



FVCC

ASN and PN NURSING

PROGRAMS

Information Packet

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<http://www.fvcc.edu/nursing>

Nursing Program Assistant
Cathy Fabel
Flathead Valley Community College
777 Grandview Drive
BC 102 (Broussard Center)
Kalispell, MT 59901
406-756-3385
cfabel@fvcc.edu



Dear Prospective Nursing Student:

Thank you for your interest in Flathead Valley Community College Nursing Programs. The nursing faculty welcome your interest in nursing and hope this information packet will answer your questions about the opportunities for nursing education at FVCC. Nursing is a profession that awards a career for a lifetime. The health field and Nursing more specifically are some of the fastest growing occupational areas in the nation today. The overall demand for nurses is expected to continue to rise. Nurses are highly sought after graduates and have an excellent rate of job placement. Achieving Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) (Certificate of Applied Science or CAS) or Registered Nurse (RN) (Associate of Science in Nursing or ASN) status may be your initial career goal, but as a graduate, you may find it is just the first step in an advanced nursing education.

The Montana State Board of Nursing (MBON) currently approves both the Practical and Registered Nursing programs at FVCC. Program approval by the MBON is necessary in order for graduates to be eligible to take the NCLEX-PN or NCLEX-RN national licensing exams. October 2018 FVCC LPN and RN programs were fully approved by the MBON through October 2023.

As of November 2019, **“The Flathead Valley Community College Associate Degree in Nursing program is accredited by the National League for Nursing Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (NLN CNEA) located at 2600 Virginia Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20037, 202-909-2526.”**

FVCC’s Practical Nursing certificate is a three-semester Certificate of Applied Science CAS, and the Registered Nursing degree is a five-semester Associate of Science in Nursing ASN. Each program has different pre-requisite courses that must be completed or be in the process of being completed at the time of application. This packet contains further information on both curriculums.

FVCC’s Nursing Programs have limited enrollment capacity. Therefore, a competitive applicant selection process is necessary and program applicants are accepted based on the criteria found in the FVCC Practical Nursing (CAS) or Registered Nursing Program (ASN) Application Packets.

Application packets open January 1 each year. Application due dates and program start dates can also be found on the FVCC website and in the applications for each program.

Currently licensed Practical Nurses (PNs) who are interested in continuing their education to a RN degree can apply to the ASN RN program during the open application cycle. Please see the current ASN RN application for more details.

The contents and specific requirements for application are subject to change – it is the student’s responsibility to obtain the most current information packet and application at www.fvcc.edu/nursing or from the nursing office in the Broussard Center at FVCC before applying for placement. Please carefully review your application to ensure it is complete, as missing items may result in an application being disqualified from selection.

If after reviewing this information packet you have additional questions, please refer to the front cover for contact information to call, email, or schedule an appointment. We are looking forward to assisting you in reaching your educational goals.

Sincerely,

Carla Genovese, MSN, RN-BC, CCRN
Nursing Program Director

FVCC NURSING PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Flathead Valley Community College (FVCC) Nursing Program is to prepare students to successfully deliver safe, effective, and culturally competent nursing care to individuals, families, and communities across the life span. The program facilitates educational mobility, personal growth, and a pattern of excellence in lifelong learning.

The Nursing Faculty identify defining principles and integrating concepts that are foundational to nursing practice and nursing education and form the organizing framework that guides the educational outcomes and organizing framework of the curriculum.

These concepts are drawn from the National League for Nursing Competency Statements (NLN), Montana Administrative Code for Nursing, the Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) Competencies, Institute and Institute of Medicine (IOM), nursing theories (Campinha-Bacote, 2012, Neuman, 2010, Newman, 2011, Watson, 2011, Winters, 2012), and adult learning theory.

Defining Principles

The defining principles of the nursing department encompass the faculty's beliefs regarding the four major dimensions of nursing theory, plus nursing education:

- ❖ Client
- ❖ Environment
- ❖ Health
- ❖ Nursing
- ❖ Nursing Education

Client: The **client** is defined as an individual, family, or community. The individual client is a unique composite of physical, mental, psychosocial, and spiritual dimensions. The client is an open system in a state of constant change (Neuman, 2010). Clients with diverse backgrounds and experiences share similar hierarchical needs, developmental changes, and health patterns across the lifespan that influence health outcomes (Newman, 2011).

