

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO  
School of Nursing

Questions frequently asked by RN to BSN students with a previous baccalaureate degree:

**Q. What are the requirements?**

A. Students with a previous baccalaureate degree are assumed to have met the liberal education requirements with their first degree, so the requirements for the RN to BSN program include completion of Special Exams to earn 30 semester hours of credit, completion of the 25 semester hours of required nursing courses, and completion of 6 additional semester hours at UNCG to complete the 31 hour **residency** requirement.

**Q. What are the prerequisites?**

A. There are no specific prerequisite courses. Students must hold an unrestricted North Carolina R.N. license prior to the required Nursing courses. Statistics (STA 108) is a pre/co-requisite to NUR 473, but we strongly encourage students to complete this course before beginning the nursing courses if at all possible.

**Q. I see something labeled “2+”. What does that mean?**

A. The “2+” (pronounced Two Plus) program was designed for R.N. graduates of North Carolina community colleges. Students with a previous baccalaureate degree would gain no benefit from being a 2+ student.

**Q. Is there a separate application for admission to the School of Nursing?**

A. There is not a separate application for admission to the School of Nursing, beyond the application to UNCG, for the RN to BSN program.

**Q. Can I go part-time?**

A. Yes.

**Q. Can I complete the program in the evening?**

A. It is possible to complete the nursing courses in the evening, but this may extend the length of time needed to complete the degree requirements.

**Q. Can I take courses in the summer?**

A. Required nursing courses are not offered in the summer. Occasionally, nursing courses that can be used as electives are offered in the summer. Electives can be completed during the summer, or students may take the summer off.

**Q. Can I take more courses at the community college?**

A. There is no reason for a second-degree student to do this, since courses transferred from a community college would not count in the 31 semester hours of residency.

**Q. How long will it take me to finish the program?**

A. The length of time varies with each student, and depends on how many hours the student has already earned, how much s/he is working, and how many hours of course work s/he can manage per semester. The fastest a student can complete the program is three semesters, but most students require 4 to 6 semesters.

**Q. What is a “tuition surcharge”?**

A. The NC General Assembly has imposed a 50% tuition surcharge on students who take more than 140 credit hours toward a baccalaureate degree. Courses taken during summer school and credit by exam do not count toward the surcharge.

**Q. Will I have an advisor?**

A. Yes. Each student will be assigned a faculty advisor. Until your advisor is assigned, feel free to contact our advising office at (336) 334-5288 or sonadv@uncg.edu if you have questions.

**Q. How many days a week will I have to come to UNCG?**

A. Nursing courses are each offered one day a week, usually Wednesdays or Thursdays. It is frequently possible to take two courses on one day. Many nursing courses use a blend on face-to-face and web-based instruction, and so may not meet every week.

**Q. Are any of the courses on-line?**

A. Many RN-BSN courses have a significant web component. Students in those courses do most of their course activities on-line or through independent work, and come to campus just a few times during the semester. The decision of how much of a course is web-based rests with the faculty, who select teaching strategies that best help students master the course content.

**Q. I'm worried about those exams. Tell me about them!**

A. The exams are designed by the National League for Nursing and cover the traditional content areas in nursing: adult health, pediatrics, maternity, and psychiatric nursing. The exams are multiple-choice, paper-and-pencil exams. The School of Nursing must pay for the exams when they are ordered, so in turn, students must pay in advance when they sign up for the exams. The application for the exams is available to be printed from the School of Nursing web page. See Undergraduate Programs, and look under "Documents of Interest." (You may have to scroll down to see this.)

The scores on the exams are averaged, so a student who does well on one exam, but not so well on another exam, may still achieve a passing grade. Most students pass the exams the first time they take them. If a student does not earn a passing score each exam may be repeated one time. Students take 3 exams, but receive 4 scores. The maternity and pediatric exams are in one long test booklet, and are taken at the same time, but there is a score for each exam.

The School of Nursing recommends that students purchase or borrow a current NCLEX-RN review book to guide their studying. Also, we recommend using some common sense: get a good night's sleep, don't work a double shift before taking the exam, eat a well-balanced meal, etc.

**Q. Do I have to take the exams before I start the program?**

A. No. Students may begin the program and take the exams during the first semester of enrollment.

**Q. What about the clinical course?**

A. The clinical course (NUR 474) builds upon the content in the classroom courses (NUR 470, 471, 472, and 473). Therefore, the clinical course should be completed after all of the mentioned courses are completed, or concurrently with the last nursing classroom course(s). As licensed professionals, RN to BSN students work in conjunction with a preceptor in the agency, and a faculty member from UNCG. The faculty member is not on-site throughout the experience, but will visit the site periodically, as well as communicate with the student and preceptor via telephone and/or email.

While the clinical course can be completed at a site in Greensboro, it may also be possible to complete clinical in a facility in the student's hometown. Students have the opportunity to have input into the selection of the facility and the preceptor, although the faculty in the course will also have ideas and suggestions. The clinical requirement is one course, with a time obligation of 9 hours per week, for one semester. Students with more specific questions related to the clinical course should contact the NUR 474 course chair in advance of beginning the course to work out details.

**Q. Can I study abroad?**

A. The School of Nursing does not have arrangements in place to allow students do take an entire semester of nursing coursework abroad. However, faculty sometimes lead short-term (usually 1 or 2 week) study abroad experiences that RN-BSN students can use as part of the clinical for the practicum, NUR 474, or for independent study (NUR 492). These are usually offered in the spring, and students wanting to use the experience for NUR 474 credit must be enrolled in NUR 474 the semester in which the trip occurs.

**Q. How can I graduate with Honors?**

A. Many RNs returning to school will have excellent academic success. Graduation arrives, and based on GPA, the student assumes she/he should graduate with honors. However, the University has a specific policy related to this, which is this: "The designation of graduation with honors is based on all courses (including the last semester's work) for which grades and grade points are given. Any senior is eligible for honors who, at the end of the senior year, has completed at least 45 hours of work in residence at UNCG. This does not include hours for which credit and grade points have been received by special examinations."

So, if graduation with Honors is important to you, plan to take more hours at UNCG than the 31 hours required for residency. Remember, the residency requirement, discussed above, is 31 hours in UNCG course work. So, you could complete the requirements for the degree but not have enough hours in UNCG course work to earn the designation of Honors. For many RNs, the convenience of taking just 31 hours at UNCG outweighs their desire to take 45 hours at UNCG to earn "Honors," but the choice is yours.