

Pre-Nursing Studies at VUSN

High school students interested in a career in nursing apply to one of Vanderbilt's undergraduate Bachelor of Arts (BA) or Bachelor of Science (BS) degree programs. See [Undergraduate Admissions](#) for application details. After completing a BA/BS degree and satisfying prerequisites in human anatomy, human physiology, lifespan development, microbiology, nutrition and statistics, students apply for admission to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree.

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), the first-professional degree in nursing at Vanderbilt, is specialty-related and offered at the graduate level. The increase in knowledge required of nurses and the scope of their responsibilities, as well as changes in role, functions, and practice settings, require post-baccalaureate nursing education built on a rich undergraduate liberal education or baccalaureate nursing degree or its equivalent. The School of Nursing does not offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree.

The MSN program prepares graduates to become both a registered nurse (RN) and an Advanced Practice Nurse (APRN). The first three semesters in the MSN degree program are generalist-nursing courses and prepares students for the NCLEX exam to become a Registered Nurse (R.N.). Students take the NCLEX after completing the generalist nursing courses and become RNs during the MSN program of studies. The generalist nursing courses provide the foundation equivalent to the bachelor's degree in nursing for course work in the selected nursing specialty. Upon completion of three semesters of generalist nursing courses, students enter a minimum of an additional three-semester sequence of courses for preparation as either a Nurse Practitioner or Nurse-Midwife.

Advanced practice nurses (APRNs) work in collegial capacities with physicians and other health care providers, and many are prepared to diagnose and treat patients with acute and chronic illnesses. These responsibilities require nursing professionals who are as smart and savvy as they are caring and compassionate. Vanderbilt School of Nursing prepares advanced practice nurses with an excellent education, real-world clinical experience and a solid grounding in theory, research and leadership.

While enrolled as a Vanderbilt undergraduate, pre-nursing students are encouraged to participate in the Pre-Nursing Society, a student organization sponsored by Peabody College and the School of Nursing. Additional information about the pre-nursing program of studies is available in the [Pre-Nursing Handbook](#) and on the [School of Nursing](#) web site.