NURSING, BSN

The Traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing (TBSN) degree program prepares individuals for careers in professional nursing in hospitals and other health care agencies. This TBSN program provides a foundation for progressing to positions of increased responsibility, leadership, and continued education in graduate programs. Upon successful completion of the program, students receive a bachelor of science in nursing degree from the UW–Madison School of Nursing.

The curriculum includes courses in nursing as well as in liberal arts and sciences. Most students enter UW–Madison as pre-nursing students and spend their first two years completing nursing prerequisite and general education courses. Students apply midway through their sophomore year to start the nursing program once admitted. From there, the two-year nursing component includes lectures, laboratory, and clinical courses. Nursing courses emphasize clinical decision-making and the application of theoretical knowledge. Clinical experiences can be up to 90 miles from Madison and may include ambulatory sites, clinics, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, home health agencies, geriatric facilities, school districts, nursing homes, policy centers, etc. This range of sites and opportunities gives students comprehensive exposure to a broad range of patients, illness, and care in both clinical patient and community health settings. Elective courses in general education and in nursing permit students to pursue individual interests.

HOW TO GET IN

HOW TO GET IN

CURRENT UW-MADISON STUDENTS

Requirements	Details
How to get in	Application required. Meeting the requirements listed below does not guarantee admission. (https://nursing.wisc.edu/undergraduate/bsn-traditional (https://nursing.wisc.edu/undergraduate/bsn-traditional/)/)
Courses required to get in	Students are required to complete a course in each of the seven prerequisites listed below. Requirements can be completed via coursework, test credit, transfer work, or placement exam (if applicable). Chemistry • CHEM 103 • CHEM 108 • CHEM 109 Microbiology • MICROBIO 101 • CHEM 343 • NUTR SCI 332 Human Anatomy • ANAT&PHY 337 Human Physiology • ANAT&PHY 235 • ANAT&PHY 335 Psychology • PSYCH 202 Sociology • Any SOC course that carries a social science designation (https://guide.wisc.edu/courses/soc (https://guide.wisc.edu/courses/soc/)/) • ANTHRO 100 • ANTHRO 104 Human Growth and Development • ED PSYCH 320 • ED PSYCH 321 • ED PSYCH 331 • HDFS 262 • HDFS 263 • PSYCH 460 • PSYCH 464

GPA requirements to get in	At the point of application submission (mid-January): • Earn a "C" or higher in any four of the seven prerequisite courses. • Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 for all undergraduate courses. • Have a minimum prerequisite GPA of 2.75 for all completed prerequisite courses. Prior to admission (at the conclusion of the spring term): • Earn a "C" or higher in each of the individual seven prerequisite courses • Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 for all undergraduate courses. • Have a minimum prerequisite GPA of 2.75 for all completed prerequisite courses.
Credits required to get in	At the conclusion of the spring application term, complete at least 54-degree credits.
Other	Have not previously enrolled in a professional Bachelor of Science-Nursing program at another institution.

Semester	Deadline to apply	Decision notification timeline
To apply for a fall start	Mid January	On or before July 1st
To apply for a spring start	This program does not accept applications to start in the spring.	
To apply for a summer start	This program does not accept applications to start in the summer	

Admission to the nursing major is competitive and determined by a comprehensive review of each student's academic preparation and performance, leadership, extracurricular activities and service, health care experience and background, diversity in experience and background, and the quality of application statements/essays.

UPPER DIVISION ADMISSION

Upper division admission is the standard route into the Traditional BSN nursing program. In this model, students enter UW–Madison as pre-nursing students (PRN), they spend the first two years completing general education requirements and nursing prerequisites, and then apply for admission to the nursing program for the final two years on campus.

PROSPECTIVE TRANSFER AND SECOND-DEGREE APPLICANTS

Students transferring to the University of Wisconsin–Madison, as well as students who already have a bachelor's degree and wish to earn a second degree in nursing, also apply to the Traditional BSN program via the Upper Division Admission option. More information on the admission process and requirements for transfer students and second-degree students is available on the School of Nursing website (https://nursing.wisc.edu/undergraduate/bsn/).

