

**Wound Care Education Program
College of Nursing
Medical University of South Carolina**

**BRIEF OVERVIEW: SPLIT-OPTION, WEB-ENHANCED, DISTANCE
LEARNING WOUND CARE SPECIALTY COURSE**

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

To expand the learning opportunities of the Wound Care Education Program (WCEP) to nurses who are unable to attend an on-site course for an extended period of time and who have the desire and ability to participate in computer-enhanced, distance learning experiences.

This option affords the learner an opportunity to take advantage of having an intensive introduction to wound theory and principles in a short, on-site program and then complete the professional practice and clinical components of the course from their own home and community. Starting the course with an on-site program, where the learner can interact with experienced faculty, provides a strong foundation for the balance of the course. Also, learners meet and interact with their colleagues in the on-site classes, which facilitates their participation and communication in the off-site portion of the course.

DESCRIPTION

The Web-enhanced, Distance Learning, Split Option course offers an alternative to the traditional, 3-week course that conducts all the required classroom and clinical experiences on-site in Charleston. The split-option format has an initial first week of classes on-site to present the wound didactic and then participants complete the rest of the course requirements (Role/Professional Practice Issues and Clinical experiences) off-site. The Role/Professional Practice didactic is completed using on-line learning experiences and the clinical experiences are arranged with a qualified preceptor in the learner's community area.

The program objectives, curriculum, class content, individual lesson outlines/ objectives, project requirements, examinations, and evaluation procedures are the same as those for the on-site course. The participants complete the required projects: written critique of a research article for evidence-based care, development and presentation of a teaching project, relevant to wound care, and development of a written role implementation plan. Participation in computer-based activities is required to complete the distance-learning portion of the course. The midterm and comprehensive final examinations are administered on-line in a proctored environment.

The distance course is designed be completed in four months (inclusive of the on-site requirement) and includes the following components:

1. At least forty-two-56.25 classroom hours of wound theory conducted during one week (8 days) on-site in Charleston, SC.

2. At least 20.75 hours of role/professional practice lessons conducted via web-enhanced, computer-based learning experiences.
3. At least 40 hours of clinical experiences in 2 settings with fully qualified WOCNCB certified nurse(s) who meets MUSC/WOCN-accreditation criteria to serve as a Preceptor.
4. Distance course participants have the option of arranging off-site clinical experiences in their local communities or returning to Charleston, after completion of all didactic, for their clinical experiences. Off-site Clinical Preceptors must be approved by the WCEP and the Preceptors and their employer must be willing to enter into an affiliation agreement with MUSC for the clinical experiences.

Grading Plan

A score of 80 is required on the Midterm and Final examinations to pass the examinations and an overall score of 80 is required to satisfactorily complete the course and receive the course certificate. Grades are allocated according to performance in the following areas: midterm examination, comprehensive final examination, clinical experience, teaching project, role implementation plan, and research critique. Attendance/completion of all classes and clinical experiences is a requirement of the course (Refer to Student Handbook for Further information and Grading Criteria).

Role/Professional Practice Web-enhanced, Distance Learning Component

A web site has been constructed for the course that includes the Role/Professional Practice learning module, which is conducted using computer-based activities. The web site provides the class topical outlines, objectives, references, and assigned learning activities to complete each lesson. In addition, each class has a study guide (class notes) with specific content that compliments the lessons and reading assignment. The lesson topics include:

- I. History and Evolution of WOCN (and WOC Nurse)
- II. Role overview: Professional Responsibilities
- III. Nutrition and Fluid Support for Wound Healing/Collaboration with Registered Dietician
- IV. Principles of Infection Control
- V. Human Development and Principles of Teaching/Learning, Patient/Family Teaching and Counseling, and Staff Education
- VI. National Health Care Issues
- VII. Role Implementation Strategies
- VIII. Legal and Ethical Considerations
- IX. Setting Up a Clinic
- X. Private Practice/Independent Practice: Entrepreneur versus Intrapreneurial Role
- XI. Change Theory and Conflict Management
- XII. Continuity of Care

On-Line Class Participation/Communication

Communication and contact with participants throughout the course is maintained using the computer-based format. A Bulletin Board and Chat Room have been developed for

the course and learners participate in threaded discussions and conferences. Specific assignments related to the scheduled lessons are completed each week. Completed assignments are submitted to the Director via Email, regular mail, fax, or posted on the Bulletin Board each week. Chat Room discussions are scheduled for group interaction, and discussions relevant to the assignments or course activities.