Environment: Environmental forces, both **internal** (physical, physiological, genetic, psychosocial, cultural, developmental, and spiritual) and **external** (economic, social, geographic, global, and health care access) drive the dynamic interactions that shape the human condition. Multiple determinants of health and changing tensions in the environmental system stimulate adaptive and integrative responses of the client that influence health outcomes (Healthy People Objectives 2020).

Health: Health is a dynamic state of physical, emotional, physiological, mental, psychosocial, cultural, developmental, and spiritual well-being. Health status continually changes and is influenced by multiple determinant factors in the environmental system (Neuman, 2010 and Newman, 2011). **Health is defined by the client values and beliefs** (Campinha-Bacote, 2012). Rural dwellers define health and health-seeking behaviors in unique ways (Winters, 2012). The client's sense of optimal health and measurable health indicators signifies a state of balance and achievement of positive health outcomes.



Nursing: The practice of nursing is an art and a science that involves a **caring** presence and **holistic** support for diverse clients in a variety of health care settings (Watson, 2012). A body of nursing knowledge, evidenced-based practice, and discrete professional identify and standards shape nursing as a practice discipline. Safe, quality nursing practice focuses on health promotion, disease prevention, risk reduction, health maintenance, illness management and restoration. Nursing judgment and clinical-decision-making are integral components in application of the nursing process as the framework to achieve client goals (Tanner, 2009).

Nursing Education: Nursing education promotes development of **professional nursing values and lifelong learning**. Nursing faculty maintain current evidenced-based knowledge and skills to serve as role models, mentors, and facilitators of the learning process. Students and faculty share responsibility to cultivate the knowledge, skills, and nursing judgment to deliver safe, quality nursing care. Nursing faculty establish a respectful learning climate that is responsive to the needs of adult students and the larger community. Excellence in nursing education incorporates classroom, distance learning, technology, simulation, and clinical practicum to introduce foundational principles and build critical thinking skills to solve complex nursing problems (Benner, Sutphen Leonard, and Day, 2010).

Integrating Concepts

The nursing faculty selected the following concepts to integrate throughout PN and RN curriculum framework and courses. The concepts guide the educational outcomes of each of the PN and RN program levels.

Caring: Caring is the essence of nursing practice. A caring presence reflects the basic concern for human dignity and the recognition of the unique worth of each person. Caring takes place with every nursing interaction. Caring involves the use of cognitive and intuitive knowledge, techniques, or processes that make a difference to one's sense of well-being. Caring is an intentional activity that promotes health, healing, and hope in response to the human condition. Caring and relationship-based values are demonstrated through one-on-one interactions, group processes, organizational climates, and the larger community structures to support health and wellness (Watson, 2011). Nursing encompasses a culture of caring that considers the whole person, a commitment to common good, and reaching out to the vulnerable (NLN, 2012).

Nursing Judgment: Nursing judgment encompasses three processes: critical thinking, clinical judgment, and integration of evidence based practice. Nurses employ these processes in decision making about clinical care, developing and applying research findings to the client/community, and management of resource allocation (NLN, 2012). **Critical thinking** involves questioning, "analysis, synthesis, interpretation, inference, inductive and deductive reasoning, intuition, application and creativity" to reach independent and interdependent decisions for planning and implementing nursing care (AACN). The nursing process provides the necessary framework for critical thinking and decision making. The nurse and client(s) enter a partnership to assess needs, identify health goals, plan care, implement interventions, and evaluate progression toward mutually identified health outcomes.

Quality and Safety: Nursing practice is dedicated to minimizing the risk of harm to clients through quality and safe applicant nursing performance, efficient use of resources to promote optimal health outcomes, and provision of leadership and accountability. The culture of safety is maintained by use of continual quality improvement methods (NLN and QSEN).

Communication: Communication is an interactive process that exchanges information among the nurse, client(s), and the health care team. The communication process uses verbal, non-verbal, electronic, and other media strategies for the purpose of social and emotional support, assessment, problem-solving, negotiation and conflict resolution, client and interprofessional education, and data-gathering and analysis to achieve health outcomes. Effective nursing communication is relationship-centered, respects the perspectives and culture of others, maintains confidentiality, employs a collaborative team approach, and reflects accountability for the outcomes of the communication process (NLN).

