NURSING PRIMER

WHAT DOES A NURSE DO?

Nurses typically do the following:

- care for individuals, families, and communities; ensure that patients attain, maintain, or recover optimal health
- assess, plan, implement, and evaluate care independently of physicians; provide support from basic triage to emergency surgery
- advise and work as consultants in the healthcare, insurance, or legal industries

From Medical News Today, 2012

WHAT DEGREE DO I NEED TO BE A NURSE?

The Bachelor of Science degree in nursing is the minimum educational requirement for professional nursing practice. Depending on the nursing school you attend, graduates may receive a BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) or a BS in Nursing degree. There is no substantive difference in the degrees offered. Individuals who have already earned a Bachelor’s degree in another field can either apply to an accelerated BSN program. If you are interested in specializing and moving forward in the field you may want to consider a Master of Science in Nursing. Specializations in nursing range widely and you can find more information here.

WHAT CLASSES DO I NEED TO TAKE TO GET INTO A NURSING PROGRAM?*

Some typical prerequisite courses include:

- Anatomy & Physiology (6-8 hours)
- Microbiology (3-4 hours)
- General Chemistry (4-8 hours)
- Statistics (3 hours)
- Nutrition (3 hours)
- Ethics (3 hours)
- English Composition (6 hours)
- General Psychology (3 hours)
- Math (3 hours)

*The above list is not exhaustive, and prerequisites for admission vary by school. For specific college requirements, visit the AACN Member Schools page and search for schools by name, state, or degree type. Refer to the schools’ websites for prerequisite coursework.

WHAT TEST DO I NEED TO TAKE FOR ADMISSION?

There is no entrance examination for second degree BSN programs. Traditional BSN programs require the SAT.

WHAT DOES A COMPETITIVE APPLICANT LOOK LIKE?

The average GPA for matriculants to nursing programs is around a 3.0. It is also important to demonstrate knowledge of and interest in the field through clinical experience.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Nursing's Centralized Application Service, NursingCAS, is the nation’s only centralized application service for students applying to registered nursing (RN) programs at all levels, from the diploma to the doctorate. NursingCAS, offers prospective students a convenient way to apply to nursing programs at participating schools nationwide. To apply to non-participating schools, you will need to visit those schools’ websites for application information. To learn more about NursingCAS and to create an account, please visit: https://portal.nursingcas.org/

WHEN DO I APPLY?

Deadlines vary by school and you can find this information on their websites. Apply Early. If you wait until the night before a program deadline to submit your application, your application may not be received by NursingCAS in time. You should apply at least four weeks before the earliest deadline of the program(s) that you are applying to. This will allow the necessary time to verify and process your application.

WHAT SITES DO I NEED TO CHECK OUT?

American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN):
http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Education/nurse_ed/careerresources.htm
American Nurses Association (ANA): http://www.nursingworld.org/
Johnson & Johnson Website: www.discovernursing.com
All Nursing Schools Database: www.allnursingschools.com