Master of Science in Nursing Degree
Application Process & Instructions

Academic Year 2018-2019

APPLICATION PROCESS
The School of Nursing welcomes applications to the Master of Science in Nursing program. If you have additional questions after reviewing the following instructions please contact the School as detailed at the end of this document.

The School of Nursing admits students for the fall semester each year. Admission consideration is extended to applicants who complete and submit the online application and all required documents (outlined below) to the appropriate UNC office by the posted deadline. The MSN Admissions Committee will only evaluate complete applications containing all required materials. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the entire application is received by the posted deadline by checking the online application portal.

Fall Semester Deadlines

| Priority Application: December 12, 2017 | Applications must be submitted by this date for University Scholarship consideration. University Merit Awards recognize the most promising incoming students. A GPA of 3.75 or higher is required for merit nomination. |
| Final Application: January 9, 2018 | The complete application must be submitted by this date. A GPA of 2.75 or higher is required for admission. |

Students in the MSN program may enroll for either full-time or part-time study. Full-time study requires enrolling in at least nine credit hours (typically three courses) per semester. Part-time study requires enrolling in six credit hours per semester. Students may work while enrolled in the program to the extent that the student’s academic progression is not compromised. However, in accordance with School of Nursing policy, full-time graduate students employed by the University may work no more than 50 percent (20 hours/week) while actively engaged in coursework. The Graduate School permits all students a maximum of five years to complete degree requirements.

The GRE Requirement has been waived for the School of Nursing Graduate Admission! School of Nursing Applicants are not required to enter their test scores on the Test Scores Page.

PROGRAM PREREQUISITES

1. Registered Nurse Licensure: All applicants must hold a current unencumbered license as a registered nurse (NC License or a compact state equivalent is required by matriculation).

2. Educational Background:
   - A Bachelor of Science in Nursing: hold a BSN from a CCNE or NLNAC accredited program by the application deadline.
   - An Associate’s Degree in Nursing or Diploma in Nursing: registered nurses without a bachelor’s degree or with a bachelor’s degree in a field other than nursing. Note: admission preference is given to applicants who will enroll in full-time study, defined as at least nine credit hours (typically three courses) per semester.

For the RN-MSN option, registered nurse applicants must complete the following 51 college level pre-requisite credits prior to the application deadline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Composition (3 credits)</th>
<th>Humanities (9 credits)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences including Anatomy and Physiology (12 credits)</td>
<td>Other Science (6 credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences (12 credits)</td>
<td>Human Growth and Development (3 credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics (3 credits)</td>
<td>Elective (3 credits)</td>
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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/ - WE STRONGLY ENCOURAGE RN-MSN APPLICANTS TO HAVE THEIR TRANSCRIPTS EVALUATED PRIOR TO APPLYING!
3. **GPA Requirement:**
   - Applicants with an earned 3.0 undergraduate GPA (on a 4.0 scale) are encouraged to apply.
     - BSN to MSN applicants: the BSN GPA is the admission GPA
     - RN to MSN applicants: the GPA is calculated using the 51 pre-requisite credits required for admission
   - Applicants with a GPA below a 2.75 will not be considered for admission.
   - If your GPA does not meet the 3.0 minimum (i.e., 2.75-2.99), you should address this in your Professional Statement.

4. **Readmissibility:**
   - All applicants must be admissible to all previously attended colleges/universities. If you have been declared academically ineligible and as such are unable to return to any previous institutions, you must contact that institution and seek documentation that reinstates your eligibility or your application cannot undergo review.
   - Copies of ALL correspondence regarding your reinstatement request must be submitted in the application.
   - Additionally, if your final institutional cumulative GPA at any previously attended college/university is below 2.0 (on a 4.0 scale), please provide documentation of your eligibility to return to that particular institution.

5. **Completion of Required Prerequisite Coursework:**
   - All applicants must have completed an introductory-level statistics course with an earned grade of C or better. The credit-bearing course may have been part of the undergraduate degree program, and must have been completed within 10 years of the posted application deadline (credit earned December 2007 or later) Note: continuing education courses will not satisfy this requirement. Please list data on this course in the Prerequisite section of the application.

6. **Work experience as a Registered Nurse:** within the past three years, applicants must have obtained a minimum of one year of recent, full-time, paid clinical work experience as a Registered Nurse by the application deadline. The following specialties have additional requirements.
   - **Adult/Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (AGPCNP)** applicants must have direct care experience in community, hospital or ambulatory settings that serve adult or geriatric patients. Experience limited to the intra-operative setting is insufficient.
   - **Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)** specialty applicants should have experience as a Registered Nurse in a public health/community, hospital or ambulatory setting that serves patients across the life span.
   - **Health Care Systems (HCS)** specialty applicants should have leadership experience within a health care setting (e.g., committee member, leading a service/QI project).
   - **Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Primary Care (PNP-PC):** Within the past 3 years, applicants must have the equivalent of 6 months of full-time clinical work experience as a Registered Nurse in a neonatal or pediatric setting, or community setting that serves children and families.
   - **Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP):** Within the past 3 years, applicants should have the equivalent of 6 months of full-time clinical work experience as a Registered Nurse in an acute or community setting that serves psychiatric illness/substance abuse.

