

NURSING

DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

Arkansas Tech University's nursing curriculum is designed to prepare students for professional responsibilities in a variety of health-care settings and to provide the necessary foundations for graduate study.

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing program is approved by the Arkansas State Board of Nursing and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. The program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Telephone: 404-975-5000.

The Department of Nursing offers undergraduate study in nursing to qualified high school graduates, graduates of diploma and associate degree programs in nursing, licensed psychiatric technician nurses, and licensed practical nurses. The baccalaureate program leads to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Satisfactory completion of eight semesters of general education, course pre-requisites, and upper-division professional nursing courses is required for the BSN Pre-licensure program. The RN to BSN program can be completed on-line in one year.

Upon completion of degree requirements for the Pre-licensure BSN, the student may be eligible to take the national examination (NCLEX-RN) for licensure as a registered nurse. All nursing students should be aware that the State Board of Nursing requires all applicants for the NCLEX-RN to have a criminal background check performed. If the applicant has ever been convicted of a crime, the Board will review the application and make a decision as to whether the applicant is eligible to take the NCLEX-RN exam and to practice nursing in the State of Arkansas. Any student who has been convicted of a crime should notify his or her advisor before taking the prerequisite courses. This information will be kept strictly confidential. The student will be advised of the method of petitioning the Board and counseled regarding the process. A registered nurse may be subject to losing his or her license if the conviction is discovered after the license is granted. The information on criminal background checks can be found on the ARSNB website, under laws and rules, rules, subchapter 3.

The Department of Nursing Pre-licensure program utilizes the clinical facilities and services of the Arkansas River Valley area; however, in order to meet the objectives of certain courses, the student should be prepared to travel out of this area. Students are required to provide their own transportation.

The Department of Nursing reserves the right to make changes, without prior notice, in the curriculum and program requirements. Changes are made in keeping with the changing health needs of society and/or the best interests of the students and the department to maintain quality professional nursing education.

Admission

Admission into lower division foundation courses is open to any Arkansas Tech University student who meets the prerequisites for each course.

Pre-licensure Admission

Admission to the upper division nursing courses is competitive and subject to evaluation by the Nursing Department's Admission and Progression Committee. Students are considered for admission the spring and fall preceding the semesters they plan to enter upper division nursing courses. All transcripts, entrance exams and/or credentials (LPN license) are due with Application to Upper Division. Pre-licensure application deadlines are March 1 for fall admission and October 1 for spring admission.

Minimum requirements for acceptance into the upper division (Level 0) nursing courses are:

1. Prerequisite grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Students will be admitted according to the criteria for selection of upper division students.
2. Completion of the following courses with a grade of "C" or better in each: ENGL 1013 Composition I, ENGL 1023 Composition II, MATH 1113 College Algebra, BIOL 2014 Human Anatomy or BIOL 2404 Human Anatomy and Physiology I, BIOL 3054 Microbiology or BIOL 2054 Microbiology for Health Sciences, BIOL 3074 Human Physiology or BIOL 2414 Human Anatomy and Physiology II, CHEM 1113 A Survey of Chemistry, and CHEM 1111 Survey of Chemistry Laboratory, PSY 2003 General Psychology, SOC 1003 Introductory Sociology, and NUR 2303 Nutrition. All attempts for the following courses will be included in GPA calculations for upper division application: MATH 1113 College Algebra; BIOL 2014 Human Anatomy/BIOL 2404 Human Anatomy and Physiology I; BIOL 2054 Microbiology for Health Sciences/BIOL 3054 Microbiology; BIOL 2414 Human Anatomy and Physiology II/BIOL 3074 Human Physiology; CHEM 1113 A Survey of Chemistry; CHEM 1111 Survey of Chemistry Laboratory; and NUR 2303 Nutrition.
3. Completion of the following General Education courses (See [General Education Requirements](#) for specific course alternatives):
 - Option 1: Social Sciences 6 hours; Fine Arts/Humanities 6 hours; Communication 3 hours
 - Option 2: Social Sciences 6 hours; Fine Arts/Humanities 9 hours
 - Option 3: Social Sciences 9 hours; Fine Arts/Humanities 6 hours
 - TECH 1001 Orientation to the University or TECH 1013 Introduction to the University (1 hour only) OR 1-hour Elective (ATU requires TECH 1001 Orientation to the University or TECH 1013 Introduction to the University unless student is a transfer student not coming in as a freshman)
 - Physical Activity 1 hour
4. Completion of an entrance exam with a score of proficient or higher. Students are allowed only two attempts on this exam.

