

2025 NURSING

OKLAHOMA'S EDUCATION GUIDE

A GUIDE FOR FUTURE
NURSING STUDENTS
AND CONTINUING
EDUCATION

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Nursing Times

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Metro Tech Provides Training, Support For Healthcare Journey

Located in the heart of Oklahoma City, Metro Tech offers a variety of full-time, short-term, and online programs designed to prepare students for successful careers in healthcare. With options for high school students, adult learners, and working professionals, Metro Tech is committed to supporting Oklahoma's healthcare workforce through hands-on, high-quality career training that meets the needs of today's medical industry.

In-district high school juniors and seniors can get a head start in nursing through Metro Tech's full-time Nursing Services program. Students graduate with certifications in Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Advanced Unlicensed Assistant (AUA), and Phlebotomy, setting them up for success after high school. Many further their training through Metro Tech's Next Step Scholarship, which provides a seamless transition into the adult Practical Nursing program.

For adults ready to pursue a career as a Licensed Practical Nurse, Metro Tech offers a full-time program with both day and evening options. This program combines classroom instruction with hands-on clinical experiences to prepare students for real-world healthcare environments.

Metro Tech also provides short-term healthcare courses for those looking to enter or advance in the field in as little as 12 weeks. Offerings include CNA, Certified Medication Aide, Phlebotomy Technician, and Medication Administration Technician.

For current healthcare professionals, Metro Tech offers online continuing education courses, allowing nurses to meet licensure requirements or expand their knowledge on a flexible schedule.

No matter where you are in your healthcare journey, Metro Tech provides the training and support to help you succeed. To learn more about Metro Tech's healthcare education programs, visit <https://www.metrotech.edu>.



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Nurse Refresher

Pharmacy Tech

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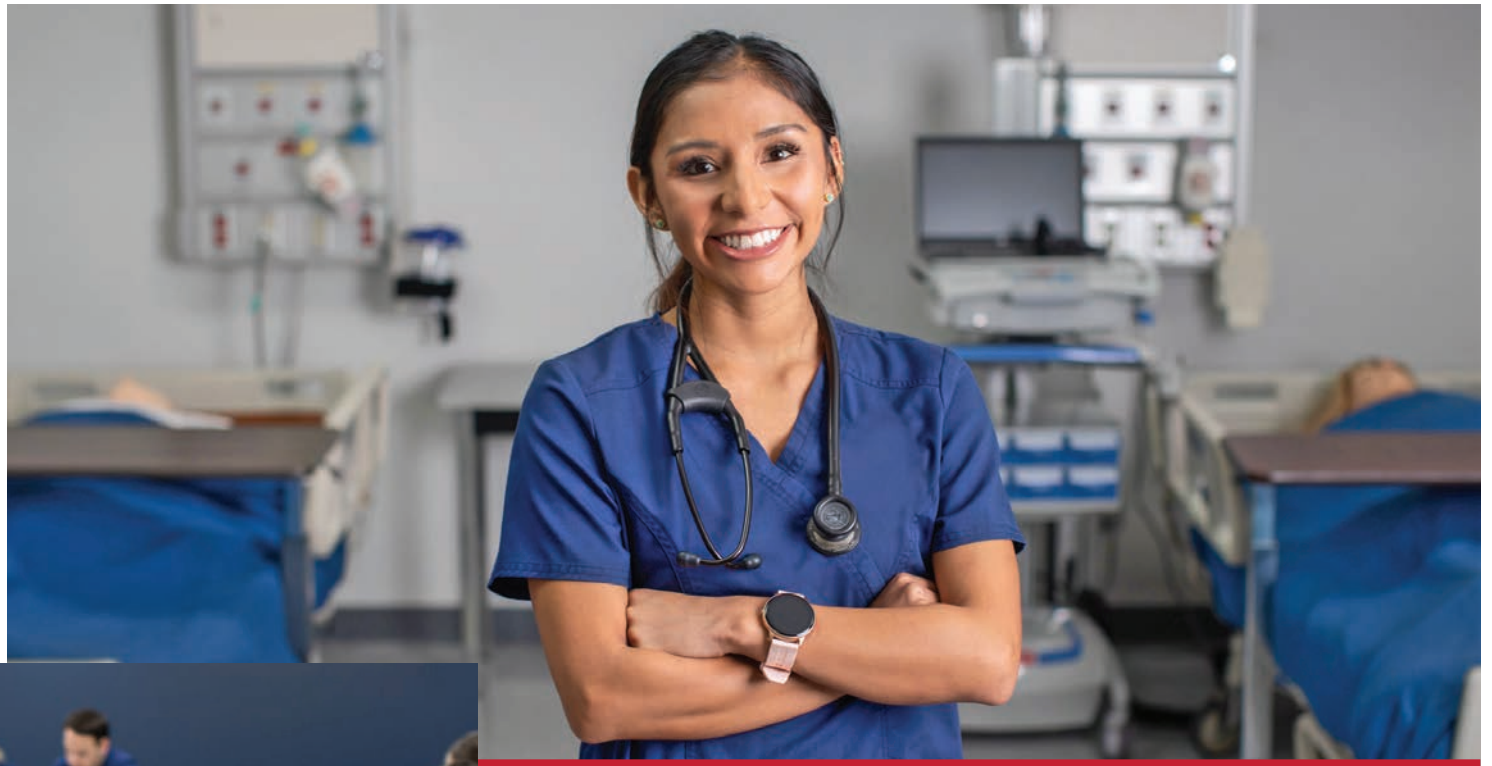


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Rogers State University

Offering Programs For Every Nurse

The Rogers State University School of Nursing and Health Professions offers programs in nursing and pre-allied health fields. Nursing programs include the RN2BSN online program which allows registered nurses with an associate degree to complete a bachelor's degree; the traditional BSN in nursing, leading to RN licensure; the Master of Science in nursing, offered fully online; and the bridge to traditional BSN entry for LPNs or paramedics to earn their bachelor's degree. Allied health sciences options include pre-athletic training, pre-physical



therapy and pre-occupational therapy. The Master of Business Administration (MBA) program at RSU now offers a concentration in Healthcare Management.

With a history of over 40 years of academic excellence, RSU's nursing program provides academic rigor and a reputation that gives RSU graduates an edge in the competitive job market. Upon graduation, RSU nursing graduate NCLEX pass rates exceed the state and national average. Approximately 95% of students report having obtained an RN position before graduation. These outcomes are credited to a quality curriculum, outstanding students, and a caring and dedicated faculty. RSU's nursing faculty have more than 130 years of experience in both academic teaching and practical

experience. Several low and high-fidelity laboratories are utilized to provide hands-on learning so that students are well prepared to deliver safe, high-quality nursing care in a variety of settings.

For those interested in furthering their education and increasing their employment viability in the nursing field, the RN2BSN online nursing program offers them the chance to earn their BSN in a fully online format. Registered nurses who currently have an associate degree in nursing can complete their BSN in as few as three semesters. The program has start dates in both January and August.

The program provides nursing students with the means to earn their Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), while the online format gives students the flexibility

to accommodate their busy schedules. RSU's nationally recognized and fully accredited RN2BSN online program offers real-world practical experience, affordability and flexible coursework that builds upon a student's experience as an RN, preparing to advance them at their workplace, through a graduate program or even to help them find a new position.

Through a partnership with Saint Francis Health System, RSU educates a select cohort of students in the nursing program at Saint Francis Hospital in Tulsa, with Saint Francis serving as an extended campus of the university where students can spend their final three semesters at Saint Francis in Tulsa as they earn their BSN from RSU. This partnership allows RSU to increase its capacity to educate nurses, with the first cohort graduating in May 2025. The opening of the extended campus at Saint Francis, as well as the recent addition of a spring cohort on RSU's main campus in Claremore, has significantly increased the capacity to graduate outstanding nurses from the RSU School of Nursing and Health Professions.

RSU consistently earns national recognition for affordability, both for traditional classes and its online programs. The university is routinely recognized for having one of the region's lowest student debt loads with nearly half of its graduates earning a degree without any student loan assistance.

The traditional BSN and RN2BSN nursing programs are fully accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). Being the only public residential university in the metropolitan Tulsa area, RSU gives students a traditional college experience. With the university's proximity to Tulsa, RSU is strategically positioned geographically, fiscally and reputationally to be Oklahoma's first choice in BSN education.

RSU is committed to building a legacy of compassionate and virtuous nurses who advocate for their patients and serve the community for years to come. For more information about RSU's nursing programs or to schedule a campus tour, visit <https://www.rsu.edu/nursing> or call 918-343-7631.



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Stillwater Medical 1st in Oklahoma to Launch Emergency Nurse Residency Program



Stillwater Medical launches residency program to invest in the growth and education of nurses throughout its health system in an effort to improve patient care.

Stillwater Medical has partnered with the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) to offer a robust new graduate residency program to invest in their nurses' growth and further patient care. This is part of the health system's continual efforts to provide the highest-quality patient experience.

The Emergency Nurse Residency Program (ENRP) is the first available in Oklahoma and is a mixture of in-person didactic (lectures, simulations, hands-on equipment, etc.) and online, independent learning modules. While the content is designed for emergency nurses, Stillwater Medical is offering the program to nurses in all specialty areas.

