

# Psychiatry Certificate (Academic Credit)



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## Curriculum

The vision of Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions (RMUoHP) is to advance the quality, delivery, and efficacy of healthcare. The Psychiatry Certificate was developed by nationally recognized Psychiatry PAs, psychologists and others specifically for PA clinicians who are committed to providing the very best mental healthcare to their patients. The Psychiatry certificate program provides an intensive competency focused, outcomes driven curriculum to expand mental healthcare capabilities of PAs practicing in either dedicated psychiatry clinics or as integrated psychiatric providers in other clinical settings. PAs who complete this certificate program will be equipped to provide the latest neuroscience informed treatments for a wide range of psychiatric disorders, accurately communicate empathy, establish constructive therapeutic relationships, guide patients to achieve lasting behavioral change, provide high quality mental health therapy in two therapeutic modalities, gain valuable personal insight, and better understand and manage the complex medical and psychological needs of patients suffering with serious mental illness. Participation in the certificate program is an ideal preparation to successfully pass the NCCPA CAQ-PSYCH examination.

The certificate program includes five 3-credit courses delivered using the latest evidence-based methods to small cohorts of dedicated learners from around the world in a virtual classroom. With the exception of some small group virtual clinical team meetings all of the content will be delivered asynchronously. Learners who demonstrate completion of prerequisite requirements and all five core courses, will earn the Psychiatry Certificate. Content is delivered completely online; students are not required to travel to campus. The courses within the Psychiatry Certificate program will automatically transfer to the Doctor of Medical Science (DMSc) Psychiatry Concentration Track at Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions. These certificate courses may also be transferred to other academic programs upon approval and University course transfer policies.

## Certificate Outcomes

The Psychiatry Certificate is committed to the development of individuals who can:

1. Apply the neuroscience model to investigate the etiologic and pathophysiologic mechanisms that underlie psychiatric disorders.
2. Formulate a comprehensive differential diagnosis for patients with clinical manifestations of psychiatric disorders.
3. Accurately diagnose psychiatric disorders based on the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) diagnostic criteria.
4. Formulate comprehensive evidence-based treatment plans including symptom-focused psychopharmacologic management for patients with psychiatric disorders.
5. Employ motivational interviewing and other psychotherapeutic modalities in the comprehensive treatment of patients with psychiatric disorders.

## Admission Requirements

1. Earned a bachelor's or master's degree from a PA program at a regionally accredited institution, or from a foreign university based on a transcript evaluation completed by an agency from the NACES website, [www.naces.org](http://www.naces.org)
2. Official transcripts from the physician assistant (PA) program and any institution from which a post-graduate master's or doctoral degree was earned.
3. Proof of unencumbered licensure and/or certification as a physician assistant (PA), or for new graduates, certification or licensure must be obtained during the first semester of the Psychiatry Certificate program.
4. Current full-time clinical practice.
5. Resume or curriculum vitae detailing education, employment, volunteer service, and scholarly activity.
6. Completed online application.

Students may enter the program during any semester and must take courses in the sequences listed below. Students are expected to complete the required courses within a 2-year period from the first day of enrollment in the program. All required courses are offered each semester, in a 15-week term.

## Program Requirements

Course Sequence	Course Code	Title	Credits
1	PMH 710	Advanced Neuroscience of Psychiatry	3
2	PMH 720	Psychiatry Diagnostics & Therapeutics I	3
3	PMH 730	Psychiatry Diagnostics & Therapeutics II	3
1	PMH 790	Psychotherapy Practicum I	3
2	PMH 795	Psychotherapy Practicum II	3

## Optional Courses

Course Sequence	Course Code	Title	Credits
1	PMH 890*	Advanced Psychotherapy Techniques I	3
2	PMH 895*	Advanced Psychotherapy Techniques II	3

\*course offering dependent on enrollments

**PMH 710      Advanced Neuroscience of Psychiatry      (3 credits)**

This course provides a detailed review of the neuroscience model beginning with neuroanatomy and neurophysiology (cells, circuits, neurotransmitters, receptors and signaling the nucleus, genetics, and epigenetics) followed by an exploration of how these structures and processes are modulated (hormonal actions in the brain, plasticity during maturation and adult development, immunity/inflammation and bioelectric modulation) and finally how the neuroscience model contributes to our understanding of pain, pleasure, appetite, anger and aggression, sleep, sex, social attachment, memory, intelligence, attention, depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, and Alzheimer's disease.

Content will be delivered using the latest evidence-based asynchronous methods to a small group of dedicated learners from around the world in a virtual classroom environment. In addition to the course text, a variety of video presentations will be included, with weekly formative assignments that will engage learners in a self-directed review of the published literature, peer to peer learning through post and reply style academic writing on a scholarly forum, and brief quizzes to build confidence in the mastery of instructional content. Summative assignments will require each student to complete 24 learning activities qualifying for the Neuroscience Education Institute (NEI) Master Psychopharmacology Certificate and complete all 10 self-assessments for the NEI Master Psychopharmacology certificate.