The Admission and Progression Committee use the following criteria to rank applicants for admission to upper division nursing courses. These criteria utilize existing admission policies.

Applicants will be ranked in groups and the criteria for selection of upper division students are as follows:

For students desiring entry to Upper Division Nursing (Level 0):

- 1 .Student has GPA ≥ 3.0 during time of application and at the end of current semester; and Proficient or higher on the entrance exam.
- 2 .Do not admit at this time.

The student must be enrolled or have completed a minimum of 48 hours of required prerequisite courses and have a GPA ≥ 3.0 before entering level 0-preclinical nursing courses.

Admission of college freshman who obtained Upward Bound/Advanced Placement/Concurrent hours while attending high school:

ATU Nursing Department wishes to offer these specific high school students the opportunity to complete their courses within a timely manner.

Criteria for consideration (Failure to meet items 4 and/or 5 will result in loss of position in Upper Division):

- 1 .GPA > 3.70
- 2 .Proficiency score > 72.0 on Entrance Exam
- 3 .No more than 8 hours of courses to complete in the summer before entry into Level 0
- 4 .Outstanding courses must be completed at ATU during summer session between spring and fall. All prerequisite courses to be complete prior to the start of Level 0
- 5 .Grade of B or better on summer courses completed to meet prerequisite requirements.

The student must have completed a minimum of 48 hours of required general education and prerequisite courses (see curriculum plan) with a GPA ≥ 3.0 before entering level 0-preclinical nursing courses.

Applications will be ranked according to GPA and the entrance exam with preference given to ATU students. Admission will be determined by the resulting rank order and proficiency or better on entrance exam.

Applicants completing prerequisite requirements at an institution other than ATU must submit a written note from the course instructor(s) verifying the grade(s) earned in the course(s). These students will sign a form agreeing to have official transcripts on file in the registrar's office within one month from the first day of the semester.

A student position may be filled in a discretionary manner for exceptional reasons as determined by the committee and approved by the faculty.

Minimum requirements for continuation into Level 1

- 1 .Acquisition of professional/student liability insurance through ATU
- 2 .Criminal background check
- 3 .Current certification of Basic Life Support (BLS Provider) CPR for adults, children, and infants as taught by the American Heart Association
- 4 .Proof of current immunization required by ATU and the ATU Affiliation Agreements with clinical facilities.
- 5 .Proof of two of the three vaccinations of the Hepatitis B series. The third Hepatitis B vaccination must be completed before the end of the first clinical semester. Alternatively, proof of a positive Hepatitis B titer is accepted.

RN to BSN Admission

The RN to BSN program admits three times each year. RN to BSN application deadlines are March 1st for summer admission, August 1st for fall admission, and October 1st for spring admission. Potential RN to BSN admits should first apply to the University, then contact the nursing department to apply to the RN to BSN program. The minimum GPA for application is 2.75. Courses not required for program entry are excluded from the GPA.

Criteria for entry into the RN to BSN program:

- 1 .GPA ≥ 2.75

All general education and nursing major pre-requisites complete or proof of current enrollment.

- 1 .GPA ≥ 2.75

Nursing major pre-requisites complete or proof of current enrollment.

Up to six hours of general education outstanding.

All criteria one students are admitted prior to category two. Upon admission, RN to BSN students must provide proof of current RN licensure, professional liability insurance, and pass a background check and drug screen. These requirements must be completed through the ATU DON approved vendor.

Progression Policy

Pre-licensure Progression

In order to progress in the pre-licensure Nursing program, the student must meet the following guidelines.

Students must achieve a “C” or better in all nursing courses.

A student in the upper division nursing courses may only repeat one nursing course. Following a second failure in any upper division nursing course the student will be dismissed from the program. Upper division nursing courses: 66 hours of course work allotted to the nursing major, inclusive of NUR 2023 Introduction to Professional Nursing, all 3000 level nursing courses and all 4000 level nursing courses (with the exception of 4903).

Students who make less than a “C” in any upper division nursing course may not progress into courses for which that course(s) is a prerequisite until the course(s) has been repeated and the required minimum grade attained.

