

Associate Degree Nursing Program FAQ's

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1. How does a 2 year Associate Degree (AD) Registered Nurse (RN) differ from a 4 year Bachelor of Science (BSN) Nursing degree RN in terms of jobs and duties?
 - a. Both the 2 year and the 4 year degree nursing graduates take the same NCLEX-RN board examination to become RN's and can take an entry level nursing job in a variety of settings (acute care, long term care, etc.). The RN with a BSN has greater opportunities for working in leadership or management positions. Generally, the more advanced the degree the RN has, the greater the opportunities for professional positions involving nursing education, research, or specialty areas such as public health, school nursing etc.
2. What programs are offered for Nursing? When do they start and on what campuses?
 - a. The Associate Degree (Mobility) Nursing Program at Central Lakes College is offered each fall at each campus (Brainerd and Staples campus). The program is a 9 month program, with dosage calculation (NURS 2522) taken prior to the start of fall semester.
 - b. If you have questions about the Practical Nursing Program at CLC, please see: <http://www.clcmn.edu/programs/lpn.html>
3. After completion of the Associate Degree (AD) Nursing Program am I ready to work as an RN? If not, what do I have left to do?
 - a. After completion of the AD Nursing Program, the graduate student nurse must take and pass the NCLEX-RN exam and be issued a license from the Minnesota Board of Nursing to practice as an RN in the state of Minnesota.
4. When is the Associate Degree (AD) Nursing Program orientation held? Is it mandatory? How do I find out about it?
 - a. Mandatory AD Nursing Program orientation is held each June, when you are accepted to the AD nursing program you will receive a letter from the admissions department which will include the date/time and other necessary information for beginning your program of study.
5. Do I need to take any courses prior to admission to the Associate Degree (AD) nursing program? If so, what are they?
 - a. Yes you do need to take some prerequisites to meet the admission criteria for acceptance into the AD Nursing Program. All science prerequisites (*) must be completed prior to admission and it is highly recommended that you have all your liberal arts classes completed to give you a broader base of knowledge for your nursing courses and allows you to focus solely on your nursing courses.
 - b. The prerequisite courses for the AD Nursing Program are:
 - BIOL 2467* Anatomy & Physiology I (4cr)
 - BIOL 2468* Anatomy & Physiology II (4cr)
 - BIOL 2457* Microbiology (4cr)
 - CHEM 1405* Life Science Chemistry (3cr)
 - CHEM 1406* Life Science Chemistry Lab (1cr)

ENGL 1411 Composition II (4cr)

PHIL 2420 Ethics (3cr)

PSYC 2421 General Psychology I (4cr)

PSYC 2431 Human Development (3cr)

6. What does the term “mobility” mean in terms of the Associate Degree (AD) Nursing Program?
 - a. The term “mobility” means you must already have an LPN license in the state of Minnesota for entrance into this type of program. A mobility program takes less time than a generic AD non-mobility program.
7. Does the Associate Degree (AD) Nursing Program have a spring term start option?
 - a. There is not a spring term start option for the AD Nursing Program at Central Lakes College.
8. Does the Associate Degree (AD) Nursing Program have a part time program option?
 - a. There is not a part time program option at Central Lakes College for the AD Nursing Program.
9. Where can I find the Associate Degree (AD) Nursing Program planning form and the AD Nursing Program Handbook?
 - a. This is found via a link at this web page: <http://www.clcmn.edu/programs/rn.html>
10. Associate Degree (AD) Nursing Program courses can I take before being admitted to the AD Nursing Program?
 - a. The prerequisites to the Associate Degree Nursing program are listed in #5 above. No NURS courses may be taken prior to acceptance into the AD Nursing Program, courses must be taken in sequential progression according to the program planning form, the web connection is found in #9 above. An exception may be made for NURS 2522 Dosage Calculations with the permission of the Director of Nursing. Permission for the course to be taken spring semester is based on making application to the program. If applicants qualify for taking the course in spring semester, a letter permitting registration is sent.
11. Are there any additional fees associated with the Associate Degree (AD) Nursing Program?
 - a. There are several fees that are included in the nursing courses as part of a differential tuition including:
 - i. Liability insurance
 - ii. Criminal background check
 - iii. Lab equipment and supplies
 - b. There are two additional fees which are not included in differential tuition that are attached to courses
 - i. Assessment Technologies Incorporated (ATI) Assessment testing is \$50 and ATI NCLEX-RN review course is \$350. Both fees will be attached to NURS 2502 in spring.
12. Are there any special requirements associated with the Associate Degree (AD) Nursing Program?
 - a. There are several special requirements associated with the AD Nursing Program:
 - i. By August, prospective AD nursing students must supply a copy of a current unrestricted LPN license in the state of Minnesota