Orientation/Introduction to On-line Learning Activities

During the on-site component of the course, participants receive the course syllabus, study guides, and student handbook as well as clinical, course, speaker, and preceptor evaluation forms. Additional forms are available for download from the course website. Learners are given an orientation class and practice session for the computer-based activities required for the course. Also, during the on-site session, students are oriented to the process for accessing the MUSC library for the distance portion of the program.

Assessment of Performance in Web-based Activities/Assignments

To receive credit for participation in distance classes, each lesson has specific assignments and/or activities that must be completed in a satisfactory manner. The evaluation of performance on the web-enhanced component of the course is done using an Assessment Rubric to evaluate the written assignments and participation in the Bulletin Board or Chat Room discussions. Students are assessed based on the following criteria: level and quality of participation, timeliness, quality of content/contribution, organization, and ability to integrate class or clinical experiences and reference readings.

Students are rated according to stated performance criteria identified in the Assessment Rubrics on a scale of 1-4 (1-Unsatisfactory, 2- Needs Improvement, 3- Meets expectation, 4- Exceeds expectation). A minimum score of 3 is required to satisfactorily complete an assignment and receive credit for that class. Students with an unsatisfactory performance in a lesson are given the option to complete the work in an acceptable manner or receive an unsatisfactory rating for the lesson.

An unsatisfactory score for two of the lessons/assignments will be the equivalent of missing a day of class. A student who receives unsatisfactory scores in three or more lessons/assignments may be asked to repeat all or part of the course at the sole discretion of the Program Director based on a review of the circumstances. **Any student failing to complete two or more lessons or clinical days on the assigned days without prior notice and approval of the Program Director will be considered withdrawn failing from the course.**

Students who fail to attend class or clinical, fail to complete lessons on due dates as assigned without **express, prior consent of the Director**, fail to respond to requests for corrections to/or completion of assignments, or fail to properly notify the Program Director of absences will be withdrawn from the program receive a failing grade (WF). Students who receive withdrawn failing scores will not be eligible for readmission to the program. **Refer to the Student Handbook for additional information about policies for incomplete grades and extensions.**

Clinical Experiences

After completion of all the required wound and role/professional practice didactic content, clinical hours can be scheduled during the final 2-3 weeks of the course with off-site clinical preceptors or participants may arrange to return to Charleston for the clinical experiences. **Off-site clinical experiences are lengthy to arrange and proper agreements must be secured prior to any clinical placement. Students are required to submit the necessary forms to arrange off-site clinical arrangement as part of the application process.**

Participants complete the required 40 hours of clinical experiences (with patients in two types of clinical settings) under the direct guidance of a qualified preceptor who meets MUSC's/WOCN's criteria and has a signed, written affiliation agreement with the MUSC/Wound Care Education Program. **Learners must submit a written schedule of their planned clinical days/hours that has been approved by their Clinical Preceptor to the Program Director 1-2 weeks prior to the planned clinical experiences (or as directed by the Program Director).**

Learners must coordinate emergency notification plans with their preceptor related to inclement weather or emergency situations. If a student cannot attend a clinical session, the Preceptor and Program Director must be notified prior to the session. In cases of life and health emergencies, where advance notification is not possible, the Director and/Preceptor must be notified as soon as possible. Missed clinical hours due to an excused absence or emergency must be rescheduled with the approval of the Program Director and Preceptor. Failure to adhere to attendance and notification procedures will result in an unsatisfactory clinical evaluation for the day (s).