REQUIREMENTS

UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS

All undergraduate students must complete both the following Core General Education (Core GenEd) and University Degree and Quality of Work requirements. The requirements below apply to students whose first term at UW-Madison or whose earliest post-high school college attendance at any institution is Summer 2026 or later.

Students whose first term at UW-Madison or whose earliest post-high school college attendance at any institution occurred before Summer 2026 should refer to the archived Guide (https://guide.wisc.edu/archive/) for the requirements that apply to them.

CORE GENERAL EDUCATION (CORE GENED) REQUIREMENTS

Civics & Perspectives	3 credits of Civics & Perspectives coursework.
Communicatio & Literacy	6 credits of Communication & Literacy coursework. This requirement may be partially satisfied by a qualifying placement test score. More information: https://go.wisc.edu/qualifyingenglishplacement (https://go.wisc.edu/qualifyingenglishplacement/)
Humanities & Arts	6 credits of Humanities & Arts coursework.
Mathematics & Quantitative Reasoning	6 credits of Mathematics & Quantitative Reasoning coursework. This requirement may be partially satisfied by a qualifying placement test score. More information: https://go.wisc.edu/qualifyingmathplacement (https://go.wisc.edu/qualifyingmathplacement/)
Natural Science & Wellness	Complete both: • 6 credits of Natural Science & Wellness or Natural Science & Wellness + Laboratory coursework. • one course must be in Natural Science & Wellness + Laboratory coursework.
Social & Behavioral Science	3 credits of Social & Behavioral Science coursework.
Total Credits	30 credits.

For more information see the policy (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1095/).

UNIVERSITY DEGREE AND QUALITY OF WORK REQUIREMENTS

All undergraduate degree recipients must complete the following minimum requirements. Requirements for some programs will exceed these requirements; see program requirements for additional information.

Total Degree	120 degree credits.
Residency	Complete 30 credits in residence. A course is considered "in residence" if it is taken when in undergraduate degree-seeking status and: • is offered by UW-Madison and completed on the UW-Madison campus or at an approved off-site location, or • is offered by UW-Madison in an online or distance format, or is completed during participation in a UW-Madison study abroad/study away program.
Quality of Work	Achieve at least the minimum grade point average specified by the school, college, and/or academic program.
Math	Demonstrate minimal mathematics competence by: • placing above MATH 96, or, • successfully completing MATH 96, or • successfully completing a more advanced mathematics course such as MATH 112, MATH 113, MATH 114, MATH 141, MATH 211, or MATH 221.
English Language	If required to take the UW-Madison English as a Second Language Assessment Test (MSN-ESLAT), demonstrate minimal English language competence by: • earning credit for ESL 118, or • achieving a qualifying MSN-ESLAT placement test score.
Language	Complete one: • 2 high school units of a single language other than English, or • one course with the second semester Language designation.
Major Declaration	Declare and complete the requirements for at least one major.

SCHOOL OF NURSING BSN REQUIREMENTS

All BSN students must complete both the BSN General Degree Requirements and Graduation Requirements. To determine which requirements are needed for application eligibility, review the How to Get in section.

BSN GENERAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Chemistry	Complete one: • CHEM 103 • CHEM 108 • CHEM 109
Microbiology	Complete one: • MICROBIO 101 • CHEM 343 • NUTR SCI 332
Anatomy	ANAT&PHY 337
Physiology	Complete either: • ANAT&PHY 235 • ANAT&PHY 335
Psychology	PSYCH 202
Social Science	Complete one: • any 3 credit course in SOC with the Social Science designation (https://guide.wisc.edu/courses/soc (https://guide.wisc.edu/courses/soc/)/) • ANTHRO 100 • ANTHRO 104
Human Growth and Development	Complete one: • HDFS 262 • HDFS 263 • ED PSYCH 320 • ED PSYCH 321 • ED PSYCH 331 • PSYCH 464
Humanities	6 credits with the Humanities, Literature, or Language designation.
Humanities or Social Science	7 credits with the Humanities, Literature, Language, or Social Science designation.
Communication A	Complete either: • one course with the Communication A designation, or • satisfaction of Communication A based on UW Placement Test.
Communication B	One course with the Communication B designation.
Quantitative Reasoning A	Complete either: • one course with the Quantitative Reasoning A designation, or • satisfaction of Quantitative Reasoning A based on UW Placement Test.
Quantitative Reasoning B	One course with the Quantitative Reasoning B designation.
Ethnic Studies	One course with the Ethnic Studies designation.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Cumulative Credits	A cumulative GPA of 2.5 is required to be eligible for graduation.
Quality of Work	Students must earn a C or better in all required NURSING or CNP coursework.
Residency	30 credits of coursework must be completed in-residence.

