

**Tarrant County College Department of Nursing
Frequently Asked Questions**

What type of program is offered? Tarrant County College (TCC) offers an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Nursing leading to RN licensure.

Is the Nursing Program located on all campuses? No. As of Fall 2011, the Tarrant County Nursing Program is located on the Trinity River East Campus.

Must I have worked in the medical field before I can be an RN? No. Our program prepares someone without a medical background to become an RN.

What general education courses must be completed before I can apply?

The following items **must** be submitted by **February 29, 2012** for your file to be complete.

Courses that you are currently enrolled in are not considered. For science courses, only the first two attempts in the same course will be considered (the highest grade will be used in GPA calculation). A minimum grade of C must be made in all general education and Nursing courses.

The following courses marked by * below must be completed at the time of application.

CHEM 1406 * Essentials of General/Biological Chemistry

BIOL 2401 * Anatomy & Physiology I

BIOL 2402 * Anatomy & Physiology II

BIOL 2420 * Microbiology

MATH Competency *

This requirement may be met by completion of MATH 0350 (Intermediate Algebra) with a grade of C or better, by a placement test score at or above the level required for placement into MATH 1314 (College Algebra), or by completion of any college level math course with a grade of C or better. Completion of a college-level Math course is not required, but the student must be eligible to enroll in college-level Math.

Only the four sciences and math competency listed above must be completed for application, however it is strongly recommended that the student have all prerequisites completed. If the remainder of the general education courses listed below are not completed prior to enrollment in the Nursing courses, they must be completed to meet graduation requirements.

ENGL 1301 English Composition I

ENGL 1302 OR PSYC 2314

Complete one course only

English Composition II or Life Span Growth and Development

PSYC 2301 Introduction to Psychology

PHED 1164 Concepts of Physical Activity

SPCH 1311 or SPCH 1318 or 1315 or 1321

Complete one course only

Fundamentals of Speech Communication, Public Speaking, Interpersonal Communication, or Business & Professional Communication.

To be selected by student from core curriculum

Complete one course only

Humanities/Fine Arts Elective (Complete one 3 hour course)

PLEASE NOTE:

- All Biology courses must have been completed within the last five (5) years (Spring 2007)
- All science courses require a lab.
- Select Humanities/Fine Arts elective from TCC Core Curriculum list found in TCC catalog.
- All students applying to the Nursing Program must take the Health Education Systems Inc. (HESI A2) Test. Scores from the TEAS Test will no longer be accepted

What is considered for entry into the Nursing Program? Admission is determined by the overall GPA on all science courses and the HESI A2 Test scores.

Where are the general education courses offered? General education prerequisite courses are offered on any TCC campus or any college or university with a comparable course that will transfer to TCC.

Can I apply for entry into the program while my general education courses are in progress? The four science courses listed for entry into the program must be completed when you apply. All other prerequisites, aside from the four science courses, can be in progress at time of application.

Does completed coursework ever expire? Yes. All Biology courses must be completed within the last (5) years. For Fall 2012 entry, the date is Spring 2007. These courses must be repeated if they exceed the time limit – there are no exceptions.

Is there a limit to how many times a general education prerequisite course can be taken? Yes. Beginning with the Fall 2009 semester, the Nursing Department implemented a “Two Attempt Rule” regarding the four science prerequisite courses. Only the highest grade of the first two (2) attempts in the four science prerequisite courses will be considered for application purposes. Applicants should be aware that course withdrawals count as attempts for this purpose. However, you will still need to complete the course with a grade of “C” or higher for application and/or graduation purposes.

When may I apply for admission to the Nursing Program? Applications for the Nursing Program are accepted in August/September for admission into the Spring semester and January/February for entry into the Fall semester. During the Nursing application period, you may download the Application Packet from the “Apply for Nursing” section of this website. To download this packet, you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader or an equivalent PDF reader on your computer.

The Application Packet is only posted on the website during an application period. Applicants should first apply for admission to Tarrant County College. Applicants must remember that acceptance by the College does not guarantee admission into the Nursing Program.

How many students do you accept for your Nursing Program? We accept 100 to 150 students each fall and spring semester depending on grant funding and other variables.

Is there a waiting list for the program? No, we do not maintain a waiting list. If an applicant is not selected and is still interested in the program, he/she must re-apply.

Is there an entrance test for the Nursing Program? Yes. All applicants must take the Health Education Systems Inc. (HESI A2) Test.

