol (Standardized Procedure) (Individual FNP student only)

- 1. BRN scope of practice for CNS/NP
- 2. General policy component for SPs (how are they made)
 - a. Development and review
 - b. Scope and setting of practice
 - c. Qualifications and Evaluations
 - d. Authorized NPs
- 3. Policy
 - a. Functions
 - b. Circumstances
- 4. Protocols (steps of medical care for given patient situations)- write 5 protocols to be included in your SPs
 - a. Definitions
 - b. Data base (Nursing Practice)
 - i. Subjective
 - ii. Objective
 - c. Diagnosis
 - i. Physical exam
 - ii. Pertinent lab/X-ray results
 - d. Plan
 - i. Treatment
 - 1. Recognition of emergencies
 - 2. Further lab or x-ray studies
 - 3. Physical therapy?
 - 4. Diet/Exercise
 - 5. Evidence based medical treatment plan
 - 6. References (at least 5 scholarly references within the last 5 years)

- ii. Patient conditions requiring consultation (with physician or specialist)
 - iii. Medication furnishing/formulary
 - iv. Education- patient/family
 - v. Follow-up
 - e. Record keeping
 - i. Charting
 - ii. HIPAA
- 5. Standardized procedures for dispensing of medications by NPs
 - a. Policy
 - b. Protocol
 - i. Data base
 - ii. Action
 - iii. Record keeping
 - iv. Consultation
 - c. Requirements for NPs
 - d. Approval page
- 6. Requirements
 - a. Nurse practitioner education program/specialty
 - b. Advanced level training
 - c. Experience
 - d. National Certification in area of specialty
 - e. Method of initial and continuing evaluation of competence
- 7. Development and approval of the Standardized Procedure
 - a. Method: (Title 16, CCR Section 1474 (a))
 - b. Review schedule
 - c. Signatures of authorized personnel approving the SPs and dates
 - i. Nursing
 - ii. Medicine
 - iii. Administration
- 8. NPs authorized to perform procedures/protocols

Educational Plan (Individual student only)

- 1. Title page
- 2. Abstract (250 words, double spaced)
- 3. Introduction
- 4. Body
 - a. Issue – Includes the identification of the educational problem, the environment in which the issue occurs, pertinent stakeholders, and

scholarly literature that supports not only the issue but avenues to resolve the issue. A minimum 10 peer-reviewed scholarly works need to be reviewed and critiqued.

- b. Educational Theory - Supports the educational intervention AND the types of learner (i.e. age and ethnicity) that will receive the educational tool. Examples of educational theorists that may be considered are Knowles, Mezirow, Freire, or Rosenstock and The Health Belief Model.
 - c. Teaching Strategies – Includes learning objectives and outcomes that address different learning styles (i.e. visual, kinesthetic), how the student’s chosen teaching strategies align with the organizational mission, and how transfer of knowledge or dissemination of information will occur. You should consider not only traditional modes of delivery but also the use of social media or online learning options.
 - d. Formal Evaluation Tools (long and short term) – Includes the type of evaluation tool (questionnaire, Likert scale, etc), when the evaluation tools will be administered, and how the evaluation tool will be administered. The evaluation tools should include components about the overall presentation, as well as the feasibility of using the educational tool. The long-term evaluation tool should determine if the educational tool was implemented. Samples of evaluation tools can be submitted as appendices.
5. Conclusion
 6. Reference page
 7. Appendices if necessary

Developing Your Final Paper

When you have decided on the topic and format of your final paper, you will want to meet with your first reader to go over your plan. It may be helpful to have an outline of your final paper ready to focus the discussion. It is best to do this in the semester prior to the semester in which you intend to graduate. Once you have reached agreement regarding the final paper with your first reader, contact your second reader so that you can discuss your plan. In collaboration with your first reader develop a plan for completion of your final paper. This should include timelines for completion of key portions of the paper and developing a method of communication that meets both your needs. You will want to share this information with your second reader. Next, you will want to begin work on the final

paper. You can start working on your final paper during your last 2 semesters of the graduate program. Do not wait until the last moment to get started or you risk not completing the final paper within the last semester of your nursing course work and extending your time in the nursing program.

Do I Need Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval?

It is your responsibility to determine if your project needs IRB approval or not. To determine if your project needs IRB approval http://research.sfsu.edu/protocol/require_review . If after reading this information you still have questions regarding whether your project needs IRB approval or not, contact your first reader.

