

Palliative Care Nursing Education Options

Three Palliative Care Courses

The UIC College of Nursing has a series of three courses to educate nurses to meet the needs of patients who are seriously ill and dying and who require end-of-life and palliative care treatment. The courses are grounded in a holistic perspective that recognizes that the individual is part of a family, a community and a society.

1. NUSC 520, Dying, Loss and Grief
2. NUSC 522, Palliative Management of Pain and Common Symptoms
3. NUSC 524, Socio-cultural and Ethical Issues in Palliative Care

Three Ways to Participate

Two Ways Lead to the Advanced Practice Palliative Care Certificate with Academic Credit and are Primarily Online but Require Some On-Campus Presence.

1. Currently enrolled in a UIC CON graduate education program

Students enrolled in the Acute Care, Adult or Geriatric Nurse Practitioner Program, or the Perinatal or Pediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist Program at the UIC College of Nursing can register for any or all of the palliative care courses. To obtain the Advanced Practice Nurse Palliative Care Nurse campus certificate, students take the three online courses, will declare a specialized concentration in palliative and end-of-life-care, and will have to have at least one of their clinical practicum courses in a palliative care setting.

2. Currently hold a master's degree in nursing

Students who have a master's degree from UIC or another institution can enroll in the three online palliative care courses to receive the Post-masters Advance Practice Palliative Care Nurse campus certificate. This campus certificate does not qualify a participant for the National Board for Certification of Hospice and Palliative Care Nurses (NBCHPN®). Post master's students will need to arrange for their own clinical hours for credentialing (work hours may be acceptable). UIC faculty do not supervise or validate the clinical experience students arrange if they are pursuing credentialing (certification). See further information on credentialing below.

One Way Leads to Continuing Nursing Education Recognition

3. Continuing Education Option - Totally Online

Nurses and other health professionals (in disciplines such as Social Work, Medicine and Pharmacy) may take these three palliative care online courses as a self-study for CNE credits through the Office of Continuing Studies in the Institute for Health Care Innovation (IHCI) at the College of Nursing. For more information please visit the IHCI web site:

http://www.uic.edu/nursing/ihci/continuing_studies.shtml. The continuing nursing education option provides 45 continuing nursing education units per course and does not provide the academic credit to obtain the Advance Practice Palliative Care Nurse campus certificate. The continuing education option does not fulfill the eligibility requirements for the NBCHPN® certification for Advance Practice Nurses, nor is continuing education required.

Admission Requirements for the Advance Practice Palliative Care Nursing Campus Certificate

1. Students currently enrolled in the Acute Care, Adult or Geriatric Nurse Practitioner Program or the Perinatal or Pediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist Programs will work with their advisor and the Office of Admissions and Records to declare a subspecialty in palliative or end-of-life care and assure that at least one of their practica experiences are in an end-of-life or palliative care setting

2. Applicants who have a master's degree must provide official transcripts for their master's degree and provide proof of advance practice licensure in at least one jurisdiction. The Office of Continuing Studies in the IHCI manages the certificate program, and works with the Office of Admissions and Records to coordinate admission and award certificate.

Requirements for the Continuing Nursing Education Option

Applicants interested in the Continuing Nursing Education Option apply to the Office of Continuing Studies in the IHCI. Directions for participation will be sent after payment is received.

Technical Requirements

You will need to have access to the internet and have a computer. These are web classes, require independent activities, readings, assignments, and the instructor may ask that those choosing academic credit to attend in-person activities, no more than twice a semester. There is no on-campus requirement for Continuing Nursing Education (CNE).

Requirements to Receive the Advance Practice Palliative Care Nursing Campus Certificate:

Completion of three courses (no transfer courses will be accepted toward the certificate):

- NUSC 520, Dying, Loss and Grief (3sh)
- NUSC 522, Palliative Management of Pain and Common Symptoms (3sh)
- NUSC 524, Socio-cultural and Ethical Issues in Palliative Care (3sh)

Certificate students are required to adhere to the same academic standards as degree seeking students

Academic Standards

The academic standards of the College of Nursing are consistent with those of the Graduate College; however, the College of Nursing has developed additional policies for academic standards, which the faculty believes are essential for a professional practice discipline. A basic premise of these policies is that graduate students are expected to achieve a minimum GPA of 3.00 in all academic pursuits. The policies are as follows:

- A minimum grade of "B" in all required courses. If a student's GPA falls below 3.00, the student is automatically placed on probationary status.
- One grade of "C" or less will result in a letter of warning from the Director of Graduate Studies and possible repeating of the course.
- Two grades of "C" or less will lead to a formal review of the student's academic record, and possible repeating of the course or dismissal from the program.
- If a student earns a "D" grade or less for any non-elective course (major or required cognate), in order to proceed in the program, the student must retake the course or its equivalent during the next period of registration in which it is offered.

Requirements to receive Continuing Nursing Education Recognition:

Completion of any of the courses:

- NUSC 520, Dying, Loss and Grief (45 CNE)**
- NUSC 522, Palliative Management of Pain and Common Symptoms (45 CNE)**
- NUSC 524, Socio-cultural and Ethical Issues in Palliative Care (45 CNE)**

Completion of an online course evaluation for each course completed.

How to Apply

1. Students currently in master's programs at UIC work with their academic advisor and the Office of Admissions and Records at the College of Nursing.
2. Those students who already have a master's degree and would like to pursue the Advanced Practice Palliative Care Nursing Certificate or those students interested in the Continuing Nursing Education Option should contact the Office of Continuing Studies in the IHCI at the College of Nursing.

Credentialing (Certification) Information

The NBCHPN Candidate Handbook and Application along with testing dates for the exam can be found on the Web site <http://www.nbchpn.org/>. The Web site contains pdf files with information on test preparation, sites, and dates, along with applications for each of the four (4) disciplines (APN, RN, LP/VN, and NA). All exams use the same handbook, as sections of the handbook are devoted to each discipline. All exams use the same application form. The pdf file is large (over 400k) and may take several minutes to download using a dial-up connection.

Those considering the value of certification may be interested in the following article:

(link to July/September 2004 of Journal of Hospice and Palliative Nursing, HPNA position paper: Value of Nursing Certification)