- ii. Students must supply a copy of a current CPR card (see AD Nursing Handbook)
 - iii. Students entering the AD Nursing Program must pass a criminal background study (see AD Nursing handbook)
 - iv. Students entering the AD Nursing Program must complete an immunization record and health form (see AD Handbook)
 - v. Students must supply a copy of their Mantoux test and results.
 - vi. There is a dress code for nursing lab and clinical (see AD Nursing handbook)
 - vii. There are many policies associated with the AD Nursing program including a clinical absence policy, confidentiality, a drug testing policy and more (see AD Nursing Handbook)
13. If I am an Associate Degree Nursing student at one campus, will I be able to take all of my required course work at that campus?
- a. Yes, all the NURS classroom courses will all be available at the campus you have been assigned or accepted to. One exception to this is NURS 2522 Dosage Calculations which is offered at the Brainerd campus spring and summer sessions (and is delivered mostly online). Students will complete the entire year of education at the campus and cohort they begin with.
14. Where are the Associate Degree (AD) Nursing Program clinical sites?
- a. There are many clinical sites that an AD nursing student may be assigned to including clinics, long term care, home care etc. but the 3 main hospital sites are:
 - i. Lakewood Health System in Staples
 - ii. St. Gabriel's Hospital in Little Falls
 - iii. Essentia Health System: St. Joseph's Medical Center in Brainerd
15. How is Associate Degree (AD) Nursing students assigned to the sites?
- a. AD Nursing students register for their clinical sites by registering for NURS 2513 Practicum I in the fall and NURS 2514 Practicum II in the spring.
 - b. Whichever section number the AD Nursing student selects in the fall, they will need to select the same section number in the spring in order to complete all program and Minnesota Board of Nursing requirements. Each section rotates through at least two clinical sites and three nursing instructors over the course of the program. In the case of attrition, if there is a need to decrease the number of sections, nursing students may be re-assigned to a new section.
 - c. NURS 2513 and 2514 section information is presented at the mandatory orientation session in June. Registration for Practicum is restricted until after this session.
16. Is the Associate Degree (AD) Nursing Program offered online, evenings or weekends?
- a. No, the AD Nursing Program is not offered online, evenings or weekends.
 - b. Some AD clinical (practicum) sections have a combination of day and evening shifts.
17. What convictions will disqualify me from becoming getting my nursing license in Minnesota?
- a. To answer this question the prospective nursing student will need to contact the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Licensing Division @ 444 Lafayette Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155-3842; phone: (651)296-3971; web address: www.dhs.state.mn.us.

