

EXPLORING: NURSING

Overview

Registered Nurses (RNs) provide and coordinate patient care, educate patients and the public about various health conditions, and provide advice and emotional support to patients and their family members.

Typical Duties:

- ▶ Record patients' medical histories and symptoms
- ▶ Give patients medicines and treatments
- ▶ Set up plans for patients' care or contribute to existing plans
- ▶ Observe patients and record the observations
- ▶ Consult with doctors and other healthcare professionals
- ▶ Operate and monitor medical equipment
- ▶ Help perform diagnostic tests and analyze results
- ▶ Teach patients and their families how to manage their illnesses or injuries
- ▶ Explain what to do at home after treatment

The 2021 median salary for RNs: \$77,600 and employment of RNs is expected to grow 6% by 2031.

Education Programs

Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)

Compresses four years of full-time nursing school into an average of 15 months (the minimum is 12 months; the maximum is 18). The accelerated second-degree BSN gives credit for non-nursing classes already completed in college, then puts students through a sequence of nursing theory and clinical classes to prepare for the national licensing exam for Registered Nurses.

Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)

Having already completed a degree at the baccalaureate, such as a BA/BS from Denison, some second-degree students are attracted to the master's program instead of a second bachelor's in nursing. These programs typically take three years to complete. Many universities offer both accelerated baccalaureate and master's programs with opportunities for students to apply credits to both degree programs. Many application deadlines are either in December or January for acceptance decisions in May, but other institutional deadlines can be as late as June. Accelerated BSN programs occasionally have multiple entry points, such as Spring, Fall, and Summer start dates. Please see each program's website for specifics.

Admission Requirements: Knowledge & Strategies

Work with your faculty advisor to plan for prerequisite requirements. Start early and consult each institution's individual website for specific requirements! NOTE: Some schools may require additional coursework so be sure to check each program individually to ensure your courses fit requirements!

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Typical prerequisites include:

- ▶ General Biology with lab
- ▶ Microbiology
- ▶ General Chemistry with lab
- ▶ Human Anatomy and Physiology with labs
- ▶ Statistics
- ▶ Nutrition
- ▶ Life Span Development Psychology

Prepare for and take the Graduate Records Exam (GRE)

- ▶ Some programs require the GRE and have established minimum scores in each section. Other programs do not require it. Check your programs of interest before registering. [Learn more about the GRE](#) on ETS's website.
- ▶ Content tested on the GRE:
 - ▷ Verbal Reasoning — ability to analyze and evaluate written material and synthesize information obtained
 - ▷ Quantitative Reasoning — basic concepts of arithmetic, algebra, geometry and data analysis
 - ▷ Analytical Writing — critical thinking and analytical writing skills

Admission is based on holistic review, involving factors beyond GPA, including:

- ▶ Exposure to nursing (Some programs require current State Tested Nursing Assistant (STNA) registration and proof of course completion for enrollment)
- ▶ Leadership and involvement
 - Employment
 - Volunteer experiences
- ▶

Additional Tips

- Perform strong academically. Many nursing programs have GPA minimums, typically around a 3.0. However, many admitted students have well-above the minimum GPA. Most programs require all prerequisites to be completed with a “C” or better and some will even require a “B” or better for prerequisite coursework.
- Build relationships: create a strong network of pre-health advisors, faculty, peers and professionals. Remember, such connections can open up opportunities for you and letters of recommendation will be required to apply.
- Submission processes vary. Some programs will have you submit applications directly to the program, others will utilize the [NursingCAS](#), a generalized application service. Some programs offer Fall, Spring, and Summer start dates.
- Plan financially: there is a cost associated with applying to nursing schools.
- When searching for and selecting nursing programs at either the Accelerated BSN or Direct-Entry Master's level, utilize the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's [Program Directory Tool](#)

Want more information?

Schedule an appointment through [Handshake](#) to meet with a career coach, learn more and create plans to meet your goals!