

What is Nursing?

- Nursing is a helping field:
 - Nurses attend to patients' health care needs, emotional, and social well-being
 - Nursing is not a field for the squeamish or those who need a lot of personal space!
- Nursing is an in-demand field:
 - The projected growth from 2023-2033 is 6% for Registered Nurses, which is faster than the average for all occupations (Occupational Outlook Handbook).
 - Average salary: the median pay (**not** starting salary) for Bachelor's degree-educated Registered Nurses in 2024 was \$93,600 per year (Occupational Outlook Handbook)
- The field of Nursing offers a variety of opportunities; to name a few:
 - Inpatient care
 - Outpatient care
 - Military Nursing
 - Travel Nursing
 - School Nursing
 - Prison Nursing
- Graduate school:
 - A B.S.N. degree prepares students to sit for the NCLEX (national boards in nursing) to earn their RN license and practice as a licensed nurse; however nursing also provides a solid foundation for graduate school
 - Graduate specialties include several master's and doctoral-level programs:
 - Nurse Practitioner
 - Nurse Administrator
 - Nurse Educator
 - Leadership and Management
 - B.S.N. to PhD and DNP programs

Admissions

- **DIRECT ADMIT PROGRAM!**
 - Must apply directly to the nursing major at University Park campus
 - Cannot start in nursing at another campus and change campus to UP
 - Cannot start in a different major at UP then change to the nursing major at UP
- Other campuses that offer the pre-licensure nursing program in resident:
 - Altoona
 - Erie (Behrend)
 - Schuylkill
 - Scranton
- If you want the nursing major to be an option for you:
 - Apply directly to the nursing major
 - If you know that you want to study nursing at UP, then put “nursing at UP campus” as your first choice, then select another commonwealth campus [where nursing is offered] as your alternative campus selection
- If you’re interested in nursing but still exploring other majors:
 - Still put “nursing” as your first choice on the application, even if you’re not positive that you want to pursue nursing
 - Students who are accepted into the nursing major may change out of nursing and into another major if they change their mind
 - The Nese College of Nursing has a goal to yield 170 students each year. The number of applicants each year varies, in 2024-25 there were close to 5,000 applications to the Nese College of Nursing
 - Apply early!! Application opens on August 1st, applications are evaluated in batches at designated points in the application cycle (rolling admission)
 - Students at the top range of the PSU Mid-50 report or higher may be considered competitive for the nursing program; high school CGPA and SAT/ACT scores are reviewed for admission, but still fill out the personal statement and list volunteer work, etc.

Appealing Aspects of the Nursing Program at UP

Must apply directly to the nursing major; cannot be admitted to another major then change to nursing at UP

- Penn State University Park campus does not have a nursing pre-major. Once admitted, the competition is over and you are a nursing student
- The nursing program offers nearly 900 hours of hands-on clinical work, beginning in sophomore year
 - Clinical hours are completed in local hospitals/clinics/etc. and in the simulation lab working with mannequins
 - Faculty/student clinicals ratio of approximately 1:8
 - Students experience personalized teaching and feedback
 - In the Pods second years start with slightly larger clinical groups range from 8-12 students since there is a focus on basic skills
 - In the third and fourth years clinical courses become more specialized and clinical groups range from 7-10 students
- The Nese College of Nursing is a small college within big university
 - Take advantage of the resources that a big university have to offer while learning in a smaller environment

Curriculum

- The first-time NCLEX (national nursing boards) pass rate for Penn State Nursing students in **2024 was 96%**
- The Penn State Nursing program is consistently above the national average for NCLEX pass rate, **the national average is 91% (NCSBN, 2024 national annual results)**
- Our nursing program is a general nursing program. Students are exposed to many major areas of nursing and do not select a nursing specialization at the undergraduate level
- Curriculum in the nursing program introduces ATI software (practice testing) to prepare students for NCLEX starting in second year
- It will take students 4 years (no more, no less) to complete the nursing curriculum due to a very prescribed curriculum of nursing coursework and clinical work
- Beginning in the spring of second year, students need to have a car to get themselves to and from their clinical sites
- Students in the nursing program at UP spend either their full third year, fourth year, or both years at Hershey Medical Center to have robust clinical exposure to more clinically acute patient cases in a level I trauma center and teaching hospital.
 - The year that a student spends at Hershey is selected by lottery
 - Some of the most unique and complicated patient diagnoses in the state are sent to HMC
 - Possible exceptions to this requirement may be Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and student athletes who fall under the NCAA requirements in order to maintain eligibility (this does not include cheerleading, the Lionettes Dance Team, club sports, or the Blue Band)

Extracurricular Activities

- Penn State has over 1,000 groups and clubs for students to consider joining
- The Student Nurses Association at Penn State (SNAPS) is an active student group in the Nese College of Nursing that we encourage students to get involved with:
 - Get to know your fellow nursing students through SNAPS
 - Sign up to have an upperclassmen mentor in SNAPS
 - Get involved with community service and participate in THON
- CON Ambassadors
 - Provides a student perspective at information and recruitment events.
- Multicultural Student Nursing Association (MSNA)
 - MSNA was recently formed to provide an inclusive environment to multicultural students and allies in the Nursing major.
- Diversity, Inclusion, and Advocacy for Minority Nursing Students (DIAMNS)
 - DIAMNS aims to create a specialized space for diverse minority students to explore and express their intersectional identities in a supportive environment.
- The Art of Nursing
 - A choir composed primarily of nursing students who hope to bring joy and healing to the elderly and sick through song and potentially other artistic mediums.
- Sigma Theta Tau
 - Students with outstanding records of scholarship and leadership are invited to join Sigma Theta Tau, the international honor society for nursing.
- Study Abroad is an extracurricular experience that can have big implications in the nursing major
 - Nursing students who study abroad for a full fall or spring semester fall behind in the nursing program for 1 year, because nursing courses are only offered once per year
 - Studying abroad in the summer through the Global Penn State is an option to go abroad without getting behind in the nursing program
 - As an alternative, the Nese College of Nursing offers embedded study abroad programs which last 1-2 weeks with a small group of nursing faculty and students during the school year
 - Other Penn State groups such as the Global Brigades may offer opportunities to go abroad, Penn State also offers a minor in Global Health in which students spend six weeks in Africa for a field experience