Newsweek recently named Stillwater Medical as No. 1 in the state of Oklahoma for patient experience. Nurses are at the front-line of patient care. Dawn Kregel, chief nursing officer and senior vice president of patient care services for Stillwater Medical, says Stillwater Medical's greatest asset is its employees.

"Nurses are caring for those who cannot care for themselves. It's a noble profession and as a health system, we are committed to investing in our employees so they can deliver the best care possible. We want them to grow in knowledge and experience because they touch the lives of so many and will continue to do so throughout their career," Kregel said. No matter an individual's specialty, Stillwater Medical nurses are encouraged to register for a course. Course modules include pediatric emergencies, shock, sepsis, & the older adult, behavioral health and metabolic emergencies, among various others.

Heidi Gilbert, emergency department clinical educator, is excited to offer this training for Stillwater Medical staff. She discovered this program in her role on the board of directors for ENA.

"It was such a phenomenal training. The best education program ENA has," Gilbert said. "And I wanted to bring it to Stillwater Medical."

The process had many components for its installation, but Stillwater Medical was able to bring the program to life thanks to a commitment from Lori and Vance Hunter through Stillwater Medical Foundation's Still Strong Emergency Department Educational Endowment.

Currently, five new graduates are enrolled in the program. As of now, the training is fast-tracked to take 12 weeks, but in the future, the program will be placed on a timeline of 16-18 weeks. Yet, Gilbert encourages nurses to take courses pertaining to their specialty as an effort to grow their expertise and skills. All classes are stand-alone.

"ICU nurses would not necessarily need OB/Gyn emergency training, so I encourage people to hop in and out of the program," Gilbert said. "No matter if completed in full, or a few classes taken, the more education we have, the better we will take care of our patients."

While the program has recently been added, the new graduates are already reaping benefits.

Kelsee Brown has worked in the emergency room at Stillwater Medical for two years while finishing her education to become a registered nurse and earn her Bachelor of Science in Nursing. As a fully registered nurse, she was eager to further her education through the program.

"Between the in-person lectures, hands-on interactive simulations and course modules, I am learning valuable information I will use every day," Brown said. "This residency program is going to equip me with the knowledge, and experience, I need to be the best nurse I can be and allow me to provide the best possible care for my patients."

The first cohort of program students graduated in the last week of April 2025, where a ceremony was held to honor their commitment to continued education. Also, graduates received a free one-year membership to the ENA.

The program is placed at a year-long endeavor for Stillwater Medical, but Gilbert hopes to see a continued partnership. Stillwater Medical has opening for nurses in a variety of specialty areas. To learn more or apply visit <https://www.stillwater-medical.org/careers/>.

"I'm very proud Stillwater Medical is the first in Oklahoma to offer this and can see nurses bettering their quality of care for years to come," Gilbert said.



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Clinical Partners Help OU Students Thrive

The excitement.
The lightbulb moments.

For nursing students, there is no greater joy than stepping onto the clinical floor and succeeding.

For University of Oklahoma Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing Interim Dean Melissa Craft, APRN-CNS, AOCN, FCNS, FAAN, clinical rotations are truly where the rubber meets the road and nursing careers take off.

“It takes them a while to realize that a nurse is more than just the skills that you bring,” Craft said. “Their eyes light up in both taking care of patients but also learning the skills. Over time you learn a lot of what nurses do are the soft skills.”

“For me, what I love is seeing those students put that together. Getting the IV stick the first time, that’s awesome, that’s exciting, that’s cool. Holding the patient’s hand after you get the stick and talking to them through what happens next and the surgery they’re afraid of, that’s the part that makes the biggest impact on the patient and what they will remember their nurse for.”

And none of that would be possible if it wasn’t for the clinical partnerships the college has forged through the years. Each semester hundreds of OU nursing students fan out to facilities across the state for their first real foray into nursing.

The first few times can be scary, but what most students don’t realize is that seasoned nurses like Craft and other faculty have already set them up for success.

“My perspective of the importance of our clinical partners has grown even more over the last year,” Craft said. “I’ve always known how important clinical partners are but the perspective I’ve gained ... is for us to be able to admit every qualified applicant to one of our five sites, the critical way we can do that is we have to have clinical spots. This is a practice profession.”

“We have to have other people that will help train our students. Having clinical partners that guarantee us those spots is huge.”

Those partnership aren’t just clinical spots but truly learning opportunities and even stepping stones into first jobs.

Stefanie Beavers, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, knows that better than anyone.

As the college’s inaugural OU Health’s Chief Nurse Executive, Beavers is an integral part in weaving those partnerships together.

“It’s critical, especially right now with our nursing workforce shortages, that as health systems we are providing this space and adjunct clinical faculty to support the College of Nursing and to realize how it helps develop students for transition into nursing practice,” Beavers said. “We know our students really need that



Healthcare clinical partners across the state help University of Oklahoma Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing students become some of the most prepared graduates in the region.

clinical anchor.”

Beavers said the nursing industry has learned how critical it is to support its partners on the academic side as they support students in the clinical environment.

“We are really helping to create the pipeline for our future workforce,” she said. “Ultimately, we’re training our future workforce. It’s our obligation as an academic health system.”

The conversation regarding clinical partnerships is two-fold, Craft explained.

“I really need my clinical partners to help me not only with the preceptors - the bedside nurses helping to train the students - but adjunct faculty,” she said. “It’s impossible to hire enough full-time faculty to manage all of the clinical groups.”

Not only do students get clinical spots, but nurses at those facilities also have an opportunity to become adjunct faculty and expand their knowledge base.

And opening horizons is what clinicals are really about.

Craft’s nursing wheelhouse is as an oncology clinical nurse specialist. She tells about Fall semester 2024 when she split a clinical group with another instructor and took them to the OU Health North Tower and the oncology floors.

“For that day, the lightbulbs that came on for the students were amazing for me to watch,” Craft said.

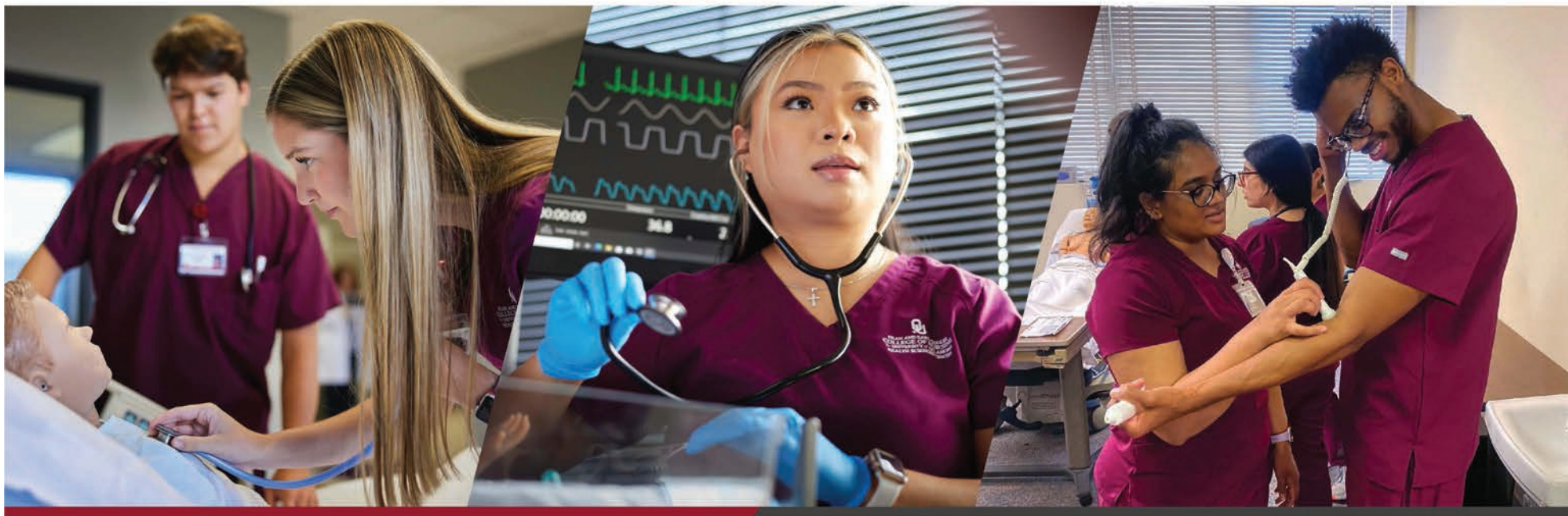
And thanks to clinical partnerships, the excitement goes both ways.

For more information about the University of Oklahoma Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing program, visit:
<https://www.ou.edu/admissions/academics/nursing>



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Oklahoma Nursing Association Celebrates Its Role

Oklahoma nurses and nursing students gain a powerful platform to understand and influence the dynamic evolution of their profession through membership in the Oklahoma Nurses Association (ONA). The annual convention in the Fall, featuring many informative speakers, and the opportunity to become advocates at Nurses Day at the Capitol in Oklahoma City in March each year, empower them to shape the future of nursing.

