

## **Psychiatric Nursing Re-entry Program Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why should I consider the Psychiatric Nursing Re-entry program? What sets this program apart from other programs?**

As a student in the Psychiatric Nursing Re-entry program, you'll review theory learned previously and you will update your knowledge, skills and judgements in order to be able to work within the full scope of practice of a psychiatric nurse.

The curriculum is designed to ensure that you meet the competencies required of a psychiatric nurse working in the four western provinces.

### **Is this program approved?**

The Registered Psychiatric Nurses Association of Saskatchewan (RPNAS) is responsible for the approval of the Psychiatric Nursing Re-entry program. The approval criterion ensures that graduates meet the standards and have achieved the minimum competencies for practice as set forth by the RPNAS.

### **Is Regina the only location where the program is offered?**

The Psychiatric Nursing Re-entry program is offered by distance learning. While the program is located at Wascana Campus in Regina, students work on the program at home. The only time you will have to come to Regina is to take the lab.

### **I have worked for a number of years in counselling. Would I get any credit for that work experience?**

The amount of credit you would receive is dependent on when you last worked in the counselling field.

It is also possible that you could access [Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition \(PLAR\)](#) for selected courses.

### **Do I need to get a criminal record check?**

Yes. Your clinical experience will occur in settings in which you will provide direct client care. For the protection of clients, the program requires that each student provide the results of a criminal record check as part of the program's registration process.

A criminal record may result in a student being excluded from clinical experience and unable to complete the necessary program requirements.

### **When can I start courses in the program?**

You can start any time of the year from September 1 to May 31 as the program has ongoing enrolment.

### **How is the program offered?**

The program is offered by distance learning. The learning method is home study with print-based learning materials. You can submit your assignments by email, regular mail or fax.

### **How many courses are there in the program?**

There are 10 theory courses, two labs and two clinical components.

You will have 18 weeks to complete each theory course. The exception is COMP 170 (Basic Computer Operation), which is 12 weeks long. Some courses have prerequisites.

### **I have not been in school for awhile. Do you have any suggestions for enhancing my study skills?**

There are wonderful study skills tools on the internet. One that former students recommend is Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review (SQ3R). Type this into a search engine to find resources using this strategy. SIAST Libraries also has a wealth of resources that they direct you to help you study, write exams and write papers.

### **How will I communicate with faculty?**

Program faculty are available to support you via the telephone and email.

There is no faculty support in July and August as these months are not counted when determining your end date.

### **I have always attended formal classroom education. Distance learning seems like it would be a lonely experience. Is there any way I could have contact with my classmates?**

While distance learning can be a lonely experience, all students are given the opportunity to complete a Freedom of Information consent form. If you agree to allow our faculty to release your contact information to other students, then you can be linked up with your classmates. Your information is only given to other classmates and is only released with your consent.

### **How will I progress through the program?**

Each of the theory courses is divided into learning outcomes that cover specific material. Each learning outcome is divided into learning steps that will guide you in your learning. There are review exercises included at the end of each learning outcome that allow you to assess your learning. Most theory courses have a midterm and final exam. Some courses have assignments to evaluate your knowledge. Guidelines for completing assignments and the grading criteria are included in the course manuals.

The theory courses are offered by distance delivery. The learning method methods are home study with print-based learning materials and online study. You can submit your home study assignments by email, regular mail or fax. NRSB 273 Introduction to Psychiatric Nursing is offered online. You will be instructed, during the course, how to submit assignments. You will work at your own pace as you progress through the program.

There is one 30-hour lab in Regina. The lab covers a large number of psychomotor skills (including those of administering fluids and medications). Case histories are used to assess your ability to apply helping, counselling and psychomotor skills involved in meeting the needs of assigned clients. Your psychomotor, helping and counselling skills will be evaluated in the lab. You must demonstrate mastery of the required skills prior to entering the clinical area.

There is one clinical practice experience which takes place in your home community (whenever possible). The preceptor and faculty will evaluate your performance in the clinical practicums. All are graded as pass / fail.

### **Where are the labs held?**

The labs are held in Regina at Wascana Campus. They are held at various times throughout the year according to student need. There is a minimum number of students required in order to offer the labs.

### **Where will my clinical practice education take place?**

You will do your clinical practicum in your home community. You will be placed with a preceptor who will help you with your learning.

### **Where do I write my exams?**

An approved test site will be assigned to you when you are registered in program courses.

Generally, students write their exams online in the test centers located at SIAST Wascana Campus in Regina or SIAST Kelsey Campus in Saskatoon.

When you write your exams online, test center staff will orientate you to the test-writing software. You must schedule an extra 15 minutes before your first exam for your orientation. The exams are multiple choice and require the writer to know how to use a mouse and read onscreen instructions.

### **Can I get credit for prior learning?**

Please go to [Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition \(PLAR\)](#).

If you have not been away from psychiatric nursing for more than 10 years, and you have learned the skills and knowledge for one or more of the Psychiatric Nursing Re-entry program courses, you may apply to be assessed for each applicable course.

### **Where can I buy my books and other materials?**

Information on purchasing textbooks and course manuals will be provided when you register. Material is available for purchase online, by phone, or in person.

### **What completion document do I receive after completing the program?**

Upon graduation, you will receive an applied certificate in Psychiatric Nursing Re-entry.