Evaluation of Clinical Competency

The Clinical Preceptor and student document evaluation of each student's clinical performance on the clinical evaluation form provided by the Wound Care Specialty Course. The learner completes clinical patient logs, product and topical therapy logs for each clinical day. At the end of the clinical experiences, the final hardcopy of the original Clinical Evaluation Form and logs are mailed to the Program Director for final grading. Upon completion of the clinical experiences, the clinical evaluation of student's performance form must be signed by the Clinical Preceptor and the student. No credit or grade will be given for Clinical Experience without the Director's receipt of the properly completed and signed Clinical Evaluation Form.

Midterm and Comprehensive Final Written Examinations On-line

Two, 100-question, multiple-choice examinations are required for the course: Midterm and Final Comprehensive Examination. These exams are administered on-line. The Midterm is scheduled midway through the course. The Comprehensive Final Examination is scheduled during the final week of the course after learners have completed all the required wound and role didactic, clinical experiences, and written projects. A grade of 80 is required as a passing score on the examinations to pass the

course. Additional exams or quizzes may be provided at the discretion of the Program Director.

The exams are password protected and the presence of a pre-arranged proctor (approved by the Program Director) is required during the entire examination to ensure the security of the exam and testing process. The Program Director provides the password for each exam to the Proctor who gives it to the Student at the time of the examination. The dates and times of the exams are posted by the first week of the course. Scores of the exams and immediate feedback to the learner for correct and incorrect responses is provided on-line upon completion of the examination. Each student may schedule an individual conference call with the Program Director to review their examination results within 1-2 weeks after each examination. The Director is available to discuss any issues/problems related to the exam or exam process.

Failure to take an Examination at the scheduled time without notification and prior approval of the Program Director will result in a Grade of “zero” on that Examination. Any alternate arrangements for the examination related to life and health emergencies must be approved by the Program Director. An alternate form of the examination may be administered, at the sole discretion of the Program Director, when students do not take examinations at the originally assigned time.

Time/Activity Logs

Distance learners are required to maintain time/activity logs to document the specific dates and amounts of time spent in completing each assignment and activity for the web-enhanced component of the course. Copies must be furnished to the Director at the completion of the Program.

Program/Course Evaluations

Participants receive copies of all required evaluation forms in the course syllabus during the on-site classes. Speaker evaluations for the on-site classes are completed and submitted on the last day of the on-site experience. At the end of the course, students complete and submit the course/director evaluation and preceptor evaluations to the Director. In addition, distance learners are asked to complete an evaluation of the web-enhanced, distance learning portion of the course. Copies of required forms are available and can be downloaded from the website.

Completion of Course

All required course work, including classroom hours, learning assignments, written projects, examinations, clinical hours, and course evaluations must be completed for Students to satisfactorily complete the course and receive the course certificates of graduation from the WOCN-accredited, Wound Care Specialty Course.

Incomplete Grade

A student who does not complete a course/clinical assignment or examination due to an excused absence will be given an incomplete grade. The student must arrange with the Director to complete all required incomplete work within one month of the end of the

course date. Failure to complete the work by the assigned deadline will result in a grade of Zero for the assignment, clinical day, or exam and the student withdrawn failing from the course. For extenuating circumstances (approved in advance by the Program Director) an incomplete status may be extended in increments of 1 month each for a maximum of 2 additional months at a fee of \$200.00 per month for each month of the incomplete extension (beyond the first month). *Each monthly fee to be paid in advance!* A request for the extension must be made in writing and approved by the Program Director and payment of fees received prior to extension. Failure to complete work during the agreed upon extended time will result in a grade of Zero and student will be withdrawn from the program and receive a withdrawn failing (WF) grade from the program.