This year, over 400 nurses, nurse practitioners, educators, and student nurses came together on March 4 at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum. They were part of a community that heard about the crucial legislation and listened to numerous speakers advocating for the positive transformation of their profession. After the ONA hosted the meeting, this community of dedicated professionals traveled to the Oklahoma Capitol that afternoon to lobby for the new legislation, further strengthening their bond.

The organizers offered diverse and inclusive breakout sessions and a dynamic keynote speaker focused on building supportive structures. They emphasized helping nurses to thrive in the new normal since COVID-19, as their challenging work environment evolves.

This year, key topics included protecting nurses from surgical smoke and access to care through the passage of the Advanced Registered Nurse Transition to Practice Bill at the Capitol.

The ONA's Strategic Goals, which include advancing the profession to improve health through advocacy, philanthropy, practice, and innovation, are not just a roadmap for the future, but also a source of inspiration. They aim to champion nursing's value and increase its positive impact on health and society, inspiring all nurses to strive for excellence in their practice.

This highlights the progress made in the nursing profession. Since COVID-19, it has become increasingly proud and optimistic about assuming its rightful place as a key component in delivering high-quality medical care.

The meeting was a step toward advancing and belonging to an advocacy group to improve nursing practice and work environments. The sessions

addressed the steps in the legislative process.

One of the attendees emphasized how nurses were newly important as world-class healthcare providers during COVID-19 at the clinic she and her team opened in 2018.

"At our Corner Clinic in Holdenville, our staff of six was doing everything we could to help our patients who had mild to moderate COVID-19 infections. They were at grave risk for progressing to severe COVID-19, facing hospitalization and death," said Stephanie Keesee, MSN, APRN-CNP, Co-Chair of Advanced Practice Nurses Oklahoma – ONA Chapter.

Oklahoma's nurses and nurse practitioners can take pride in how progressive their nursing association is as a disseminator of important cutting-edge information and therapies. The ONA takes great pride in keeping everyone up to date.

"As soon as it was available, we used Regeneron, an experimental antibody cocktail, to keep our patients out of an emergency room and hospital. We took advantage of those two therapies by infusing monoclonal



MSN, APRN, Board-Certified Nurse Practitioner, Stephanie Keesee-Pipkin.

antibodies (mAbs) intended to directly neutralize the COVID-19 virus and prevent disease progression. We were proud we could ease our patients' discomfort and help alleviate the burden on our health care system."

For more information about ONA, visit <https://oklahomanurses.org>.

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OC Offers Unique Nursing Program that Combining Faith, Firsthand Experience

Oklahoma Christian University in Edmond offers a unique nursing program that combines faith and firsthand experience preparing students with a well-rounded education.

“Our first graduating class was 2008, and now we have an enrollment that’s nearing just over 450,” Dr. Toni Davis, DNP, RN, Oklahoma Christian University Chair of Nursing, Assistant Professor of Nursing said. “We are unique in the fact that we are a small Christian school. We have a diverse population of students, and we have a diverse population of faculty. We have 10 students to one professor. That is pretty good.”

OC offers a Nursing (B.S.N., Pre-Licensure) program with both on-campus and online learning.

An OC graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree will:

1. Exemplify Christian principles of compassion, service, integrity, and respect for the well-being of clients, peers, and self.
2. Synthesize critical thinking skills for professional nursing practice.
3. Communicate clearly, effectively, and appropriately with clients and other healthcare providers to promote positive client outcomes.
4. Provide appropriate and safe nursing care (clinically competent) to clients.
5. Demonstrate a leadership style consistent with academic preparation while adhering to the standards of the nursing profession.
6. Provide nursing care based on knowledge and appreciation of unique cultural variations.



Students must complete a minimum of 123 hours including the major, core, and minor if required. Additional elective hours may be required to reach a total of 123 hours.

Davis said OC offers a state-of-the-art simulation lab for nursing students.

“We have an amazing simulation lab,” she said. “We’re able to teach students about how to take care of patients with mannequins. That is unique for a small school like ours.”

Davis said OC nursing students can earn their degree online, if desired.

“We have an online program that’s one of a kind,” she said. “There’s not one like this anywhere where a student can get a four-year degree in nursing all online. We have three starting dates. You can start in the fall, you can start in the spring, and you can start in the summertime. The online program does allow for those who are working adults to have the flexibility to take classes online. They do have to come on campus to do some validation of skills and go to clinicals in the hospitals. Over 660 hours of clinical hours that’s required for Oklahoma Christian for these students to graduate and be ready for the workforce. That’s for both online and in-person.”

Davis said OC nursing students can learn through mission trips.

“We offer international and domestic mission trips for all students to have that opportunity to do that, which is unique as well,” she said.

Davis said OC tackles specialties of nursing, namely critical care, pediatrics, and obstetrics.

“We cover most medical specialties,” she said. “Med-Surg nursing, critical care, pediatrics, mental health. There are schools that combine those classes. Not Oklahoma Christian. We have those classes one at a time.” Davis said OC does community health services.

“We serve the community. We do school screenings, we work at public health agencies across the state,” she said.

OC nursing students do clinical training.

“They’re getting in and doing the job. When these students go to clinicals, they’re assigned a nurse every clinical shift, which can be between eight- and 12-hours shift,” Davis said. “It is not really a following or a shadowing. The clinical training is where they do the work as a nurse under the supervision of their clinical instructor and the preceptor, the nurse they’re assigned.”

Davis said before a student is accepted to the OC nursing school, they must take four introductory classes.

“That’s when we introduce the simulation lab to them,” she said. “We’ve got four introductory courses that we give them teaching the early skills of taking care of patients. It is hands-on from the beginning. We teach them how to take care of patients before they enter the nursing program. That is unique.”

Gabriel Jeter, an OC senior, said the OC School of Nursing is the most supportive faculty on campus.

“I’ve never met a group of professors who have cared more about their students, their health and their overall well-being,” he said. “I will be a better nurse because of my experience here at OC!”

Davis said faith plays a key role in OC’s students’ lives.

“It’s no secret everywhere that nursing is tough,” she said. “What makes us unique, though, is that we instruct our students not really to bear it but just to seek Christ in all of your endeavors and all the things that you do with patients. That sets us aside from everyone else.”



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For more information about OC visit

<https://www.oc.edu/academics/college-of-sciences-education/nursing>



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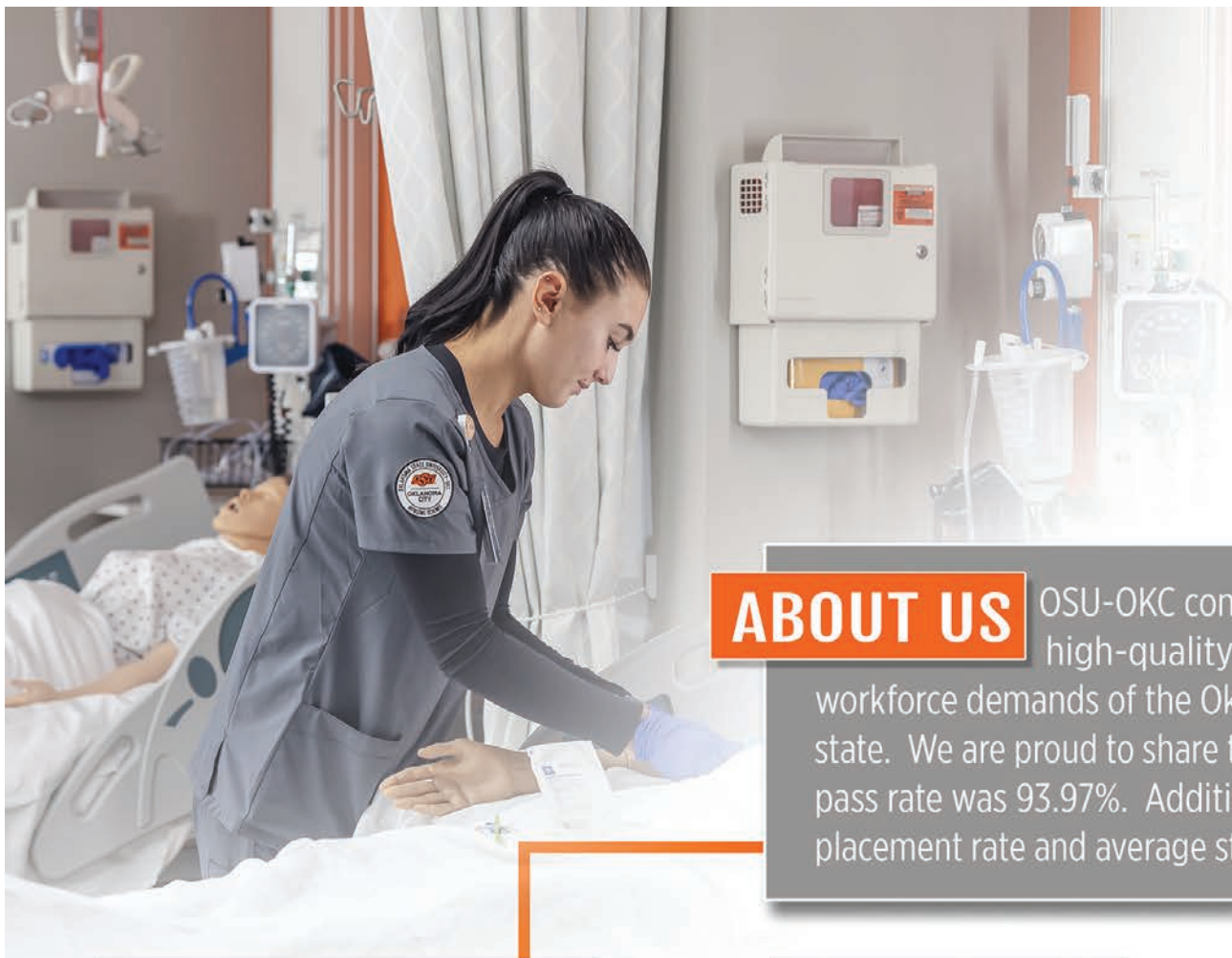
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ABOUT US

OSU-OKC continues its 55+ year history of providing high-quality nursing education to help meet the workforce demands of the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area and the state. We are proud to share that our 2024 annual first-time licensure pass rate was 93.97%. Additionally, our graduates report a 100% job placement rate and average starting salaries of over \$65,000 per year.

