

Frequently Asked Questions about the RN-BSN Program

Q: Who can apply to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program?

A: This program is designed for the Registered Nurse (RN) who wants to obtain a bachelor's degree. You must have a license to practice nursing (from any state in the U.S.), and have a minimum of 2.0 overall GPA in order to apply to this program. If you are not a nurse and wish to pursue this career choice, you can apply to the [Associate in Science Nursing Program](#) housed at SPC's Health Education Center.

Q: How do I apply for the BSN program?

A: You must complete applications. The first application is for [general admission into St. Petersburg College](#) (\$40.00 fee-this fee is waived for former SPC students) and the second application to be submitted is the [Baccalaureate Application Supplement](#), which can be submitted in MySPC by clicking on the "Apply for BS/BAS/Upper Div Cert" link and selecting the NURS-BS program of study. As part of the application process, you must submit all official transcripts from high school and postsecondary schools attended, and a photocopy of your nursing license. Students begin the BSN curriculum in August or January. If you plan to begin the BSN curriculum in August, please have all application materials submitted by August 1. The deadline for January is December 1.

Q: Is there a wait list for the RN-BSN program?

A: There is no waiting list for the program. Students who meet the requirements for full or provisional admission are offered admission on a first come-first served basis. Students enroll in BSN classes on a space available basis. Typically, up to 30 students may enroll in a class.

Q: How long is the program?

A: The core nursing curriculum length is approximately five semesters or one and a half years--or between 18-20 months. If you have general education and/or foreign language requirements to complete, you may take additional courses each semester to complete the program within this time frame.

Q: I have an A.S. (or A.A.S.) degree. Will I need to take general education courses in addition to the nursing curriculum?

A: Yes, you will need to take general education courses in addition to the nursing core curriculum. You may take these courses before entering the program, concurrent with your nursing courses, or in some cases, after completing the nursing courses. Keep in mind that you may complete these general education courses at your local college or at SPC-and either online or face to face. You will need to complete all general education courses and requirements in order to receive your diploma. Use the [Checklist](#) provided on this site to help you determine the general education courses that are required. Also, once you have been accepted into the program you will have access through MySPC to your Degree Progress Report. This report details the courses that are needed for completion of all BSN program requirements.

Q: I would like to take a basic computer literacy course in preparation for this program. Which one do you recommend?

A: Currently, the best one to take at SPC is CGS 1060 Basic Computer and Information Literacy. You must demonstrate Computer/Information literacy competency before admission, and this course meets this requirement.

Q: I have an A.A. degree. Will I need to take general education courses in addition to the nursing curriculum?

A: No. Having a documented Associate in Arts degree exempts you from general education courses. However CLAS and Statistics course STA 2023 are separate requirements which you may or may not have completed as a part of the AA degree you earned elsewhere.

Q: Do I need to take a foreign language?

A: If you have not successfully completed two consecutive years of the same foreign language in high school, you will need to complete 8 credits (two semesters) of one foreign language at the college level. If you took two years in high school, you must submit your high school transcript for validation of completion of this requirement. American Sign Language courses can be taken to complete the foreign language requirement. If you earned an accredited AA or bachelors degree prior to 9/1/89, you are exempt from the foreign language requirement.

Q: I am currently a student in a BSN program at another institution, how can I transfer to the RN-BSN program at SPC?

A: Registered nurses who wish to transfer from another BSN program to the RN-BSN program at SPC must complete the application process as a new student to SPC. In addition, they may submit the course syllabi/descriptions for BSN courses completed elsewhere to the Dean for the College of Nursing at SPC. The Dean may substitute up to 10 upper division nursing credits towards the 40 credit hour BSN curriculum at SPC. However, students must complete at least 30 of the upper division BSN credits through SPC.

Q: How do I know when BSN courses start and end?

A: Each BSN course will be taught in a shortened framework of four to ten weeks. **You will be taking only one BSN course at a time.** It is best to review the RN-BSN sample course schedule as it does not follow the traditional college calendar. View the [Sample Course Schedules](#) on this site to get an idea of the time frames for courses and the length of the program.

Q: I have a full-time RN job. Will I be able to complete the program while continuing to work?

A: Yes-many of our current BSN students have family responsibilities and most work full- or part-time while in the program. Some students may need to make adjustments to their schedule during the practicum courses.

Q: How much time during the week will I need to spend on my courses?

A: Expect to spend between 7 and 15 hours a week to complete course activities, papers, projects and other requirements.

