

PALLIATIVE CARE (MS)

Overview

The Master of Science Degree in Palliative Care along with the Interprofessional Graduate Certificate in Palliative Care aim to ease suffering worldwide through exemplary palliative care education.

These programs develop Palliative Care Community Specialists through innovative educational pedagogies designed to facilitate learning for healthcare providers and allied health professionals in up-to-date, evidence-based, interdisciplinary palliative care concepts using a hybrid learning environment that offers flexible online and live application-based approaches.

Biomedical and Allied Health Professional Tracks provide specialized content in addition to the core curriculum. Program courses are delivered in an interprofessional learning environment that mirrors the palliative care work setting. The program focuses on advancing clinical knowledge; developing clinical wisdom; building an evidence-based palliative care practice; enhancing communication skills; and addressing physical, psychological, social, and spiritual suffering.

Admission Requirements

DOMESTIC APPLICATION DEADLINE: May 1

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 15

To apply for admission applicants must submit the following:

- Online Graduate School application
- Personal Statement: A one-page personal statement describing the applicant's career goals and purpose for studying palliative care.
- Resume: The applicant's current resume or curriculum vitae, including professional work/practice since graduating with a bachelor's degree (or equivalent).
- Educational Goals statement.
- Two recommendations: to be completed by people who know your professional, academic and/or personal achievements or qualities well. As such, references must be from professional contacts, such as employers, supervisors, former faculty, preceptors, or professional colleagues. References from clergy, family members, friends or politicians will not be accepted.
- Licenses and Certificates: A notarized copy of the applicant's current professional license and a copy of the photo identification used in the license notary process or online verification of the applicant's current professional license. (Biomedical Track only)
- Driver's License: A copy of the applicant's driver's license or state-issued ID.
- Application Fee: A nonrefundable application fee of \$50.00 (U.S. dollars). Checks or money orders should be made out to the University of Colorado.
- Interview: After the application is complete a telephone or video interview will be arranged with the applicant and two faculty members. This interview will afford the program the opportunity to understand the needs of the applicant and for the candidate to ask questions. The interview process is designed to assess the applicant's knowledge of the profession, communication, and ability to perform in a positive, professional manner when working with

others. To be considered for admission, applicants must participate in the interview process.

- Transcripts: Official transcripts from all post-secondary colleges and/or universities should be sent directly to:

University of Colorado Denver Graduate Admissions
Campus Box 163
PO Box 173364
Denver, CO 80217-3364

OR Electronic Transcripts should be sent to: graduateadmissions@ucdenver.edu

International students must meet ALL of the requirements above and those required by International Admissions.

Degree Requirements

First Year

Course	Title	Hours
First Year		
Fall		
PALC 6110 or PALC 6111	Basic Pain Assessment & Management: IDT Care or Basic Pain Assessment & Management: IDT Care (AHP)	3
PALC 6510	Core Concepts, Principles & Communication Skills	3
	Hours	6
Spring		
PALC 6210 or PALC 6211	IDT Care for Non-Pain Symptoms: Part A or IDT Care for Non-pain Symptoms: Part A (AHP)	3
PALC 6220 or PALC 6221	IDT Care for Non-Pain Symptoms: Part B or IDT Care for Non-Pain Symptoms: Part B (AHP)	3
	Hours	6
Summer		
PALC 6520	Communication Skill Refinement: IDT Collaboration	3
	Hours	3
	Total Hours	15

Second Year

Course	Title	Hours
Second Year		
Fall		
PALC 6310	Advanced Illness in Special Settings: Part A	3
PALC 6320	Advanced Illness in Special Settings: Part B	3
	Hours	6
Spring		
PALC 6330	Advanced Illness in Special Settings: Part C	3
PALC 6120 or PALC 6121	Advanced Concepts in Pain Management or Advanced Concepts in Pain Management (AHP)	3
	Hours	6

Summer		
PALC 6530	Palliative Care Integrated in Your Community	3
PALC 6950	Capstone Project	1-3
	Hours	4-6
	Total Hours	16-18

Learning Objectives

Communication Skills

The PC Community Specialist demonstrates expertise in relationship centered communication theory and skills to gather and share information, negotiate shared decision making and plans of care, and sustain relationships with palliative care patients/families and healthcare providers.

Expert Symptom Management Skills (Pain and Non-pain)

The PC Community Specialist demonstrates expert clinical judgment in performing a comprehensive patient assessment, leading to diagnosis development, implementation, and ongoing reassessment with modification of effective, evidence-based care plans utilizing the skills and expertise of the interdisciplinary team (IDT), for all distressing pain and non-pain symptoms experienced by patients with any serious illness.

