

Practical Nursing Program Frequently Asked Questions

Revised 10-2-2014

1. What if I want/need to go part-time for the Practical Nursing (PN) Program? Is that possible?
 - a. There are two options for the PN program either 9 months (fall and spring) or 12 months (spring and fall with summer off).
2. Are there any Practical Nursing (PN) courses available on line? If so which are available online?
 - a. Yes there are several PNUR courses available completely online
 - b. Courses available online include:
 - i. PNUR 1130 Life Span (1 credit)
 - ii. *PNUR 1132 Infection Control (1 credit)
 - iii. *PNUR 1138 Medical Terminology (1 credit)
 - iv. PNUR 1140 Medication Calculation for Healthcare Professionals (1 credit)
 - v. PNUR 1166 Gerontological Nursing (2 credits)
 - vi. *these two courses are not program requirements, but are helpful in preparing for the program and learning more about nursing if you are unsure!
3. Where can I get CPR training? Is there a special course I should get for the Practical Nursing (PN) Program?
 - a. CPR training is held at many area Hospitals; call the education department of the hospital in your area. It is also offered through CLC customized training: EMTS 1503: CPR for Health Care Professional.
 - b. The CPR course that you need as a prerequisite for admission to the PN program is either courses listed below. These are the ONLY courses accepted for the CPR requirement in the nursing programs at CLC:
American Heart Associate: Health Care Provider
American Red Cross: Professional Rescuer
4. What programs are offered for the Practical Nursing (PN) Program, when do they start and on what campuses?
 - a. Practical Nursing at Central Lakes College offers two program choice start dates at each campus, program plans are listed on the PN web page found at: http://www.clcmn.edu/directory/practical_nursing/ and include:
 - i. Fall full time start at the Brainerd campus (begins in August and ends in May of the following year).
 - ii. Fall full time start at the Staples campus (begins in August and ends in May of the following year).
 - iii. Spring full time at the Brainerd campus (begins in spring, summer off and ends in December)
 - iv. Spring full time at the Staples campus (begins in spring, summer off and ends in December)
5. What if I want to be an LPN in North Dakota? Do I need to do something different in the program or take different courses?

- a. For licensure with another state you need to contact that states' Board of Nursing.
6. When is the Practical Nursing (PN) Program orientation held? Is it mandatory? How do I find out about it?
 - a. The PN Program orientation is held at either CLC campus.
 - b. PN Program orientation is mandatory.
 - c. When you are accepted to the PN Program you will receive a letter from the admissions department. When the mandatory orientation has been scheduled you will receive a letter providing the date and time. Fall orientation is held in early summer, spring orientation is held in October or November.
7. Do I need to take any courses prior to admission to the Practical Nursing (PN) program? If so, what are they?
 - a. Yes you do need to take some prerequisites to meet the admission criteria for acceptance into the PN Program.
 - b. The prerequisites are:
 - CPR: Health Care Provider or Professional Rescuer
 - BIOL 1404 Human Biology (3cr)
 - OR
 - BIOL 2467* Anatomy & Physiology I (4cr)
 - AND
 - BIOL 2468* Anatomy & Physiology II (4cr)
 - ENGL 1410 Composition I (4 cr.)
 - NSGA 1110 Nursing Assistant (3cr)
 - OR
 - Original Certificate of Completion of the Minnesota Department of Health approved 75 hour Nursing Assistant Course
 - PNUR 1130 Life Span (1 credit, online)
 - PNUR 1140 Medication Calculation for Healthcare Professionals (1 credit, classroom or online)
8. What other application requirements are there for admission to the Practical Nursing Program?
 - a. Completed application form for admission to the Practical Nursing Program
 - b. Pass the **TEAS** Test (Test of Essential Academic Skills)
 - c. The minimum TEAS cut score for entry to the PN program is 50%. If a student's score falls below 50%, the student may retake the TEAS test. The test may be taken up to three times. If the TEAS test is not passed with a score of 50% in three attempts, the student will be ineligible for entry into the PN program at CLC for a year, during that time students are encouraged to remediate and study for the TEAS test.
9. For more information on the TEAS test see the link information from the program web page at https://catalognavigator.clcmn.edu/App_Themes/CLCMN_2011/PDFs/PNTEASstest.pdf
10. What is I am having trouble passing the TEAS test?
 - a. There is a study guide available in the learning center.
 - b. The study guide may be purchased in the book store on the Brainerd campus.
 - c. A professional tutor is available in the learning center.

