Master of Science in Nursing

Application Process & Instructions
Academic Year: 2014

The School of Nursing welcomes applications to its MSN program. If you have additional questions after reviewing the following instructions, please contact the School as noted at the end of the document.

APPLICATION PROCESS
The School of Nursing admits students for fall semester each year.

Nursing Leadership: RN-MSN and BSN-MSN applicants may enroll in part-time or full-time study.

Fall Semester
Priority Application Deadline: Applications must be submitted by December 17, 2013 in order to be considered for University Merit.

The completed application must be electronically submitted by this date.

NOTE: Applications deemed incomplete by the posted deadlines will not be reviewed; late applications are not accepted.

PROGRAM PREREQUISITES
1. Registered Nurse Licensure: all applicants must hold a current unencumbered license as a registered nurse in the state in which the student will do clinical course work. Note: an “unencumbered license” means neither the license, the licensee’s practice, nor the licensee is associated with any type of restriction, encumbrance, or probationary limitations imposed by the applicable Board of Nursing or any judicial entity. Documentary evidence must be submitted with the application.

2. Educational Background:
   • Bachelor of Science in Nursing: The bachelor’s degree must be awarded by a school of nursing accredited by the National League for Nursing (NLN-AC) or the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)*.
   OR
   • An RN-MSN option is available for registered nurses without a bachelor’s degree or with a bachelor’s degree in a field other than nursing.

For the RN-MSN option, the following 51 college level pre-requisite credits must be completed by registered nurse applicants:

- English Composition (3 credits)
- Humanities (9 credits)
- Biological Sciences including Anatomy and Physiology (12 credits)
- Other Science (6 credits)
- Social Sciences (12 credits)
- Human Growth & Development (3 credits)
- Statistics (3 credits)
- Elective (3 credits)

To assist the RN-MSN applicant, the School of Nursing offers an unofficial transcript evaluation service; more information is available at:

http://nursing.unc.edu/admissions/transcript-evaluation/index.htm
3. **Work experience as a Registered Nurse**: Advanced Practice Area (APA) requirements for a minimum of one year of work experience as an RN within the past five years are listed below.

- **Adult Nurse Practitioner (ANP)** specialty applicants must have experience with adults in any medical-surgical type setting.
- **Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)** specialty applicants should have nursing experience in community or ambulatory settings (either as a paid employee or as a volunteer).
- **Health Care Systems (HCS)** specialty applicants should have experience in a leadership role within a health care setting. Applicants to this specialty may select from among six areas of study: Administration, Clinical Nurse Leader, Education, Clinical Nurse Leader/Nurse Educator, Informatics and Outcomes Management.
- **Pediatric Nurse Practitioner (PNP)** specialty applicants must have experience in a neonatal or pediatric setting, or community setting that serves children and families.
- **Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMH NP)** specialty applicants must have experience in a psychiatric or mental health setting.

4. **Completion of Required Prerequisite Coursework**: All applicants are required to have completed the following course:

   - Introductory-level statistics course (may be part of the undergraduate degree) with an earned grade of C or better. The course must have been completed within 10 years of the date of matriculation into the MSN Program. Please list data on this course in the Prerequisite section of the application.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION**

This document contains instructions for the integrated online application process; the UNC-Chapel Hill Graduate School and School of Nursing Supplemental Application have been combined for user-ease and processing efficiency. Information regarding Graduate School requirements is available at: [http://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/instructions.html](http://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/instructions.html). Please carefully read and follow the School of Nursing application instructions below; each element described is a required facet of the online application.

1. **Transcripts of Undergraduate Education**: Applicants must scan into the application an unofficial transcript for all post-secondary schools attended since high school. These documents must reflect all college-level course work (including pre-requisite courses you have taken, any summer school courses or AP courses). Upon Admission to the program, official transcripts from all schools attended must be submitted to The Graduate School.

