

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Nursing Programs

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

1. Apply to the college online. Indicate the Associate Degree Nursing Program, Practical Nursing Program, or LPN to ADN Transition Program, or RIBN program as your Desired Program of Study.
2. Once accepted you will be listed as an Associate in General Education-Science (AGE-S). 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 Program Application with a pre-health advisor. Mrs. Tonya Waddle [waddlet@vgcc.edu](mailto:waddlet@vgcc.edu) is the specific advisor at Main campus for the ADN and PN programs; Mrs. Seletha Pherribo is the specific advisor at South Campus for the LPN to ADN Transition Program and the RIBN program. Please make sure that your Program Application is completed thoroughly by the posted deadline as this 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 Program Application the Department Chair of Nursing and/or the ADN Program Head will determine who is accepted based on the point system and the number of spots available (VGCC accepts approximately 48 students into the ADN program, 20 students into the PN program, and 20 students into the LPN to ADN Transition Program each year). Students will be notified via mail if accepted approximately 4 weeks after the deadline has passed. **Please refrain from calling the Nursing Department to ask if you have been selected during this timeframe.**

*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.

If you are not listed on the Registry you will need to either complete a NA-I State Approved Training Program or renew your listing. VGCC offers a state-approved NA I course through our Continuing Education Department. Please visit the Continuing Education website and look for the course offerings under Occupational Healthcare.

We require students to keep their CNA I certification current during the first year of the program. At the successful 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. In order to be listed as an NA II, students must keep their CNA I certification current. Unfortunately, the clinical hours in the nursing programs cannot count as the required work hours for CNA I renewal.

*Is there an Admissions Test?*

The nursing programs use the ATI TEAS (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 only take the test twice (2) in a one-year admission timeframe.

There are resources for the TEAS test available on the ATI Testing website, such as online practice tests.

*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; Points for General Education Courses required for the specific program you are applying for; County of Residence in our four-county service area (Vance, Granville, Franklin, and Warren counties) or a certain percentage of courses taken at VGCC if you live outside our four-county service area; additional healthcare certifications; and WorkingSmart certificate. 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 general education classes, you should strive to get an “A” or “B” as more points are awarded for higher grades.

*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 use the grades and the credit hours of the general courses required for the program you are applying for (BIO, ENG, PSY, ONLY). GPA calculators are available for free on the internet.

*How long are the programs?*

The ADN program is 2-years; the PN program is 1-year; the LPN to ADN program is 1-year; and the RIBN program is 4-years. All the Nursing programs have NUR courses in the Summer semester. 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.

*Do I have to take all my general education courses (sometimes referred to as Pre-requisites) prior to getting into the program?*

It is recommended but not required that you complete as many general education 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. General education courses must be completed with a “C” or better.

*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.

*Is Health Insurance required for the program?*

Yes, our clinical facilities require students have their own health insurance while in the program. We do not require any specific kind of health insurance though. Students can get student health insurance through the Healthcare Marketplace.

*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 Program Application 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 non-acceptance. Students should then develop a plan to address those factors or may consider an alternate health sciences program in preparation for a nursing program.

*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; some clinical may be held in the evening or on the weekend. Unfortunately, we are not able to let students select their clinical sites. We currently do not offer NUR courses as solely evening or weekend classes. Faculty will provide students accepted into the program with a schedule as early as possible, however, schedules are subject to change.

*Where will I be going for clinical?*

The nursing programs use many clinical facilities to provide a diverse learning experience to students. Clinical sites are in Vance, Granville, Franklin and Warren counties, however, we also use clinical sites in counties outside of our service area such as Durham, Wake and Orange. Unfortunately, we are unable to assign clinical sites based on where students live. Students should be prepared to travel to clinical sites, possibly an hour or more from where they live. Carpooling is allowed however, faculty do not facilitate carpools for students.

*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.

*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.