University of Maryland School of Nursing

**Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL)**

#### Scholarly Paper Guidelines for fall 2017 Graduates

**EFFECTIVE XXX**

The Graduate School of the University of Maryland, Baltimore requires all master’s degree students to complete a comprehensive examination. The CNL Specialty examination requires completion of a scholarly paper, suitable for publication in a professional nursing journal. Completion of this examination provides evidence that the student has integrated the content from core and specialty courses and CNL competencies.

This assignment offers the student the ability to demonstrate knowledge by preparing a scholarly paper that demonstrates the synthesis of the master’s degree experience. This includes interrelationships of concepts within nursing practice; knowledge and use of theoretical/conceptual bases related to clinical practice in a variety of health care settings; knowledge of the research process and the application of evidence-based practice to nursing and/or health problems; and the ability to synthesize materials, organize thoughts, and present them in a clear and scholarly manner. The final product should be consistent with the excellence in scholarship expected of a graduate of the Master of Science degree.

## The examination is designed to offer wide latitude for topic selection. The chosen topic should address a quality and safety issue that is relevant to CNL practice and for which evidence is available in the literature. Students should consider the six Institute of Medicine Competencies when identifying their topic of interest. These include: patient centered care, teamwork and collaboration, evidence-based practice, quality improvement, safety and informatics.

**Guidelines:**

**The comprehensive examination is separate from assigned course work.** It is an opportunity for the student to write a paper suitable for publication that focuses on a clinical problem/quality and safety issue relevant to CNL practice. The completed paper should include an assessment, analysis and synthesis of evidence-based literature related to the paper’s focus. **Students will have an opportunity to showcase their scholarly work in a poster in support of a graded project in the N523 practicum course and so should be familiar with due dates for this poster presentation as outlined in the N523 syllabus.**

To begin this process the student should select a topic and receive topic approval to proceed according to instructions. Once topics are approved then select a reader from an updated list of faculty with expertise in the student’s area of interest available on the CNL community BB page. **Contact faculty and secure faculty agreement to be the student’s reader**. Faculty will then assist the student in narrowing the topic focus and identifying a targeted journal of interest appropriate to the topic. **Together, the student and faculty member should develop a plan** for completion of the examination based upon the attached timeline.

**The student will inform the Office of Graduate Studies at** [**NRSgraduate@umaryland.edu**](mailto:NRSgraduate@umaryland.edu) **of the topic and name of the faculty member who has agreed to be the student’s reader.** Once the student’s approach is approved by the reader, the student and reader should have periodic contact to discuss the student’s progress. Students should submit manuscript guidelines from the targeted journal to their faculty reader.

**The student is expected to provide faculty with a completed first draft and final draft for feedback on the dates indicated on the attached schedule. Both the first and final draft of the paper is turned in through SafeAssign so that the student can make any necessary adjustments. With each draft turned in to your reader, the student must include a downloaded copy of the safe assign report for reader review. Safe Assign access is available through the CNL Community BB site.**

**The format of the paper follows this general format with the understanding that editorial guidelines from the target journal can influence the format of the final paper.** Students should submit manuscript guidelines from the targeted journal to their faculty reader. This scholarly paper is an exercise in influence and so no actual letter to an editor should be sent although writing a sample letter is one of the requirements for this scholarly paper project.

1. **Introduction of Theme and Focus: Background and Significance:** Introduce the selected clinical or leadership related quality and safety issue using a PICO format. Include the significance of the problem, and how the problem can potentially be addressed using CNL knowledge, skills, and competencies. Explore briefly, how your unique background (education and/or previous employment experience) informs your view of this problem and its potential solution. A narrow focus will best assist you to identify relevant evidence. **In the final paper the PICO question will be included with your graded evidence tables in an appendix.**
2. **Locating, Evaluating and Synthesizing the Evidence: Literature Review:** Review, rate, and grade the evidence-based literature (7 to 10 references) relevant to the identified problem. The evidence selected must address how the identified problem is currently managed in patient care settings and provide recommendations based on research findings that either support or recommend changes in current practice. Using the format used in NRSG 790, include a table in which you provide a critique of the strengths and weaknesses of each study. Then, using the same approach used in NRSG 790 rate and grade the evidence in a separate table. Next, synthesize the evidence, noting consistencies and inconsistencies in the findings. **The final evidence table is included in your paper appendix with synthesized evidence in the body of your text.**
3. **Implications for Nursing Practice: Translation of Findings**: Discuss the implications of the evidence for quality and safety relative to the identified problem. Consider whether the evidence you located is sufficient to alter practice and if so, describe a plan for using the evidence in practice and how resulting outcomes might be evaluated. If the evidence is insufficient to alter practice, discuss why and offer recommendations for future directions. When discussing implications, be sure to include the significance of the findings for patient safety, quality of care, inter/intra disciplinary communication, and lateral integration or continuity of care.
4. **Summary and Conclusions**: Provide a summary and conclusions that integrate the findings and relevant implications. Briefly include directions for future research relative to the identified problem.
5. **Organization:** Organize the paper, using the format consistent with the targeted journal, for levels of headings, formatting, and page limits.
6. **Your final turned in paper must include:**
7. Title page: Name, academic degree, affiliation, contact information
8. Abstract: 100-150 words, or the number indicated in the author guidelines, on a separate page which summarizes the main points of the article
9. Body/text of article
10. Reference list: Provide a copy of the references to your reader
11. Figures, tables and legends

