

NURSING

Admission Requirements

Applicants apply for admission to the program via the J. Jeffrey and Ann Marie Fox Graduate School application for admission (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/admissions/how-to-apply>). Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-300 Admissions Policies (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>).

For admission to the Nursing program, an applicant must hold either:

- a bachelor's degree in Nursing from a U.S. regionally accredited institution or
- a postsecondary degree in Nursing that is equivalent to a U.S. baccalaureate degree earned from an officially recognized degree-granting international institution. Students entering the doctoral program via the traditional post-master's route must have earned a master's degree with a major in nursing from a program accredited by a national accrediting agency for nursing. Well-qualified Ph.D. applicants with a baccalaureate degree in nursing and master's degree in a related discipline (e.g., public health) will be evaluated individually to assess the need for prerequisite master's-level course work in nursing for doctoral program admission.

Applicants must submit official transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended (<http://www.gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply/new-applicants/requirements-for-graduate-admission/>). For M.S.N. applicants, a cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) for the baccalaureate degree is expected with a B or better in all science and nursing courses. B.S.N. to D.N.P. applicants are expected to have a cumulative undergraduate grade-point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) with a B or better in all science and nursing courses. For master's to Ph.D. or D.N.P. applicants, a cumulative grade-point average 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale) for master's and subsequent course work is expected.

Post-graduate APRN certificate students must have earned a masters or doctoral degree in nursing from a program accredited by a national accrediting agency for Nursing. Post-graduate APRN certificate applicants are expected to have a cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in both their baccalaureate and graduate degree work in Nursing.

Two letters of reference are required for the M.S.N. degree program and three letters of reference are required for the D.N.P. and Ph.D. degree programs. Three letters of reference are required for the post-graduate APRN certificate programs. The letters should be solicited from professional supervisors and faculty who can attest to the applicant's ability. If a degree was completed in the last 5 years, an academic reference is required.

All applicants must submit a statement of purpose. In addition, D.N.P. and Ph.D. degree applicants must also submit a published or unpublished scientific paper, thesis, or other scholarly writing sample and a complete curriculum vitae. DNP, PhD and post-graduate APRN certificate applicants must submit an updated curriculum vitae.

GRE scores are optional for admission to the Ph.D. program. GRE scores are not required for the M.S.N. or D.N.P. applicants, but if the scores are submitted to Penn State they will be reviewed as part of the application.

The language of instruction at Penn State is English. English proficiency test scores (TOEFL/IELTS) may be required for international applicants. See GCAC-305 Admission Requirements for International Students (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-300/gcac-305-admission-requirements-international-students/>) for more information.

Applicants to the M.S.N. options and D.N.P. degree must hold a current license to practice professional nursing in at least one U.S. state or in a foreign country. Those applying to a nurse anesthesia option must hold a current Pennsylvania license to practice professional nursing. Nursing applicants to the Ph.D. degree program must be licensed to practice professional nursing in at least one state or in a foreign country.

Applicants to the Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Option are required to have two years of acute care hospital experience.

In addition to all DNP requirements listed above, applicants to the Nurse Anesthesia Option (*opening Summer 2027*) are required to have:

1. Current, unencumbered license as a registered professional nurse and/or an APRN in the United States or its territories or protectorates
2. Minimum scholastic GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
3. Minimum Science GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
4. Undergraduate statistics course with a grade of B or better (within the last five years)
5. Undergraduate or graduate-level chemistry course with a grade of B or better (within the last five years; lab portion not required)
6. Minimum of two years of full-time critical care experience, or its part-time equivalent, as a registered nurse in a critical care setting
7. Three letters of recommendation from a direct supervisor (required), an academic educator/professor, and healthcare professional who can speak to the applicant's potential success as a CRNA
8. A written personal statement describing understanding of the DNP degree, the role of a CRNA, personal goals as an advanced practice provider, and reasoning for interest in Penn State University
9. Minimum of 8 hours of shadowing experience with a CRNA (completed shadow log to be submitted with application)

Applicants to the M.S.N. and D.N.P. degree program are encouraged to discuss program options with the faculty; an interview will be required for DNP-NP applicants. PhD applicants will be contacted by the College of Nursing to schedule a required interview (either in person or via internet-based video conferencing).