NURSING (TRADITIONAL) MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

A total of 124 credits are required for the Nursing, BSN (Traditional).

MATH

Code	Title	Credits
MATH 112	College Algebra	3

NURSING CORE

Code	Title	Credits
NURSING/ SOC WORK 105	Health Care Systems: Interdisciplinary Approach	2
NURSING 313	Foundations of Nursing Practice	3
NURSING 314	Essentials of Health Promotion, Prevention, and Wellness in Person-Centered Care	3
NURSING 315	Professionalism in Nursing Practice	2
NURSING 316	Foundations of Nursing Practice: Experiential Learning	4
NURSING 317	Pharmacology Essentials for Nursing Practice	3
NURSING 318	Pathophysiology Essentials for Nursing Practice	3
NURSING 323	Developing Clinical Judgment in Nursing Practice: Health and Illness Concepts	4
NURSING 324	Meeting the Psychosocial Health Needs of Individuals, Families, and Communities	3
NURSING 326	Foundations of Nursing Practice: Experiential Learning II	4
NURSING 430	Perinatal Nursing	2
NURSING 431	Nursing Care of Children & their Families	2
NURSING 432	Population Health Nursing	2
NURSING 433	Nursing Care of the Older Adult	2
NURSING 436	Advanced Experiential Learning I	4
NURSING 438	Informatics and Health Technologies for Nursing Practice	1
NURSING 443	Advancing Clinical Judgment in Nursing Practice: Complex Health and Illness Concepts	4
NURSING 445	Transition to Practice	1
NURSING 446	Advanced Experiential Learning II	4
NURSING 448	Leadership in the Profession of Nursing	2
NURSING 447	Scholarship for Evidence-Based Practice	2
Total Credits		**57**

HONORS IN THE MAJOR

First-year Traditional BSN students can apply to the BSN Honors in the Major. Applying to the Nursing Honors in the Major includes completing an essay prompt about how engagement in nursing research would enhance your career. For complete information on how to apply and application details, review the Honors program page. Questions about the application should be directed to Academic Affairs.

HONORS IN THE MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

Complete the following courses in addition to the major requirements.

Code	Title	Credits
NURSING 679	Nursing Honors Research Seminar	2
NURSING 681	Senior Honors Thesis	1-2
NURSING 682	Senior Honors Thesis	1-2

LEARNING OUTCOMES

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Promote health and manage illness by providing safe, client-centered, culturally congruent care across the lifespan in a variety of health care settings.
2. Employ professional nursing leadership concepts to address patient care and system needs to promote quality health care outcomes and health equity for all.
3. Make effective use of technology for patient care, education, and management of health information.
4. Understand the roles and scope of practice of disciplines of the health care team and practice as an effective, collaborating member of the interprofessional team.
5. Use knowledge sources effectively to provide evidence-based care.
6. Identify health disparities and advocate for basic essential health services for all.
7. Allocate health care resources to maximize the health care benefit to clients, families, and community.
8. Assume fiscal and ethical responsibility for clinical practice.
9. Function as a member of the nursing profession within the community and the world.

FOUR-YEAR PLAN

FOUR-YEAR PLAN

Below is a sample four-year plan. There are many potential variations of this plan, especially in the pre-nursing years. The degree requires 124 credits minimum which could be more than 15 credits per semester depending on individual situations.

