

**MENNONITE COLLEGE OF NURSING  
AT ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY**

Graduate Program  
Family Nurse Practitioner Sequence

STATEMENT ON CORE SKILLS

The following are examples of core skill areas for the family nurse practitioner that are practiced in the clinical setting:

- physical examination, history taking
- diagnostic reasoning
- documentation
- smoking cessation
- stress management
- lifestyle modification
- alternative therapies
- growth and development assessment and counseling
- functional assessment
- mental status assessment
- parenting education
- referral, collaboration, and case management
- role development
- diet modification and nutrition counseling

Increasing proficiency as a family nurse practitioner is developed over the four semester Family Nurse Practitioner sequence. In the first practicum course, the focus in the clinical setting is on the student's ability to observe and record findings. The clinical experience begins with selected involvement in diagnosis and management of presenting health conditions under the guidance of the preceptor. The student progresses to more involvement in diagnosis and management in the later courses. In the first practicum, the emphasis in documentation would be on the "S" and "O" with the student gaining experience in identifying a list of differential diagnoses and documenting pertinent rule outs or possible "A's". In the first semester, potential diagnoses and treatments are reviewed with the preceptor. Additional experience with assessment and treatment is developed over subsequent semesters toward increasing levels of independence and proficiency. By the third semester, the student is usually seeing patients with more complex health problems and managing patients representing special populations. The number of clients seen in a day would increase from 3 to 4 in the first semester to 8 to 10 or more in later semesters, depending upon the setting. The last semester provides an opportunity for an in depth clinical experience with the population and setting of the student's choice. By the last semester, the student would progress to working up patients independently, including complete and targeted history and physical examination, assessments and plans for patients according to the presentation of the health problem, health status, health risks, cultural, social, economic, and family situations.