

WASHBURN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF NURSING

Program Comparisons: Prelicensure BSN and  
RN-BSN Undergraduate Degrees

Introduction

The Washburn University School of Nursing offers two tracks for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree (BSN). To compare the similarities and differences between these programs of study, we must start by defining each program.

Undergraduate Prelicensure BSN: The undergraduate prelicensure BSN track is for first-time nursing students who want to prepare for a career in professional nursing while earning a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. Upon graduation from the program, students are prepared to sit for the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN). The current curriculum provides students with a strong scientific base of study with a diversity of clinical experiences in order to assume entry-level positions.

Undergraduate RN to BSN: This undergraduate track is for those students who are already Registered Nurses (RNs) licensed by the state of Kansas. They have successfully completed the requirements of an associate degree accredited nursing program and passed the licensure examination. These students desire to further their education and expand career opportunities by completing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN). The broad knowledge base found in the BSN provides the opportunity for RNs to gain the competencies necessary to excel in the current and future healthcare marketplace.

Mission Statement

The Washburn University Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN) Completion Program seeks to prepare competent, caring professional nurses to meet the ever-changing healthcare needs of individuals, families, and communities.

Philosophy

Congruent with the philosophy of Washburn University, the School of Nursing RN to BSN Program offers a program of study based on a solid liberal education foundation from previous as well as current coursework. The RN to BSN track is designed to provide professional knowledge and skills to the licensed Registered Nurse, to support educational and career mobility as well as to strengthen community health and leadership proficiencies of nurses who already have a foundation in the profession. The responsibility of the program administrator and faculty is to generate a well-educated professional workforce ready to care for patients in an ever-changing healthcare environment.

Nursing faculty will serve as educators and role models to provide students with a solid foundation that supports learning and success in practice. Faculty and students work collaboratively to identify student-learning needs and develop strategies that will lead to successful outcomes. The

philosophy and conceptual framework pillars of the Washburn University Nursing Program will be modeled and integrated throughout the RN to BSN Program.

The nursing profession, Washburn University and the nursing faculty believe in lifelong learning, professional advancement, and contributing to the advancement of the community. The purpose of the RN to BSN Program is to prepare registered nurses for complex professional roles in order to meet the challenges of a career in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Washburn University RN to BSN Program prepares students for entry into the advanced study of nursing. The Bachelor of Science degree will provide students with the credentials for growth and development within the nursing profession well as preparation for graduate study.

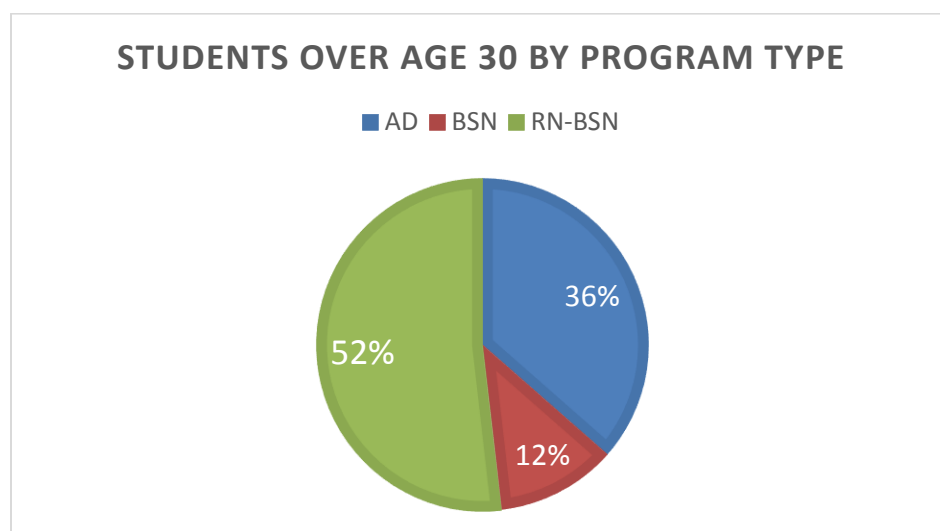
### The State of the State

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA, 2011) reports that by the year 2020, without aggressive intervention, the U.S. nursing supply will fall 36 percent below the necessary requirements; a shortage of more than a million registered nurses nationwide. HRSA is predicting a deficit of approximately 6,000 Kansas RNs by the year 2020. Currently ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in the nation for RN shortage, Kansas' ranking will increase to 18<sup>th</sup> by 2020.