CAREER LADDER & TRADITIONAL

OSU-OKC welcomes LPNs and Paramedics looking for a pathway to being eligible for Registered Nurse licensure. With proof of active, state licensure and required prerequisite courses, LPNs and Paramedics will complete a transition course, then the final two courses in the program.

Upon successful completion of the transition course, students are awarded 17 credit hours of advanced standing credit for their licensure. The coursework for this pathway is provided online. Students come to campus for testing, simulations, and laboratory experiences on Fridays. Students will complete clinical experiences on the weekends. This hybrid design was at the request of our program advisory committee to meet the needs of working adults.

SIMULATION CENTER

OSU-OKC boasts having one of the largest and most sophisticated simulation facilities in the metro area. Students will experience realistic hospital environments with simulation mannequins that can mimic human patients.

The goal was to make the learning environment as close to an actual hospital as possible to increase students' comfort when they enter our partners' facilities and begin to take care of patients. This decreases student anxiety and boosts student confidence in their ability to care for patients.



OKLAHOMA CITY
Nurse Science

Interprofessional Simulation

OSU-OKC nursing students, OSU-OKC paramedicine students, and OSU-Center for Health Sciences resident physicians come together to rescue, triage, and treat patients with a variety of injuries and illnesses. The goal is for these different groups to learn to work together as they will in the actual healthcare arena.

Student volunteers and staff take on the role of patients and may simulate suffering anything from a traumatic injury requiring being rescued by our paramedic students to a mental health crisis and any other healthcare emergency in between. Not only do students learn to work together as a team, but they will also learn to prioritize care based on the severity of the simulated patient.

APPLICATION TIMELINES

FALL ADMISSION Feb 1 - April 1 • Traditional Students & Career Ladder Students

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For more information, including program outcomes, program costs, admission points, and general contact information please visit osuokc.edu/nursing.



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— OSU-OKC —
NURSING

REDLANDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE PREPARES NURSING GRADUATES FOR WORKFORCE

A common desire
among nursing students
is to help others.



Redlands Community College nursing students gain valuable experience in the campus' simulation lab.

"I chose to pursue a career in nursing because of my innate desire to assist others in any way possible," said Kassidy Brinlee, a Redlands nursing student and a student ambassador. "Witnessing my grandmother's battle with dementia deeply impacted me and highlighted the importance of helping others facing similar challenges."

Redlands Community College in El Reno, Okla., gives these students the start toward a successful and fulfilling career in the health care field where they impact the lives of patients and families every day. With a 100% job placement rate, Redlands offers a two-year degree program that prepares graduates to successfully take the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX) for licensure as a registered nurse and to enter the workforce immediately.

"The benefit of earning an associate degree in nursing at Redlands is that graduates are well-prepared for the licensure exam that will allow them to begin working quickly," said Diane Duffy, interim director of Redlands' Nursing Program. "Once they have completed this stage, they are able to focus on their career as a registered nurse or continue their education at a university to earn a bachelor's of nursing degree."

Redlands has two nursing

program options: the traditional RN program and a track for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs). Students who are enrolled in the LPN-to-RN cohort earn articulation credits in the first semester, allowing them to graduate in three semesters instead of four. This helps get them out of the classroom and into the community where they can do the most good.

Hollye Edmonds has taken a different path to the nursing field. After spending 15 years as a pre-k teacher, Edmonds decided to pursue a new career that still allows her to help others.

Returning to school can be daunting, but Edmonds has found a supportive environment at Redlands. "From the beginning, I was offered help and guidance from enrolling in courses to securing financial aid when needed and every area in between. Redlands has made the process of being a student easy and has mapped out clear pathways to success and supports their students on their journey."

Redlands is a solid, affordable choice for students because of the scholarships available as well as the personal attention and opportunities it provides. The college's partnerships with several area health facilities provide students with challenging, hands-on

experience during their clinical rotations.

"Fortunately, our location just outside of Oklahoma City gives our students the opportunity to serve in both rural and urban areas, exposing them to the different types of nursing care available and helping them figure out what is the best fit for them" Duffy said.

After spending a decade in pre-hospital health care, Jeremy Pool was ready to expand his experience with a greater focus on patient care. He had previously earned an associate degree from Redlands as well as other medical certifications, so he wanted to complete the college's nursing program.

"I find the staff very helpful and down to earth and my college credits transferred seamlessly here," Pool said. "The faculty goes above and beyond to make sure you have the tools and resources to succeed in the program. They are with you every step of the way to answer questions, address problems or concerns, and assist with test taking strategies and note taking."

With a Cooperative Arrangement Development Grant from Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institutions (NASNTI) Part A to support outreach and retention efforts and additional funding to update campus

simulation labs, the Redlands Nursing Program is providing a high-quality learning experience led by dedicated and well-trained faculty.

"At Redlands, everyone is friendly, and the faculty is excited to be part of students' lives," said Duffy. "We are committed to helping our nursing students succeed, and our faculty and staff are dedicated to supporting them throughout their time in the program."

Pool agreed, saying "I feel the faculty I work with daily make an impact on my success in their own way. Professor Newell makes lectures and test prepping always engaging and interesting, while my success coach keeps me accountable of my work and gives me great advice on how to approach my test taking and time organization."

The five-year cooperative grant is designed for Native American and low-income students and is 100% funded by the U.S. Department of Education as part of the NASNTI program.

Visit www.redlandsc.edu/nursing/careers.php for more information and to apply for the program and scholarships. The scholarship application is due May 31.



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Northern Oklahoma College A Shining Star

Tucked away in Tonkawa, Northern Oklahoma College has been turning out some of the state's best nurses for more than half a century.

One-hundred percent NCLEX pass rates going on three years now, small class sizes, three campuses and multiple pathways make NOC a leader in nursing education.

Under the direction of Dr. Nikole Hicks, NOC Nursing Division Chair, the program is rigorous and innovative.

"Faculty really get to know our students and help to provide them with resources to be successful," said Hicks, who has seen Northern Oklahoma College's reach expand to campuses in Enid and Stillwater. "They have lots of support. We have faculty who specialize in success coaching and a structured remediation program for those who are struggling with exams or clinicals."

The College has learning partnerships with both large and small facilities to provide experience in both urban and rural inpatient and outpatient settings.

Hicks said students come from a variety of backgrounds and age groups.

"We have a lot of diversity. We have traditional college students coming out of high school ... we also have students embarking on nursing as a second

"To see the impact starting from one location - one small program - the impact in producing nurses who go on to care for thousands of people in our communities was really remarkable." - Dr. Nikole Hicks

or third career choice," Hicks said. "We really have a wide variety and the positive of that is students can learn from each other. There are students with experience who can help mentor other students.

"There is no typical Northern student. It's a wide variety of people who want to go into nursing, help people, make a difference and improve their communities."

In 2023, the college celebrated a half century of success.

Fifty years of success included more than a few accolades including a Top 10 Nursing Program in the state ranking, according to Nursing Hub.

The celebration was marked with a gathering of past and present nursing students, even members of the first graduating class.

"It was wonderful," Hicks said. "People from the community talked about how Northern Nursing graduates have made a difference to them. (It was rewarding) just to see the things this program provided a foundation for people to be able to do; innovative things, practice areas, advanced degrees and people in education in all areas of nursing.

"To see the impact starting from one location - one small program - the impact in producing nurses who go on to care for thousands of people in our communities was really remarkable."

Northern Oklahoma College, the State's first



Dr. Nikole Hicks, NOC Nursing Division Chair.

public community college is a multi-campus, land-grant institution that provides high quality, accessible, and affordable educational opportunities and services which create life-changing experiences and develop students as effective learners and leaders within their communities in a connected, ever-changing world.