Diversity and Cultural Competence: Valuing diversity involves recognition of the differences and similarities applicants, groups, and communities to promote the delivery of culturally safe and congruent care and support a healthy and effective workplace environment. It embraces acceptance and respect for the environment from which the applicant comes and to which the applicant will return. By recognizing and valuing diversity, the nurse supports different values, beliefs, ways of thinking, being, interacting, learning, and lifestyle, self-care, and health care choices (NLN).

Professional Identity: Professional identity “involves the internalization of core values and perspectives recognized as integral to the art and science of nursing” (NLN) and represents the framework which shapes ethical standards of practice. It encompasses respect for diversity, autonomy, truth, justice, and dignity. The nurse embraces fundamental values such as accountability, reflective practice, commitment to life-long learning and promotes the ideals of the nursing profession (Benner, et al., 2010).



General Nursing Program Standards and Requirements

To progress successfully through either the Practical Nursing (CAS) or Registered Nursing (ASN) Nursing Program, applicants should have:

- Adequate visual acuity, with or without corrective lenses, to read fine print.
- Adequate hearing ability, with or without auditory aids, to be able to hear heart, lung, bowel sounds, etc. and understand a normal speaking voice.
- Adequate physical ability to perform basic client/patient care, which includes the ability to lift a minimum of 25 lbs.
- Sufficient command of the English language to effectively communicate (verbally and in written form) with clients/patients, families, and other healthcare professionals. Applicants who English is a foreign language may be required to show proficiency through testing.

PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM (CAS) INFORMATION

PRACTICAL NURSING DEFINITION

FVCC's Practical Nursing program follows the HealthCare Montana Model for Nursing Curriculum, Montana Board of Nursing requirements, and the laws and rules in the State of Montana, which govern Practical Nursing.

The focus of the curriculum is to provide education leading to basic knowledge of the biological, physical, behavioral, psychological, and sociological sciences and of nursing procedures. The practice of practical nursing uses standardized procedures in the observation and care of the ill, injured, and infirm, in the maintenance of health, in action to safeguard life and health, and in the administration of medications and treatments prescribed by a physician, naturopathic physician, physician assistant, optometrist, advanced practice registered nurse, dentist, osteopath, or podiatrist authorized by state law to prescribe medications and treatments.

In their roles as members of the discipline of nursing, practical nurses actively participate in and subscribe to the legal and ethical tenets of the discipline. LPNs always function under the supervision of a registered nurse, physician, naturopathic physician, physician assistant, optometrist, advanced practice registered nurse, dentist, osteopath, or podiatrist (**MCA 37-8-102. Definitions**).

Graduates will be eligible to apply to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nursing (NCLEX-PN).

FVCC PRACTICAL NURSING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of the Practical Nursing curriculum, the graduate will be able to:

- Implement health promotion and disease prevention that is cost effective, comprehensive and coordinated.
- Engage patient and families as partners in **evidenced-based care**, while **respecting applicant preference**.
- Integrate current research findings, expert opinion, **clinical reasoning**, and patient preferences in implementing a **plan of care**
- Demonstrate cooperation, coordination, and **communication** among team members, patients, and community populations to improve **quality** and enhance patient **safety**.
- Recognize and **assist in ongoing assessment** of patient and systems with the goal of providing the highest level of patient care and outcomes.
- Participate in utilization of technology as a member of the care team, to gather data, manage information, and improve communication to support clinical decisions.
- Recognize basic **safety** principles and utilize safety-enhancing technology to reduce risk of harm to self and others.

Practical Nursing Program Outcomes

1. Graduates performance on the NCLEX will be at or above the national average.
2. 80% or more of students who enter the program will successfully complete the program.
3. Graduate Satisfaction surveys will reflect a >80% satisfaction
4. Employer Satisfaction surveys will reflect a >90% satisfaction
5. 80% or more of graduates will report being employed or planning to continue on as full-time students.

PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Practical Nursing applicants must complete the FVCC Application for Admission (degree seeking) and follow the steps for enrolling at Flathead Valley Community College.

Admission to Flathead Valley Community College does not guarantee acceptance into the Practical Nursing Program.

The Practical Nursing Certificate of Applied Science is a 3-semester program. This includes one semester of pre-requisite courses, which must be completed, or in the process of being completed at the time of application.