Freshman

Fall	Credits	Spring	Credits
Chemistry and/or Math	3	Chemistry and/or Math	5
PSYCH 202 (or SOC or Human Growth & Development course)	3-4	PSYCH 202 (or SOC or Human Growth & Development course)	3-4
Core General Education Requirements	3	Core General Education Requirements	3
Humanities, or Social Science, or Electives	6	Humanities, or Social Science, or Electives	6
NURSING/ SOC WORK 105 (if taken in a FIG)*	2	NURSING/ SOC WORK 105 (if not completed previously)*	2
	15		**17**

Sophomore

Fall	Credits	Spring	Credits
Human Anatomy	3	Human Physiology	4-5

Core General Education Requirements or Parallel Plan Courses	3	Core General Education Requirements or Parallel Plan Courses	3
PSYCH 202 (or SOC or Human Growth & Development course)	3-4	PSYCH 202 (or SOC or Human Growth & Development course)	3-4
Humanities, or Social Science, or Electives	8	Humanities, or Social Science, or Electives	6
NURSING/ SOC WORK 105 (if not completed previously)*	2	NURSING/ SOC WORK 105 ((if not completed previously)*)	2
	17		**16-18**

Junior

Fall	**Credits**	**Spring**	**Credits**
NURSING 313	4	NURSING/ SOC WORK 105 (if not completed previously)*	2
NURSING 315	2	NURSING 314	3
NURSING 316	3	NURSING 323	4
NURSING 317	3	NURSING 326	4
NURSING 318	3	NURSING 447	2
	15		**15**

Senior

Fall	**Credits**	**Spring**	**Credits**
NURSING 324	3	NURSING 430	2
NURSING 431	2	NURSING 432	2
NURSING 433	2	NURSING 443	4
NURSING 436	4	NURSING 445	1
NURSING 438	1	NURSING 446	4
		NURSING 448	2
	12		**15**

Total Credits 122-124

*It is recommended to complete NURSING/SOC WORK 105 before starting the nursing program if possible.

ADVISING AND CAREERS

ADVISING AND CAREERS

The School of Nursing's advising team helps students identify academic pathways and educational goals to aid in developing meaningful plans to ensure academic and career success. We believe that advising is an ongoing, caring, and collaborative relationship between advisor and student that provides meaning, guidance, and support throughout the educational process.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

All students are assigned an academic advisor based on the nursing or pre-nursing program with which they are affiliated. Detailed information on the school's advising structure and staff is available on the School of Nursing's academic advising website. (https://students.nursing.wisc.edu/undergraduate-menu/undergraduate-advising/)

CAREER ADVISING

The School of Nursing offers extensive career advising services which provide resources and strategies for career readiness and licensure planning. This includes workshops, career fairs, resume review, prospective employment resources, and licensure information. More information about career advising is available on the School of Nursing's career advising website (https://students.nursing.wisc.edu/career-advising/career/).

STUDENT SUPPORT

The School of Nursing offers academic support, leadership & connection, mentorship, and wellness throughout the student experience. Additionally, admitted nursing students have access to onsite UHS mental health services. Information about student support is available on the School of Nursing's student support website. (https://students.nursing.wisc.edu/career-advising/nursing-learning-center/)

CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE

CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE

Earning the bachelor of science in nursing degree is the first step toward becoming a Registered Nurse. Graduates must also take and and pass the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX-RN) to receive their nursing license and begin their careers as nurses in hospitals, community health and mental health agencies, industrial health centers, nursing homes, family planning centers, crisis care centers, and beyond. A nursing license gives an individual permission to practice nursing, granted by the state where he or she met the requirements.

The School of Nursing works with students as they complete graduation requirements and the two-step process to register for the NCLEX. Specifically the school verifies graduation and assists students as they register for the exam. Most students take the NCLEX within three months of graduation. More than 90 percent of School of Nursing graduates pass the NCLEX on first attempt.

