NURSING, MSN

Program Description
The Master of Science in Nursing degree enhances and expands the clinical competence of baccalaureate nurses. The focus of the degree is to prepare nurses for advanced nursing practice in nursing leadership, family nurse practitioners, or nurse educators. Emphasis is placed on facilitating health care delivery within a multicultural framework. The graduate nursing curriculum includes four core courses and specific courses related to role specialization within the three degrees. Three minor areas of study are also available for students seeking to refine their skills as leaders/managers, practitioners, or educators. The variety of learning opportunities and the flexibility of options provided by the curriculum will accommodate the diverse clinical and functional interests of students who enroll in the program. Each degree provides a specialty area of study that includes courses with clinical laboratory components that whenever possible, can be completed in the communities where students reside. In some cases students may have to travel to clinical agencies to access experiences essential to course objectives. The lecture component in all of the graduate nursing courses is offered online. See the semester class schedule for details.

Student Learning Outcomes
Students will:

- Critically analyze, interpret, and integrate appropriate knowledge, research and theories to meet the health care needs of diverse populations;
- Apply competent leadership and collaborative skills as members of a multi-professional health care workforce to promote high quality and safe patient care;
- Design evidence-based plans to sustain quality initiatives that promote a transparent professional environment and contribute to the delivery of safe high quality care;
- Integrate research into professional practice through the implementation of translational processes;
- Demonstrate competence and accountability as clinicians, educators, and leaders in advanced healthcare roles;
- Model caring, sensitivity and respect in the delivery of health care to culturally diverse populations;
- Operationalize principles of ethical, legal, financial and economic theories as applied to health care delivery systems;
- Guide the adoption and use of information, communication technologies and resources to document patient care and improve patient outcomes.
- Evaluate the effect of legal and regulatory processes on nursing practice, healthcare delivery, and outcomes using critical analysis of policies that influence health services.

The expected outcomes for the Master of Science Degree in Nursing are also published in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences Student Handbook.

Graduation Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Courses</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Specialty Courses</td>
<td>25-37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Credit Hours</td>
<td>37-49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The TAMU-CC College of Graduate Studies Recency of Credit rule requires that all credit earned for a graduate degree must be completed within seven years of the first semester in which a student is enrolled in a graduate program. This requirement means that students are expected to complete their MSN program in seven years. In rare situations, an exception to this seven-year policy may be granted from the Dean for the College Graduate Studies when a student is unable to complete courses in this time period. The student must complete a request with an explanation as to why the exception should be made as soon as the student determines that courses will not be completed within this time frame. The request should be submitted to the Graduate Nursing Department Academic Advisor and the Graduate Nursing Department Chair.

For Additional Information
Website: http://conhs.tamucc.edu

Phone: (361) 825-5893 - CONHS Graduate Academic Advisor

Campus Address:
Island Hall 322

Mailing Address:
College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
6300 Ocean Drive
Corpus Christi, Texas 78412-5805

Admission Requirements
Registered nurses have three entry options to the Master of Science in Nursing program. Individuals who have earned a Master’s of Science in Nursing degree but would like to acquire a new specialty area of practice may apply to the College post-master’s certification programs. For admission to any of the College programs all applicants must:

1. Complete an application to the University for admission to graduate study and to the MSN Program for degree student status. Applications should be made through College of Graduate Studies using the application in Apply Texas. See the Admissions section of the catalog.
2. Students must complete an online application to the College of Nursing and Health Sciences using Nursing CAS. If the student is not already enrolled at Texas A & M University-Corpus Christi, the student must also apply to the University for admission. Admission to the University does not constitute admission to the nursing program.
3. Provide evidence of a current valid unencumbered licensure as a registered nurse with authorization to practice in Texas.
4. Have earned a satisfactory grade point average (4.0 scale): 3.00 GPA on the last 60 semester hours.
5. Write an original essay describing professional goals associated with graduate nursing education. Guidelines for this essay are available at https://gradschool.TAMU-CC.edu/forms/CONHS_Graduate_Form.php.

6. Submit three letters of recommendation from individuals who can address their potential for graduate study. At least one of these references should be from an individual who can address an applicant’s level of professional competence.

7. Provide a current resume that delineates an applicant’s professional contributions and work experiences and contains sufficient information to represent the applicant’s accomplishments in nursing. The resume should include information about an applicant’s professional activities outside the work place. Guidelines are available at https://gradschool.TAMU-CC.edu/forms/CONHS_Graduate_Form.php.

8. Additional information will be required from applicants before full admission can be granted. Applicants must demonstrate compliance with Texas Administrative Code immunization for health professional student regulations, Texas Board of Nursing disclosure of criminal history or disciplinary action, and affiliated clinical agency requirements for access to clinical experiences. Details are outlined under the Program Requirements section below.

The Graduate Nursing Department Admission, Progression, and Graduation (APG) Committee will consider the information provided in the application and supporting documents for in admission decisions. After due consideration the APG Committee may permit a student who wishes to pursue the Master of Science in Nursing degree, but does not meet the requirements for admission to the Graduate Nursing Program, to enroll on a conditional status. Contact the Graduate Nursing Academic Advisor for instructions on requesting waivers to the admission requirements. Progression through the program will require a student meet the conditions associated with admission within the timeframe designated if a waiver is granted.