**PMH 720      Psychiatry Diagnostics & Therapeutics I      (3 credits)**

This course focuses on the psychiatric interview for the accurate diagnosis of psychiatric conditions and the implementation of comprehensive treatment plans. In addition to

psychiatric pharmacology, crisis intervention and risk management will be reviewed. The course will also explore the ethical and legal issues associated with the diagnosis and treatment of psychiatric disorders. Neurodevelopmental, psychotic, mood, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive, trauma-related, stressor-related, dissociative, and somatic disorders will be covered in this course. *Prerequisite: PMH 710*

**PMH 730     Psychiatry Diagnostics & Therapeutics II** **(3 credits)**

This course is a continuation of the Psychiatry Diagnostics & Therapeutics course series, building upon the concepts that were explored in Psychiatry Diagnostics & Therapeutics I. Eating, sleep, sexual, gender identity, disruptive, impulse control, conduct, substance-related, neurocognitive, and personality disorders will be covered in this course. *Prerequisites: PMH 710, PMH 720*

**PMH 790     Psychotherapy Practicum I** **(3 credits)**

The focus of this course is Motivational Interviewing (MI) for advanced graduate-level students. Learners will be provided with a comprehensive review of MI as a person-centered therapeutic modality, its clinical application to a wide range of behavioral and psychological conditions involving diverse clinical settings and populations across the life span. Learners will receive access to online therapy supervision asynchronously from a licensed mental health therapist while they complete 500 hours of clinical practice at their current location of employment. Learners will conduct systematic and continuous process and outcome measurements during their practical application of established psychotherapeutic methods and procedures. This course will include proctored case scenarios and real-time audio-visual patient/client interactions to promote mastery of the course material. Learners will receive instructive feedback through evidence-based clinical supervision models that include session recording, transcription, and analysis. *Prerequisite: PMH 710*

**PMH 795     Psychotherapy Practicum II** **(3 credits)**

This course focuses on the “gold-standard” of contemporary psychotherapy practice, Cognitive-Behavior Therapy (CBT), for advanced graduate students. Learners will be guided through a comprehensive review of CBT based on the theoretical models and strategies proposed by CBT pioneers, Aaron and Judith Beck. Learners will receive access to online therapy supervision asynchronously from a licensed mental health therapist while they complete 500 hours of clinical practice at their current location of employment. The learner will expand their proficiency in clinical case formulation and the therapeutic application of CBT in a variety of clinical settings with diverse populations (individuals/families and groups) across the lifespan. This course will incorporate clinical conceptualizations, reflective strategies, practice exercises, interactive videos, and case examples to stimulate learner skill acquisition, fostering needed social, cognitive, behavioral, and affective change in clients/patients. This course will include proctored case scenarios and real-time audio-visual client/patient interactions to promote mastery of the course material. Learners will receive instructive feedback through evidence-based clinical supervision models that include session recording, transcription, and analysis. *Prerequisite: PMH 790*

**PMH 890     Advanced Psychotherapy Techniques I****(3 credits)**

This course focuses on Medical Family Therapy (MedFT) and Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) for advanced graduate-level students. Learners will develop MedFT skills to conceptualize patients from a family systems model and infuse interpersonal strategies and interventions into general psychotherapy practice and integrated care – especially patients presenting with trauma syndromes and somatic-based illnesses. Additionally, learners will acquire knowledge and skills relative to SFBT to address patient needs without exploring the illness history and origin of problems. Competencies with this psychotherapy modality focus on practical application to many family-related situations, including children, pregnant and peripartum women, couples, parents treating family members of patients with serious illnesses, and families coping with suicide. Learners will concurrently engage in online supervision and consultation with faculty, colleagues, and peers. *Prerequisites: PMH 790 & PMH 795.*

**PMH 895     Advanced Psychotherapy Techniques II****(3 credits)**

This course focuses on Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) for advanced graduate-level students. Learners will obtain DBT skills to treat patients with personality disorders and interpersonal conflicts, mood disorders and suicidal ideation, post-traumatic stress and dissociative disorders, traumatic brain injuries, and changing behavioral patterns such as self-harm, substance use, and eating disorders. Additionally, learners will acquire ACT skills to promote psychological flexibility, including the following behavior-change strategies: reducing the tendency to reify thoughts, images, emotions, and memories; allowing unwanted thoughts, feelings, and urges to come and go without engaging in compulsive behaviors; and awareness of the present moment allowing them to experience greater openness, interest, and acceptance (mindfulness). Learners will concurrently engage in online supervision and consultation with faculty, colleagues, and peers. *Prerequisites: PMH 790 & PMH 795.*