Northern Offers offers a two-year Associate of Applied Science Degree for the RN. A two-year RN's focus is providing care at the bedside regardless of whether the bedside is located in the hospital, clinic, doctor's office, hospice, nursing home or community.

The program also focuses on how to manage care for groups of patients.

NOC also offers an opportunity for students to complete their fourth semester clinical experiences and be paid by the clinical site through Academic Practice Partnerships.

"It's part of onboarding and a commitment the clinical facilities make to help partner in their education and it's a great opportunity for our students to dedicate more time to their studies the last semester because they are receiving payment for their clinical hours," Hicks said. "It's a very unique opportunity."

For more information about the Northern Oklahoma College nursing program, visit <https://www.noc.edu>.



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OCU offers 12-month Accelerated BSN Degree Program

In 2023, Oklahoma City University introduced the state's first and only in-person 12-month accelerated Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN) degree to help address the nation's critical nursing shortage.

"An accelerated bachelor of science in nursing (BSN) degree is one of the strongest tools we can employ to help fill the nursing employment pipeline," said Gina Crawford, dean of Oklahoma City University's Kramer School of Nursing. "The overall goal of the program is to assist second degree students in completing their BSN in one year; this is to assist in the achievement of their professional career goals, but also to have high-quality nurses entering the workforce at a faster rate."

Crawford said the program has been highly successful.

"Students in the ABSN have found their stride in the rigors of an accelerated format," she said. "The faculty have designed the 8-week courses to meet all curriculum requirements in a manageable format for students. The accelerated students must complete the same curriculum requirements as students who are in the traditional option. Our faculty are committed to providing students with support and resources that set them up for success."

Dr. Casey Cassidy, Associate Dean of KSN, said in December 2024, KSN graduated its first ABSN cohort of 33 students.

"There are currently 87 students enrolled in the ABSN option. We admit the ABSN twice a year (Fall and Spring)," she said.

Amaka Okwudigbo endured quite a journey moving to the United States from Nigeria in pursuit of a career in the healthcare field.

She overcome homelessness, food insecurity, and financial issues to fight for her career dreams.

Okwudigbo graduated with her BSN in December from OCU and recently passed her NCLEX. She is moving to Tulsa to work at St. Francis Hospital in their Trauma Emergency Center.

"OCU's Kramer School of Nursing has been a very good foundation for me, and the fast track was one of the best decisions I made," she said. "Even though it is fast track, they let you do your own thing at your own pace, but you must meet the deadline regardless. I really enjoyed my stay."

OCU is making substantial scholarship money available to almost all students accepted in the program to help pave the way for those interested in pursuing the degree and becoming a nurse.

The degree track is open to any student with a non-nursing associate or bachelor's degree. Courses are offered in eight-week blocks.

To help increase financial access to the program, the Kramer School of Nursing (KSN) is making its Kramer Way Scholarship available to at least 10 students who begin in January. The scholarship is awarded through a competitive application process; it provides \$15,000 to each of the selected



Nursing Dean Gina Crawford with Amaka Okwudigbo at the pinning ceremony in December.

students.

In 2024, OCU reduced the total program cost which allowed students to complete an affordable BSN degree.

"OCU offers generous academic scholarships to pre-licensure BSN students," Crawford said. "For example, a student with a 3.6 or higher cumulative GPA, the program cost is \$23,560."

"Kramer School of Nursing has numerous endowed scholarships and partnerships to lower the cost even further."

The Kramer Way Scholarship provides \$15,000 for 13 students each year for students beginning the program in the spring semester.

"The Kramer Way Scholarship allows students to obtain a BSN they may not have otherwise been able to afford to go back to school," Cassidy said. "Dean Crawford is committed to continuing to build current and new partnerships to support students at Kramer School of Nursing."

Oklahoma City University (OCU) also offers transfer and departmental scholarships, as well as special nursing scholarships for some students transferring from Oklahoma City Community College. These scholarships - based on a student's college GPA - provide an opportunity to defray a significant portion of the program's costs.

For example, all students with a college transfer GPA of at least 3.0 will automatically receive nearly \$10,000 in scholarships. All students with a GPA of 3.6 or higher will receive more than \$17,000 in scholarships.

The 12-month accelerated BSN degree is the second major initiative OCU has unveiled recently in its efforts to help combat the nursing shortage.

The school announced the Saints & Stars Program, a five-year partnership with SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital. Saints & Stars allows certain OCU nursing students to work part-time with SSM Health while receiving scholarships and tuition discounts during their junior and senior year of college.

In addition to the 12-month accelerated BSN program, OCU offers a variety of other nursing programs with options both on-campus and online, including master's and doctoral degrees; a registered nurse-BSN degree; a licensed practical nurse-BSN degree; and a traditional, two-year BSN track.

"Kramer is dedicated to providing high quality education," Crawford said. "Our faculty are innovative and are consistently updating the curriculum to support student success and provide enriching opportunities, such as interprofessional education, immersive clinical experiences, and simulations. We want to actively be a part of the solution for an ongoing shortage of registered nurses in Oklahoma, and we see ABSN as one avenue to support our community's health."

More information about the 12-month accelerated BSN and OCU's other nursing programs can be found at <https://www.okcu.edu/nursing>.



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OSU Nursing Program Dedicates Mary K. Chapman Nursing Simulation Laboratory



The nursing lab on Oklahoma State University's Stillwater campus has been dedicated as the Mary K. Chapman Nursing Simulation Laboratory.

The College of Education and Human Sciences unveiled the name on April 15th at an event celebrating the project's major gift donors.

The lab is located in the former Scott-Parker-Wentz cafeteria, which has been transformed into a state-of-the-art facility. It has been in use since early 2025, ensuring students are prepared to meet the dynamic health care needs of individuals, families and their communities.

A four-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree began being offered at the Stillwater campus in the 2023-24 academic year. The program is crucial for Oklahoma, which is facing a critical shortage of nurses. Students in the program have hands-on experience with both rural and urban settings, including 600 hours of clinical experience.

"Thanks to the generosity of donors and the work of our

incredible faculty and students, the future of OSU Nursing is very bright," said Dr. Jon Pedersen, College of Education and Human Sciences dean. "We are truly grateful to the Chapman Foundation, the Pedigo family and the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma. They are providing first-class facilities, top-of-the-line equipment and scholarship support for students, and their early commitment has been vital in building momentum for the program."

The H.A. and Mary K. Chapman Foundation supported the initiative with a \$1.5 million gift. Mary K. Chapman was born in Oklahoma where she worked as a nurse, later establishing the Tulsa-based foundation before her death in 2002.

"The H.A. & Mary K. Chapman Foundation is honored to support Oklahoma State University's Nursing Simulation Lab, continuing our longstanding dedication to advancing health care in Oklahoma," said Craig Willis, Chapman Foundation program officer. "As a former nurse, Mrs. Chapman deeply valued the profession, and this

grant reflects our commitment to training the next generation of medical professionals. We hope this state-of-the-art facility provides students with the hands-on experience and confidence needed to deliver exceptional patient care in our communities."

Rick and Terri Pedigo, whose daughter attended OSU, were also early investors in the Stillwater nursing program. Pedigo Products Inc., a medical equipment manufacturer, donated more than \$100,000 in equipment to outfit the new lab - including stretchers, IV poles and more.

"We are proud to support the new OSU Nursing program by providing state-of-the-art medical equipment that will directly transform the educational experience of future health care professionals," Rick Pedigo said. "Nurses offer invaluable insights into how medical products can revolutionize patient and staff safety, improve clinical outcomes

Learn more about Oklahoma State University's Nursing Program, visit

<https://go.okstate.edu/>

and streamline delivery.

"With this substantial donation, we're not just providing equipment - we're supporting the professionals who will save lives, comfort patients and care for our families. It's an investment in patient care, health care innovation and the next generation of nursing excellence."

Additionally, the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma donated more than \$250,000 to support the lab, including funds to purchase several high-fidelity simulation manikins.

Along with honoring major donors, a ribbon-cutting event featured remarks from OSU President Jim Hess and Pedersen. Attendees were offered tours of the simulation lab, getting a first-hand look at the experiential learning opportunities it provides students.



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Bringing Innovation and Entrepreneurship to Nursing

“Be Curious” is one of the defining values of the University of North Texas System. The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth is cultivating that curiosity with the launch of its College of Nursing. Starting in fall 2024, students can expect to gain entrepreneurship and innovation skills to bring scalable solutions to the health care market.

HSC has a proud history of providing innovative solutions to pressing health care problems. HSC Next is a unique program at HSC, guiding innovators to develop and scale their health care solutions for the masses. HSC Next also works with the Techstars Physical Health Fort Worth Accelerator to connect entrepreneurs from around the world to revolutionize the physical health industry through new technology.

Nursing professionals coming to HSC will have a solid base of support for developing technologies, ideas and strategies to address health care challenges. Incoming students also will benefit from all that makes HSC a first-class health science center.

From the outset of their experience with the college, HSC nursing students will gain interpersonal connections formed with peers. The connections formed between students in different degree programs serve both patients and the larger community by creating health care teams that have known and learned from each other for years.