Ethics, Advocacy, and Legal Aspects of Care

The PC Community Specialist incorporates knowledge of ethical and legal aspects of palliative care into practice by exhibiting the highest professional standards and by advocating for the rights of patients/families to access optimal palliative care.

Spiritual, Religious and Existential Aspects of Care

As part of the IDT, the PC Community Specialist demonstrates and promotes spiritually sensitive care, respecting diversity in all forms, for patients/families and other health care professionals.

Social and Cultural Aspects of Care

As part of the IDT, the PC Community Specialist demonstrates respect for diverse communities through culturally sensitive skills, recognizing how social and economic barriers and challenges impact the delivery of health care services.

Psychological Aspects of Care

As part of the IDT, the PC Community Specialist effectively addresses psychological concerns, and promotes access to expanded resources for all patients/families living with any serious illness.

Integration of Palliative Care for patients throughout the course of any serious illness in all venues

The PC Community Specialist effectively advocates to provide evidence-based palliative care for patients/families and supports and develops expanded resources for all patients/families living with any serious illness.

Effective Palliative Care Educator

The PC Community Specialist demonstrates knowledge, skills, and applies adult learning principles when providing palliative care education to patients, families, healthcare professionals, and the community.

Systems Thinking

The PC Community Specialist demonstrates understanding of the healthcare system to effectively manage and utilize resources to support patients/families living with any serious illness and advocates for the reform of healthcare systems to provide optimal palliative care.

PALC 6110 - Basic Pain Assessment & Management: IDT Care (3 Credits)

This course reviews basic pain pathophysiology, assessment, non-pharmacological interventions, and non-opioid and opioid pharmacological pain management. Integrated with IDT topics related to pain such as psychological, social & spiritual distress and ethical standards of practice.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6111 - Basic Pain Assessment & Management: IDT Care (AHP) (3 Credits)

Offered jointly with PALC 6110; reviews basic pain pathophysiology, assessment, non-pharmacological interventions, and non-opioid & opioid pharmacological pain management. Integrated with IDT topics such as psychological, social & spiritual distress and ethical standards. Some coursework tailored to AHP students.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6120 - Advanced Concepts in Pain Management (3 Credits)

This course focuses on methadone, opioid infusions, interventional pain management, and other complex modalities. This class focuses on ethics and psychosocial issues including pain in the face of addiction and public policy around opioids and REMS. Prerequisites: PALC 6110 and 6510

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6121 - Advanced Concepts in Pain Management (AHP) (3 Credits)

Offered jointly with PALC 6120; Focuses on safe use of methadone, opioid infusions, interventional pain management, and other complex modalities. This class also covers ethics and psycho-social-spiritual issues related to pain, addiction, and public policy around opioids and REMS. Some thanatology content is tailored for AHP students. Requisite: PALC 6111, 6511, and 6512

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6210 - IDT Care for Non-Pain Symptoms: Part A (3 Credits)

Course covers the assessment and management of eight common non-pain symptoms (e.g. anorexia, asthenia, constipation and nausea/vomiting). Integrated with IDT topics related to symptom assessment/management such as psychological, social & spiritual distress and ethical standards of practice.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6211 - IDT Care for Non-pain Symptoms: Part A (AHP) (3 Credits)

Offered jointly with PALC 6210; assessment/management of eight common non-pain symptoms (e.g. anorexia, asthenia, constipation and nausea/vomiting). Integrated with IDT topics such as psychological, social & spiritual distress, and ethical standards related to practice. Some coursework tailored to AHP students.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6220 - IDT Care for Non-Pain Symptoms: Part B (3 Credits)

This course covers the assessment and management of eight different common non-pain symptoms (e.g. dyspnea, cough, and insomnia). Integrated with IDT topics related to symptom assessment/management such as psychological, social & spiritual distress and ethical standards of practice.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6221 - IDT Care for Non-Pain Symptoms: Part B (AHP) (3 Credits)

Offered jointly with PALC 6220; covers assessment & management of eight common non-pain symptoms (e.g. dyspnea, cough, and insomnia). Integrated with IDT topics such as psychological, social & spiritual distress and ethical standards. Some coursework tailored to AHP students.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6310 - Advanced Illness in Special Settings: Part A (3 Credits)

Assessment/management of 8 chronic illnesses (cardiopulmonary, end stage liver and renal diseases) emphasis on early PC combined with disease focused therapy. Attention: prognostication and transitions into palliative/hospice care or discontinuing treatments including bioethical review and IDT support. Prerequisite: PALC 6510