NCLEX-RN PASS RATES

National Council of State Boards of Nursing NCLEX-RN (https://www.ncsbn.org/nclex.htm)

Year of Exam	UW-Madison Graduates: First Attempt	Nationa First Attemp
April-September 2025	93%	87%
April-September 2024	96%	91%
April-September 2023	96%	81%

Note: UW-Madison BSN Graduates pass rate reflects all UW-Madison Bachelor of Science-Nursing graduates who tested during the April-to-September test period for the first time, including recent and previous graduates.

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE DISCLOSURE (NC-SARA)

The United States Department of Education (via 34 CFR Part 668 (https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-VI/part-668/?toc=1)) requires institutions that provide distance education to disclose information for programs leading to professional certification or licensure.

The expectation is that institutions will determine whether each applicable academic program meets state professional licensure requirements and provide a general disclosure of such on an official university website.

Professional licensure requirements vary from state-to-state and can change year-to-year; they are established in a variety of state statutes, regulations, rules, and policies; and they center on a range of educational requirements, including degree type, specialized accreditation, total credits, specific courses, and examinations.

UW-Madison has taken reasonable efforts to determine whether this program satisfies the educational requirements for certification/licensure in states where prospective and enrolled students are located and is disclosing that information as follows.

Disclaimer: This information is based on the most recent annual review of state agency certification/licensure data and is subject to change. All students are strongly encouraged to consult with the individual/office listed in the Contact Information box on this page and with the applicable state agency for specific information.

The requirements of this program meet certification/licensure requirements in the following states:

Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, District of Columbia, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands

The requirements of this program do not meet certification/licensure requirements in the following states:

California, New York

Updated: 1 June 2026

RESOURCES AND SCHOLARSHIPS

RESOURCES

Signe Skott Cooper Hall

The School of Nursing is located in Signe Skott Cooper Hall. The building features world-class technology and innovative educational spaces that will allow the nursing school to address health care's new standard of excellence—high-tech and high-touch methods and practices that result in better patient outcomes.

Office of Academic Affairs

The Office of Academic Affairs functions as the academic dean's office for the School of Nursing. Staff members interpret school regulations, policies, and program requirements; make exceptions around requirements and deadlines; advise prospective and current students; monitor and support students having academic difficulties; coordinate compliance; facilitate the admissions process; and maintain the official files of students in the school.

Academic and Career Advising

The School of Nursing provides dedicated, professional academic and career advising to undergraduate students in their pre-nursing and nursing years. Detailed information can be found on each individual degree guide page and on the School of Nursing's Student Website (https://students.nursing.wisc.edu/).

Academic Support Services

Career & Student Success (https://students.nursing.wisc.edu/support-assistance/nursing-learning-center/) is available at the School of Nursing. Students can utilize support by Student Success course TAs and peer led study groups.

Student Support Services

Information about student support: academic and non-academic resources, policies, forms, clinicals, and compliance can be found on the School of Nursing's Student Website (https://students.nursing.wisc.edu/).

Student Organizations

The School of Nursing encourages and supports students to pursue their interests and form social networks. Information about nursing specific student organizations can be found on the School of Nursing's Student Website (https://students.nursing.wisc.edu/). You can also find more opportunities by going to the Wisconsin Involvement Network (https://win.wisc.edu/organizations/) page.

Scholarships and Financial Aid

The School of Nursing offers a generous scholarship program to incoming and current School of Nursing students. All School of Nursing applicants and current students are highly encouraged to apply for scholarships.

Applications will be considered for all School of Nursing scholarships depending on a variety of factors, including: academic achievement, financial need, leadership experiences, community involvement, personal qualifications, and career interests.

Students are invited to apply to nursing-specific scholarships, as well as campus-wide or non-nursing scholarships, through the Wisconsin Scholarship Hub or WiSH (http://scholarships.wisc.edu/Scholarships/). For more information, see the School of Nursing website (https://students.nursing.wisc.edu/undergraduate-menu/scholarship-aid/).

In addition, university scholarships, loans, and employment are available through the Office of Student Financial Aid (https://financialaid.wisc.edu/) for additional information about financing your education.

ACCREDITATION

ACCREDITATION

The baccalaureate degree program in nursing at the University of Wisconsin - Madison is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (http://www.ccneaccreditation.org).

Next accreditation review: 2029–2030.