How do I make an appointment for the entrance test? The HESI A2 Test is given at the Trinity River Testing Center. It is only administered during the months of February and September. Please be aware that this test is offered for a limited number of days, so it is helpful to reserve a testing appointment early. An applicant can only take the test once per application period with TCC. However, the applicant is welcome to test at other testing centers that administer the HESI A2 and turn that score in with their TCC application as long as it includes Math, Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary & General Knowledge, and Grammar.

Is there a study guide for the entrance test? Yes. The study guide will be available at the Trinity River Campus Bookstore. Please contact the Bookstore at 817-515-1050 for current prices and availability.

What kind of GPA do I need to get into the program? All applicants must have a minimum GPA of 2.0. However, you are in competition with other applicants so a higher GPA increases your chances of being selected. Most applicants selected for admission have a GPA of 3.4 or higher.

Does a criminal conviction, addicted to and/or treated for use of alcohol or any other drug, or a mental illness prevent me from entering the program and becoming a nurse? Not necessarily. If you answer "Yes" to any question on the Nursing Eligibility Information Form, it will be necessary for you to be cleared by the Texas Board of Nursing prior to applying to our program. This review can take a minimum of three months to two years depending on the case. This petition is a formal disclosure to the Board of any eligibility issues that may disqualify you from taking the NCLEX examination for licensure. Go to www.bon.state.tx.us and click on Download other Applications and Forms and scroll down to "Candidates for Licensure." Click on Declaratory Order Form and Fingerprint card. Additionally, you are required to present a copy of the letter from the Board which states you have successfully completed the Declaratory Order process and are eligible to sit for the state board examination. This letter must be included with your application.

How can I find out if classes I took at another school will be accepted toward the Nursing degree? If you earned college credit from another institution(s), you must submit official transcripts to the TCC Registrar's Office and request that your transcripts be evaluated for the Nursing Program. This will provide you with an official record of which courses transferred and what courses you may still need to take.

What if I have a transcript from another country? You must pay all costs for international transcript evaluations by the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACRS) and have an official transcript evaluation sent to the International Admissions Office which is located at the TCC May Owen Center, 1500 Houston Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102. Please contact 817-515-5232 for further information.

Does working in the medical field or a previous degree give me any advantage for purposes of application?
No. Only the general education courses necessary for admission as well as the HESI A2 test are considered for the purpose of selection to the Nursing Program. The selection committee does not consider degrees completed at other institutions, work experience, personal motivation to be a nurse or if a student has previously applied to our program.

Applicants are not screened on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, veteran status, disability or marital status.

What are the performance requirements for Nursing students? To accomplish the objectives of the Nursing Program, students must be able to meet the following performance requirements:

- Visual acuity with corrective lenses to identify cyanosis, absence of respiratory movement in patients, and to read small print on medication containers, physicians' orders, monitors and equipment calibrations.
- Hearing ability with or without auditory aids to understand the normal speaking voice without viewing the speaker's face and to hear monitor alarms, emergency signals, call bells from patients, and stethoscope sounds originating from a patient's blood vessels, heart, lung, and abdomen.
- Physical ability to stand for prolonged periods of time, perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation, lift patients, and move from room to room or maneuver in limited spaces.
- Ability to communicate effectively in verbal and written form. Ability to speak clearly and succinctly when explaining treatment procedures, describing patient conditions, and implementing health teaching. Ability to write legibly and correctly in patient's chart for legal documentation.
- Manual dexterity to use sterile techniques, inserting catheters, and prepare and administer medications by various routes.
- Ability to function safely under stressful conditions.

What immunizations are required for applicants? All immunizations must be completed before the first official day of the Nursing Program: HEP B -series of 3 injections, MMR -two doses, Tetanus, Proof of Varicella (Chicken Pox)-need vaccine(s) or titer, TB skin test, and Seasonal Flu. Immunizations are not required to be completed at time of application, however the HEP-B series should at least be started at time of application.

Do you have an LVN program? No. TCC only offers an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Nursing leading to RN licensure. You may visit the Texas Board of Nursing website - www.bon.state.tx.us for a listing of all accredited nursing programs in Texas. Some local college LVN programs are offered at El Centro College in Dallas, Weatherford College in Weatherford, Hill College in Cleburne, and North Central Texas College in Corinth.

