

**School of Nursing
Master's of Science in Nursing (MSN)
RN-MSN Programs**

Frequently Asked Questions

PROGRAM QUESTIONS:

- **What programs do you offer for the Registered Nurse?**

We offer both Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) programs for Registered Nurses. At the Master's level, we have the ADN-MSN, BSN-MSN, RN with non-nursing BA/BS- MSN program, and we can accommodate nurses who are graduates of diploma programs (www.usfca.edu/nursing/msn). At the doctoral level, we have the BSN-DNP and MSN-DNP program with either a Family Nurse Practitioner or Health care Systems Leadership concentration (www.usfca.edu/nursing/dnp).

- **How long are the programs? What is the schedule?**

The RN-MSN programs are six semesters or 2 years. There are 3 semesters per year – Fall, Spring, and Summer. The classes meet one night a week for three hours plus online components. Additionally, if you start with an ADN degree, you will take a community nursing practicum course (NURS 505/506) where you are required to do 90 hours in a community health setting, one day per week for the semester. It is the same day as theory classes. For all RN-MSN programs, students complete 35 clinical hours that are associated with the role courses and a 300 hour internship in the last semester (NURS 653).

The BSN-DNP program varies from 4 to 4 ½ years. The first two years generally follow the MSN schedule of one night a week with possible weekend classes. For last 2 – 2 ½ years, the schedule changes to every other weekend on Friday evenings and all day Saturday. You will be required to do 1000 clinical hours in the BSN-DNP program that includes 135 DNP residency hours.

- **Do you offer the RN-MSN programs at the Regional Campuses?**

We offer the RN-MSN program in **Cupertino, San Ramon, Santa Rosa, and Fresno**. Start dates vary from campus to campus. Please refer to the following webpage for specific start dates and locations: <http://www.usfca.edu/nursing/msn/>. Or, feel free to contact Megan McDrew: msmcdrew@usfca.edu or your regional campus representative to see start dates for each respective campus.

- **What is the master's program concentration?**

In addition to the MSN degree, upon taking the certification exam at the end of the program, you will be awarded with a Clinical Nurse Leader certification. Designed in 2004, a Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) is a masters' prepared nurse generalist who assumes accountability for the healthcare outcomes of a specific group of patients within a unit or setting through the assimilation and application of research-based information to design, implement, and evaluate patient outcomes at the point of care. The emerging role of the CNL is a national initiative in response to patient care needs and the current health delivery environments. See AACN's webpage for more information: <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/cnl/index.htm>.

- **What work can I do upon graduation? Will I be required to work as a Clinical Nurse Leader?**

The CNL role is a versatile, flexible role that allows nurses to not only be hired as a CNL, but also go into nurse education, management, administration or teaching. Other graduates decide to stay in their present position but often with more authority and responsibilities. The CNL degree does not limit your potential for growth within your chosen field but rather, enhances and broadens the spectrum of professional possibilities.

- **Do you take new graduates out of ADN or BSN programs? Do you require any work experience prior to applying to the program?**

Yes, we do accept new graduates. We do not require any work experience prior to application. Yet, because our programs are designed for the working professional, we assume that what you are learning in class can be applied to your work and vice versa. If you can not find work by the time your clinical rotations begin, we have a Clinical Placement Coordinator who will work with you to find a suitable placement.

- **How many clinical hours are required for the program? What is the final project?**

There are 400 clinical hours required for the CNL role, 300 which are done in the CNL internship in the last semester (NURS 653). With supervisor permission, you may do these hours at your place of work. You will be taking on the role of a CNL and performing such functions. You will also be working on your final project during this time. As a CNL, you will be trained to develop solutions for any kind of fragmentation or systems problem that you see on your unit or place of work. In your final project, you will develop that solution to such a problem and present it in poster-style presentation as well as a paper. You are not required to write a thesis.