Students also will have access to some of the best health education facilities in Texas and the region, including the state-of-the-art Regional Simulation Lab, as well as a team of diverse, field-leading faculty. Associate Dean for Research, Tonychris Nnaka, PhD, MPH, RN, CPH, recently brought his expertise in digital health to the 2024 VIVE Conference, a leading digital health technology meeting. Assistant Dean for Clinical and Outreach Affairs Kate Taylor, DNP, APRN, FNPC, CPPS, FNAP, is bringing innovation to home-based primary care for older adults through her work with HSC’s Center for Older Adults House Calls program.

HSC understands that training the next generation of nurses, physicians and health care professionals must also be financially accessible. The UNT System has kept tuition the same since 2016, and the College of Nursing has awards and scholarships, including a developing mentorship program, to ensure that students’ education and professional development is supported financially.

As it welcomes students for the Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN) and Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) in Nursing Practice Innovation degree programs, HSC’s College



of Nursing aims to help professionals not only advance their clinical skills for better patient outcomes, but also use their unique experience to create solutions for the complex health care challenges that face urban, rural and specialized populations.

One innovation for fall 2024 is nursing microcredentials, short, affordable and intensive courses designed to train professionals in an area of acute need. Studies have shown the enormous positive impact of microcredentials on student education and outcomes. The HSC College of Nursing will offer microcredentials for health care management, correctional nursing and substance use disorder nursing, all areas of critical need across the region and state.

With an increasing general population and nurse turnover affecting the nursing gap in Texas, the time is now for an institution to prepare nurses to address society’s most pressing health challenges. As the College of Nursing adds programs, students and faculty, it will continue to be guided by the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship that has defined HSC since its beginning in 1970. HSC’s College of Nursing is proud to develop nurse innovators who are ready and willing to bring their experience, leadership and solutions to improve health outcomes in their own communities and throughout Texas.

For more information about the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth visit <https://www.unthsc.edu/oklanursing>.

Discover HSC's new College of Nursing



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No Degree Required: CV Tech Preps You For A Career Helping Others

Looking for a career that makes a real impact? Canadian Valley Technology Center offers exciting, hands-on programs that launch students into high-demand health care fields such as these below.

Surgical Technology

Clayton Faber is stepping into the fast-paced world of the operating room. While surgeons and nurses are often in the spotlight, surgical technologists-or “scrub techs”-work behind the scenes to ensure procedures run seamlessly. Their expertise is essential.

Faber was initially set on a different health care path until a nurse friend guided him elsewhere. He will soon complete the Surgical Technology program at Canadian Valley Technology Center, setting the stage for his future in the O.R.

“I know I can make a difference in people’s lives through surgery and by applying sterile technique,” he said.

Faber, 20, of Yukon, has a close relative who developed a serious infection due to improper sterile technique during surgery. This experience reinforced the importance of his chosen career.

Scrub techs serve as the backbone of the surgical team. They meticulously prepare a sterile O.R. field, often prep patients for procedures and hand instruments to doctors during surgery. Their vigilance helps prevent infections and ensures patient safety. After surgery, they are responsible for sterilizing and storing instruments, an essential step in preventing contamination.

Vision Care Technician

Carlee Wall does not see herself in college. Instead, her career choice came into focus when she enrolled at CV Tech.

Soon, she will become a Certified Ophthalmic Assistant, which establishes her as an eyecare professional. She is thinking about pursuing more advanced certifications down the road.

“I learned ophthalmic skills and how to be professional in a workplace,” she said. “Yes, at 19, I already have a career with job stability and room for growth. CV Tech taught me a lot of technical skills that I get to use while helping others.”



CV Tech’s Vision Care Technician program provides students with skills in diagnostic testing, clerical skills and assisting an eye care doctor.

Wall, a 2024 Tuttle High School graduate, participated in a registered apprenticeship while at CV Tech. She is paid for working part of the week on site at an eyecare business. The rest of the time at school, she adds new knowledge and skills. Many apprentices are hired full-time after completing school.

Practical Nursing

Lacey Arreola, 26, of Yukon, was tipped by a colleague about a year-round program that prepares students for the NCLEX exam for a career as a Licensed Practical Nurse. Timeframe is 18 months, and the pass rate is nearly 100 percent.

“The schedule gives you the flexibility to still have a job and take care of your family while still getting an education,” Arreola said. “You take it one class at a time, one day at a time. You are responsible for your own success.”

LPNs provide basic nursing care under the supervision of registered nurses and physicians. Primary duties include taking vital signs, administering medications and assisting patients with daily activities. Students who complete the program may pursue an online LPN-to-BSN program through Southwestern Oklahoma State University. Arreola plans to start this bridge program in January.

Medical Assistant

Kenlee Early, enrolled last year at CV Tech. Health Careers student are given options after their first year at the Cowan Campus in Yukon. Among the options is enrolling in Medical Assistant in preparation for attaining a Registered Medical Assistant licensure.

Early, 18, and a Piedmont High School senior, said she’s wanted to become a nurse since childhood. She believes working as an RMA is the next logical step.

“I wanted to challenge myself,” she said of the Medical Assisting program. “Only one high schooler has graduated from it. CV Tech has helped me become so much more of an adult. It’s self-paced but with accountability.”

Early has enrolled at BYU-Idaho and plans to pursue a three-year bachelor’s program in Nursing.

Ready to jump-start your future? Many of CV Tech’s health programs can be completed in just one year, with options available for both high school students and adults. Take the first step toward a rewarding career in health care - visit <https://www.cvtech.edu> to learn more.



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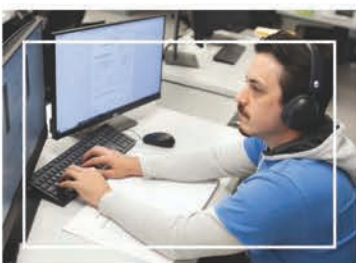
Prepares students to assist physicians and other healthcare providers in a medical office or clinic setting. Some core courses include CPR, First Aid, medical terminology, anatomy and physiology and an introduction to medical assisting. Specialized courses include pharmacology and clinical procedures for disorders.



Medical Coding Specialist

Yukon

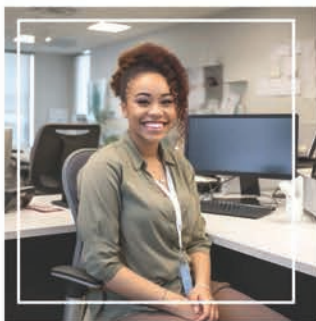
Students learn administrative medical assisting, medical terminology, basic anatomy and physiology. They also acquire skills and knowledge in medical coding, medical insurance, and electronic health records. Careers include employment in a medical office, medical billing and medical coding field and administrative medical assistant.



Patient Account Representative

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Students receive training in administrative medical assisting, medical billing and electronic health records. This program prepares students for employment in a medical office setting in an administrative capacity.



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Students prepare to deliver quality patient care before, during and after surgeries as a critical part of the surgical team. Students prepare the OR for surgery, sterilize equipment prep patients for surgery and assist surgeons and nurses during surgical procedures, handing them instruments and supplies.



Vision Care Technician

Yukon

Developed in co-op with the Dean McGee Eye Institute ... experience diagnostic testing and clerical skills. Students record patient info, clean and maintain ophthalmic instruments, assist during patient visits and provide instruction for corrective lenses. Students can participate in registered apprenticeships, earning competitive hourly pay while going to school.



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Discover Your Path to Nursing Excellence at Southwestern Oklahoma State

Are you considering a career in nursing? Look no further than Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU), one of the best universities in Oklahoma known for providing top-quality programs. With 14 nationally accredited academic programs, SWOSU is a senior regional university that offers an exceptional education.

The SWOSU School of Nursing has a reputation for excellence, offering five different nursing programs to fit the needs of all students. If you're looking to start your nursing career, the traditional BSN program taught on campus is an excellent option. Alternatively, if you're already an RN looking to advance your career, SWOSU offers four online degrees, including an RN to BSN degree and graduate degrees in nursing education and nursing administration.

But the nursing programs at SWOSU don't stop there. The university also offers online professional programs in Health Information Management and Information Management at the graduate level. Additionally, SWOSU has two contractual agreement programs for Occupational Therapy Assistant and Physical Therapist Assistant Programs in partnership with Caddo Kiowa Technology Center.

SWOSU is proud to have six nationally accredited programs in Health Information Management, Nursing, Occupational Therapy Assistant, Physical Therapist Assistant, Radiologic Technology, and Medical Laboratory Technician. The university's professionally and academically qualified faculty are dedicated to mentoring students and helping them achieve their goals.

At SWOSU, students have access to a diverse selection of academic college courses and are rated as one of the most affordable universities in the region. Additionally, SWOSU's location in Weatherford is conveniently located on Interstate 40, less than one hour west of the Oklahoma City metro area. Whether you're a commuter or a traditional student, SWOSU provides accessibility and convenience.

SWOSU's nursing program is more than just traditional classroom learning. The university also boasts a nursing simulation lab that provides hands-on experience in a controlled environment. The lab features high-tech manikins that can simulate a wide range of medical conditions and scenarios, allowing students to practice and develop their clinical skills in a safe and supportive environment.



