

THE FIELD

Nurses help individuals, families, and groups to promote, maintain, or restore optimal health within the context of their environments. Nursing practice requires substantial specialized knowledge of nursing and related scientific, behavioral, and humanistic disciplines. It also incorporates intellect, interpersonal skills, and management abilities into the development and implementation of health-care strategies. Nursing includes the performance of services that promote and support optimal functioning across the life span, collaboration with other members of the health team, health counseling and teaching, the provision of comfort measures, teaching and supervising others, and participation in research. The scope of the field includes community health nursing, parent-child nursing, medical-surgical nursing, rehabilitation nursing, and mental health nursing, among others. Responsibilities have expanded dramatically for today's professional nurse, making a bachelor of science degree in nursing essential for entry to the profession.

There is no minor available in nursing.

THE MAJOR

The College of Nursing offers an undergraduate program leading to the bachelor of science degree that provides the knowledge and skills fundamental to professional nursing. The general education requirements and core courses provide the foundation for an approach to nursing science that is humanistic and scientific. The program uses lectures, case studies, group projects, seminars, clinical practice, simulated laboratory, independent study, multimedia instruction, web-enhanced courses, and self-paced modules to prepare students. Clinical practice is arranged under faculty direction with the cooperation of a number of community agencies and health-care facilities including senior citizen centers, schools, occupational settings, ambulatory care centers, area community hospitals, and tertiary-care medical centers.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Nursing is a major with limited enrollment. High school students interested in the traditional undergraduate track apply through the Admissions Office, which determines acceptance to the university and to the nursing major. Currently, the College of Nursing is not accepting transfers into the nursing major. However, should an opportunity arise, information will be posted on the College of Nursing website (umass.edu/nursing).

In the first two years, students will complete courses in psychology, writing, anatomy and physiology, nursing, nutrition, and statistics, as well as General Education requirements and electives. Beginning in the spring of the sophomore year, students begin their clinical nursing coursework. During the junior and senior years, many courses are specific to the nursing major. Students are required to provide their own transportation to the program's clinical and community sites, which are used seven days a week, with the potential for evening, weekend, and night hours. Students are also required to take assessment exams throughout their junior and senior years. Completion of requirements in part qualifies the graduate to take the National Council Licensing Examination in Nursing for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN), a prerequisite to working as a registered nurse.

HONORS

The College of Nursing offers a departmental honors track. Students should contact honors coordinator Dr. Kimberly Dion for more information (413-545-1314, kadion@nursing.umass.edu).

STUDY ABROAD

The College of Nursing provides opportunities for students to pursue clinical experiences abroad. Students are eligible to earn credit for these courses.

CURRICULUM FOR STUDENTS OBTAINING AN ACCELERATED SECOND BACHELOR'S DEGREE

The College of Nursing offers a track for students who already have a degree in a field other than nursing and are seeking a second bachelor's degree in our Springfield location. This challenging, full-time program requires four to five days per week in classes or in clinical rotations. The program builds on the students' previous education and prerequisite foundation courses in the sciences and social sciences. This 17-month program offers a variety of nursing courses and clinical experience, all of which are offered through the University Without Walls under the auspices of the College of Nursing.

CURRICULUM FOR STUDENTS WITH AN RN

The RN to BS online nursing track is designed for students with clearly defined career goals. To receive a bachelor of science degree, students must successfully complete a total of 120 credits; 52 non-nursing credits must be completed before beginning the online nursing program; 30 credits are awarded for RN licensure; and 30 credits are earned in the UMass nursing program.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

A career in nursing provides opportunities to participate in a profession that makes a major impact on the nation's health. There is a high demand for baccalaureate-prepared nurses to meet the needs of clients and families in a complex health-care system. There are extensive opportunities to develop expertise in a particular area of interest in nursing practice. Students who wish to pursue graduate degrees as nurse practitioners, clinical specialists in nursing, or in the areas of teaching, research, or management of nursing, will find that this curriculum offers excellent preparation for advanced study.

Please consult our website for program updates and information sessions.

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