

## Preparing for **Second Degree/Accelerated Nursing Programs**

Second degree/accelerated nursing programs are for those who already hold a bachelor's degree but not in nursing. Most programs are not considered graduate degrees but some offer matriculation agreements into graduate programs.

Some nurses choose to further their education beyond the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) to pursue master's degrees to become Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants or to pursue doctoral degrees. Many pursue specializations as they move through their careers. A good resource is <http://explorehealthcareers.org/en/Field/6/Nursing> (see Related Careers listed on the right).

### **COURSEWORK:**

Commonly Required Coursework*
Biol 129 (Anatomy w/Lab)
Biol 141 (Physiology)
Biol 142 (Physiology w/Lab)
Chem 101 or 110 (+111) (Chem or Chem with Lab)
HDFS 129 or Psych 212 (Human Development or Developmental Psych Across the Lifespan)
Math (Math 021 or higher)
Micrb 106+107 (Microbiology w/Lab)
Nutr 251 (Intro Principles of Nutrition)
Psych 100 (Intro Psych)
Soc 001 or 005 (Sociology)
Stat 200, 240, or 250 (Statistics)

*\*The above listing is typical, but requirements may vary from one school to another. It is ultimately the student's responsibility to research the admission requirements for the schools to which they plan to apply.*

### **GRADES:**

- Most programs require a 3.0 minimum cumulative GPA.

### **EXPERIENCE:**

- Getting healthcare related experience may help your application. A list of local opportunities is detailed on the reverse side of this handout. As you accumulate hours of experience we recommend you keep a log with information about where and when the hours were completed, how many hours, and contact info of someone who can verify the hours (including email address). This information may be needed when applying to programs.

### **GRADUATE RECORD EXAMINATION (GRE):**

- Some schools require the GRE for admission. Check each program's website for information.

### **LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION:**

- Letters of recommendation are an important part of the application process for an accelerated BSN program. Many programs require applicants to submit two or three letters with their applications. The program may specify who they want the letter of recommendation to be coming from such as a previous or current employer, professor, friend and/or relative. Letters of recommendation may need to be submitted on an official recommendation form provided by the program to which you are applying. It is recommended that you check with the program to verify the type of letter preferred, how many letters are required and to get information on where to find the required form. Please note that anyone affiliated with Penn State will need you to complete and provide to them the form at [http://www.registrar.psu.edu/student\\_forms/request\\_for\\_recommendation.pdf](http://www.registrar.psu.edu/student_forms/request_for_recommendation.pdf) for each individual recommendation you are requesting.

### **HOW TO LOOK UP INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS' REQUIREMENTS:**

- Try to narrow down your choices geographically and then search for second degree nursing programs within that state or states.
- Review each program's website for details about their admission requirements.

### **APPLICATIONS:**

- There is currently no central application so you will need to review each program's website for application information and deadlines.

### **LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES:**

- University Health Services Clinic Volunteer Program
- Mt. Nittany Medical Center Volunteer Program
- Nursing homes, assisted-living facilities, home health care aides
- HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital
- Penn State Orthopedics
- University Orthopedics
- Penn State Pre-Med Society (<http://www.clubs.psu.edu/up/premed/>)
- Penn State Pre-Med Honor Society (<http://www.clubs.psu.edu/up/aed/>)
- Emergency Medical Services at University Health Services (start by taking Kines 403)