SWOSU's nursing programs have a strong emphasis on community service and engagement. Nursing students can participate in various community-based programs and initiatives, such as health fairs and clinics, providing valuable service to the local community while also gaining practical experience and skills.

SWOSU's nursing faculty are experienced professionals who bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the classroom. They are dedicated to helping students succeed and are committed to providing a supportive and inclusive learning environment. Additionally, the university offers a range of scholarships and financial aid opportunities to help nursing students achieve their academic and career goals.

In summary, SWOSU's nursing programs provide students with a comprehensive education that prepares them for a successful career in nursing. With a strong focus on hands-on experience, community engagement, and academic excellence, SWOSU's nursing programs provide students with the skills, knowledge, and experience they need to make a positive impact in the world of healthcare. Join us at SWOSU and pursue your dreams of becoming a nurse while receiving a top-quality education. We are dedicated to helping our students succeed. For more information on SWOSU's nursing programs visit: <https://www.swosu.edu/nursing>.



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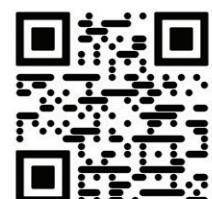
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UCO Nursing Programs Recognized Among Best In State, Nation

For more than 50 years, the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) has provided Oklahoma with highly skilled and educated nurses. Graduates of UCO's nursing programs are recognized among the best in the state and across the nation.

Accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), UCO bachelor's and master's programs equip future nursing leaders with the expertise needed to excel in various healthcare settings. By offering both traditional and nontraditional pathways, Central supports aspiring nurses and experienced professionals alike to advance their careers and meet the growing demand for exceptional nursing care in Oklahoma.

Traditional Nursing Program, B.S.

Central's traditional, on-campus nursing program is for students who are not yet licensed to practice nursing as an RN.

When Abbie Yates transferred to Central, she could instantly feel that Central's nursing professors were invested in her education and success. "The professors at UCO take the opportunity to get to know their students and create connections. Nursing at UCO is a well-oiled program that is constantly improving based on the needs of their students," Yates said. Yates knows she will be prepared to enter the workforce. "UCO has one of the highest number of clinical hours compared to many nursing schools around Oklahoma, and I believe it better prepares us for entry into practice."

Online RN to B.S. in Nursing Track

Central's RN to B.S. track is available 100% online for RNs who want to further their nursing education. Upon successful completion, nurses earn a Bachelor of Science in nursing. With both part- and full-time options available and for as low as \$8,500, Central's program is designed to provide flexibility for students, with the option to complete the track in as little as 10 months.

Fast-Track B.S.

For those who have earned a traditional bachelor's degree in another field and are ready for a career in nursing, Central's Fast Track in nursing is for them. The fast-track program can be completed in just 16 months and provides the flexibility of hybrid courses. Upon successful completion, students will have earned a B.S. in nursing.

After Kanece Ham started her career in neuroscience research, she realized she wanted to combine her love for neurology and the complexity of the brain with helping people in their lives. That is when she decided to pursue Central's fast-track program to become a psychiatric nurse. "When researching programs, I was excited to see that UCO had a fast-track program, which would allow me to get my degree in nursing within 16 months-providing me the ability to reenter the workforce and begin working in the meaningful way I always had aspired to do," Ham said.

Online M.S. in Nursing

The Master of Science in nursing degree program at UCO offers working RNs flexibility through fully online courses with both part- and full-time options available. The program can be completed in as little as 16 months, if pursued full time. The online Master of Science in nursing can be completed for as little as \$15,000. Nursing graduate students can choose from two tracks - nursing education or nursing leadership.



Micaela Carothers is a cardiac nurse who graduated from UCO's traditional nursing program. The compassion and dedication she received from UCO nursing faculty inspired her to continue her nursing education at Central. The M.S. in nursing provided her with the flexibility she needed to succeed. "With the program being online, the classes were very flexible around my workdays," Carothers said. "I feel that I am effectively able to meet the class expectations and continue working without feeling overwhelmed."

The Future of Nursing

All UCO nursing programs offer real-world instruction from supportive nursing faculty who are experts in their fields. Graduates from UCO nursing programs are recognized within the health care community for their knowledge, professionalism and leadership potential. Central prides itself as a smart investment for success and for preparing future leaders in an opportunity-rich environment. For more information about Central's nursing programs, visit go.uco.edu/nursing.



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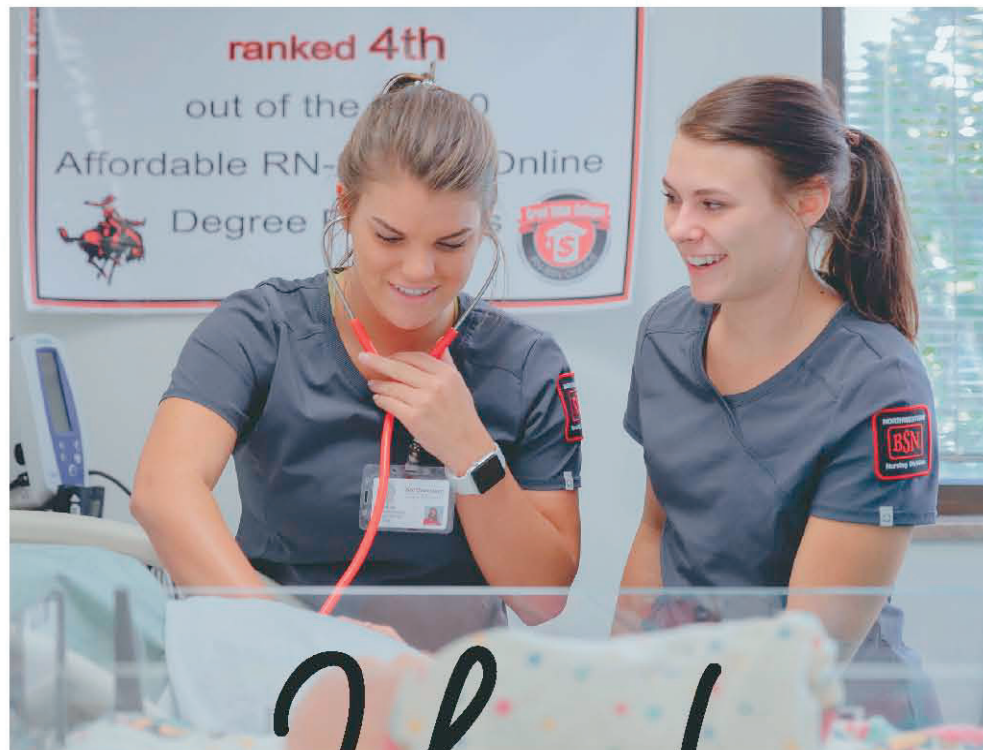
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Nissi Jordan's Nursing Journey: From Passion to Practice to DNP

Nissi Jordan's passion for nursing stems from an innate ability to nurture and a childhood emphasizing mind and body wellness. Her parents' belief in food as medicine shaped her entire approach to nursing care and remains a philosophy for future goals. These early lessons now drive her pursuit of a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree.

Jordan's undergraduate journey in nursing began at Northwestern Oklahoma State University, where she earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree in 2017.

During her last year of nursing school, she became a first-time mom with husband Blake and struggled with postpartum depression.

It was during this time that Northwestern faculty members Dr. Leslie Collins, chair of the Charles Morton Share Trust Division of Nursing and associate professor of nursing; Dr. Krista Tilley, assistant professor of nursing; and Dr. Jennifer Mahieu, associate professor of nursing, played a crucial role in supporting her through the challenges of balancing motherhood and education.

"I confided in Dr. Collins and Dr. Tilley about my emotional challenges, and their empathy and support helped me navigate that problematic period and finish nursing school, which I am so thankful for," she said. "And Dr. Mahieu was instrumental in ensuring student success, providing endless resources that benefited me and my peers."

After graduating, Jordan took some time away from schooling and studying to focus on her new career as a nurse, where she gained hands-on experiences in various settings.

During this time, she became certified as an Infection Preventionist, a role that allowed



Nissi Jordan, RN, BSN began her journey at Northwestern Oklahoma State University where she credits Northwestern's rigorous nursing program and hands-on professional experiences for giving her the confidence to pursue a DNP.

her to gain insight into policy-making with long-term care facilities and exposed her to the broader political landscape of healthcare.

Her experiences as a Registered Nurse (RN) span long-term care, infection prevention, and emergency room and trauma nursing.

"These diverse roles have enabled me to collaborate closely with interdisciplinary healthcare teams and interact with patients and families to ensure optimal outcomes," she said.

Jordan added that while working with everyone from neonates and psychiatric patients to geriatrics, she has gained invaluable experience in assessment, diagnosis and treatment.

Jordan credits Northwestern's rigorous nursing program and hands-on professional experiences for giving her the confidence to pursue a DNP. She also cites the university's affordability, quality education and strong faculty support as key reasons for returning in 2024.

"The school provided me with a solid foundation in clinical skills, evidence-based practice and hands-on experiences in various healthcare settings," she said of her undergraduate degree. "Over the years, my passion for nursing and patient care has only deepened, and pursuing a DNP is the next step in my professional journey."