Do you have a Fast Track program that prepares an LVN and/or Paramedic to become an RN? Yes. The Fast Track Option is an accelerated 15 month program offered to students who are already licensed/ certified as an LVN or Paramedic. Due to the fast pace of this option, it is strongly recommended that applicants **complete all general education course requirements** before admission to the program. Applications for the Fast Track Option are only accepted during the **January/February** application period. Those students accepted into the program will attend a Fast Track Option orientation and will take a series of three examinations during the first summer session that cover the first semester of the Nursing Program (RNSG-1413-Foundations for Nursing Practice, RNSG-1460-Clinical Foundations for Nursing Practice and RNSG-1105-Nursing Skills). An optional non-credit preparatory course "Building Foundations for Nursing" is offered through Nursing Continuing Education to prepare students for the exams. Students will only be allowed to test once and must pass all three examinations. A fee is charged for each examination and grade posting. If successful, students receive credit for the three courses listed above and will enter into Mental Health Nursing the second summer session. They will then enter Common Concepts

of Adult Health in the fall. More detailed information regarding the Fast Track Option is available on the TCC Nursing website. **Please note:** The application procedure and requirements for the Fast Track program are the same as the regular Nursing Program.

Can I attend school at night and/or part-time? The general education courses may be taken at various times during the day and night. Primarily all Nursing theory courses are only offered Monday through Friday during the day and must follow a set sequence. We do have a few all day clinicals from 6:30 am-6:30 pm on the weekend and some evening clinicals that may last until approximately 7:30 pm.

How much will it cost me to complete the Nursing Program? Based on current fees, a resident of Tarrant County will spend approximately \$9,235.00 to complete the entire program (This amount includes tuition for general education and Nursing courses, textbooks, uniforms, liability insurance, and graduation fees). If you live in state but out of Tarrant County it will cost approximately \$ 10,891. Out-of-state and International students' tuition will be higher. This amount is only an estimate and is subject to change. The Tarrant County College Catalog is the official source of information about tuition and fees. Payment for tuition and books are paid each semester.

What are the rules regarding the personal appearance of Nursing students? Applicants should be aware that all tattoos must be covered at all times and jewelry for piercings must be limited to one small stud per ear. There is a complete overview of the dress code for Nursing students in the TCC Nursing Student Handbook.

Will I need health insurance while I am a Nursing student? Yes. You must show proof of health insurance at the beginning of each semester. TCC does not provide student health insurance nor does it endorse or recommend insurance providers. However, as a courtesy to students, there are several links to insurance companies listed on the TCC website.

Is financial assistance available? Information concerning financial aid, loans, and student employment is available from the Office of Financial Aid. You may contact the Office of Financial Aid on the Trinity River Campus at 817-515-1058.

Are there special scholarships for Nursing students? Yes. Many types of scholarships are administered through the TCC Foundation including general Foundation scholarships, endowed and dedicated scholarship funds, community, and school district partnerships. Occasionally the Nursing Department receives separate information on scholarships that are available to students who have completed at least the first semester of the Nursing Program. Information on these scholarships will be posted in the Nursing Department.

What percent of your Nursing students are men? Each semester is different, but usually 15-25% of students are male.

Will I be an RN when I finish the program? No, you will be a Graduate Nurse (GN). After you have completed all requirements of the Nursing Program, you will be eligible to take the state board examination for licensure (NCLEX-RN). Once you pass the NCLEX examination, you will obtain your Registered Nursing (RN) license.

What type of CPR certification will I need? Current Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), **Course for Health Care Providers** training is required. It must include hands-on

demonstrations and defibrillator training (AED). Only the American Heart Association Certification will be accepted.

What is the difference between a two-year program and a four-year program? The TCC Nursing Program awards an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Nursing; a four-year program awards a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing. The four-year program requires more hours in the basic education courses, as well more Nursing courses. These additional hours will include course in management, research and community health.

What type of salary can I make as a nurse? Salaries will vary according to the area and hospital where you are employed. The average starting salary in the Dallas/Fort Worth area is approximately \$24.00 an hour. Contact area hospitals for current estimated salary ranges.

What happens if I am not selected for the program? You may re-apply for the Nursing Program during the next application period. Since all applicants cannot be accepted into the TCC Nursing Program, it is important that an applicant consider other available alternatives. Any applicant who would like to be advised regarding alternate careers should contact the Advising and Counseling Office.

What other medical programs or certificate programs are offered through TCC?

- **Dental Hygiene**
- **Emergency Medical Technician**
- **Health Information Technology**
- **Paramedic Program**
- **Physical Therapist Assistant**
- **Radiologic Technology**
- **Respiratory Care**
- **Surgical Technology**
- **Certified Nurse Aide (CNA)**
- **Dietetics Technician**
- **Long Term Care Administration**
- **Medication Aide**
- **Phlebotomy**