

ACPNP Frequently Asked Questions

What is an Acute Care Pediatric Nurse Practitioner?

The CPNP-AC role is designed to meet the specialized physiologic and psychological needs of children with complex acute, critical and chronic health conditions. CPNP-ACs respond to rapidly changing clinical conditions, including the recognition and management of emerging crises, organ dysfunction and failure. In accordance with this practice focus, CPNP-ACs role activities encompass a wide range of NP practice strategies including contributing to the management of children's health and illness states, the client-nurse relationship, the teaching-coaching function, the professional role, managing and negotiating healthcare delivery systems, monitoring and ensuring the quality of health care practice, providing family-centered care, and demonstrating cultural competency. The short-term goal of care is stabilization of the child, minimizing complications, and providing physical and psychological care measures. The long-term goal of care is to restore maximal health potential through implementation of NP strategies to reduce health risks. The continuum of care spans geographic settings including emergency departments, sub-specialty clinics, the home, hospitals and intensive care units (PNCB, 2014).

What are the requirements for admission?

To be considered for admission, you'd need to be working in a pediatric acute care setting, and have a 2 year minimum of pediatric RN experience.

Is the program completely online?

Yes. The program is completely online, except for the mandatory 3-day orientation in the fall prior to clinicals on campus, where we will engage in intensive interaction and skills lab before you enter your first clinical rotation.

Can I do my clinical rotations where you live?

You can do your clinical rotations where you live, based on the nursing board of your state, and an approved preceptor/mentor (preferably the majority of your hours with an ACPNP, but you can work with an MD). We have students from across the nation. The majority of ACPNP students complete clinical hours in their home communities or within driving distance of their home communities. Students in remote areas have sometimes had to travel outside their communities to find clinical sites. Students are responsible for finding appropriate clinical sites. If a student cannot locate a clinical site in their home area, faculty can occasionally provide names of nearby sites that have been used by previous ACPNP students.

Students who are unsuccessful in being accepted by an agency in their home community may have to travel to another area to complete practice requirements or withdraw from the program. Please review the list of clinical affiliations found under the "Current Student" tab on the College of Nursing Web Site at <http://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/con/students/clinicalagencies.html>

If there is not a clinical site listed near you or you are interested in a site not listed, negotiations should be initiated as soon as you begin the program through the ACPNP Track Coordinator.

The current list of clinical affiliation sites does not include sites near me. What does this mean?

The affiliation list on the webpage is simply a list of clinical agencies with which USA has a long-term affiliation agreement. Most ACPNP students use clinical sites that are not on the website list. The contract process is just a little different for sites that are not on the list. This will be explained further at orientation.

Can I do my clinical rotations where I work for pay?

It is possible to do your clinical rotations where you are paid, but you must complete the required hours for the course outside of your typically scheduled hours where you are paid. No clinical time can be paid time. It is

strongly recommended that you gain experience in your clinical rotations in a setting outside of your RN position if possible.

Can I work full time while in the ACPNP program?

Many students do work full time, but many cut back at some point in their studies, generally during their clinical rotations. Remember that you will need to dedicate much time to learning to be competent in this role, and it will be very different than your RN role.

What are the clinical rotations for the ACPNP program?

The Acute Care Nurse Practitioner clinical curriculum occurs over 3 semesters

Spring	(MCN 563)
Summer	(MCN 565)
Fall	(MCN 566)

There are **600** clinical hours required to be eligible to sit for the Acute Care PNP certification boards. These are divided over 3 semesters of clinical and are described below.

- 60 hours are required to be in a primary care setting.
 - **Exception for PNPs:** If you are a primary care PNP already, you will NOT do the 60 primary care hours but you must still complete six hundred hours, so your hours in the spring will adjust with the other rotations.
- Based on clinical performance, preceptor evaluation, or instructor evaluation students MAY, at the discretion of the clinical instructor, be asked to perform additional hours beyond the semester requirements in order to receive a passing grade for the course

What are the Rotational Requirements for the ACPNP Clinicals?

