

PATHWAYS TO NURSING

There is no single "right way" to pursue your career in nursing. Explore pre-licensure nursing programs below!



Start here

DO YOU HAVE A BACHELOR'S DEGREE YET?

Yes
(but not in nursing)

No

Academic Degree

ACCELERATED BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN NURSING (ABSN)

MASTER'S ENTRY PROGRAM IN NURSING (MEPN)

ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE IN NURSING (ADN)

BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN NURSING (BSN)

PASS THE TEST AND OBTAIN YOUR LICENSE AS REGISTERED NURSE!

TAKE THE NCLEX-RN
(NATIONAL COUNCIL LICENSURE EXAMINATION FOR REGISTERED NURSES)

VISIT US ONLINE



www.nursing.uci.edu

ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE IN NURSING (ADN)

- An ADN degree provides the opportunity to work standard entry-level nursing positions.
- Can be acquired over the course of 2-3 years and upon completion. Graduates earn an Associate's Degree.
- One disadvantage of only earning an ADN are the rapidly changing standards of hospitals and state boards. Many hospitals only hire nurses that have a BSN or higher.
- Typically found at community colleges and private institutions.

MASTER'S ENTRY PROGRAM IN NURSING (MEPN)

- MEPN-style programs, sometimes called an "Entry-level Master's" (ELMN), allow individuals with a bachelor's degree in a non-nursing discipline to pursue a career in nursing at the graduate-degree level.
- Graduates from ELMN/MEPN programs earn a Master's Degree.
- Most ELMN/MEPN programs are general prelicensure programs and are not "advanced practice" (APRN) programs. However, some programs offer APRN specialized tracks.
- Students can expect to spend approximately 2-3+ years in a ELMN/MEPN program, depending on the type of APRN/specialty track (if any).

BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN NURSING (BSN)

- A BSN degree can be completed between 2-4+ years depending on the point of entry into the program.
- A BSN is a more advanced degree compared to an ADN. Graduates earn a Bachelor's Degree.
- BSN graduates are typically offered a greater variety of positions than RNs that only have an ADN. Many hospitals now require that perspective job applicants have their BSN.
- In California, BSN programs are offered at UC campuses, CSU campuses, and private institutions.

ACCELERATED BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN NURSING (ABSBN)

- ABSN programs allow individuals that already have a bachelor's degree in a non-nursing discipline to pursue an additional accelerated bachelor's degree in nursing.
- ABSN programs are "accelerated" compared to the traditional BSN because students are not required to re-take general education and university requirements.
- ABSN programs can be completed in 1.5-2 years, depending on the specific program.
- In California, ABSN programs are typically found at CSU campuses and private universities.

Selecting the Right Program

- Confirm accreditation! In California, you can check programs here: <https://www.rn.ca.gov/education/rnprograms.shtml>
- Consider what's important to you! Review factors like tuition & fees, degree level, program length, and location.
- Do your research! Contact programs directly with questions early so that you're prepared to apply.

Taking the NCLEX-RN Exam

- All of the types of programs on this sheet prepare students to take the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN).
- The NCLEX-RN exam determines whether or not you have the knowledge to begin practice as an entry-level nurse.
- You obtain a license as a Registered Nurse (RN) in the state you take and pass the exam.