A Clinical Nurse Leader is a master’s prepared nurse, serving as an advanced generalist, coordinating patient care, and improving patient outcomes.

**FAQs**

**What is a CNL?**

Clinical Nurse Leaders (CNLs) oversee the care coordination of a distinct group of patients and actively provide direct and indirect patient care in complex situations. They put evidence-based practice into action to ensure that patients benefit from the latest innovations in care delivery. CNLs evaluate patient outcomes, assess cohort risk, and modify care plans as necessary.

**Where do CNLs practice?**

The Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) is an advanced generalist. As an advanced generalist, you could practice in a variety of settings, and with a variety of populations, using a set of skills including leadership, evidence-based practice, coordination and collaboration, and principles of process improvement. Currently, CNLs are being employed in a variety of healthcare systems.

**Is OSU’s program accredited?**

The CNL specialty meets the standards for application for the credentialing examination (CNL) through the Commission on Nurse Certification (CNC).

**What skills will I need to become a CNL?**

After graduation, you will enter the workforce with the skills and competencies to:

- put evidence-based practice into action to ensure that patients benefit from the latest innovations in care delivery
- evaluate patient outcomes, assess cohort risk, and modify care plans as necessary
- delegate and oversee care delivery by other nursing staff on a daily basis

**Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL)**

**Sample curricula**

### Sample Graduate Entry curriculum

#### Year 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>Autumn</th>
<th>Spring</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing 6100</td>
<td>2 Nursing 6270</td>
<td>7 Nursing 6260</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nursing 6410</td>
<td>3 Nursing 6430</td>
<td>3 Nursing 6280</td>
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<td>Nursing 6420</td>
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<td>5 Nursing 7780</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total semester hours</strong></td>
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#### Year 2

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<td>8 Nursing 7410</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nursing 6340</td>
<td>4 Nursing 6480</td>
<td>1 Nursing 7470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing 7491</td>
<td>3 Nursing 7403</td>
<td>3 Nursing 7483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing 7500</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total semester hours</strong></td>
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#### Year 3

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing 7238.01</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total semester hours</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total option credit hours: 82

1 Students must take N6480 prior to N7483

These sample curricula are for illustration purposes only. Course numbers, semester of offering, and specialty requirements are subject to change. Additional information may be found at [www.nursing.osu.edu](http://www.nursing.osu.edu).
communicate with interdisciplinary team members to coordinate client care
ensure cost-effective care through the coordination of human, environmental, and material resources

How long will it take to complete the program?
As a Traditional Master student pursuing the CNL specialty, you can complete the program in four semesters of full-time study or two years and one semester of part-time study. As a Graduate Entry student you can complete the program in about three years of full-time study.

Is healthcare experience required?
Whether you are a recent graduate, pursuing a second career, or have years of nursing experience, you are welcome to apply to the master’s program. Healthcare experience is not required for admission, however, experiences and observations can help you determine your career goals.

CNL courses
N7238.01 Introduction to Clinical Nurse Leader Practice
N7238.02 Transition to Clinical Nurse Leader Practice
N7403 Innovation Leadership in Advanced Nursing Practice
N7404 Advanced Health Assessment
N7450 Pathophysiology of Altered Health States
N7470 Advanced Pharmacology in Nursing
N7491 Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Across the Life Span
N7483 Quality Improvement and Informatics
N7500 Health Policy and Advocacy
N7780 Evidence Based Nursing Scholarship

How much does the program cost?
As a student, you will pay tuition and fees every semester. Graduate Entry students will be full-time each semester of the program. Traditional Master students can either be full-time or part-time, so tuition will be dependent on the number of credits taken. Please visit the website for specific details on tuition, or consult our Financial Aid handout.

Is financial aid available?
Yes, you can apply for financial assistance in the form of scholarships and loans. Please visit www.nursing.osu.edu/finaid to learn more. Additional questions can be sent to nursing@osu.edu.

Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) Sample curricula

Sample full-time Traditional Master curriculum

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Autumn</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing 7450</td>
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<td>Nursing 7403</td>
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<td>Nursing 7483</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nursing 7491</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nursing 7780</td>
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Total credit hours: 13
Total option credit hours: 39

Sample part-time Traditional Master curriculum

<table>
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<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Autumn</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing 7238.02</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total credit hours: 8
Total option credit hours: 39

Is there a distance-learning option for this specialty?
Currently the CNL specialty is offered as an on-campus program only. You will, however, have the opportunity to take online courses throughout the program.

What will my clinical experience be like?
You will work with CNLs, CNSs, and administrators in mostly the acute care setting but primary care clinical sites are also available. Most of the sites are available only during daytime and/or weekdays. You should plan to meet your clinical rotation goals during these times. You will be required to complete at least 400 clinical hours in order to be eligible for certification. We will work to place you at a site and will also handle all contracts.

How can I find out more?
For more information please explore www.nursing.osu.edu. Additional questions can be sent to nursing@osu.edu.

How will I be able to work while going to school?
For Traditional Master students, a part-time option is available which allows you to work while completing the program. Some Graduate Entry students work part time, usually no more than 10-15 hours per week in a flexible employment environment. In the third year of study, some Graduate Entry students choose to work part time as registered nurses.

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