The following must be consistent with author guidelines:

* 1. Abbreviations and acronyms
  2. References: must be current and relevant
  3. Formatting: font, page margins, spacing and numbering of pages

1. Determine in advance if your faculty prefers an electronic copy only or both a hard and electronic copy. Submit a **copy of your paper to your designated faculty along with the SafeAssign report reader by 12:00 noon on the due date.** Retain an electronic copy of the assignment.

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| **Assignment** | **Due Date** |
| Student identification of topic or theme submitted via email to Dr. Gail Lemaire [lemaire@umaryland.edu](mailto:lemaire@umaryland.edu) or Dr. Sherrie Lessans [lessans@umaryland.edu](mailto:lessans@umaryland.edu)depending upon topic selected: Dr. Lemaire (Maternal and Child Health, Psychiatric Mental Health and Community Health) or Dr. Lessans (Adult Health, Critical Care, etc.) |  |
| Student identification of reader ( with topic) submitted via email to [NRSGraduate@umaryland.edu](mailto:NRSGraduate@umaryland.edu) |  |
| **After conversation with reader**- Identification of targeted journal name—submitted via email to reader and to [NRSGraduate@umaryland.edu](mailto:NRSgraduate@umaryland.edu) |  |
| Outline of paper, abstract, letter to the editor requesting review of the manuscript, and a copy of the selected author guidelines submitted to reader |  |
| Submission of paper (including abstract),and SafeAssign report to reader |  |
| Paper returned to student for final revisions if needed |  |
| Final Submission of any revisions to reader |  |
| Final paper evaluation due to student, It is the Student responsibility to submit final signed comprehensive exam form (not paper) to the Office of the Academic Deans at [NRSGraduate@umaryland.edu](mailto:NRSgraduate@umaryland.edu) | **; submitted by Student** |

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** This timeline provides sufficient time to complete the paper, and time for the reader to fully evaluate the final submission. Once the reader has evaluated the paper using the attached evaluation form, the student collects the faculty signed form, adds their own signature and then submits this form electronically to[**NRSGraduate@umaryland.edu**](mailto:NRSgraduate@umaryland.edu)

The evaluation form must be completed in a timely manner for students to meet qualifications for graduation.

### If the student does not pass the comprehensive exam:

**A student who does not pass the comprehensive examination in a timely manner will be required to register for an additional semester and enroll in an independent study to complete the examination requirements.**

**Graduation Requirements:**

**Students are responsible for knowing and meeting all degree requirements and graduation deadlines. Program completion forms and due dates can be found on our website under the Academics tab. We encourage Diploma applications be submitted upon registering for the final semester in the program. To file a Diploma application, login into SURFS, under Student Records. The scholarly project, application for diploma, and completion of program forms are mandatory in order to graduate.**

**Office of the Academic Deans**

**CNL Evaluation of Comprehensive**

**Examination: Non-Thesis Option**

**Student Name:**      **Paper Title:**

**Reader Name:**      **Targeted Journal:**

**Date:**      **Status: Pass**     **Fail**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Pass** | **Fail** |
| Scholarly grammar, punctuation, spelling and organization | Acceptable scholarly grammar, punctuation, spelling and organization | Paper is not meeting acceptable writing standards. Will not be graded and will be returned |
| Cover letter to the editor of selected journal | Letter introduces the author, summarizes the paper and is clearly written | Fail |
| Theme: Background and Significance | Pass | Fail |
| Review and synthesis current, relevant, evidence-based literature | Pass | Fail |
| Implications for practice | Pass | Fail |
| Summary and Conclusions | Pass | Fail |
| Organization consistent with journal | Pass | Fail |
| Integration of literature with CNL knowledge, skills and roles | Pass | Fail |
| Formatting of components to targeted journal: A. Title page B. Abstract C. Body/text D. References E. Figures/tables/legends | Pass | Fail |
| SafeAssign submission results |  |  |

Comments:

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**Faculty Signature** **Student Signature** **Date**

**Students please submit completed form to the Office of the Academic Deans at** [NRSGraduate@umaryland.edu](mailto:NRSgraduate@umaryland.edu)