The following Upper Division required non-clinical courses (NUR 2023 Introduction to Professional Nursing, NUR 3103 Nursing Skills I, NUR 3204 Theories and Concepts in Nursing I, NUR 3213 Care of the Older Adult, NUR 3303 Health Assessment, NUR 3402 Pharmacology I, NUR 3513 Nursing Skills II, NUR 3606 Theories and Concepts in Nursing II, NUR 3802 Pharmacology II, NUR/BIOL 3803 Applied Pathophysiology, NUR 4206 Theories and Concepts in Nursing III, NUR 4303 Nursing Research, NUR 4606 Theories and Concepts in Nursing IV) must be completed with a grade of “C” or better to graduate. Any student who attempts any one of these courses twice (2 times) and does not achieve a final grade of “C” or better in the course, will automatically be withdrawn from the Arkansas Tech University Nursing Program and will not be eligible for readmission. An attempt is defined as “any enrollment in any course and dropping it (or changing it to an audit) after the first day of the 10th week of the semester during the Fall or Spring semester, or after the third week of either Summer session for any reason, or failure (grade of “D” or “F”) of the course.”

Readmission will not be considered for any student dismissed from the nursing department who obtained a “D” or “F” in two (2) upper division nursing courses. The Department Head will consider exceptions on an individual basis.

Any student who withdraws from a clinical nursing course (NUR 3404 Practicum in Nursing I - Nursing the Individual Client, NUR 3805 Practicum in Nursing II - Nursing the Family, NUR 4405 Practicum in Nursing III -- Nursing Clients in Crisis, NUR 4804 Practicum in Nursing IV - Nursing in the Community) must have a passing grade at the time of withdrawal in order to withdraw passing. Students failing (“D” or “F”) at the time of withdrawal will receive an “F”. A grade of “F” will count as a failure (“F”) for progression purposes.

All seniors are required to pass the NCLEX Exit/Predictor Exam as part of NUR 4903 Synthesis of Clinical and Theoretical Nursing requirements.

Students must achieve a passing grade “C” in both the Theories and corresponding Practicum courses in order to progress within the program. Students who repeat a Theories course are required to show clinical competency in order to progress. Students who repeat Practicum are required to show theoretical competency in order to progress.

Clinical competence can be attained by:

1. Taking for credit the corresponding practicum course
2. Completing NUR 3892 Clinical Competency I or NUR 4892 Clinical Competency II with a grade of “C” or better.

Theoretical competence can be attained by:

1. Taking for credit the corresponding theory course. Students must maintain a 75% average on all exams.
2. Completing NUR 3792 Theoretical Competency I with a grade of “C” or better.

RN to BSN Progression

RN to BSN students must also achieve a “C” or better in all nursing courses. Students who make less than a “C” may not progress into courses for which that course is a pre-requisite until the course has been repeated and the minimum grade attained. Upon the second failure in any RN to BSN course, the student will be withdrawn from the ATU DON and will not be eligible for readmission. The department head will consider exceptions on an individual basis.

Readmit Policy

Pre-licensure Readmit

Any student that fails an Upper Division nursing course (with the exception of nursing electives), withdraws, or has a break in enrollment (including medical emergencies/complications) must reapply for progression in the nursing program by end of each fall/spring semester for readmission to the following fall/spring semester. Reapplication must be made by the date immediately following the last day of end of semester final exams. To reapply, the student shall write a letter of intent addressing reasons for past failure and a plan of action for future success within the nursing program, schedule an appointment with his/her level coordinator to complete the "Reapplication to Upper Division" form then submit the completed packet to the Admission and Progression committee. Completion of the reapplication process is the responsibility of the student. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Reapplication will be based on the availability of positions within the repeating level, letter of intent and current GPA. Should several students reapply for the same level and there are a limited number of positions, GPA ranking, in conjunction with their letter of intent, will guide the committee decision-making process.

Students who have not attended Arkansas Tech University during the past year must apply for readmission to the University.

The nursing program must be completed within four years of entry into upper division nursing.

RN to BSN Readmit

RN to BSN students are required to reapply in the event of a break in enrollment. The student should write a letter of intent addressing reasons for past failure or break in enrollment and a plan of action for future success in the nursing program. The student should also contact the RN to BSN program coordinator to complete the "Reapplication to Upper Division" form, then submit the completed packet to the Admission and Progression committee. Completion of the reapplication process is the responsibility of the student. The due date for RN to BSN reapplications is March 1st for summer re-entry, August 1st for fall re-entry, and October 1st for spring re-entry.

Advanced Placement for Licensed Nurses

Arkansas Tech University Department of Nursing complies with the Arkansas Nursing Education Progression Model for admission and progression of licensed practical (LPN/LPTN) and registered nurses (RN) to the baccalaureate degree.

Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN/LPTN)

The LPN or LPTN who has met all general education and nursing pre-requisite course requirements and has a GPA >3.0 is eligible to apply to upper division nursing. Upper division applications are due by March 1st for fall admission and October 1st for spring admission. Eligible applicants are evaluated by the ATU Department of Nursing Admission and Progression Committee.

The LPN/LPTN must:

1. Have a current unencumbered LPN or LPTN license in the state where they are practicing.
2. Have graduated from a PN/PTN that was Arkansas State Board of Nursing approved or NLN CNEA or ACEN accredited at the time of graduation.
3. Document work experience if applying for admission >12 months after graduating from PN/PTN program. Specifically:
 1. <12 months after PN graduation - no work experience required.
 2. >12 months after PN graduation - documentation of at least 1000 hours of nursing employment in the preceding 12-24 months.
4. Completion of an entrance exam with a score of proficient or higher. Students are allowed only two attempts on this exam.

LPNs progressing to the ATU baccalaureate degree in nursing will be awarded credit for the following courses (17 hours):

- NUR 3103 Nursing Skills I
- NUR 3204 Theories and Concepts in Nursing I
- NUR 3213 Care of the Older Adult
- NUR 3404 Practicum in Nursing I - Nursing the Individual Client
- NUR 3513 Nursing Skills II

LPN/LPTNs who do not meet the defined criteria for admission will be evaluated on an individual basis. The following nursing courses can be challenged or validated:

1. NUR 3204 Theories and Concepts in Nursing I & NUR 3404 Practicum in Nursing I - Nursing the Individual Client - Validate by passing the National League for Nursing (NLN) ACE I with a decision score of 75 for eight credit hours
2. NUR 2303 Nutrition - Validate by passing the NLN Normal Nutrition exam with a decision score of 50 for three credit hours.
3. NUR 3103 Nursing Skills I and NUR 3513 Nursing Skills II – Validate by taking a written and demonstration skills test developed and administered by the ATU DON faculty with a decision score of 75 for six credit hours. Scores for skills challenge examinations are valid for two years.

Upon admission, LPN/LPTNs are required to provide proof of licensure and submit to a background check completed by an ATU DON approved vendor. LPN to BSN students are also required to comply with the additional admission requirements prior to clinical coursework (proof of professional/student liability insurance, CPR certification, and required immunizations).

LPN to BSN students must pass NUR 2023 Introduction to Professional Nursing, NUR 3303 Health Assessment, NUR 3402 Pharmacology I, and NUR 3803 Applied Pathophysiology with a "C" or better prior to advanced placement into Level II nursing. See [curriculum plan for LPNs](#).

Licensed Registered Nurses (RN)

The RN who has completed all nursing pre-requisite courses and all general education courses or has less than six hours of outstanding general education courses and has a GPA >2.75 is eligible to apply to the RN to BSN completion program (see [curriculum plan for RNs](#)). RN to BSN applications are due by March 1st for summer admission, August 1st for fall admission, and October 1st for spring admission. Eligible applicants are evaluated by the ATU Department of Nursing Admission and Progression Committee.

The RN must:

1. Have a current unencumbered RN license in the state where they are practicing.
2. Graduated from an accredited (NLNAC, ACEN) or Arkansas State Board of Nursing approved diploma or associate degree nursing program.
3. Document work experience if applying for admission >12 months after graduating from diploma or associate degree RN program. Specifically:
 1. <12 months after RN graduation – no work experience required.
 2. >12 months after RN graduation – documentation of at least 1000 hours of nursing employment in the preceding 12-24 months.

RNs progressing to the ATU baccalaureate degree in nursing will be awarded credit for the following courses (38 hours):

- NUR 2023 Introduction to Professional Nursing
- NUR 2303 Nutrition
- NUR 3103 Nursing Skills I¹
- NUR 3204 Theories and Concepts in Nursing I
- NUR 3213 Care of the Older Adult
- NUR 3402 Pharmacology I
- NUR 3404 Practicum in Nursing I - Nursing the Individual Client
- NUR 3513 Nursing Skills II
- NUR 3606 Theories and Concepts in Nursing II
- NUR 3802 Pharmacology II
- NUR 3805 Practicum in Nursing II - Nursing the Family

RNs who do not meet the defined criteria for admission will be evaluated on an individual basis.

Upon admission to the RN to BSN program, students must provide proof of current RN licensure, professional liability insurance, and pass a background check and drug screen. These requirements must be completed through the ATU DON approved vendor.

Any student transferring from another nursing program must submit a letter of good standing to the Admission and Progression Committee with the application to upper division nursing.

Contact Information

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For more information, please visit www.atu.edu/nursing