

Nursing

What Can I Do With This Major? • Career Pathways

University of St. Thomas

Nursing at St. Thomas prepares graduates for one of the most respected, impactful, and consistently in-demand professions in healthcare. Registered nurses are the backbone of the healthcare system — delivering direct patient care, coordinating treatment, advocating for patients, and leading clinical teams across hospitals, clinics, schools, and communities. The BSN from St. Thomas is the gold standard entry credential, opening doors to clinical practice and an extraordinary range of specializations and leadership pathways.

CONVENTIONAL CAREER TRACKS

All roles below are accessible with a bachelor's degree and appropriate licensure or certification.

Track	What you'll do	Sample Job Titles (BS)
Hospital & Acute Care Nursing	Provide direct patient care in inpatient hospital settings across medical, surgical, and specialty units.	■ Registered Nurse (RN) ■ Med-Surg Nurse ■ ICU / Critical Care Nurse ■ Emergency Department Nurse ■ Pediatric Nurse ■ Cardiac / Telemetry Nurse
Specialty Clinical Nursing	Develop expertise in a specific patient population or clinical domain following initial RN experience.	■ Labor & Delivery Nurse ■ Oncology Nurse ■ Perioperative / OR Nurse ■ Neonatal ICU (NICU) Nurse ■ Psychiatric / Mental Health Nurse ■ Orthopedic Nurse
Ambulatory & Primary Care	Deliver preventive care, chronic disease management, and health education in outpatient and community clinic settings.	■ Clinic RN ■ Primary Care Nurse ■ Telephone Triage RN ■ Chronic Disease Management Nurse ■ School Nurse ■ Occupational Health Nurse
Public & Community Health Nursing	Improve the health of populations through community-based programs, home visits, and public health initiatives.	■ Public Health Nurse ■ Home Health Nurse ■ Visiting Nurse ■ Parish Nurse ■ Correctional Health Nurse ■ Community Health RN
Healthcare Administration & Care Coordination	Use nursing expertise in non-bedside roles focused on care quality, coordination, and systems improvement.	■ Care Coordinator / Case Manager ■ Utilization Review Nurse ■ Quality Improvement Analyst ■ Infection Control Nurse ■ Patient Safety Specialist ■ Clinical Documentation Specialist

NON-CONVENTIONAL & EMERGING TRACKS

Paths that sit at unexpected intersections — often less competitive and equally rewarding.

Emerging Area	Roles You Might Not Expect
Legal Nurse Consulting	Legal Nurse Consultant • Medical Malpractice Analyst • Insurance Claims Nurse Reviewer • Workers' Compensation Case Analyst • Expert Witness (nursing)

Health Technology & Informatics	Clinical Informatics Specialist • EHR Implementation Analyst • Telehealth Nurse • Digital Health Product Specialist • Health IT Analyst
Global & Humanitarian Nursing	Global Health Nurse • Disaster Relief Nurse (Red Cross) • International Medical Corps Nurse • Peace Corps Health Volunteer • Medical Mission Nurse
Entrepreneurship & Nursing Innovation	Nurse Entrepreneur • Health Startup Founder • Nursing Staffing Agency Owner • Nurse Coach (private practice) • Health Content Creator

WHERE A GRADUATE DEGREE TAKES YOU

A graduate degree meaningfully expands your ceiling and opens leadership, research, and specialized roles.

MSN / APRN (Nurse Practitioner)	Nurse Practitioner (FNP, AGPCNP, PMHNP, PNP) — independent practice with prescriptive authority in most states.	The NP role is one of the fastest-growing in healthcare; NPs deliver primary and specialty care with significant autonomy and compensation.
MSN (Nurse Educator / Administrator)	Nursing Faculty, Director of Nursing Education, Chief Nursing Officer, Nurse Manager.	For nurses who want to shape the profession through teaching, program leadership, or executive healthcare administration.
CRNA (Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist)	Nurse Anesthetist — consistently among the highest-paid advanced practice nursing roles.	Highly competitive doctoral programs (DNP); CRNAs administer anesthesia independently and are in strong demand nationwide.
DNP / Ph.D. Nursing	Chief Nursing Officer, Dean of Nursing, Health Policy Leader, Nursing Research Scientist.	The terminal practice (DNP) and research (Ph.D.) degrees for nurses who want to lead health systems or advance nursing science.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

- The BSN is now the preferred entry credential at most major health systems — UST's BSN positions you competitively from day one.
- New Graduate Residency Programs (offered by Allina, Fairview, M Health Fairview, and HealthPartners) provide structured transition support — apply early.
- Develop strong time management and clinical documentation skills during clinicals — they are the most consistently cited competencies by hiring managers.
- Consider NCLEX preparation resources early; passing on the first attempt is important for your job search timeline.
- The Twin Cities nursing market is robust — Minnesota faces a nursing shortage with strong wages and signing bonuses at most major health systems.
- Specialty certifications (CCRN, CEN, OCN) after 2 years of experience significantly increase earning potential and career mobility.

This guide reflects current workforce trends and is updated annually. Licensure and certification requirements vary by state and employer. Visit the UST Career Development Center for personalized advising and employer connections.