- Students are responsible for establishing their own clinical rotations.
- Rotational requirements for the Acute Care PNP program are determined in part by the Acute Care PNP certifying body and your instructors.
- ACPNP students' required rotations through the three semesters are as follows:

Spring MCN 563- Acute by Stable, and Primary Care

- 240 hours total
- 60 hours in primary care management of children (unless already PNP-PC)
- 90 hours Hospitalist rotation
- 90 hours Surgery rotation
- Optional: Urgent care (max 40 hours with adjustment of hospitalist/surgery hrs)

Summer MCN 565- Chronic Sub Specialty Clinics

- 120 hours total
- 60 hours- Specialty of your choosing
- 60 hours- Specialty of your choosing

Fall MCN 566- Acute LifeThreatening/Emergent/Unstable

- 240 hours total
- 80 hours- PICU General
- 80 hours- PICU Specialty
- 80 hours- Pediatric Emergency Department

**Clinical Rotation Grid
Acute Care Pediatric Nurse Practitioner**

COURSE	Spring MCN 563	Summer MCN 565	Fall MCN 566
CLINICAL AREA	Primary Care Acute but Stable	Chronic Sub-Specialty Clinics	Acute Life Threatening Unstable
HOURS	240 hours	120 hours	240 hours
EXAMPLES OF SITES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary care pediatric clinic • Hospitalist rotation • Surgical rotation • Peds Urgent Care 	Endocrine clinic Infectious Disease clinic GI clinic Neurology clinic Cardiology clinic Nephrology clinic Oncology clinic Etc...	PICU –General PICU -Specialty Peds Emergency Dept
COMMENTS	Primary Care 60 hours (waived if PNP-PC) Hospitalist rotation 90 hrs Surgical rotation 90 hrs <i>Urgent care optional 40 hrs</i>	2 different rotations 60 hours each.	PICU –General 80 hrs PICU -Specialty 80 hrs Peds ED 80 hrs

When will I take boards after graduation?

The Acute Care Pediatric NP graduate will become eligible to take the PNP-AC board certification exam, offered through the Pediatric Nursing Certification Board (PNCB), after successful completion of 566/567, offered in the fall term. Candidates successfully passing this exam will earn the certification credential CPNP-AC. Those students who are in the DNP program will continue in their doctoral studies, earning the MSN at the end of the fall term, and are able to take boards and start in their new position while finishing their DNP coursework.

I am a Primary Care CPNP (CPNP-PC) and would like to have my Acute Care PNP certification. Can I have both certifications?

Yes, you can have both. If you have your Master’s degree with the CPNP-PC, then you would apply to the Post Master’s ACPNP program to obtain the certification, or to the DNP program as a Post Master’s Student.

I currently have my CPNP-PC but am working in an Acute Care environment. Do I need to return to school for this certification?

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing, the National Task Force Criteria and the APRN National Consensus Model include recommendations that **all** states require nurse practitioners to have congruence between education, national certification and clinical practice. While a few states may not currently require national certification for licensure, your employer may require certification or you may move to another state that requires it. Your state board, or your employer may also request that you obtain the necessary credential to maintain your position.

Is the University of South Alabama ACPNP accredited?

Yes. The BSN, MSN and DNP programs are all accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

Why are there different semester agenda options for the DNP program in the ACPNP program?

Students who apply and are accepted into the DNP program will complete their MSN or Post Master’s coursework and sit for boards at the completion of Fall 566/567. DNP students will take their DNP Project Planning Course in the Summer, and then start the Residency component of the DNP in the fall. Depending on

which curriculum agenda you choose, you can do this simultaneously with Summer 564/565 and Fall 566/567, or the following year following completion of the MSN and ACPNP coursework.

What is the DNP project?

The scholarly DNP project is an engagement with a quality improvement process (practice problem, goal or initiative) that is developed by you, within a synthesis of scholarship, integration of the literature and evidence into an application of an endeavor worthy of doctoral nursing practice, and demonstrates a student's growth in competence, expertise and professionalism. You will work with your DNP Faculty throughout the residency course work as well as with an approved agency/organization and mentor to plan and implement this quality improvement project, appropriate for a doctoral ACPNP graduate.

What are the employment opportunities/prospects for an ACPNP after graduation?

Excellent! ACPNPs practice in PICUs, Emergency Departments, Acute Specialty Inpatient Settings (Peds Cardiology, Neurology, Bone Marrow Transplant, Heme-Onc, Surgery, etc) and in Hospitalist positions, among many other exciting roles. Our students have been extremely successful, with most receiving several interviews and offers for positions nationwide, by several organizations upon their graduation