The Graduate School  
UNC Chapel Hill  
Campus Box #4010  
200 Bynum Hall  
Chapel Hill NC 27599-4010.

- The Bachelor’s degree in nursing must be awarded from an NLN-AC or CCNE accredited School of Nursing*
- The School of Nursing strongly prefers applicants have earned a 3.0 GPA (on a scale of 4.0) or better in their BSN program. The GPA for RN-MSN applicants is calculated using the 51 pre-requisite credits required for admission.
- Note: failure to receive a transcript for each school attended will render the application incomplete.
- Applicants who have attended school outside of the US, must provide a full credit evaluation of all courses completed at a foreign institution. This should include a course by course evaluation as well as a validation of the degree received. The National Association of Credential Evaluation Services provides a list of organizations that offer this service at the link below. Applicants may also choose to have credit evaluated by faculty members in the various departments on campus. Please submit the credit evaluation report and an official copy of your transcript with your application for admission. These documents may be scanned into the transcript section of the application. Submission of this credit evaluation with degree validation will allow us to view your transcripts in a US transcript format on a 4.0 GPA scale. Related URL: [http://www.naces.org/](http://www.naces.org/)
2. **Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores:** An applicant’s GRE scores must be less than five years old at the time of application submission. ETS will generate scores for persons taking the computerized version of the GRE quickly and distribute to designated schools within two-three weeks. Those taking the paper version of the GRE should allow 4-6 weeks for scores to reach designated schools. Applicants should take these timeframes into consideration when planning for portfolio completeness. One official score report should be sent by Educational Testing Service (ETS) to the Graduate School. Processing your application can be initiated using self-reported scores. (Note: UNC-Chapel Hill’s School Code is #5816, no department code is needed.)

Applicants are more competitive when their verbal and quantitative scores reach or exceed the 50th percentile. The GRE is a factor in admissions decisions; however, it is essential to note that it is not the sole factor on which decisions are made. An applicant’s total portfolio is considered by the Admissions Committee.

3. **Letters of Recommendation:** Three references are required for each applicant. Two letters of recommendation are needed from **faculty members** whose class you have taken and who can speak to your academic qualifications and strengths as a student. Specifically, the letters should address your potential for success in graduate education, leadership ability, and personal characteristics that will help or hinder development as an advanced practice nurse.

The online application will prompt you to submit the email addresses for your three required recommenders. The recommender will then receive an email request for recommendation and be able to upload the reference into the application. Recommendations MUST be uploaded into the application.

**Note:** applicants who have been out of school **five or more years** may substitute professional colleagues as referents. If this option is utilized, the professional colleagues must have an earned graduate degree (master’s or doctorate) and possess the ability to speak to your potential for success in graduate school.

The third reference must be submitted by your **immediate supervisor** or department head of your **current or most recent nursing position**. **Use of the School of Nursing’s Employment Reference Form is required.** It is the applicant’s responsibility to provide the School’s form to the employer with the top portion completed.

http://nursing.unc.edu/admissions/applications/index.htm **YOU MUST GIVE YOUR EMPLOYER OUR FORM BEFORE YOU LIST THEIR NAME AND EMAIL IN YOUR APPLICATION.**

Please print the employer recommendation form from our website. Complete the top of the form and give it to your supervisor. Please ask your supervisor to complete the form and then scan the completed recommendation form to their computer. Next, let your supervisor know that they will be receiving an email request from “University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill - The Graduate School [mailto:support@hobsons.com]”. Following the instructions provided in the email, your supervisor will be able to upload your recommendation directly into your application portfolio.

Students who are reapplying to Nursing and who had letters of recommendation submitted last year, may re-use the letters from that application. In order to do this, you must list the Recommender’s name in the Recommender section of the application. In the email spot, you may list previousrec1@unc.edu, previousrec2@unc.edu and previousrec3@unc.edu. The system requires a different email address be listed for each recommender. Listing this email will trigger the Office of Admissions at the School of Nursing to load the letter from last year.