The changing demographics and growing population in Kansas will have an impact on access to quality nursing care. The projected increase in the Kansas population to 3.0 million by 2020, coupled with a 46 percent increase in those aged 65 and over, will continue to place high demand on Kansas healthcare systems. Now is the time to remove the obstacles that associate degree-prepared RNs have faced in obtaining a bachelor's degree in nursing so that the professional nursing workforce in the state is prepared for the next decade. Removing barriers will involve the creation of innovative programs to meet the educational needs of diverse students. The online RN to BSN program is an appropriate intervention to aggressively increase the production of bachelor-prepared nurses for Kansas.

### Students

When comparing the two tracks offered by Washburn University School of Nursing, it is also important to understand the differences in the student populations of each program. The National League of Nursing (NLN, 2013) noted there are significant age differences within the prelicensure BSN student and the RN to BSN student. Survey data revealed 50 percent of students enrolled in associate degree programs are over 30 years of age. Students enrolled in prelicensure BSN programs are clearly younger with only 16 percent over the age of 30. Data related to the working RN returning for a BSN indicated 71 percent were over the age of 30.



Source: National League of Nursing, 2013. Annual Survey of Schools of Nursing, Fall 2012.

This difference in age requires significant consideration with regard to curriculum and pedagogy. This supports the rationale for two tracks and validates the need to make certain courses offered address the students and the curriculum in a tailored fashion. The priority with the RN to BSN curriculum relates to building on the expertise through work experience and designing course content to be real world for this student.

### Curriculum

The curriculum for the RN to BSN program integrated best-practices in its design. A thorough review of the literature focused on barriers to retention in RN to BSN programs. The barriers most frequently mentioned include the following: (McEwen, White, Pullis, & Krawtz, 2012).

- Geographic location
- Employment obligations
- Family responsibilities
- Tuition
- Fear of inability to successfully manage course expectations.
- Lack of differentiation of the RN to BSN student from the prelicensure BSN student.

During curriculum development each of these barriers were considered. The RN to BSN program must provide the experienced RN adult learner course work which builds on his or her current level of knowledge, provides meaningful learning experiences, rigor, and flexibility with attention the student's career aspirations. With over 7 million students taking online coursework, an additional priority will be designing a program of success (Allen & Seaman, 2013).

The RN to BSN program is developed on the foundation of the AACN Baccalaureate Essentials inclusive of the recommended provision for practice experiences. The program is based on the principles of adult learning with consideration for affordable tuition, flexible plans of study, support services and required orientation to assist with retention, as well as meaningful real world learning grounded in experience. The subject matter of the RN to BSN program relates to professionalism, quality improvement, evidenced-based practice, informatics, and leadership. The

goal of this online program is not to be similar to our competition, but to be the exemplar of what all online programs should look like.

Washburn University’s RN-BSN program is in compliance with the Kansas Statewide Nursing Articulation Plan. Associate degree and diploma graduates of accredited programs may articulate into the program having met all prerequisite requirements. Prospective students **may** receive 31- 37 hours of credit from completion of his/her nursing program. All other courses will be subject to evaluation of transcripts for transfer credit.

Kansas Nursing Articulation Model:

Associate Degree or Diploma Graduates to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree (BSN).

Articulation Criteria:

- Must meet program admission requirements
- Must be a graduate of a Kansas program
- Must validate previous nursing information when required through the NCLEX-RN, by testing, escrow, or portfolio according to the program policy.

Variables:	0-5 years after graduation	6-10 years after graduation	More than 10 years after graduation
Nursing credits:	No validation required if holds current RN license. No work experience required.	No validation required if holds current RN license. College may require 1000 hours nursing work experience during last three years.	Validation required. Current RN license required. College may require 1000 hours nursing work experience during the last three years.
Non-nursing credits:	May be transferred from colleges subject to BSN program policies.	May be transferred from colleges subject to BSN program policies.	May be transferred from colleges subject to BSN program policies.
<b>Out-of-State graduates:</b> (regardless of time since graduation)	Nursing credits: Evaluated individually by the admitting BSN program. Non-nursing credits: Transferred according to BSN program policies.		

## Program Requirements Comparison

### RN-BSN Program

#### **I. General Education Requirements:**

A. Humanities: **9** credit hours in **two** subject areas; 3 credit hours from Music, Art, and Theatre)

English  
Philosophy  
Religion  
Music  
Art  
Mass Media  
Modern Foreign Language  
Theatre  
Communication

B. Social Sciences: **9** credit hours

General Psychology (3)  
General Sociology (3)  
Elective (3)

C. Natural Sciences/ Mathematics: **23** credit hours

Introduction to Biology (4-5)  
Human Anatomy (4)  
Human Physiology (4)  
General Chemistry (4-5)  
Microbiology (4)  
Statistics (3)

#### **II. Supporting Courses: 6** credit hours

Nutrition (3)  
Human Development (3)