As Jordan works through the stresses of her first year in the DNP program and family obligations (she now has two young children), she also is employed as an emergency room/trauma nurse at St. Mary's Regional Medical Center in Enid, Oklahoma, a little more than one hour from her home in Alva, Oklahoma.

"I appreciate that the DNP program is self-paced with deadlines that align well with working professionals' schedules," Jordan said. "The faculty members have been incredibly supportive and accommodating to student needs."

According to U.S. News & World Report, No. 1 in the 100 Best Jobs list is Nurse Practitioner.

With that in mind, Jordan encourages both men and women

to consider an undergraduate degree in nursing at Northwestern and continue at the school to earn a DNP degree.

"Although nursing is a female-dominated field, men have an equally important place in the profession," she said. "They bring strength, honor and unique perspectives, and incorporating caregiving into their role only enhances their ability to serve others."

Upon earning her DNP, Jordan's goal is to work in a rural healthcare setting post-boards, focusing on functional medicine and becoming an Emergency Room Nurse Practitioner.

She also wants to be a provider who addresses the mind and body in assessment, diagnosis and treatment. Her passion for natural health and encouraging homeostasis guides her vision for the future of patient care.

"Education and credentials evolve together," Jordan said. "More education leads to more excellent knowledge, which is essential for nursing and developing strong critical thinking skills that apply to all aspects of life."

With a steadfast commitment to lifelong learning and patient-centered care, Jordan is poised to make a lasting impact in healthcare. Her journey from a passionate undergraduate nursing student to a future DNP graduate is a testament to the power of perseverance, education and an unwavering dedication to healing.

"Nissi is a shining example of a nurse who works hard to set her goals and achieve them while meeting the needs of her family and community," Collins said. "Nissi continues to embody what a Northwestern nursing graduate is known for and will continue to exemplify that through the DNP program and as an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse."

Applications for entry into any of Northwestern's nursing programs are accepted Oct. 1 through Feb. 1. Interested students can apply for the traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing program that Jordan completed, the online RN-to-BSN program or the BSN-to-DNP program.



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More information about each Northwestern program and their requirements may be found at www.nwosu.edu/school-of-professional-studies/nursing.

Faculty Leads The Way at Western OK State

Bringing education to life.

It's the hallmark of good educators and Diane Fairchild, MSN, RN, Director of Nursing at Western Oklahoma State College, knows she has some of the best.

"Nursing instructors play such a pivotal role in someone's educational journey and I have an excellent faculty," Fairchild said. "They have so many years in nursing in general."

From ER to ICU, and from women's and children's health to flight nursing, Fairchild's faculty brings decades of experience with them in the classroom and into the clinical setting.

"They can bring that into the classroom and make everything come alive for the students," she said. "Also I have an excellent simulation coordinator who is able to create so many experiences for the students and help them learn to interact with patients before they get to the hospital. That way they feel safer to practice." Simulations provide a safe environment for students to begin to learn how to assess patients and do those caring interventions for patients."

Established as Altus Junior College in 1926, WOSC is the oldest original municipal two-year college still in existence in Oklahoma.

The Nursing Program at Western Oklahoma State College was established in 1981 and has an outstanding success rate for preparing qualified nurses, graduating its first class in 1983.

Fairchild is pretty certain why.

"It's so important because we are staying current with medical care. Those nursing instructors are truly keeping everything relevant to what is happening right now in healthcare," she said.

The WOSC nursing program is offered at three campus sites: Altus, Lawton, and Elk City. Western's ADN program has several program tracks.

Face-to-face classes for both general and advanced standing entry students are available as well as online classes with a face-to-face clinical component for advanced standing students.

Students in the face-to-face track are able to take daytime classes at all three campuses.

Through its online program, WOSC draws students from a wide radius including Texas and northwest and central Oklahoma.

Fairchild said several current students entered the program when their military spouses came to the area and will likely go on to other states to practice.

The nursing faculty at Western includes a bevy of specialties. When they aren't in the hospital, an ER nurse, nurse practitioner, ICU nurses, and house supervisors bring a wealth of experience to Western nursing students.

For this reason NCLEX RN first time pass rates are high at Western.

"All of our clinical sites and hospitals ... getting these students as graduates say they are prepared to practice



Western Oklahoma State College nursing students come from around the country to learn from faculty still working and practicing in today's healthcare environment. photo provided

clinical judgment and provide compassionate care to the patients in those facilities," Fairchild said.

Western Oklahoma State has one of the only ADN programs in southwest Oklahoma and has three campuses and flexible options.

WOSC NCLEX pass rates for both the general program and the LPN-to-RN track have met or exceeded the Oklahoma Board of Nursing requirements for the past several years.

Working full-time, the struggle is real for LPNs trying to get their RN licensure.

Throw in family and the rest that life has to offer and it gets easier and easier to postpone your dreams.

Leaders at Western Oklahoma State College recognized that reality and answered the call to bring quality, affordable and convenient nursing education to those that needed it.

And as an added bonus, it's helped Southwest Oklahoma facilities find the trained staff they need.

The mission of the nursing program at Western is to provide high quality education while ensuring equity, supporting student success, and empowering individuals to become productive members of local, regional, and global communities. With the students who are eager to learn and the excellent nursing faculty, this mission is being met with success.

For more information about the nursing program at Western Oklahoma State College, visit <https://www.wosc.edu>.



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Graceland University's history of educating nurses dates back more than 50 years. The Division of Nursing became the sixth academic area of Graceland in 1969 when administrators of the diploma nursing program at the Independence Sanitarium and Hospital in Independence, Missouri, collaborated with Graceland to move its educational base into the four-year collegiate setting.

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The Nursing curriculum is carefully designed to integrate professional education with liberal arts and sciences. The program accommodates students beginning their education in nursing as well as

students eligible for advanced placement. Our asynchronous online RN-BSN degree includes specific areas of study allowing registered nurses to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) in approximately one year with an organized and supportive learning environment. Faculty and student support counselors at Graceland University in Independence, Missouri, are there to help you from application to completion of the online RN to BSN program. The result is a quality nursing degree that will put you in high demand, our students graduate with nearly 100% job placement.

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First introduced in 1994, Graceland offers **Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)** program. The FNP program track prepares the RN to care for individuals and families in a wide variety of health care settings, including clinics, community-based settings, long-term care facilities, and hospitals.

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In 2021, the U.S. News & World Report ranked Graceland University's Master's in Nursing online programs #1 in the nation. To learn more about the Graceland School of Nursing, visit our website at www.graceland.edu/nursing.



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Getting ready for nursing college can be easier than you think

Graduating High School? Thinking about college? There's so much to consider when it comes to getting ready for college: where to go, what to study, how to apply, how to pay for it all, and more.

It's never too early—or too late—to explore your options for college. Inside this Guide are some key steps in preparing for college and resources that can help you along the way. You'll have to take the time to research and understand your options, but you don't have to do it alone. This Guide Can Help!

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As a student or the parent of a student about to start college, the following checklists will help you

get ready.

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2. Stay involved in after-school activities, and seek leadership roles if possible.
3. As soon as possible after its Oct. 1 release, complete and submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®), at fafsa.gov, along with any other financial aid applications



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your chosen school(s) may require. You should submit your FAFSA® by the earliest financial aid deadline of the schools to which you are applying, usually by early February.

4. After you submit the FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within three days to three weeks. This document lists your answers to the questions on your FAFSA and gives you some basic information about your aid eligibility. Quickly make any necessary corrections and submit them to the FAFSA processor.

5. If you haven't done so already, register for and take the standardized tests required for college admission. Check with the colleges you are interested in to see what tests they require. Apply to the colleges you have chosen. Prepare your applications carefully. Follow the instructions, and **PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO DEADLINES!**

6. Well before your college application deadlines, ask your counselor and teachers to submit the required documents (e.g., transcript, letters of recommendation) to the colleges to which you're applying.

7. Complete any last scholarship applications.

8. Visit colleges that have invited you to enroll.

9. Review your college acceptances and compare the colleges' financial aid offers.

10. Contact a school's financial aid office if you have questions about the aid that school has offered you. In fact, getting to know your financial aid staff early is a good idea no matter what—they can tell you about deadlines, other aid for which you might wish to apply, and important paperwork you might need to submit.

11. When you decide which school you want to attend, notify that school of your commitment and submit any required financial deposit. Many schools require this notification and deposit by May 1st.

Notes: **a.** Understand the FAFSA better by watching the videos in the "FAFSA: Apply for Aid" playlist at www.YouTube.com/FederalStudentAid. **b.** Follow or like the office of Federal Student Aid at www.Twitter.com/FAFSA and www.Facebook.com/FederalStudentAid to get regular financial aid tips. **c.** Make informed decisions about student loans. The following resources are important at this point: Federal Versus Private Loans and Federal Student Loans: Basics for Students

REMEMBER: Register for all tests in advance and be sure to give yourself time to prepare appropriately! If you have difficulty paying a registration fee, ask your school counselor about getting the fee waived. For more information go to: <https://studentaid.ed.gov>





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