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6320 - Advanced Illness in Special Settings: Part B (3 Credits)

Assessment/management of cancer and HIV as chronic illness with emphasis on early palliative care combined with disease focused therapy. Attention to prognostication, transition into palliative/hospice care. Paired with Spiritual Care review of challenging spiritual issues, hope, miracles and rituals. Prerequisite: PALC 6510

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6330 - Advanced Illness in Special Settings: Part C (3 Credits)

Assessment/management of neurodegenerative disorders as chronic illness with emphasis on early palliative care combined with disease focused therapy. Attention to prognostication and transitions into palliative/hospice care. Paired with bioethical review and comfort care for the imminently dying. Prerequisite: PALC 6510

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6410 - Death & Dying: Unique Role of the AHP (3 Credits)

This course focuses on methadone, opioid infusions, interventional pain management, and other complex modalities. This class focuses on ethics and psychosocial issues including pain in the face of addiction and public policy around opioids and REMS. For AHP students only.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6510 - Core Concepts, Principles & Communication Skills (3 Credits)

Online and on-campus intensive (some physical presence required) on palliative care topics including: models of care, early palliative care integration, whole person assessment, meaning of illness, and demonstration of advanced communications skills. Special focus on treatment plans with simulated patients/families. Requirement: Restricted to PALC MS or certificate students

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6511 - Online: Core Concepts, Principles & Commun. Skills (2 Credits)

Online discussion of palliative care topics including: models of care, early palliative care integration, whole person assessment, meaning of illness, and demonstration of advanced communications skills. Special focus on treatment plans with simulated patients/families. Co-Requisite: PALC 6512

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6512 - Intensive: Core Topics, Principles & Commun. Skills (1 Credit)

On-campus, in-person intensive (physical presence required) discussion of palliative care topics including: models of care, early palliative care integration, whole person assessment, meaning of illness, and demonstration of advanced communications skills. Special focus on treatment plans with simulated patients/families. Co-Requisite: PALC 6511

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6520 - Communication Skill Refinement: IDT Collaboration (3 Credits)

Online and on-campus intensive (some physical presence require). Advanced topics in PC including refinement of advance PC skills covered Year 1 (e.g. communication) to ensure effectively application to your PC practice; demonstration of psycho-social-spiritual assessment integrated in treatment plans with simulated patients/families.

Prerequisite: PALC 6510

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6521 - Online: Comm. Skill Refinement: IDT Collaboration (2 Credits)

Online. Advanced topics in PC including refinement of advance PC skills covered Year 1 (e.g. communication) to ensure effectively application to your PC practice; demonstration of psycho-social-spiritual assessment integrated in treatment plans with simulated patients/families. Co-Requisite: PALC 6522

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6522 - Intensive: Comm. Skill Refinement: IDT Collaboration (1 Credit)

On-campus, in-person intensive (physical presence required). Advanced topics in PC including refinement of advance PC skills covered Year 1 (e.g. communication) to ensure effectively application to your PC practice; demonstration of psycho-social-spiritual assessment integrated in treatment plans with simulated patients/families. Co-Requisite: PALC 6521