4. **Professional Statement:** This narrative is a very important part of your portfolio. The quality of the Professional Statement is often crucial in admissions decisions since it provides the Admissions Committee a first-hand example of your writing skills and your ability to present ideas in a clear, logical and coherent manner. In lieu of an interview, the professional statement provides the Committee with your personal perspective on your professional contributions, strengths as a student, current skills and abilities, and prior experiences. Proofread your statement carefully!

Please address EACH of the following subjects in your professional statement. Create a topic-specific header for every response. Poorly written statements will weaken your portfolio notably.

a. Explain why you have chosen the specific advanced practice area in the MSN program.

b. Discuss how your work experience (both paid and voluntary) demonstrates your fit with your selected specialty and your readiness for the advanced practice role.

c. Define your professional goals and how this program will contribute to your achieving them.

d. Discuss your academic strengths and areas of improvement.

e. Discuss your clinical strengths and areas of improvement.
f. Identify any aspect of the program’s admission criteria for which you do not meet minimum requirements and provide an explanation for your situation (e.g., an explanation is needed if GPA < 3.0, GRE scores < 50th percentile (or equivalent), work experience not current or < 1 year, etc.)

g. Lastly, please share any other information you feel is pertinent to your application that you wish the admissions committee to know.

Consider this your opportunity to communicate with Admissions Committee members key information about your professional background and reasons for pursuing a graduate degree in nursing in your selected advanced practice area.

The Professional Statement should be a thoughtfully prepared, three to five typed, double-spaced page document that focuses in detail on all elements noted above. The document should then be submitted with your application as an uploaded MS Word “.doc.” file.

5. Resume: Please submit a current resume or curriculum vitae with your application as an uploaded MS Word “.doc.” file. The resume must be thorough, detailing your education and employment history; any gap of greater than one year should be explained. It is important to ensure that all entries be properly dated, indicating when your activity relative to the entry began and concluded. A standard resume format is acceptable. Note: Full disclosure of your complete educational history is required. Failure to do so may result in disqualification of your application on grounds of filing an untruthful and fraudulent application. [See Application Section Work and Volunteer Experience]

6. Professional Nursing Licensure: Documentation substantiating the applicant holds a current unrestricted/unencumbered license as a registered nurse in the state in which the student will do clinical course work must be uploaded into the application. Note: an "unencumbered license" means neither the license, the licensee's practice, nor the licensee is associated with any type of restriction, encumbrance, or probationary limitations imposed by the applicable Board of Nursing or any judicial entity. [See Application Section Supplemental Documents]

8. Financial Certificate with supporting documents (for international students only).

9. Application fee: $85.00 (may be paid by check, money order or online by credit card to the Graduate School; instructions are available on the final screen of the application)

INTERVIEWS
If at any time additional information is needed to clarify or supplement your application portfolio, you will be contacted for an interview. Note: all applicants educated outside the US will be interviewed in person or via phone depending on geographical location.

FULL-VERSUS PART-TIME STATUS
Full-time students are expected to take three or more courses per semester (at least nine credit hours.) Part-time students take less than 9 credit hours. The Graduate School permits all students a maximum of five years to complete degree requirements.

1. Full-time students are eligible to apply for scholarships, traineeships and merit assistantships through the School of Nursing. Part-time students are encouraged to pursue external funding opportunities.

2. Due to the demands of the MSN program, full-time students are also discouraged from working full time.

NOTIFICATION OF DECISION
It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the online application is submitted prior to the posted deadline, all requested documents are uploaded properly into the application, and that your file is complete. You can check the status of your application review by logging on to the application to see if any required items are missing. The Admissions Committee only considers COMPLETE applications.

