

Sabbatical Report

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Overview and Purpose

I was granted a sabbatical in Spring 2026 to create a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) program in the School of Nursing and Health Sciences. I have been a PMHNP for 14 years and have taught in the School of Nursing for nine years. There is a dire need for more psychiatric providers particularly those who can prescribe medications. I felt well suited and inspired to create this program for our school and university and had the full support of our school chair, the director of the Family Nurse Practitioner program and the college dean. The California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees approved the creation of this new curriculum in Spring, 2026.

Activities Undertaken During Sabbatical

1. I created and met with an Advisory Board of community partners including Kaiser Permanente Psychiatry, Sonoma County Behavioral Health Services, Santa Rosa Providence Outpatient Behavioral Health Program, Santa Rosa Behavioral Health Hospital (Aurora), Santa Rosa Community Clinics, Anderson Valley Community Clinics
2. I solicited commitments for student placements with multiple agencies including those above.
3. I met with Board of Registered Nursing (BRN) education consultant regarding BRN requirements for a new program.
4. I met with Jenn Lillig, Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies to initiate the process of creating the program for Sonoma State University
5. I met with potential faculty and director of the Family Nurse Practitioner program several times over the semester to discuss and plan the curriculum.
6. I created the new curriculum and wrote the proposal for the new curriculum for submission to Curriculog
7. I created eleven new courses and wrote syllabi for the program for submission to Curriculog and the Board of Registered Nursing.
8. I submitted the program and course proposals to Curriculog.
9. I gathered and/or wrote materials for the substantive change application to the Board of Registered Nursing which includes the following:

Table of Contents for Sonoma State University Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Program Proposal Submission

- 1) BRN Cover Letter for PMHNP Program Substantive Change

- 2) BRN Standards Compliance Summary
- 3) NP General Information Form
- 4) NP Total Curriculum Form SSU PMHNP Program
- 5) NP Report on Faculty Form
- 6) Program Learning Outcomes Crosswalk to AACN (2021) and NONPF (2024) Competencies
- 7) PMHNP Curriculum Map
- 8) Curriculum Map Narrative Explanation
- 9) School of Nursing Department Chair job description
- 10) Director of Family Nurse Practitioner job description
- 11) Assistant Director of SSU FNP Program job description
- 12) Assistant or Associate Professor in School of Nursing Job Description and Announcement
- 13) Graduate FNP Faculty job description
- 14) 5-year Budget for PMHNP program
- 15) MS Nursing Degree Transcript Example
- 16) Evidence of Sufficient Resources
- 17) Proposed mock up of PMHNP program for website and catalog
- 18) SSU School of Nursing Organizational Chart
- 19) SSU Faculty Handbook
- 20) SSU Student Handbook
- 21) Syllabi (11)
- 22) Faculty CVs
- 23) Letters of Support from Community Partners
- 24) CCNE Substantive Change Communication Letter

I have submitted the above materials to the Board of Registered Nursing. I anticipate communication from the BRN for any necessary edits or revisions to our submission.

Conclusion

I will continue to contribute necessary work and documentation as the program develops. Challenges I see going forward are having adequate faculty with the appropriate degrees and training as well as securing clinical site placements for students to do their practicum hours. It will be a work in progress.

As stated above, there is a great need for more psychiatric providers. Adding a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Post Master's Certificate track to our university will improve Sonoma State's reputation and our visibility as a CSU that is meeting the increasing needs of those with mental health issues in our state. It will provide much needed education to train PMHNPs who would serve Northern California's mental health needs. There are currently no PMHNP certificate programs at any of the CSUs in Northern California. Often students need to seek out very costly programs which often deter them from pursuing becoming PMHNPs. Providing a program for Nurse Practitioners to practice in psychiatric mental health would be an enormous contribution to the mental health of Northern Californians.

I have learned a great deal during this sabbatical and believe it was very productive. I look forward to continuing the PMHNP program as it develops.