

# Oregon State University | College of Public Health and Human Sciences

## PRE-NURSING

### Does Oregon State University have a nursing program?

No, but we offer the prerequisite courses that will allow you to apply to nursing schools in Oregon and elsewhere.

### Can I get a bachelor's degree in Pre-Nursing at OSU?

No. Students are encouraged to major in a subject that interests them and add in the general pre-requisites. Schools in Oregon vary, let alone across the country, so it will require some investigation into specific schools to make sure you are getting the courses needed for the program(s) you are interested in. Although it is possible to simply do the pre-reqs to get into nursing school, it is **highly** competitive, and students should have a major they will enjoy pursuing should they not be accepted in the first or second try. College of Public Health and College of Liberal Arts have majors that incorporate many of the pre-reqs:

- Public Health
- Human Development & Family Studies
- Nutrition
- Kinesiology
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Anthropology
- Spanish

### Do I need to take Bacc Core courses for the pre-nursing program?

Many of the pre-requisite courses for nursing school also fulfill OSU Bacc Core categories. Students who intend to complete a four-year degree at OSU before pursuing nursing school should choose courses that will meet both the pre-nursing requirements as well as the Bacc Core.

Students who hope to transfer to nursing school after two-three years at OSU do not need to focus on additional Bacc Core courses; however, many of the pre-reqs can easily fulfill categories of the bacc core simultaneously. Students who complete their degree at another institution will have to meet that school's general education requirements, not OSU's.

### What is the difference between a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing (BSN) and an Associate's Degree in Nursing (ADN)

The BSN is granted by a college or university. Six Oregon universities offer the BSN. These programs usually require about two years of prerequisite course work prior to admission. Some also require satisfactory scores on nursing school preadmission tests.

An Associate's Degree in Nursing (ADN) is granted by a two-year college. In Oregon, 17 community colleges offer associate programs. These programs require some course work prior to admission and some require satisfactory scores on nursing school pre-admission tests.

### Why seek a BSN degree?

While graduates of associate degree programs are qualified to provide direct patient care, a BSN opens doors to more open nursing positions and ultimately more career options and earning potential. Many job postings for nursing positions now list the BSN as a preference, if not a requirement. Additionally, organizations such as the American Nurses Association are now recognizing the BSN as the minimum educational requirement for professional nursing. Many hospitals are requiring ADNs to go back to school to earn their BS or BA degree.

A BSN is a prerequisite to most advanced practice nursing programs. To become a nurse practitioner, a nurse anesthetist, or most other types of advanced practice nurse, a master's degree is ultimately required.

### **How long does it take to get a BSN degree? An ADN?**

A BSN degree takes a minimum of four years. Most nursing schools operate on what is called a 2+2 program: two years are usually spent in a pre-nursing program taking prerequisite courses, and two more years are spent in the nursing program. OHSU and its partner universities in the Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education (OCNE) offer a 1+3 program, where students complete at least 45 credits of prerequisites and then three years in the nursing program. However, many students take longer than one year to complete the OHSU prerequisites for a variety of reasons (see below).

Many students are now completing a four-year bachelor's degree in another major first before applying to an **Accelerated BSN (or ABS) program** or a **Direct-entry Master's Degree** in Nursing; these programs are designed specifically for students who already have a bachelor's degree in any major. An ADN usually takes about three years of general education and nursing courses

### **How does an Accelerated BSN work?**

An Accelerated BSN program is designed for students who currently have or will have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution with a major other than nursing. They focus solely on the nursing courses/clinical work required to get a BSN. These programs will prepare the graduate for R.N. licensure and will also give interested students the necessary credentials to pursue a graduate degree in nursing. At the completion of the Bachelor of Science Nursing curriculum, students would earn a second B.S. degree and be eligible for professional registered nurse licensing examinations. Typically, these programs run ~18 months (five quarters) of full-time nursing coursework, often starting summer term. Currently, there are two Accelerated BSN programs in Oregon - Linfield and OHSU (Portland and Ashland campus).

### **What are the BSN programs in Oregon?**

Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) offers programs at its Portland campus as well as its partner universities in the Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education (OCNE) around the state (see below). Other BSN programs in OR are Eastern Oregon University (La Grande); Western Oregon University (Monmouth); Southern Oregon University (Ashland); and Oregon Institute of Technology (Klamath Falls).