Technological Problems/Back-up

Students must be able to type and submit assignments by email attachments as typed, **Word documents**. The faculty and staff of the MUSC Wound Care Education Program are not responsible for providing the computer equipment or skills needed to complete the course. **It is the sole responsibility of the student to have access to the required computer equipment and software, to insure that the computer equipment and software is installed properly, to maintain or repair the hardware/software, and obtain or possess the computer skills necessary to complete the required on-line activities and assignments.** Pre-requisites for equipment and skills needed for the course are provided as part of the application packet and verified by the Director as part of the admission process.

The Program Director will communicate and coordinate with Technological Support at MUSC to resolve any problems related to the site and server at MUSC but cannot provide technology support to individuals in their off-site locations. If an individual student encounters a technical problem with their personal equipment, they should **first** check with the technology support services from their Internet Service Provider, the equipment manufacturer, or supplier to resolve the issue. **The Director must be notified if the problem will delay completion of an assignment beyond the due date and an alternate means of submission for required lessons can be arranged.**

In the event problems are encountered with on-line activities (Email, bulletin board, or chat room discussions), the student is to notify the Director immediately by telephone or fax. Written assignments or bulletin board postings can be submitted to the Director by fax or regular mail if there is a failure of on-line services. On-line chats that are missed completely by all students due to technology failures will be re-scheduled by the Director. If verifiable problems are encountered with the on-line administration of an exam, that cannot be resolved in a timely fashion, a paper form of the exam may be arranged at the discretion of the Director after a review of the circumstances.

Admission Policies: Pre-requisites for Admission to the Split-Option, Web-Enhanced, Distance Learning Wound Care Specialty Course

All students desiring to attend the Split-option, Web-Enhanced, Distance Learning Wound Care Special Course must meet all the admission criteria for the on-site course

and additionally must provide evidence of acknowledgement and compliance with the following requirements:

1. Access to communication via computer

- Students must have access to a computer configured to use on-line network transmission of electronic mail and the World Wide Web and adequate RAM that allows participation in on-line chat room and bulletin board discussions
- An in-home computer with a modem and Internet Service Provider is required
- Email capability
- Access to a fax machine is necessary (in-home preferred)
- Home telephone voice mail or answer machine required
- Students must possess basic computer and word processing skills: ability to manage files, i.e. save and transmit files as Email attachments, download and install software such as Adobe Reader, Virus Scan, knowledge of Email operations and their Internet service provider, and ability to conduct online, library searches. **All written, emailed assignments must be typed and completed as WORD documents and sent as email attachments.**
- Students will be held accountable for information from faculty disseminated via electronic mail
- **Students must provide a correct Email address, fax number, and phone number with the admission packet and are responsible for notifying the Program Director immediately of any changes**

2. Minimum Computer Hardware Recommendations

- Pentium processor or equivalent, 233 MHZ or faster
- 56k Modem
- 64MB RAM
- 4 GB Hard Drive
- 3.5" 1.44 Floppy Drive
- Printer

3. Minimum Software Requirements

- Operating Systems: Windows 95 and above or Macintosh OS 7.6 and above
- Internet Browser Preferred
- **Internet Browser required to work with WebCT 4.1**
- **Windows Browser**
 - Microsoft Internet Explorer: 5.0, 5.5, 6.0
 - Netscape: 6.2.x, 7.0
 - AOL: 7.0, 8.0
- **Macintosh OS Browser**
- Microsoft Internet Explorer: 5.1 (OS 9.x and OS X.1) and 5.2 (OS X.2)
- Netscape 6.2
- AOL: OS X
- Office suite: current version of Microsoft Office suite. **Must be able to transmit and receive Email files in Word format.**

- Acrobat Reader Software with Acrobat PDF Companion. To download, go to www.Adobe.com
- Java and Java Script must be enabled in your browser of choice
- Note: MUSC currently supports Netscape. MUSC does not support WEBCT with AOL.
- If AOL is your ISP, download and install and use Netscape or Internet Explorer (IE) only. Do not use proprietary AOL versions of these browsers that are imbedded in the AOL software. WEBCT, on-line course software which is used for the examinations will not function properly with the imbedded IE or Netscape browser in AOL client software