Q: What is a "cohort"?

A: Students begin the BSN classes in either January or August as part of a group called a learning community. Each learning community consists of at least two smaller groups of approximately 15-30 students called learning communities. New students have the option of enrolling in the online learning community or the face-to-face learning community that meets once per week from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. It is intended that you will progress from course to course through the entire program with this group of learners. This design fosters connectivity and team collaboration within courses.

Q: Is there much writing required in the BSN program?

A: Yes, this program has a writing intensive curriculum. It is expected that students have an excellent command of written English language, and that written work is at the baccalaureate level. Student assessment is mostly derived from written communication via papers, projects, email and discussion forums.

Q: Which is the best way to do the program, online or face-to-face?

A: What works best for you depends on your own learning style and preference. Students tend to prefer online/internet classes when they have the discipline to commit themselves to completing course requirements without a structured class format. Both the online and face-to-face classes offer students the opportunity to network and collaborate with other healthcare professionals. If you are considering an online course, please review the [self-questionnaire of essential computer skills for online student success](#). Be aware however that online courses are \$15 per credit hour more than face-to-face courses.

Q: As an online student, will I ever have to come to the SPC campus, or meet with an instructor if I choose to do the BSN program online?

A: No. Online students will complete the new student orientation online; it is a PowerPoint presentation located in the Nursing Commons. However, many online students decide to attend the RN-BSN Student Advisement Day just before the beginning of their first term of enrollment. One of the unique features of our internet BSN program is that there is never a requirement to be on campus. The fully online option has the convenience of allowing students to complete their coursework at any time of the day or night that is compatible with their schedule. Students do not have to spend any time on campus. There are three practicum courses that are arranged close to the student's home.

Q: Is it really completely online?

A: Yes. You will have the option of sending your instructor a videotape of your health assessment final, and you can find a preceptor local to your area for your practicum courses.

Q: Do I need special computer training to succeed in online courses?

A: You do not need proof of specialized computer training to succeed in our online courses. However, it would be helpful if you have a working knowledge of the following:

- Email including sending attachments
- Accessing and browsing the web
- Basic computer functions like word processing, copying and pasting text as well as backup procedures
- Be able to "bookmark" or set as a "favorite" your class home page, and other frequently visited websites
- Create, name, save, and move files and folders around on your computer

Q: Do I have to have a particular type of computer and software in order to take online courses?

A: SPC has an informational page on the particular computer hardware needs for online courses. The computer software that is required for completion of writing and project assignments is Microsoft Word 98 or higher (with PowerPoint): Microsoft Office for Students and Teachers OR Microsoft Office Professional are both excellent choices to purchase if necessary.

Q: What online program does SPC use for the BSN courses?

A: ANGEL (A New Global Environment for Learning) is the chosen learning management system at St. Petersburg College for all online courses. ANGEL provides faculty a place to make content easily available to students. ANGEL also has a variety of online tools to facilitate communication between the instructor and both online and face-to-face students.

Q: If I chose to do the program online, how often will I need to log into my courses?

A: Since our courses are delivered in shortened time frames of four to ten weeks, you will need to log in and participate four days a week. All activities are asynchronous, meaning that you can do your coursework any day or time of the week that you choose, and from any location that has internet access.

Q: If I chose to do the program online and discover that I perform better in face-to-face classes, can I switch?

A: Yes. You will need to contact the Director of Curriculum and Student Success in the office of the dean in order to switch from one format to another.

Q: Is there a clinical component or requirement for this program?

A: The RN-BSN program is not a clinical program. This program is designed to enhance your knowledge and skills in nursing research, management and education.

Q: What are the practicum courses?

A: In the last two semesters of the RN-BSN program, students complete community and leadership practicum courses that complement their theoretical courses. Each practicum provides the opportunity for students to explore area of focus outside the traditional clinical nursing setting, and to

do so within their community. Students develop their own learning contract and identify a mentor to facilitate their practicum experiences. Each practicum can be focused on many non-traditional settings including areas such as education, public health, research, marketing, sales, and business. Each practicum experience involves 45 documented hours in your area of interest as observation, internship, project development, research and implementation. Each practicum course may require participation during traditional/daytime hours.

Q: What is the nursing elective requirement?

A: Students who are interested in completing the nursing elective requirement via an independent study course should contact the faculty member of interest for project options. Independent study courses involve 15-45 contact hours. Students might also complete the nursing elective requirement by completing one of two credit hour elective courses: See Course Descriptions for the various course options.