Several community colleges in Oregon are also partners in the Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education (OCNE) and in addition to the ADN offer the OHSU bachelor's degree on their campus with similar prerequisite and entry requirements: Clackamas Community College (Oregon City); Mt. Hood Community College (Gresham); Lane Community College (Eugene); Southwestern Oregon Community College (Coos Bay); Rogue Community College (Grants Pass); Umpqua Community College (Roseburg); Portland Community College (Portland); and Blue Mountain Community College (Pendleton).

There are four private nursing schools in Oregon, all in the Portland area: Concordia University, George Fox University, Linfield College and University of Portland.

### **Can I complete my OHSU prerequisites in one year at OSU?**

As noted above, the structure of OHSU and its partner universities in the Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education (OCNE) is unique. Students are expected to complete at least 45 credits of prerequisites and then three years in the nursing program, instead of the more traditional 2+2 model. However, this prerequisite requirement does not account for courses that must be completed before taking some of those nursing prerequisites. A good example is that students must typically have sophomore standing to take Human Anatomy and Physiology.

Additionally, OCNE schools require students to complete at least 30 college credits of prerequisite courses by the end of Fall Term during the year they apply. Therefore, unless first-year college students have at least 15 college credits earned in high school that fulfill OCNE prerequisites, they must wait to apply to OCNE programs until their second year in college.

### **What are my options if I don't get into nursing school?**

Because of the competitive nature of nursing school admissions, it's possible that even a strong applicant may not be admitted on his or her first attempt. It's a good idea to have a back-up plan in case this happens. For most pre-nursing students, this means completing a bachelor's degree at OSU and then trying to go to nursing school. See above for some of the more common majors that students have chosen. A bachelor's degree can provide a broader educational background and more maturity before nursing school, as well as an opportunity for students to raise their GPA and gain more work or volunteer experience.

Students who complete a bachelor's degree **in any major** are eligible to apply not only to traditional nursing school transfer programs, they may also pursue accelerated BSN programs or direct-entry master's degree in nursing programs. These programs are designed specifically for students who already have a bachelor's degree in any major. The accelerated BSN is typically 18 months long, and the direct-entry MSN programs are at least two or three years depending on the focus of the program.

### **Do out-of-state BSN programs accept Oregon residents?**

Admission into some out-of-state public institutions is more competitive than in-state schools. For example, many public universities in the University of California/California State University systems do not accept applications from out-of-state residents. Private nursing schools usually give out-of-state students the same admissions consideration as in-state students. OSU students have recently been accepted to out-of-state nursing schools at Johns Hopkins University, Hawaii Pacific University and Nevada State College (among others). The requirements listed for Oregon nursing schools will meet MOST of the prerequisites for out-of-state schools. Students are responsible for checking the requirements of any school to which they wish to apply.

### **How much does nursing school cost?**

OHSU School of Nursing

ABSN (OR resident) 5 quarters: ~\$41-44,000

Concordia College

ABSN (16 mo) ~75\$,000 \*BSN must first be admitted to undergrad non-nursing to apply

Linfield College

undergrad BSN (2 yr TR) \$112,000;  
ABSN (15 mo) \$106,082

University of Portland

Undergrad BSN (2 yr TR) \$105,000

George Fox University

Undergrad BSN (must first be admitted to undergrad non-nursing program to apply)  
(2 yr TR) \$132,000

There are other factors to consider beyond "sticker price." First of all, most private school nursing students receive financial aid. Many of OSU's pre-nursing students in recent years have received private school scholarships totaling \$10,000 or more.

Additionally, although the private schools' tuition is higher, their programs are all one year shorter than OHSU's, which means that private school students are out in the nursing workforce one year earlier than OHSU students.

Due to the nursing shortage, some hospitals and medical facilities will give scholarships or forgivable loans for part of your nursing school education in return for a work commitment for a specified period of time (most notably the Providence Scholarship through the University of Portland). The state of Oregon also has loan repayment programs for nursing school graduates who can commit to a few years of nursing in designated critical-healthcare-shortage areas (such as some counties in Eastern Oregon). However, these arrangements are binding, and students who can't fulfill these commitments will be expected to repay the loan or scholarship money awarded to them.

Because of these factors, it is important for students not to decide where to apply based on "sticker price" alone! Students who are seeking financial aid should file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon after January 1 as possible.

**When are the application deadlines?**

Application deadlines for most Oregon schools are in January or February for fall and/or spring enrollment dates. George Fox University typically has an October 1 application deadline for a January enrollment date. Out-of-state application deadlines will vary. Students are responsible for checking the deadlines and other requirements of any school to which they wish to apply.