You will receive written notification of the Admissions Committee’s decision and rationale. All admissions decisions are immediately forwarded to the Graduate School for deliberation. Once approved, you will receive a formal offer of admission from the Dean of the Graduate School. Upon your formal acceptance and payment of the enrollment deposit (if applicable), you will contacted by the Office of Student Affairs regarding orientation and registration for your first semester of study.
Please notify the Office of Student Affairs in the School of Nursing, (919) 966-4260, and The Graduate School, (919) 966-2611, of any change in the name or address after your application is submitted.

Critical Information for International Applicants:

Admissions Requirements:

This MSN Program is available to international students. It is essential that international students be fluent in English. Presently, the University (including the School of Nursing) does not offer ESL programs or an English language institute. For this reason, candidates interested in attending the University must be able to understand rapid, idiomatic English as spoken in lectures, group discussions, and clinical settings by individuals of widely varying accents. Students from non-English-speaking countries must be able to communicate quickly and clearly in spoken and written English.

Transcripts:

International students must provide a full credit evaluation of all courses completed at a foreign institution. The National Association of Credential Evaluation Services provides a list of organizations that offer this service at the link below. Applicants may also choose to have credit evaluated by faculty members in the various departments on campus. Please submit the credit evaluation report and an official copy of your transcript with your application for admission. These documents may be scanned into the transcript section of the application. Submission of this credit evaluation with degree validation will allow us to view your transcripts in a US transcript format on a 4.0 GPA scale. Related URL:
http://www.naces.org/

TOEFL or IELTS

International applicants must achieve a minimum total score of 575 (with a minimum of 50 in each section) on the written version of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or minimum of 233 (with a minimum of 18 in each subsection) on the computer-based test, or a total score of 89 on the internet-based test with the following minimum section requirements: Reading, 21; Listening, 22; Speaking, 24; Writing, 22. This is not a requirement of applicants who are residents of a country where English is the language of instruction or if applicants hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited United States institution of higher education.

Meeting the minimum total score on TOEFL does not guarantee admission to the School of Nursing. Admission decisions are made on the basis of multiple factors including: scholastic performance; English proficiency; essays; letters of recommendation; GRE scores; the appropriateness of the requested advanced practice area to the applicant’s goals and clinical experiences; and verification of financial support to insure proper visa status.

A score of 8 is required on IELTS. Refer to the Graduate School for more information
http://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/instructions.html#toefl

Letters of Recommendation

Three current letters of recommendation are required from persons qualified to speak to your knowledge, skills and abilities. Specifically, the letters should address the candidate’s potential for success in graduate education, leadership ability, and personal characteristics that will help or hinder development as an advanced practice nurse. All candidates for whom English is a second language (non-native language), must submit at least one additional letter of reference that addresses your ability to communicate fluently in the English language.

Interview

An interview is required of all international applicants who are non-native English speakers. The interview (personal or telephone) will be conducted by faculty who teach in the candidate’s clinical area of interest. The interview has two distinct foci: part one will focus on information provided in the application materials (for example, essay and future goals); the second part will evaluate the interviewee’s English proficiency.

Credit Evaluation*

International students must provide a full credit evaluation of all courses completed at a foreign institution. The National Association of Credential Evaluation Services provides a list of organizations that offer this service at the link below. Applicants may also choose to have credit evaluated by faculty members in the various departments on campus. Please submit the credit evaluation report and an official copy of your transcript with your application for admission. These documents may be scanned into the transcript section of the application.
Submission of this credit evaluation with degree validation will allow us to view your transcripts in a US transcript format on a 4.0 GPA scale.
Related URL: http://www.naces.org/

QUESTIONS:
Questions regarding the instructions, application requirements, or the status of your application, should be directed to the Office of Student Affairs in the School of Nursing at (919) 966-4260 or via email to nursing@unc.edu. Thank you for your interest in the School of Nursing at UNC-Chapel Hill.

TO BEGIN:
To begin the application, simply click https://app.applyyourself.com/AYApplicantLogin/fl_ApplicantLogin.asp?id=unc-ch

GOOD LUCK!!!