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6530 - Palliative Care Integrated in Your Community (3 Credits)
Online and on-campus intensive (some physical presence required). Demonstrate advanced PC communications skills & management of complex pain and symptoms; apply ethical training and practical experience with supportive interventions to help preserve dignity, achieve closure and have peace at life's end. Prerequisites: PALC 6510, PALC 6520, and PALC 6950 or PALC 6960
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6531 - Online: Palliative Care Integrated in Your Community (2 Credits)
Online. Demonstrate advanced PC communications skills & management of complex pain and symptoms; apply ethical training and practical experience with supportive interventions to help preserve dignity, achieve closure and have peace at life's end. Co-Requisite: PALC 6532
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6532 - Intensive: Pall Care Integrated in Your Community (1 Credit)
On-campus, in-person intensive (physical presence required). Demonstrate advanced PC communications skills & management of complex pain and symptoms; apply ethical training and practical experience with supportive interventions to help preserve dignity, achieve closure and have peace at life's end. Co-Requisite: PALC 6531
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6910 - Systems Topics: Preparation to Capstone (3 Credits)
Palliative Care Research, Quality Improvement, Health Care Policy and Advocacy and Palliative Care Program development including institutional needs assessment and program planning. Instruction to become a PC Educator, development of professional resilience and role of medical humanities. Prerequisite: PALC 6511/PALC 6512
Grading Basis: Letter Grade with IP
A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6911 - Systems-Level Thinking: Capstone Project Overview (1 Credit)
This course provides an overview of Capstone Project types: Evidence-based practice; quality improvement or patient safety; program development or evaluation; education; engagement; ethics and humanities; and research. Students will formulate problem statements for various project types. Can be taken concurrently with PALC 6912.
Requisite: PALC-MS students only
Grading Basis: Letter Grade with IP
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6912 - Systems-Level Thinking: Capstone Project Lit Review (1 Credit)
Students will learn to search for evidence, critique journal articles, and synthesize a literature review. They will develop and refine purpose statements for their Capstone project, conduct their literature search, and create an evidence table for their Capstone Proposal. Can be taken concurrently with PALC 6911. Requisite: PALC-MS students only
Grading Basis: Letter Grade with IP
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6913 - Systems-Level Thinking: Capstone Project Proposal (1 Credit)
Students will draft Capstone Proposals for faculty review and feedback. Students will present Capstone Proposals to a Bridge Committee for approval and revise per Bridge Committee feedback. Requisite: PALC 6911, PALC 6912, PALC-MS students only
Grading Basis: Letter Grade with IP
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6950 - Capstone Project (1-3 Credits)
MS Palliative Care Capstone Project. Students will design, implement, evaluate, and present the result of a research, QI, education, advocacy, or medical humanities project during year 2 with mentorship from faculty. Results presented at final on-campus course (PALC 6530). Prerequisites: PALC 6910 and PALC 6520
Grading Basis: Letter Grade with IP
Repeatable. Max Credits: 12.
A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.
Additional Information: Report as Full Time.
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 6960 - Masters Thesis in Palliative Care (1-3 Credits)
Masters thesis work in Palliative Care. Final results presented at final on-campus course (PALC 6530). Prerequisite: PALC 6910 and 6520
Grading Basis: Letter Grade with IP
Repeatable. Max Credits: 12.
A-GRAD Restricted to graduate students only.
Additional Information: Report as Full Time.
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer.

PALC 7001 - Comm-Based Hospice and Pall Med Fellowship - A (8 Credits)
For physicians MSPC students who are accepted as CB-HPM Fellows. Graduate Medical Education and supervision for fellows to complete all clinical requirements for patient care and meet HPM Milestones. Pre- or Co-Requisite - PALC 6511/12
Grading Basis: Pass/Fail with IP
Typically Offered: Fall.

PALC 7002 - Comm-Based Hospice and Pall Med Fellowship - B (8 Credits)
For physicians MSPC students who are accepted as CB-HPM Fellows. Graduate Medical Education and supervision for fellows to complete all clinical requirements for patient care and meet HPM Milestones. Pre- or Co-Requisite PALC 6511/12
Grading Basis: Pass/Fail with IP
Typically Offered: Spring.

PALC 7003 - Comm-Based Hospice and Pall Med Fellowship - C (5 Credits)
For physicians MSPC students who are accepted as CB-HPM Fellows. Graduate Medical Education and supervision for fellows to complete all clinical requirements for patient care and meet HPM Milestones. Pre- or Co-Requisite - PALC 6511/12
Grading Basis: Pass/Fail with IP
Typically Offered: Summer.

PALC 7004 - Comm-Based Hospice and Pall Med Fellowship - D (8 Credits)
For physicians MSPC students who are accepted as CB-HPM Fellows. Graduate Medical Education and supervision for fellows to complete all clinical requirements for patient care and meet HPM Milestones. Pre- or Co-Requisite - PALC 6511/12
Grading Basis: Pass/Fail with IP
Typically Offered: Fall.

PALC 7005 - Comm-Based Hospice and Pall Med Fellowship - E (8 Credits)

For physicians MSPC students who are accepted as CB-HPM Fellows. Graduate Medical Education and supervision for fellows to complete all clinical requirements for patient care and meet HPM Milestones. Pre- or Co-Requisite - PALC 6511/12
Grading Basis: Pass/Fail with IP
Typically Offered: Spring.

PALC 7006 - Comm-Based Hospice and Pall Med Fellowship - F (5 Credits)

For physicians MSPC students who are accepted as CB-HPM Fellows. Graduate Medical Education and supervision for fellows to complete all clinical requirements for patient care and meet HPM Milestones. Pre- or Co-Requisite - PALC 6511/12
Grading Basis: Pass/Fail with IP
Typically Offered: Summer.

Please refer to the Graduate School Policies page (<http://catalog.ucdenver.edu/cu-anschutz/schools-colleges-programs/graduate-school/#policiestext>).

Contact Us

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