Students who request to transfer into the TAMU-CC MSN program from another program must submit evidence that they left their former institution in good standing before an admission decision will be made.

Except in rare situations applications for the Family Nurse Practitioner degree will only be reviewed for a fall semester admission.

**Program Requirements for all Nursing Graduate Students**

Students will be considered out of compliance if a designated immunization or other item required to be submitted to the CONHS Castle branch database manager or other agency is not updated by the designated deadline throughout their clinical courses. Additionally, there may be further requirements from a clinical facility that students will be required to meet. Any student who is out of compliance may be disenrolled from his/her classes.

The following program requirements apply to all nursing graduate students upon admission and throughout program of study. Students must:

1. Have completed an undergraduate nursing program or earned a diploma from an NLNAC or CCNE accredited school of nursing.
2. Successfully complete (with a grade “C” or above) a course in statistics
3. Hold current unencumbered licensure as a registered nurse with authorization to practice in Texas
4. Upon admission to the College, complete a criminal background check.
5. Complete a ten panel non-chain of custody urine drug screen.
6. Purchase professional liability coverage through the University. Fees for this coverage are included in the fees paid at the time of registration at the beginning of each academic year.
7. Meet Texas Department of State Health Services immunization requirements for students in health professions programs. Students must complete and present evidence that immunizations are complete and current prior to starting classes. Immunizations must remain current throughout the program. Students will not be allowed into courses or clinical laboratory agencies if evidence of compliance is missing. These requirements, as stated in the Texas Administrative Code, Title 25, Part 1, Chapter 97, Subchapter B, Rule 97.64 (https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac%24ext.TacPage/?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=25&pt=1&ch=97), include the following:
   a. “Students may be provisionally enrolled for up to one semester to allow students to attend classes while obtaining the required vaccines and acceptable evidence of vaccination.”
   b. “Students cannot be provisionally enrolled without at least one dose of measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine if direct patient contact will occur during the provisional enrollment period.”
   c. “Varicella vaccine is not required. Students enrolled in health-related courses are encouraged to ascertain that they are immune to poliomyelitis.”
   d. “One dose of tetanus-diphtheria toxoid (Td) is required within the last ten years.”
   e. “Students who were born on or after January 1, 1957, must show, prior to patient contact, acceptable evidence of vaccination of two doses of measles-containing vaccine administered since January 1, 1968.”
   f. “Students must show, prior to patient contact, acceptable evidence of vaccination of one dose of rubella vaccine.”
   g. “Students born on or after January 1, 1957, must show, prior to patient contact, acceptable evidence of vaccination of one dose of mumps vaccine.”
   h. “Students shall receive a complete series of hepatitis B vaccine prior to the start of direct patient care or show serologic confirmation of immunity to hepatitis B virus.”
   i. “Students shall receive two doses of varicella vaccine unless the first dose was received prior to thirteen years of age.”

Rule 97.65 lists the following exceptions to the immunization requirements:
   i. “Serologic confirmations of immunity to measles, rubella, mumps, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, or varicella are acceptable. Evidence of measles, rubella, mumps, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, or varicella illness must consist of a laboratory report that indicates either confirmation of immunity or infection.”
   ii. “A parent or physician validated history of varicella disease (chickenpox) or varicella immunity is acceptable in lieu of vaccine. A written statement from a
Progression, Retention, and Dismissal

All students must meet the standards for minimal performance and progression established by TAMU-CC Office of Graduate Studies. See catalog section on Graduate Academic and Degree Requirements.

1. When a grade lower than a C is earned, the student:
   a. Must repeat a course in which a grade of D, F, or W (Withdrawal) was earned.
   b. May be placed on scholastic probation if the GPA falls below 3.0 because of the D, F, or W.
   c. Will be removed from scholastic probation in accordance with university policy. See Scholastic Probation and Enforced Withdrawal in this catalog.
   d. May not progress to courses for which that course is a prerequisite when a grade of D, F, W or I (Incomplete) was earned.

2. If the student earns a third C or below in the program, the student cannot progress further and is required to withdraw from the program even when the GPA does not fall below 3.0. (Grades earned in the RN-Bridge or RN-MSN program count in the total number of grades earned in the program. Therefore all grades below a B will be considered in progressions decisions.)

3. The student cannot progress to next course after withdrawing from two courses in the program unless approved by the APG Committee. A plan to complete the program must be submitted to the Committee before a progression decision can be made. Admission to courses that need to be completed will depend on space availability.

4. The student may be dismissed from the program without previous warning for unsafe and/or unprofessional behavior identified by College administrators and faculty. The conduct of nursing students should meet ethical standards as defined by the American Nurses Association (ANA) in the Code of Ethics (https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/ethics/). Personal integrity is reflected in professional judgments. Consequently, the College reserves the right to dismiss students from the program for unprofessional or unsafe behavior. See College of Nursing and Health Sciences Student Handbook for examples.