**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. Be sure to read the information regarding Graduate School requirements: ([http://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/instructions.html](http://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/instructions.html)). Please carefully read and meticulously 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 upload into the application an unofficial or official transcript for all colleges and universities attended since high school. If the unofficial transcript does not clearly state the name of the institution, PLEASE write the name at the top of the transcript prior to scanning and uploading.
Collectively, transcripts must reflect all college-level course work you have taken (including pre-requisite courses, any summer school courses and AP courses). Transcripts must indicate the date degree was conferred.

- **Failure to upload a transcript for each college and university attended will render the application incomplete.**

- **Uploading transcripts is the responsibility of the applicant.**

- Transcripts must be uploaded in the correct form and size. This may take some time and effort. Please do not leave document upload to the last minute as it may prevent you from submitting the application on time. Follow the instructions in the application for uploading unofficial transcripts and review the additional information on transcript upload provided at the end of this document.

- **NOTE:** If you will be completing a course or a degree after you submit the application, please upload the final transcript for the course or degree into the application portal or email to son_gradapp@unc.edu

- **Paper transcripts are not accepted for the admission application** (except for Fall 2017 courses as noted above); only legible documents are accepted for application evaluation.

- If a college/university you’ve attended has changed its institutional name, please indicate the name change under academic history within the application.

2. **Letters of Recommendation:** Submit three (3) letters of recommendation supporting your potential for success in the MSN program. Recommendations must be received from three individuals familiar your intellectual ability, academic achievement, practice expertise, and professional commitment to nursing. Note: The Letters of Recommendation are traditionally the most challenging for applicants. To ensure that your application is reviewed, follow these guidelines explicitly.

   - **Employer Reference:** One letter must be from your current immediate supervisor.

   - **Academic References:** Applicants attending a nursing program (online or traditional) between Fall 2013 and the present, must submit two (2) letters of recommendation from faculty members with an earned graduate degree (master’s or doctorate) 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. One faculty letter of recommendation must be from the nursing program most recently attended.

   - **Additional References:** Applicants out of nursing school over five years (no completed courses since Summer 2013) have the option to submit faculty recommendations as outlined above, or two letters of recommendation from professional colleagues with an earned graduate degree (master’s or doctorate) who possess the ability to speak to your potential for success in graduate school. Letters from relatives, family friends, fellow staff members (co-workers of equal or less rank), clinical preceptors, clients/patients or religious/spiritual leaders will not be accepted.

   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 by the recommenders. Applicants are responsible for checking the online application portal and following up with recommenders to assure all letters are uploaded by the application deadline. **The School of Nursing is unable to reuse recommendations from previous application cycles.**

3. **Professional Statement:** You are asked to write, and upload into the application, a Professional Statement that addresses each bulleted item noted; the statement must be formatted as outlined below. Create a topic-specific header for each response; ensure that you address each subject noted. Please include APA formatted references on a separate page of the document. This narrative is a very important part of your portfolio as it offers insight into your professional goals and expectations. The quality of the Professional Statement is crucial in admission 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 avails the Committee of your personal perspective on your professional contributions, strengths as a student, current skills and abilities, and prior experiences. Prepare and proofread your statement carefully as poorly written statements will notably weaken your portfolio!

Please address EACH of the following subjects in your professional statement.
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. Consider your academic performance and describe in detail your academic strengths and areas of improvement.

e. Consider your clinical performance and describe in detail 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 (An explanation is needed if GPA falls between 2.75 and 3.0, or example).

g. Describe your leadership capabilities and provide examples of when you have served as a leader. This can be a formal leadership position or informal leadership (e.g. committee chair, leading strategic initiative, etc.)

h. Please share any other information you feel is pertinent to your application that you wish the Admissions Committee to know (e.g. overcoming personal and/or professional adversity, etc.).

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

Format:

- Create a topic-specific header for each response
- Three to five typed, double-spaced pages
- Submit as a single document uploaded as MS Word “.doc” file

4. Current Curriculum Vitae or Resume: Use the CV/resume page within the online application to detail your career path, explaining any gap in employment greater than one year. Full disclosure of your complete education background including a list of all colleges and universities you’ve attended is required. 

5. Professional Nursing Licensure: Documentation substantiating you hold a current unrestricted/unencumbered license as a registered nurse must be uploaded into the application. 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. NC License or compact state equivalent is needed by matriculation. The Information provided by the Board of Nursing website of your state is sufficient. Print and scan or save a screenshot to upload into the application.