- d. TEAS test study groups may be available in the learning center by arrangement.
11. Can I talk with someone to get information about the Practical Nursing (PN) Programs available at Central Lakes College (CLC) before I apply? If so, who? How do I find out about them?
 - a. You can contact Rose Tretter in advising (218-855-8036); rtretter@clcmn.edu
 - b. You can contact Connie Frisch, Director of Nursing (218-855-8147); cfrisch@clcmn.edu
 12. Is there a Practical Nursing (PN) Program spring term start option?
 - a. See answer to #4, above.
 13. Is there a Practical Nursing (PN) Program part time option?
 - a. See answer to #4, above.
 14. Where can I find the Practical Nursing (PN) Program planning forms?
 15. These are found via a link at this web page:
<https://catalognavigator.clcmn.edu/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=viewcatalog&topicgroupid=1231&entitytype=CDD&entityid=1200&loaduseredits=False>
 16. Where can I find the Practical Nursing (PN) Program Handbook?
 - a. The PN Program Handbook is found via a link at this web page:
<https://catalognavigator.clcmn.edu/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=viewcatalog&topicgroupid=1231&entitytype=CDD&entityid=1200&loaduseredits=False>
 17. What is included in the Practical Nursing (PN) Program Handbook?
 18. To know what is included in the handbook, please view the handbook from the link found at the PN program web page:
<https://catalognavigator.clcmn.edu/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=viewcatalog&topicgroupid=1231&entitytype=CDD&entityid=1200&loaduseredits=False>
 19. What nursing classes can I take prior to being admitted to the Practical Nursing (PN) Program?
 - a. The prerequisites to the PN Program are listed at #7 above.
 - b. NSGA 1110 (Nursing Assistant) is a prerequisite;
 - c. the following four PNUR courses are taken as pre-requisites to the program
 - i. PNUR 1130 Life Span
 - ii. PNUR 1140 Medication Calculation for Healthcare Professionals
 - d. The following two courses may be taken prior to acceptance to the program if desired (see answer to #2 above).
 - i. PNUR 1132 Infection Control
 - ii. PNUR 1138 Medical Terminology
 20. Are there any additional fees associated with the Practical Nursing (PN) Program?
 - a. There are several fees that are included in the nursing courses as part of a differential tuition including:
 - i. Liability insurance
 - ii. Criminal background check
 - iii. Lab equipment and supplies
 - iv. Assessment Technologies Incorporated (ATI) Assessment testing is and ATI NCLEX-RN review course.
 21. Are there any special requirements associated with the Practical Nursing (PN) Program?
 - a. There are several special requirements associated with the PN program

- i. Admission to the PN program involves taking the TEAS test within the last two years and meeting cut score admission criteria (see PN Handbook and #7 above)
 - ii. Students entering the PN Program must complete an immunization record and health form (see PN Handbook) and this record must be complete before registering for your courses (the clinical sites need this information 5 weeks prior to your first clinical day)
 - iii. Students entering the PN Program must pass a criminal background study (see PN handbook) and this record must be complete before registering for your courses (the clinical sites need this information 5 weeks prior to your first clinical day)
 - iv. There is a dress code for nursing lab and clinical (see PN handbook)
 - v. There are many policies associated with the PN program including a clinical absence policy, confidentiality, a drug testing policy and more (see PN handbook)
22. If I am a Practical Nursing (PN) student at one campus, will I be able to take all of my required course work at that campus?
- a. Yes, all the PNUR classroom courses are planned to be available at the campus you have been accepted to, alternate plans may be made if enrollment drops (such as combining all students at one campus for courses)
23. Where are the Practical Nursing (PN) program clinical sites?
- a. There are many clinical sites that a nursing student may be assigned to including clinics, long term care, home care etc. but
 - i. The five main Hospital sites are:
 1. Cuyuna Regional Medical Center in Crosby
 2. Lakewood Health System in Staples
 3. Riverwood Health Care Center in Aitkin
 4. St. Gabriel's Hospital in Little Falls
 - ii. The main Long Term Care sites are:
 1. Lakewood Health System in Staples
 2. Aicota in Aitkin
 3. St. Otto's in Little Falls
 4. Bethany Good Samaritan System in Brainerd
 5. Woodland Good Samaritan System in Brainerd
24. How are Practical Nursing (PN) students assigned to the sites?
- a. Students register for their clinical sites once they have completed all the required information needed 5 weeks in advance of the first clinical day (see #21 above)
25. Is the Practical Nursing (PN) Program offered online, evenings or weekends?
- a. No, the PN program is not offered online, evenings or weekends.
 - b. There are four PNUR courses that are offered completely online:
 - i. PNUR 1130 (Life Span, 1 credit)
 - ii. PNUR 1140 Medication Calculations for Healthcare Professionals (1 credit)
 - iii. *PNUR 1132 (Infection Control, 1 credit)