5. Students admitted conditionally to the College must earn a B or better in each of the first four MSN courses to remain in the MSN program. If a grade of less than B is earned during the period the student is classified as a conditional student, the student will be prohibited from further enrollment in the MSN program. Students pursuing the RN-Bridge or RN-MSN options are not eligible for enrollment under the conditional admission status.

Students in the RN-Bridge and RN-MSN program must complete all of the undergraduate course work before beginning graduate classes. In order to progress in these entrance options, students must maintain a 3.00 grade point average. Students may earn credit for NURS 3435 Health Assessment (4 sch) and NURS 4324 Nurse as Caregiver - RN/BSN (3 sch) through a challenge examination process when a score of 83% or better is earned on the examination. If the challenge examination results are not successful, the student may move to the RN-BSN track and take the course in question. The student may not reenter the RN-MSN track. The student may not progress through the RN-MSN track if the challenge exam score is less than 83% and the student does not want to enter the RN-BSN option.

Admission to the CONHS is highly competitive. Students who drop a course or do not enroll in a semester in which they are eligible to enroll will only have access to subsequent courses in their area of study when space is available. Therefore it is highly recommended that students consult the graduate nursing academic advisor or the graduate nursing department chair before withdrawing from any course.

Program Options

MSN Degree

Registered nurses who want to earn a Master of Science in Nursing degree may enter the graduate program through one of three entry options. These options include the BSN (also referred to as traditional), RN-Bridge, and RN-MSN options.

Applicants who have earned a BSN from an accredited program can start graduate course work upon admission to the MSN program.

Applicants who are registered nurses with baccalaureate degrees in disciplines other than nursing can enter the MSN program through RN-Bridge option. Students must complete undergraduate level courses before they can begin graduate courses that lead to the MSN. The 18 hours of RN-Bridge undergraduate courses include:

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<tr>
<td>NURS 3435</td>
<td>Health Assessment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 4318</td>
<td>Nurse as Research Consumer</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 4560</td>
<td>Nursing Care of Community - RN/BSN</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 4471</td>
<td>Leadership/management - RN/BSN</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Hours 16

Articulation agreements exist between A&M- Corpus Christi and associate degree nursing programs to support student access to this MSN entry option. Registered nurses who have earned a diploma or associate degree in nursing from an accredited program and who meet all other requirements for admission into the MSN degree program are eligible to apply for the RN-MSN entrance option. Students who enter...
the MSN program through this option will not earn a bachelor’s degree in nursing at any stage of their course work.

The RN-MSN student must complete 58 credit hours of designated general education and support courses in accordance with the A&M-Corpus Christi University Core Curriculum transfer policy requirements and the Bachelor of Science degree requirements for prescribed support courses, as specified in the Undergraduate Catalog. Equivalency tables are available showing which general education and nursing courses will be accepted for transfer to meet these required hours.

Prior to beginning master’s level course work, the RN-MSN student must complete the following prescribed course work:

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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Hours</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
</tr>
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Course work completed by students in the RN-MSN program may transfer to the undergraduate RN-BSN track when students decide they are unable to maintain the accelerated pace of the RN-MSN track. Students may not reenter the RN-MSN track once they have withdrawn from this option.

**Post Masters Certification**
Post-masters certification is available for students that have earned their MSN Degree. Certification will allow registered nurses to expand their scope of practice beyond the role or population focus associated with their current credentials. Post-Masters-Certification-Only students automatically will be considered to have completed the MSN core courses based on the completion of the master’s degree. All progression requirements apply to students enrolled in this program. See Role Specialization Section for available list of minor or post masters areas of study.

**Non-degree-seeking Students**
Non-degree status is designated for the student who wants to enroll in graduate course work to meet unique personal or career goals that do not lead to a graduate degree or certification. Colleges may place restrictions on the enrollment of students admitted in this status. Students must see a nursing advisor and the graduate nursing department chair to discuss their educational career goals.

**Advising**
Every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of the information in this catalog. Students are advised, however, that such information is subject to change without notice. Therefore, students should consult with their academic advisors each semester prior to registration. Students should be aware that courses are offered upon sufficient demand and faculty availability.

A student is assigned an academic advisor and a faculty advisor. The student and advisors work together to generate a program plan according to the student’s academic, occupational and family needs. The advising team and student work together until the student graduates.

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**Post Masters Certificate Areas of Study**
- Family Nurse Practitioner Post-Masters Certificate
- Leadership in Nursing Systems Post-Masters Certificate
- Nurse Educator Post Masters Certificate

**Minor Area of Study**
The College of Nursing and Health Sciences offers three minor areas of study that provide students with a secondary specialization focus. The courses that constitute the minors are taken in addition to the courses required for the role specialization.
- Nurse Educator Minor
- Leadership in Nursing Systems Minor

**Thesis Option**
The thesis option is available for those students interested in pursuing scholarly investigation of a research proposal topic.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURS 5399</td>
<td>Thesis</td>
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