



The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing

Masters of Science in Nursing Frequently Asked Questions

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General Information:

Does the School of Nursing Graduate Programs offer any on-line or distance learning courses or degrees?

No, all programs are offered in the classroom or in clinical settings.

What MSN concentrations does the School of Nursing Graduate School offer?

The School of Nursing offers the following programs of study:



- Adult Gerontology—Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS)*
- Leadership in Diverse Settings (LeaDs)
- Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)*
- Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Practitioner (PMHNP)*
- Pediatric Nurse Practitioner (PNP)*

**Advanced Practice Nursing programs*

Must I have a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree in order to enter the MSN program?

No, students may enter the master's program with:



- Bachelors of Science in Nursing or
- An Associates degree in Nursing (ADN) or Nursing Diploma **and** a Bachelor's degree in a non-nursing field.

Where are the School of Nursing and the Graduate Student Services Office located?

The School of Nursing is located at 1710 Red River, Austin, Texas 78712. The Graduate Student Services Office is on the main entrance floor (2nd level) office 2.414.

Can you mail me a packet of information?

Information packages are not provided as all of the information available to prospective students may be found on the [School of Nursing website](#).

Admission Requirements and the Application Procedures:

The Graduate and International Admissions Center (GIAC) process applications for graduate admissions. To apply for graduate admission to the School of Nursing the admissions application must be completed electronically at [Apply Texas](#) during the open application period of **September 1 through November 1**.

The following documents must be uploaded via the [Online Status Check](#) page by the **APPLICATION DEADLINE of November 1:**

-  **Application**-GIAC process applications for graduate admissions. Applications are to be completed and paid at [Apply Texas](#). For additional information on Graduate admissions, please visit the [University of Texas at Austin Graduate School](#) webpage.
-  **Official Transcript(s)** from each **four-year academic institution** you have attended and the transcript for Associate degree in Nursing, if applicable. **All 4-year institutions attended and the community college for ADN, if applicable, must be entered on the online application.** Upload a copy of official transcripts dated one year or less; if admitted official, hard copy, transcripts are required and the open transcript is acceptable.
-  **Official** report of **GRE** scores; scores are valid 5 years prior to the program start date. GRE School Code: 6882 (a department code is not required).
-  Current **Curriculum Vitae (CV)** indicating educational background, professional experience, volunteer experience and other relevant information (e.g. publications, scholarship and awards, professional organizations and community activities).
-  **Statement of Purpose (SOP)** should be uploaded on the Status Check page. **DO NOT use the essay box on ApplyTexas.** The SOP must be double spaced, 1 inch margins, 12-point and maximum length of 2 pages, addressing the following:
 - Discuss the development interest in nursing **graduate** education.
 - Identify the clinical specialty and the basis for the choice as well as personal and professional goals.
 - Discuss any special circumstances that require clarification.
-  **Three recommendations.** Provide the name, position and email address for three (ONLY) recommenders on the application for admission. Recommenders are sent an email with instructions on completing the recommendation form.
-  **International applicants** must provide official report of Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

Is there a minimum GPA required for admission?

The Graduate School at the University of Texas at Austin requires a GPA of at least a 3.0. This requirement is calculated based on the grades earned in upper-division (junior and senior level) undergraduate and graduate courses.

Applicants with a GPA below 3.0 may be admitted with conditions. Conditions may be placed by the Associate Dean of the Graduate School, or by the Graduate Admission and Progression Committee in the School of Nursing.

Do I have to take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) to be admitted?

Yes, the GRE is required and must have been taken within the last five years prior to the intended start date of the program. GRE is not waived.

What is the minimum score required on the GRE?

There is no minimum score required. To be competitive, the School of Nursing recommends a combined total score of 300 on the verbal and quantitative sections of the exam. The Analytical Writing section score is required and considered in the admission process.

My GRE score is not at the recommended total. May I still apply?

Yes. Applicants' admission materials are evaluated on a value-point system.

How and when do I arrange to take the GRE?

Information regarding the GRE, test dates, and test locations is available via the [ETS website](#).

The School of Nursing recommends taking the GRE no later than October 1 of the application year.

How much weight is given to the statement of purpose?

The statement of purpose is considered very carefully. Applicants are encouraged to highlight relevant experiences and professional goals as part the statement of purpose. See the admission requirements above for details in writing the statement of purpose.