18. What are the approximate total costs of the Associate Degree (AD) Nursing Program including tuition/fees, books, supplies, uniforms, etc.?
- Total approximate costs changes every year related to tuition costs, book costs, number of credits taken, etc.
 - Generally two uniforms tops and pants, one pair of white shoes and one lab coat will meet the uniform requirements and should run about \$100-\$150.
 - Books are generally most expensive for the first semester (many books are used again in subsequent NURS courses), first semester books may be \$1000-\$1200. Second semester students typically only need to purchase one more book and a study guide, approximately \$100.
 - Equipment necessary includes a watch with a second hand, a stethoscope and bandage scissors. Total costs for these vary a great deal. The Nursing Club usually offers a stethoscope purchase in the fall allowing students to purchase a quality stethoscope with choices of price range.
 - In preparation for taking the NCLEX-RN, a predictive assessment examination is required as part of NURS 2502 course completion and will be administered during the last half of spring semester. This exam will identify areas of weakness that need remediation prior to taking the licensure examination. The fee for this test is \$50 and is attached to NURS 2502.
 - In preparation for taking the NCLEX-RN, a comprehensive live NCLEX-RN review is required as part of NUR 2502 and will be schedule during spring finals week. The fee for this test is \$350 and is attached to NURS 2502.
19. How do nursing licenses transfer between states?
- Licensed nursing (or nursing student seeking to become licensed in any state) must contact each state's Board of Nursing to determine this.
20. What are the top things current or former students report they needed to know before entering the Associate Degree (AD) Nursing Program?
- "This is a difficult question to answer because there are probably 100 things I could have told you in September, but now I am used to the program. Perhaps that is something that can be mentioned. That the schedule is rigorous and at times confusing, but that things will make sense as the semester progresses.", shared by AD nursing student Kelly
 - "I think that the change in thinking from LPN to RN should be emphasized even more. I did not know what exactly was expected at the RN level at the first day of clinical, so I did what I knew, and that was act like an LPN. I think I would have benefited from more practical connections between the Nursing Practice Act and clinical during LPN to RN Role Transition class (e.g. so if you are at clinical changing a dressing, what would you do as an RN that you wouldn't do as an LPN? If you are doing a head-to-toe, what is different about it as an RN from an LPN?)" shared by AD nursing student Kelly
 - "As a current student in the AD Nursing Program, I feel that number one important thing to know, is that EVERY STUDENT is at their own personal level (experience, competence, knowledge, skills, etc.) as an LPN... and that's OK! I think that many, many students felt (and still feel) that they are "behind" when in fact, that exact thinking is what is holding

them back from learning their RN role. It should be known and expected that everyone is at a different level. It should be something that each student should embrace this fact (rather than hide it), in order to find their own strengths and weaknesses.”, shared by AD nursing student Emily

- d. “Another important thing to know before entering the program is that it is ALWAYS a good idea to ASK questions and to ask for help (i.e. in clinical, especially), and to not feel like it is stupid or an inconvenience. It is safer for the patients and for the nurses. Communication and working together is a key part of the nursing field, and even more so as a nursing student.”, shared by AD nursing student Emily
 - e. “A final important thing is to find a balance. A balance between school, work, home, and/or whatever else is going on in your life. Laura gave a fantastic lecture in the beginning of the year about “balance” and how we each need to figure out what is most important to us, because there are definite chances that something’s gonna’ give... especially if we try to continue doing exactly what we were doing before we entered the AD Nursing Program. Get ready to give up something(s) -and yes, this is not something that anyone wants to do; however, it is only temporary- in order to survive the program.”, shared by AD nursing student Emily
21. What information would current Associate Degree (AD) Nursing students like to share with incoming students?
- a. “This program is HARD! Our instructors are top notch and they will not just let you breeze through on anything. That said, it can be done. Don’t freak out if a test or two doesn’t go well. You will live. (I think)!”, contributed by AD nursing student Kelly
 - b. “Flash cards of concepts, bodily processes and vocab are very helpful. And when the instructors say, ‘Buy an NCLEX book to study,’ listen to them!!!”, contributed by AD nursing student Kelly
 - c. “My best advice to any future AD Nursing students would be to ATTEND EVERY LECTURE and to STUDY! Find what works for you as an individual, and do it. Whether that is group studying, reading the books front-to-back, or old school flashcard making... Figure it out in the beginning of the program, and do it every day that you possibly can.”, contributed by AD nursing student Emily
 - d. “I also recommend going to the instructors as soon as possible with any concerns, questions, problems, ideas, etc.”; the instructors “have been phenomenal to have as instructors, and are always willing to take the time to sit down and talk it out. Do not wait until last minute. Get to know your instructors so your instructors can get to know you! It is one of the best ways to be the best AD Nursing student that you can be... and eventually to become the best RN that you can be.”, contributed by AD nursing student Emily
 - e. “Finally, get ready to work hard. It is a busy program, with each and every part being equally important. Get ready for exams every week. It is a very quick-paced program, with a lot of self-learning, along with being taught in class. Get organized early in the

semester. Get a planner. Write everything out on it; school, work, home, fun, etc. It sounds silly, but it has helped tremendously.”, contributed by AD nursing student Emily