

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Nursing Programs

1. *I am interested in applying to one of the nursing programs at VGCC. What do I do first?*

1. Please follow the steps for General Admission to the College:

http://www.vgcc.edu/admissionoffice/general_admissions

Indicate the Associate Degree Nursing Program, Practical Nursing Program or LPN to ADN Transition Program as your Desired Program of Study.

2. Once accepted you will be listed as an Associate in General Education-Science (AGE-S) or “Pre-Health Student.” This means you are completing the admission requirements to be considered for admission to a nursing program. You will also receive an information packet in the mail with instructions on how to use VGCC services, such as Student Email. Once you have been accepted to the college we require the use of your VGCC student email in all communications.
3. You will then begin working on your Eligibility Checklist with a pre-health advisor. You may work with any advisor in the Student Success Centers at the Main, Franklin, or South campuses. Completion of the Eligibility Checklist correctly and thoroughly by the posted deadline is required to be considered for admission. A point system is utilized to determine who is accepted to the programs.
4. After the deadline for the Eligibility Checklist has passed the Health Sciences Admissions Coordinator will work with the Department Chair of Nursing to determine who is accepted based on the point system and the number of spots available (VGCC accepts approximately 55 students into the ADN program, 40 students into the PN program, and 16 students into the LPN to ADN Transition Program each year). Students will be notified via mail if accepted approximately 3 weeks after the Eligibility Checklist deadline has passed. **Please refrain from calling the Health Sciences Admissions Coordinator or the Department Chair of Nursing to ask if you have been selected during this timeframe.**

2. *Am I required to be a CNA I in order to get in? Do I have to keep it while in the program?*

Yes, VGCC requires students to be listed on the NC Registry as a CNA I with no findings on the registry. Students are also required to complete a NA-I State Approved Training Program prior to being listed on the registry. Most community colleges offer NA-I State Approved Training Programs. A list of approved training programs can be found at:

<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dhsr/hcpr/pdf/trainingprograms.pdf>

More information on the CNA I registry can be found at:

<https://www.ncnar.org/ncna.html>

We require students to keep their CNA I certification current during the first year of the program. At the completion of the first year, students are eligible to be listed as an NA II on the North Carolina Board of Nursing registry. We strongly encourage students to obtain the NA II certification when the opportunity is present. In order to be listed as an NA II, students must keep their CNA I registry current. Unfortunately, the clinical hours required in the nursing program cannot be used as the 8-hour paid work requirement for the CNA I registry.

3. Is there an Admissions Test?

The nursing programs use the TEAS V (Test of Essential Academic Skills) as the admissions test, provided by ATI Testing. If you have taken the TEAS test at another school, you may have your official score sent to VGCC. TEAS test scores are valid for 5 years. If you took the TEAS test over 5 years ago, you must repeat the test. You may take the test multiple times to improve your score. It is recommended that you use the following study tools to help you prepare for the TEAS test:

TEAS V Study Guide: <http://www.atitesting.com/solutions/prenursingschool/teas/studyguide.aspx>

TEAS V Online Practice Test:

<http://www.atitesting.com/solutions/prenursingschool/teas/practice-test.aspx>

Learning Strategies: Your Guide to Classroom and Test-Taking Success:

https://www.atitesting.com/ati_store/product.aspx?zpid=1168

4. What is the Points System and how do I have the best chances of getting in?

The Points System is a way for VGCC to select the most qualified candidates for the nursing programs. The Points System is made up of four criteria: TEAS score; BIO 168 grade for ADN and LPN to ADN Transition, and BIO 106 grade for PN; high school GPA; and County of Residence. We recommend a score of at least 70% for admission to the nursing programs. The higher the TEAS score, the better chances of being accepted.

For the BIO classes, you should strive to get an “A” or “B” as more points are awarded for higher grades.

5. Is there a GPA required for program admission?

A 2.5 or higher Program Specific GPA is required for admission. To calculate your program specific GPA you take the grades and the credit hour of the related courses

required for the programs (BIO, ENG, PSY, etc) ONLY and calculate your GPA. You may use this website to calculate your program specific GPA:

<http://www.sfsu.edu/~gradstdy/gpa-calculator-sfsu.htm>

6. *How long is the program?*

The ADN program is 2-years and the PN program is 1 ½ years in length. Many students start to take classes prior to program entry. Even if you have completed related classes prior to program entry, the length of the program remains the same due to the number of NUR courses.

7. *Do I have to take all my related courses prior to getting into the program?*

It is recommended but not required that you complete as many related courses as possible prior to program entry. Any related courses (BIO, ENG, PSY, etc) not taken prior to program entry will be required to be taken in the semester list in the Program of Study and will increase the load taken by the student during that semester. Related courses must be completed with a “C” or better.

8. *Are a Criminal Background Check and Drug Screen required for program entry? What should I do if I have a criminal record?*

Both a criminal background check and a urine drug screen are required for program admission. The clinical agency will review the criminal background check as well as the drug screen. Clinical agencies, as well as the North Carolina Board of Nursing, consider many factors when reviewing a criminal background. These factors include the type of offense, the timeframe the offense occurred and the repetition of the same or similar offenses (as in a pattern of behavior). A letter of explanation for the charges on a criminal background may be requested in order for the student to be approved to attend clinical. Charges specifically related to drugs, violence, abuse, and felonies will likely be of concern to a clinical agency and may result in the student being denied privileges to attend clinical, therefore resulting in dismissal from the nursing program.

9. *What happens if I don't get in? Will I be on a waiting list for next year?*

VGCC does not use a waiting list for program admissions. Students who do not get in to the program are allowed to re-apply. A new Eligibility Checklist must be completed with the pre-health advisor if the student desires to be considered for the next admission date. We strongly recommend that students who are not selected for the program meet with their pre-health advisor to determine the factors that may have contributed to the nonacceptance. Students should then develop a plan to address those factors or may consider an alternate health sciences program in preparation for a nursing program.

10. What is the schedule like once in the program?

The NUR courses are offered during day time hours, mainly on Mondays-Fridays. Students can expect to be in class, lab and clinicals most days of the week. Most class and labs are held from 8am-4pm. Clinical rotations may require a student to arrive at 6am and stay for a 12-hour period. The schedules for class and labs are posted on WebAdvisor during the registration period. In cases where there is more than one section for a NUR course (usually designating a morning and afternoon lab) students are unable to select the section they desire. This is due to the fact that some students need to take related courses concurrently with the NUR courses. We currently do not offer NUR courses as solely evening or weekend classes.

11. Where will I be going for clinical?

The nursing programs use many clinical facilities to provide a diverse learning experience to students. Most clinical sites are in Vance, Granville, Franklin and Warren counties, however, we do also use clinical sites in Wake, Durham and Person counties. Unfortunately, we are unable to assign clinical sites based on where students live.

12. Will I need a computer while in nursing school?

A computer with internet access is not required but is highly recommended for use while in the program. All NUR courses are Moodle enhanced which requires the use of Moodle via the internet. Students may use the computers at the computer labs on each campus.

13. What if I have to work while in the program?

Due to the amount of class, lab and clinical hours required for the program, we recommend that students work no more than 20 hours per week. In addition to the hours in the class, lab and at clinical, students must complete many hours outside of class spent reading and studying. Many students find it is difficult to work at all while in the program. Your nursing advisor will assess your performance while in the program and ask about your work and study habits. Your advisor may make recommendations based on the assessment in order to assist you with the best possible chances for success.