What is most important to the Graduate Admission and Progression Committee?

The committee considers each applicant holistically based on admissions materials. Admission materials are evaluated on a value-point system.

When are admission decisions sent out?

Applicants may expect to receive admission decisions by early March.

How many students are admitted yearly?



Adult Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist: 8-10

Leads: 15-20

Family NP: 10-12

Psychiatric Mental Health NP: 6-10

Pediatric NP: 6-8

Prospective Student Information:

What are the prerequisites?



Statistics (3 credit hours) –Completed prior to enrollment

When does the program start?

The fall semester ONLY; typically, late August or early September.

How long will it take to complete the program?

The minimum time to complete the MSN program is one and half to two calendar years for full-time students.

Can I attend the program as a part-time student?

The program can be completed part-time; however, part-time study will extend the length of time necessary to complete the degree.

I've been out of school for more than 10 years. Is this too long to try such a rigorous graduate program?

No. Students in the program have completed previous degrees as long as 20 years ago and as recently as one semester ago.

What is the difference between RN licensure and CNS certification?

RN licensure is controlled by a regulatory agency in each state and assures the public that the individual has the basic competency to practice professional nursing as a generalist. The CNS certification is a national designation awarded to qualified individuals who demonstrate competency for advanced practice nursing in a particular specialty area. Refer to the [Texas Board of Nursing](#) website for eligibility details.

Once Admitted:

When are Nursing courses offered?

Courses are typically scheduled between the hours of 8:00 am and 7:00 pm on weekdays.

Must I be enrolled as a full-time graduate student?

No. Graduate students may be enrolled part-time (8 credit hours or less), however, all degree requirements must be completed within six years.

Will I be able to work while enrolled in a graduate program?

Even though the workload is heavy, some full-time students do work part-time while enrolled in courses. However, students who work full-time generally cannot carry a full course load.

What grades are expected of graduate students?

The Office of Graduate Studies requires a minimum GPA of 3.0 (B average) for admission to, retention, and graduation from the University of Texas at Austin.

If I have started a graduate program at another institution, will I be able to transfer my credits if admitted to your program?

Possibly. A student seeking to use coursework from another institution must provide the School of Nursing Graduate Advisor with an official transcript, the official explanation of the course numbering system, grading system, and the course syllabus from the institution at which the course/s were completed. If the Graduate Advisor deems the course appropriate for your degree plan, she/he will submit a petition to the Office of Graduate Studies on your behalf. The Dean of the Graduate School must then approve the petition.

Transfer courses **must** meet the following criteria:



The student must have earned a grade of B or better in the course.

The course must be graduate level. If the course is open to both undergraduates and graduate students, the student must provide proof that extra work was required for graduate credit, that only graduate students were enrolled in the course, or that the course is required for a master's degree.

The course may not be taken at another institution during the semester of intended graduation.

The course may not have been used to fulfill requirements toward another degree.

If approved, the course must be used within a six-year time limit.

A maximum of six (6) semester credit hours from a different institution may be approved.

I live in another state now. I will be considered a Texas resident after I finish a year of graduate school?

Possibly. Please visit the UT Austin [Texas Residency](#) for additional information.

Financial Considerations:

How much are tuition and fees?

Tuition and fee information can be found online on the Office of Accounting [Tuition and Fee Rates](#) webpage. Graduate tuition and fees are a flat rate based on the number of hours taken per semester. Most full-time students take an average of nine credit hours per semester.

Does the School of Nursing offer any financial aid for graduate students?

Yes, in limited amounts. The School of Nursing offers scholarships ranging from approximately \$200-\$2,000 per semester. Competitive fellowships also are offered through the Office of Graduate Studies for continuing students. Full-time students holding an RN license and are in Nurse Practitioner program, are eligible to receive a monthly advanced traineeship stipend of about \$120-\$150 for up to 36 months. There also are a limited number of Teaching Assistant and Research Assistant positions available. Some tuition assistance is provided to students who are awarded fellowships and to students holding Assistant Teaching, Research Assistant and Assistant Instructor positions.

Applicants are encouraged to begin searching for financial aid at least nine months prior to the semester in which you enroll.

All financial aid applicants must complete a FAFSA form. Please visit the [Office of Student Financial Services](#) website for more information.

Contact Information:

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