Searching for Information and Interpreting Research Articles

Through your nursing course work you will develop the skills necessary to conduct a comprehensive literature review. All formats of the culminating experience require you to review and critique at least 10 peer-reviewed scholarly works. The most commonly used databases used in nursing are PubMed, Cumulative Index of Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), Web of Science, and PsychInfo. You will be oriented to each of these databases at various points in the graduate program.

An important aspect of success in writing a comprehensive review of the literature is being able to critique the research by determining its significance to the discipline and assessing reliability and validity of the study and study methods. Most student benefit from building a table that aids in summarizing each of the studies reviewed. It may be beneficial for you to develop a table similar to the one below to help you organize the studies you're reading.

Taking Notes from Research Sources:

Complete citation in APA style:
(save yourself work at the end by carefully recording citations as you read)
Purpose and type of research (Quantitative or qualitative; experimental or descriptive; longitudinal or cross-sectional, etc):
(record the kind of information you will need for your literature review)

Methodology: (number and type of subjects, control groups, measures/variables, procedures)
Findings: (record statistically significant findings or general themes)
Comments (limitations, relationship to your topic, notes to yourself)

When it is time to write your literature review, it is so much organize the review if you have a stack of single page summaries of the sources you have read instead of a lot articles and reports.

Writing the Literature Review

The literature review that is required in the final paper is much more detailed than those in most published research articles. The goal of the literature review is to review and critique the most current research to support your project. You are required to review and critique a minimum of 10 peer-reviewed scholarly works (books, journal articles, etc.) in your literature review. However, your topic area may require that you review more than 10 to provide the reader with an understanding of the state of the knowledge. Most of the topics of papers in graduate school will be subjects with hundreds of potential sources, including books, articles, chapters, monographs, government reports, and other sources of information to inform the paper. Literature reviews are rarely exhaustive of the entire literature unless that literature is sufficiently small. There are two types of literature reviews. You will select the type of review that is most appropriate to your project and format. Your first reader will provide guidance regarding the most appropriate type of literature review for your paper.

Descriptive Literature Reviews

Descriptive literature reviews merely summarize the findings of the existing literature, sometimes in chronological order, particularly if you wish to show some trends over time or grouped together under headings that are based on major themes. Papers for undergraduate classes or graduate courses early in your career will typically follow this

format. A descriptive review of the literature is the foundation for the integrative literature review that is required in your final paper.

Integrative Literature Reviews

An integrative literature review compares and contrasts, identifies strengths and weaknesses, or highlights gaps or major themes in the body of literature. Sometimes an integrative literature review stems from meta-analyses of several existing empirical studies. The meta-analysis is considered the highest form of evidence in many schemes of evidence-based practice. An integrative review synthesizes the whole body of research on some topic and generates conclusions based on this evidence. Generally, the conclusions include some statement about how confident we can be about the evidence on this topic. All sources used in your integrative literature review must be no more than 5 years old unless they are considered seminal work. To determine if a work is considered seminal, you note that some articles are referenced in the bibliographies from articles you are reading. If you see that a particular study is cited in numerous articles, it is probably considered seminal to the topic or field. You can include seminal work in your literature review.

In general, a literature review goes from the general to specific. Your first paragraphs should provide the reader with background information, why the topic is important, and what the reader can expect from the literature review. By giving the reader a sense of what to expect, the reader will be able to understand your intentions for the literature review. If you do not provide the reader a clear description of the focus of the literature review, then you have not been clear enough in your intentions.

It is best to use a topical approach in your literature review rather than a chronological approach (one study described in detail, then another study, and so on), unless you have a good reason for presenting the literature chronologically. Your literature review should be divided by topics with separate headings. Topic heading will help you organize your paper. As you review your draft, make sure that the content under each topic heading is only

about that topic, and that the last sentence provides a bridge to the next section of the literature review.

Sometimes tables or graphs are an effective way to compare and contrast the research. For example, a table of the effectiveness of asthma prevention programs may list the demographic characteristics of the sample, a brief description of the intervention, and the outcomes. Alternatively, figures that illustrate the theoretical relationships among the variables can be helpful.

You will need to summarize your literature review. You will end the literature review section with a brief conclusion that summarizes the key findings, and provides a transition to the methods, intervention or clinical protocol section of your paper. You will need to describe the gaps in knowledge and common themes. Also, you will need to describe what the gaps and themes you identified mean for nursing practice. You would also note any limitations you experienced in your review; for example, you might have been unable to access some potentially important articles because they were not available electronically, the research you found did not address your topic directly, or the samples were not representative of the population at large.