4. Self-Assessment for Distance Learning Tool.

- **Distance applicants should carefully consider and evaluate their individual learning needs and learning style prior to choosing distance learning. The course requires a significant amount of time each week that can be dedicated to completion of the weekly course assignments, projects, examination preparation, and clinical experiences over the 4-month period.**
- Individuals with extensive family responsibilities and/or heavy work demands may find it extremely difficult to keep up with the lessons. Distance learners must be independent and able to manage their time well to accomplish their lessons on time.
- It is the sole responsibility of each student to read and understand the schedule of assignments and due dates. **It is not the responsibility of the Program Director to remind students of due dates.** All assignments and dates are clearly identified on the website and in the syllabus and if students have questions about any assignment, they have the responsibility to contact the Director for clarification or guidance.
- Each applicant completes the "Distance Learning Assessment Tool" included in the application packet to determine if distance education suits their learning style and the Director will review the assessment and discuss any problems with the potential student.

5. Off-Site Clinical Preceptor Requirements

Off-site clinical preceptors must be pre-approved by the Program Director and are required to complete an application form for the MUSC Program.

- For off-site clinical experiences, applicants must provide written evidence of arrangements with qualified WOCNCB certified nurse (s) who agree to serve as a clinical preceptor for 40 hours of clinical patient experiences in 2 settings.
- All Clinical Preceptors must meet all WOCN accreditation and MUSC Wound Care Education Program criteria: (a) Bachelor's Degree or above with a major in nursing or Bachelors Degree in another field with documentation of BSN equivalent competencies in the areas of nursing health assessment, community health nursing, nursing leadership/management, and research/statistics; (b) hold current WOCNCB certification (CWOCN, CWCN, CWON) (c) have at least one year, full-time practice in the specialty after certification; (d) provide evidence of prior preceptor or clinical nursing educator experience or evidence of completing

- a preceptor workshop or other structured learning program to include principles of adult learning, critical/clinical teaching strategies, and clinical evaluation methodology; and (e) provide evidence of an adequate daily census of patients with acute/chronic wounds appropriate to meet the learning objectives of the course.
- Off-site Clinical Preceptors are required to provide the Program Director with the required documentation/credentials necessary to determine eligibility: specialty experience, patient case load, prior experience as a preceptor, clinical nursing educator, or evidence of having attended a preceptor workshop.
 - **After a preceptor's eligibility is confirmed by the Program Director, it is necessary for the preceptor's employer to sign an affiliation agreement with MUSC to confirm the clinical arrangements. Potential participants should be aware that negotiating formal clinical affiliation agreements can take several months so early application and prompt attention to obtaining preceptor agreements is essential as part of the application process.**
 - Students may use more than one qualified preceptor if necessary to meet the learning needs of the student for experiences in 2 types of clinical settings.
 - The MUSC Wound Care Education Program will provide an orientation packet (Self-Study Manual) to the preceptor regarding the program, curriculum, objectives, preceptor role and duties, clinical evaluation forms and process, evidence-based practice and role of clinical preceptor, and information about teaching/learning principles for adult education. The Director is available to discuss any questions via Email, fax, or phone with potential preceptors.
 - As part of the initial negotiation with the preceptor and facility, students should inquire about any charges or fees the preceptor may require and make the financial arrangements. Costs of these arrangements vary across the country and the student should confirm their arrangements in writing with the preceptor in advance. **Any compensation to the preceptor or the preceptor's employer for the clinical experiences for the off-site distance learning option is the sole responsibility of the participant.**

6. Examination Proctor Requirements

Each participant is required to furnish written evidence of arrangements with an acceptable Exam Proctor who has agreed to be physically present during the entire examination time for both the Midterm and Comprehensive Final Examinations. The proctor will be required to sign a written agreement to comply with procedures that are designed to ensure the security of the examination process.

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