

RN-MSN FAQs

Why should I return to school for a BSN or MSN?

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) and other leading nursing organizations recognize the BSN degree as the minimum educational requirement for professional nursing practice. While graduates can begin practice as an RN with an associate degree or hospital diploma, the BSN degree is essential for nurses seeking to perform at the case-manager or supervisory level or move across employment settings. Consider that all other health care professionals are required to have AT LEAST a baccalaureate degree, while the majority require at LEAST a Master's Degree or equivalent of a Doctorate for entry into practice. The BSN degree prepares us to enter the professional practice arena with other members of the healthcare team.

Why should I select Nova Southeastern University?

The curriculum is planned with input from practicing nurses and students and is geared to addressing the healthcare issues facing entry level nurse managers. Student and community input is vital to our program. During the program students and nursing professionals are frequently asked to evaluate the program and make recommendations for changes that will better serve the students and meet community needs. Students serve on advisory and various councils within the program.

How is the NSU RN to MSN curriculum different from others in the area?

The curriculum is planned to give maximum transfer credit to the practicing RN. On-line and face-to-face classes are small, and individual attention to a student is of utmost importance. The curriculum focuses on enhancing established clinical skills with separate Health Assessment and Pathophysiology courses. Courses in leadership and business focus on preparing nurses to be collaborative nursing leaders. All the courses are taught by MSN or doctoral-prepared nurses with expertise in the area. All courses focus on the use of evidence based research as a cornerstone for practice. In the first year of the RN to MSN program, students complete their BSN courses. At the end of the first year, in order to matriculate to the MSN courses, the students must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher in the BSN courses and all general education courses must be completed. After meeting this criteria, the RN to MSN students take nine credits MSN credits towards the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN). When these first nine credits are successfully completed, the BSN degree is awarded and the student continues forward in the MSN program.

The tuition for NSU is higher than many other schools in the area? Is it worth it?

As with other students seeking a professional degree, the investment in your future should not be measured in dollars and cents. The reputation of the program, individualized attention and small classes, along with a relevant, state-of-the-art curriculum should all be weighed in your decision. At NSU you will be exposed to the full interdisciplinary team consisting of Osteopathic Medicine, Pharmacy, Optometry, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physician Assistant, Dental students and faculty. Fully operational clinics and partnerships with many health care facilities are available for your learning experiences. A caring faculty with a wide range of expertise is eager to assist you in your journey.

When does the program begin?

Students are admitted in January and August.

Is the RN to MSN Program available in a totally online and face-to-face (hybrid) format?

The RN to MSN is offered in the hybrid and online formats. The online format requires Internet access with all course work completed online. The hybrid format is a combination of in-class and Internet course activities. The hybrid requires the students to attend class once a week from 6:00-9:30 pm. The hybrid format is available in Fort Lauderdale, Fort Myers, and Orlando.

Is there a clinical component to the program?

The only practicum requirement is a 4-credit Community-Based Nursing Practicum that requires 50 hours. This practicum is completed in the last course of study and implemented in the students own geographic area.

Can I take classes in any order?

No. This program is a lockstep program, with course content building on content taught in previous courses.

Can I just complete the work in each course as time permits?

All semesters have specific start and end dates. All courses have assignments and activities that have specific due dates.

How much time will I spend with my courses each week?

How much time you spend will be based on several factors to include your study style, time management, the professors' methods, and your study area. It is generally felt by polling current students that approximately 10 hours per week per class will be the average. This will include study time, assignments, reading, discussion board activities and interactive internet activities.

How will each course be conducted?

The courses are offered through a course management tool called Web CT/Black Board. Each professor will have his/her own instructional strategies that could include discussion boards, chat, synchronous sessions, online group and individual activities, and written requirements. Synchronous sessions are real-time sessions on your home computer with a microphone. However, the program is cognizant that our online students are working professionals with a variety of work and personal responsibilities.

Are papers a major part of the program?

Yes. As with most online and face-to-face programs of study, papers compose a large portion of the course requirements. All scholarly writing is in the APA writing format. One of the factors that separates baccalaureate nursing education from associate degree education is the focus on scholarly writing.

Are textbooks required?

Yes. Each professor determines the need for a text book, journal articles, and internet readings. You will be responsible for purchasing the required text for each course.

Do students have a place they can exchange information outside the virtual classroom?

Yes. We have developed an online student center for the RN to BSN and RN to MSN students. In this virtual student lounge, you can post messages, questions, and have chats with classmates. You will also find the schedule, course plans, links, library resources and much more.

How long are the semesters and when do they start?

There are 3 semesters in one year with each semester 12-16 weeks in length. The RN to MSN program is completed in approximately three years. In the first year the BSN courses are completed. In years two and three, students complete their MSN course work. For further information on specific MSN tracks available go to <http://www.nova.edu/nursing/>

How many credits will I take per semester?

The RN to MSN program is accelerated. During the first year of BSN courses, students take 33 credits before matriculating to the MSN program.

How much is the program?

The 2011/12 tuition for BSN credits will be \$390 per credit hour. A \$50 non-refundable fee is required with each application. A \$200 Acceptance Fee is required to reserve the accepted applicant's in the entering first year class. This advance payment will be deducted from the tuition payment due on registration day, but is not refundable in the event of a withdrawal. A Health Professions Division general access fee of \$145 may be required each year. An NSU student services fee of \$750 is also required annually. When the student matriculates to the MSN courses, the tuition for the MSN courses will be at the MSN per credit hour rate.

How do I pay for the program?

Courses can be paid via your WebStar account by check, cash or credit cards.

Is there financial aid?

The financial aid department is an integral part of our admission process. Student loans for nursing are at an all time low interest rate. Loans are not due for repayment until 6 months after completing all of your higher education. Many healthcare facilities in the area participate in the National Loan Forgiveness programs. Health care facilities are offering sponsorships for many of the students. We will explore all available options with you as you develop a workable financial aid package. On the web financial aid information is found at: <http://www.nova.edu/cwis/finaid/index.html> It is important that you check the financial aid website early in order to complete the necessary forms to be eligible for financial aid.

How can I apply?

Review all the RN to MSN materials on the NSU nursing website under programs at www.nova.edu/nursing
Apply online at www.nova.edu/nursing