- **How does the N653 internship work?**

The purpose of the CNL internship in the final semester of the curriculum is to immerse the student in the CNL role and requires a minimum of 300 hours of unit based activity. In general, the student will arrange a liaison in their work setting that will allow them to perform CNL role activities. In addition to performing CNL activities outlined in the end-of-year competencies in the CNL Whitepaper (2007), the students will do a final CNL project for their micro-system and develop a poster and abstract. The Whitepaper can be found at <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/CNL/>.

- **What is the CNL certification and when do I take the certification exam?**

After the completion of your CNL internship hours (400 total over the program) you are eligible to become CNL certified by taking an exam. Once you complete your final semester, N653 you will be eligible. Taking the CNL certification exam is a course requirement for N651. Information regarding the exam can be found at <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/CNC/>

- **How do I apply for a Public Health Nurse Certificate?**

Once you complete all of our courses and graduate from the program you are eligible to apply for a Public Health Nurse Certificate. The application can be obtained at <http://www.rn.ca.gov/pdfs/applicants/phn-app.pdf>. Please follow the directions. On the application form, complete the section under Education, check Masters and fill in USF's name and address. Leave the Verification of child abuse/neglect training blank. The BRN knows that USF's curriculum meets this requirement. There is an official transcript request form. Complete section A and, deliver it or mail it along with an USF transcript request and \$5 payment to the registrar's office. They will send the completed form and an official transcript to the BRN.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

- **Where do I get the application for the program? Do I have to apply on-line?**

Our application is online at: <http://web.usfca.edu/graduate/>. If you have supplemental documents, please mail them to **USF, Office of Graduate Admissions, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117, even if you are applying to a regional campus.** Additionally, do not mail them to the School of Nursing – they must be sent to the Office of Graduate Admissions first.

- **What is the minimum GPA requirement? Do I still have a chance of being accepted if I have under that?**

We take a holistic perspective when reviewing applications. The minimum GPA requirement is 3.0, but we accept people who have under a 3.0 on a conditional basis. If accepted with under a 3.0, students are required to take a 4-unit graduate level writing course in the first semester (PSCA 500).

- **How much is the program?**

For the 10-11 academic year, the cost is \$1055 per unit and the programs vary from 33-70 units depending on your specific track. You can expect to pay an additional \$1500 more or so for books, clinical fees, etc.

- **Does USF offer financial aid or scholarships?**

We do offer substantial financial aid. US citizens and permanent residents are eligible for \$20,500 in federal loans per academic year. You can apply for Graduate PLUS loans to make up the remainder of the cost. We have select scholarships through the School of Nursing. It is best to look online through a search engine for appropriate scholarships or grants.

- **Do you require the GRE or TEAS test?**

No, we do not.

- **As an international nurse applicant, what are the requirements?**

International nurses are required to have a valid California RN license in order to be eligible to apply. You are also required to submit transcripts evaluated by WES, IERF, or similar transcript evaluation agency in the US. Upon evaluation completion, you may apply to the program through the online application. Please include 2 letters of recommendation, a personal statement, a resume, copy of your RN license, a Certificate of Finance, and an official TOEFL or IELTS score. Please refer to the following webpage for application instructions and score requirements: <http://www.usfca.edu/admission/graduate/international/>.

- **How often do you accept applications? What are the deadlines? Do you accept applications on a rolling basis?**

We accept applications three times a year, yet this varies depending on campus and program. Please see the following webpage for an up-to-date list of program start dates and locations: <http://www.usfca.edu/nursing/msn/>. The application deadlines are June 15th for Fall, October 15th for Spring and February 15th for Summer.

- **How can I find the semester time lines?**

Please refer to the five year academic calendar to see when each semester starts and ends and when you will have your holiday breaks: <http://web.usfca.edu/registration/>

- **When do we find out if we have been accepted?**

We let you know approximately 4-6 weeks after the deadline, assuming all supporting documents have been received.