#### **III. University Requirements: 9** credit hours

Freshman Composition – EN101 (3)  
Junior Composition – EN300 (3)  
College Math – MA112 or Algebra – MA116 (3)

#### **IV. Unrestricted Electives: 4** credit hours

#### **V. Nursing Major Courses: 30** credit hours

#### **VI. AD Nursing Transfer Credit: 31-37** credit hours

### Pre-licensure BSN Program

#### **I. General Education Requirements:**

A. Humanities: **9** credit hours in **two** subject areas; 3 credit hours from Music, Art, and Theatre)

English  
Philosophy  
Religion  
Music  
Art  
Mass Media  
Modern Foreign Language  
Theatre  
Communication

B. Social Sciences: **9** credit hours

General Psychology (3)  
General Sociology (3)  
Cultural Anthropology (3)

C. Natural Sciences/ Mathematics: **23** credit hours

Introduction to Biology (4-5)  
Human Anatomy (4)  
Human Physiology (4)  
General Chemistry (4-5)  
Microbiology (4)  
Statistics (3)

#### **II. Supporting Courses: 10** credit hours

Nutrition (3)  
Human Development (3)  
Pathophysiology (4)

#### **III. University Requirements: 11-12** credit hours

Freshman Composition (3)  
Junior Composition (3)  
Basic Math or Algebra (3)

Washburn Experience (3) OR  
The College Experience (2) OR  
Washburn Honors Experience (3)

#### **IV. Unrestricted Electives: 2-6** credit hours

#### **V. Nursing Major Courses: 58** credit hours

RN-BSN Program  
Full-time Option

**PRE-FALL SESSION** – 4 weeks

NU103 Power Up: Success for Online Learners (1)  
(*Online RN-BSN Orientation*)

**FALL I SESSION** – 8 weeks

NU305 Applied Pharmacology for RNs. (3)  
NU321 Professional Transformation (1)  
IS172 Advanced Research Strategies in Nursing (1)

**FALL II SESSION** – 8 weeks

NU317 Health Assessment for RNs I. (2)  
NU323 Pathophysiology I. (2)  
NU329 Introduction to Nursing Informatics (2)

*(Four week break)*

**SPRING I SESSION** – 8 weeks

NU319 Health Assessment for RNs II. (2)  
NU327 Pathophysiology II. (2)  
NU341 Evidence-based Nursing (2)

**SPRING II SESSION** – 8 weeks

NU451 Leadership, Management, & Health Policy (2)  
NU467 Clinical Prevention & Population Health  
Management/Practicum (4)

**SUMMER SESSION** – 8 weeks

NU463 Quality & Safety in Healthcare (2)  
NU495 Leadership Capstone Seminar/Practicum (4)

Pre-licensure BSN Program  
Full-time

**THIRD YEAR**

**Fall Semester**

NU306 Health Assessment (4)  
NU311 Fundamentals of Nursing/Practicum (6)  
NU 316 Pharmacology/Lab (3)  
NU318 Professional Transformation (1)

**Spring Semester**

NU325 Nursing Informatics (2)  
NU328 Evidence-Based Nursing (2)  
NU356 Maternal, Women, Newborn/Practicum (3)  
NU386 Nursing of Older Adults/Practicum (6)  
NUXXX Elective (2)

**FOURTH YEAR**

**Fall Semester**

NU441 Integrative Seminar (1)  
NU446 Psychiatric/Mental Health/Practicum (5)  
NU450 Leadership, Management, Health Policy (3)  
NU456 Adult Medical/Surgical/Practicum (7)

**Spring Semester**

NU462 Quality & Safety in Health Care (2)  
NU465 Clinical Prevention & Population Health  
Management/Practicum (4)  
NU468 Pediatric Medical/Surgical/Practicum (3)  
NU494 Capstone Seminar/Practicum (4)

RN-BSN Program  
Part-time Option

**PRE-FALL SESSION** – 4 weeks

NU103 Power Up: Success for Online Learners (1)  
(*Online RN-BSN Orientation*)

**FALL I SESSION** – 8 weeks

NU305 Applied Pharmacology for RNs. (3)  
NU321 Professional Transformation (1)  
IS172 Advanced Research Strategies in Nursing (1)

**FALL II SESSION** – 8 weeks

NU317 Health Assessment for RNs I. (2)  
NU323 Pathophysiology I. (2)

***(Four week break)***

**SPRING I SESSION** – 8 weeks

NU319 Health Assessment for RNs II. (2)  
NU327 Pathophysiology II. (2)

**SPRING II SESSION** – 8 weeks

NU329 Introduction to Nursing Informatics (2)  
NU341 Evidence-based Nursing (2)

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