6. Application fee: $87.50 (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: International applicants for whom English is the second language will be interviewed.

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/

A note on foreign degrees: As part of the transcript submission, degree credentials are also reviewed by the Graduate School. Assessment of a foreign degree, including those conferred from institutions participating in the Bologna Accord, is based upon the characteristics of a national system of education, the type of institution attended, its accreditation and the level of studies completed. The following guidelines indicate the level of study expected of international applicants prior to graduate enrollment:

- British patterned education bachelor's degree with honours
- French patterned education degree of diplome requiring four years of post baccalauréat study
- Germany university Diplom preferred. Applicants with very strong academic records may be considered if they have completed the Staatsexamen, a bachelor’s degree after a 13-year Abitur, or at least one year of full-time study beyond Vordiplom, Zwischenprüfung, Vordiplom, or any other bachelor’s degree
- Other European countries: university degree requiring a minimum of four years of study
- Canada three year bachelor’s degree from Québec; four-year bachelor’s degree from all other provinces
- Latin America university degree requiring a minimum of four years of study
- India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal bachelor’s degree in engineering or medicine; master’s degree in all other fields
- Philippines five year bachelor’s degree or four year bachelor’s degree plus one year of graduate course work
- Other Asian countries: university degree requiring a minimum of four years study

TOEFL or IELTS: The School of Nursing MSN program requires a higher level of English proficiency than The Graduate School due to the clinical requirements. The UNC Graduate School Institution Code is 5816 (no department code). 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 90 on the internet-based test with the following minimum section requirements: Reading, 21; Listening, 22; Speaking, 25; Writing, 22. This is not a requirement of applicants who are residents of a country where English is the sole official language of instruction or if applicants hold a 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; the appropriateness of the requested advanced practice area to the applicant’s goals and clinical experiences; and verification of financial support to ensure proper visa status.

A score of 8 is required on IELTS which is higher than The Graduate School requirement.

Letters of Recommendation: In addition to the three current letters of recommendation meeting the specifications outlined above, applicants 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, telephone, Skype) 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.

Financial Certificate with supporting documents will be required upon admission
http://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/instructions.html#fincert

Information concerning visa, U.S. Immigration, or financial certificate matters can be obtained from the UNC Office of International Student and Scholar Services. http://oisss.unc.edu/

ONLINE APPLICATION PORTAL
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 application is complete. You can check the status of your application review by logging on to the application to check whether required items are missing. The Admissions Committee only considers complete applications. The School of Nursing will contact you directly, if we need additional documents or information.
BASIS FOR DECISIONS
Admission to the MSN program is necessarily a selective process. Meeting the posted criteria does not ensure admission. The Committee considers a myriad of factors including: the quality of performance in previous undergraduate and graduate study (as applicable), success in previous employment and related experiences, and personal qualifications including suitability for advanced study. The Admissions Committee weighs the applicant’s accomplishments and potential for success in the program. Diversity in student backgrounds and scholarly interests is desired. Using an objective review procedure, the Admissions Committee recommends selected candidates to the Dean of The Graduate School.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Nursing is committed to equality of educational opportunity and does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, national origin, age, religion, sexual preference, or handicap. Members of racial or ethnic minority groups and males are encouraged to apply.

NOTIFICATION OF DECISION
The School of Nursing and Dean of The Graduate School will notify you in writing of the outcome of your application review as soon as decisions are rendered. Therefore, please modify your information in the Update Profile section of your application if you change your address prior to notification.

FOLLOWING ADMISSION ACCEPTANCE:
Admitted applicants are required to pay a $250 deposit and submit official transcripts to the Graduate School (not the School of Nursing). Instructions on how to submit official transcripts will be included in the admission offer letter from the Graduate School. Admitted students seeking to establish North Carolina residency for tuition purposes, shall submit an online application located at this site: http://gradschool.unc.edu/student/residency/

TO BEGIN:
Go to the Graduate School Admissions Application Management Page: https://applynow.unc.edu/apply/

Select Create an Account to start a new application or Log in to continue an application.

QUESTIONS:
Questions regarding the instructions or application requirements should be directed to the Office of Student Affairs in the School of Nursing at (919) 966-4260 or via email to son_gradapp@unc.edu.

TECHNICAL HELP:
If you have any technical problems, such as browsers or login issues, contact the UNC Help Desk at (919) 962-HELP (4357).

Transcript Specifications
- Applicants should either upload the document directly if it is in an accepted format or scan each unofficial transcript into a file that can be uploaded.
- Scan multiple page transcripts from one institution into one file; however, only one back page is required from each school.
- Preview the uploaded transcript(s) to ensure legibility so that the processing of your application is not delayed. If you cannot read the file clearly, please try another scanner or different settings and upload again.
- A transcript from each institution is always required.

Thank you for your interest in the School of Nursing at UNC-Chapel Hill. Good luck with your application!