- iv. *PNUR 1138 (Medical Terminology, 1 credit)
 - v. PNUR 1166 Gerontological Nursing (2 credits)
 - vi. *not program requirements (see # 2 above)
- c. Some PN clinical sections may be offered in the evenings partially or completely.
26. What convictions will disqualify me from becoming getting my nursing license in Minnesota?
- a. To answer this question the prospective student will need to contact the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Licensing Division @ 444 Lafayette Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155-3842; phone: (651)296-3971; web address: www.dhs.state.mn.us.
27. What are the approximate total costs of the Practical Nursing (PN) Program including tuition/fees, books, supplies, uniforms, etc.?
- a. Total approximate cost changes every year related to tuition costs, book costs, number of credits taken, etc.
 - a. Generally two uniforms tops (white) and pants (black scrubs), one pair of white shoes and one (white) lab coat will meet the uniform requirements and should run about \$100-\$150. A uniform purchasing system is available in the CLC Bookstores and financial aid may be used for purchasing these items.
 - b. Books are generally most expensive for the first semester (many books are used again in most subsequent PNUR courses), first semester books may be \$800-\$1000.
 - c. Equipment necessary includes a watch with a second hand, a stethoscope and bandage scissors. Total costs for these vary a great deal. These items are available for purchase in the CLC Bookstore and financial aid may be used for purchasing them. The Nursing Club usually offers a stethoscope purchase in the fall allowing students to purchase a quality stethoscope with choices of price range.
28. How do nursing licenses transfer between states?
- a. Licensed nursing (or nursing student seeking to become licensed in any state) must contact each state's Board of Nursing to determine this.
29. What are the top things that current or former students report they needed to know before entering the Practical Nursing (PN) Program?
- a. Check online class schedules immediately when the semester begins. Look through all seated class schedules and write everything down in a planner. There could be a test or paper due very quickly. Don't let it be a surprise.
 - b. It seems that around mid-semester; there are about 100 things due at once. Use the less busy times to prepare.
 - c. Know that it takes more time to study than you would originally think. It's not impossible, you just have to stay organized and focused
 - d. Stay on top of your homework assignments as much as possible. It can be overwhelming but it's a lot better to get it done right away rather than stressing and doing it at the last minute. If you have questions, ask your instructors and talk with them if you're feeling behind or confused on something. Make sure you understand the information because everything you've learned you need to know at some point whether it is on finals, boards or when you start working. If you don't ask question and clarify, you'll be missing something important that can really make a difference in the future.

- e. Stay on top of school work because you won't be able to "float" through the program... it's difficult. Use resources when you have question.
 - f. You need to have time management skills. You do a lot of studying outside of class. Get to know your fellow students, you will spend a lot of time with them, study groups do help. Take the time to talk to students who have already been through the course. It's a lot of hard work and takes up a lot of your time but it's well worth it.
 - g. Time management skills. If you procrastinate on your studies it shows. The program is hard work, and it takes a lot of time, so you need to be able to prioritize.
 - h. Be organized, have all things in order; example: immunization forms, keep CPR and Mantoux up to date, don't wait to be reminded, you may fall behind in clinical or be in danger of being out of the program if you don't keep your information up to date.
30. What information would current Practical Nursing (PN) students like to share with incoming students?
- a. For each credit taken it isn't the usual 2 hours of outside classroom time studying I would say it is 3 hours each credit taken
 - b. If you have a family, you will need a support person or persons. You will need to have time to get your assignments done and you will have to be able to prioritize. It is going to take away from the time you would normally spend with your family. It is difficult to balance home and school. I had no idea coming into the course how many papers were required in the first semester and how many role plays we would need to do. You are going to want to know your math and comp before you start 😊. This is a program that demands you work for your grade and all of the classes are needed to help you become the best nurse possible. Work ahead whenever possible. I worked ahead on my med cards, so instead of spending time doing them the night before they were due I could study for other tests or do other homework
 - c. It's hard work, but hopefully you will love and enjoy becoming a nurse as much as I did. I know that if nursing wasn't something I had a passion for I probably wouldn't have made it through. Also to really take the time and read every chapter assignment that is given to you and keep up once you fall behind it is near impossible to catch up and take the time to know your med terminology it really helps on everything
 - d. Your family life will suffer some. You will find yourself awake at 3 a.m. and then log onto D2L and notice that half of your cohort is on also! I don't even watch TV anymore because there is not time for it. If you find yourself with extra time on your hands, jump ahead and start researching for your paper or work ahead. Any little bit helps. Remember to find some time for yourself before you get too overwhelmed. You don't want to stress your body out.
 - e. Everything seems overwhelming at first. You may ask yourself, "Why am I subjecting myself to all this?" However, it does get better and more manageable as time goes on. Change your current way of thinking. What you have seen, done, overheard, thought or previously learned, may not be the right answer. Challenge your instructors. Keep them on their toes and always ask questions if you don't understand something. They should respond to your desire to learn. Go to any NCLEX-PN practice tests.

- f. Stay calm, be positive and you will be just fine. You will get out of classes what you put into them so study in ways that work for you. Put the effort into each class and you will soar.
- g. Program is hard; the teachers ask a lot of you, as they should. They are understanding and will go above and beyond to help you understand things. Attend all classes