For placement, applicants must have successfully completed or be in the process of completing the prerequisite general education courses listed below before applying. Fulfillment of the minimum requirements does not guarantee acceptance into the Practical Nursing Program. The formal application process must be completed and applicants must be accepted into the program before they can register for the NRSNG courses. This process is outlined in a separate document: the FVCC Practical Nursing Program Application Packet.

The following prerequisite general education courses must be completed or going to be completed by the end of the semester preceding the start of the Practical Nursing program. A grade of “C” or higher is required for **ALL non-nursing courses**. **A minimum GPA of 2.50 is required for the pre-requisite courses.** Prerequisite courses may be repeated one time in an attempt to receive a “C” or higher grade. **BIOH 104 must have been completed with a C or higher within 5 years of beginning the program.**

**PRACTICAL NURSING CURRICULUM prerequisites:
Pre-requisite courses may be repeated only one time.**

Course	Title	Credits
	Semester One (can be taken any semester prior to acceptance into PN program)	
BIOH 104	Basic Human Biology with Lab*	4
M 120	Mathematics with Health Care Applications	3
PSYX 100	Introduction to Psychology	4
WRIT 101	College Writing I	3
TOTAL		14

**must have been taken within 5 years of acceptance into the Practical Nurse program.*

Applicants are presumed to possess basic computer skills (use of word processing & presentation software and ability to use the Internet & send/receive email). Applicants with little or no computer background could benefit by enrolling in a Computer Applications Course.

If an applicant has courses from prior degrees, out-of-state colleges, or non-Montana University System colleges that they wish to be considered as an equivalent or substitution for any of the PN prerequisites, the courses must first be evaluated by FVCC registrar. Official transcripts must be sent from the colleges or universities to FVCC in order to be evaluated. If courses are not equivalent to FVCC pre-requisite courses, applicants may request review by the Nursing Program Director for consideration as substitutions **prior to the application deadline.**

When applicants have completed prior degrees, individual courses are not generally listed on a FVCC transcript, only the degree, so it is important to work with our academic advisors when transferring courses to ensure courses being used as pre-requisites are evaluated.

The evaluation process may involve having faculty who are experts in specific content area review course information. Be prepared to supply course descriptions for the courses to be reviewed. Providing a syllabus for course/courses to be evaluated is even better, if they are available. This process of evaluating classes can take several weeks, so plan ahead.

APPLICATION AND ADMISSION TO THE PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM IS REQUIRED BEFORE STUDENTS MAY BEGIN TAKING THE FOLLOWING REQUIRED PRACTICAL NURSING COURSES:

Course	Title	Credits
	Semester Two	
NRSG 130	Fundamentals of Nursing	3
NRSG 131	Fundamentals of Nursing Lab	3
NRSG 135	Pharmacology for Practical Nurses	3
NRSG 136	Pharmacology for Practical Nurses Lab	1
NRSG 152	Gerontology and Community Nursing	2
NRSG 153	Gerontology and Community Nursing Clinical	2
	Semester Three	
NRSG 140	Adult Health Nursing	4
NRSG 141	Adult Health Nursing Clinical	2
NRSG 142	Nursing Care of Women and Children	3
NRSG 143	Nursing Care of Women and Children Clinical	1
NRSG 148	Leadership Issues for Practical Nurses	2
NRSG 149	Leadership Issues for Practical Nurses Clinical	1
TOTAL	(including prerequisites)	40

Each nursing course must be passed with a minimum grade of a “**C+**” (78-79% or higher) for the student to continue in the program (**a C will not be accepted**). Students receiving a C or lower grade in PN nursing courses will be not be able to continue in the program or graduate from the program. A student CANNOT progress to the next semester of courses if he/she is not passing current semester nursing courses. If a course has a co-requisite lab/clinical course, students must successfully complete both the classroom and lab/clinical courses to progress to the next semester. Courses must be taken in sequence.

It is essential to work with your academic advisor to assure proper selection and sequencing of courses. Third (3rd) semester courses cannot be started until all courses in the second (2nd) semester are successfully completed. Petitions for re-entry into the program will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and all placements in the Nursing Program are dependent upon sufficient financial, faculty, and clinical resources.

The Practical Nursing Program standards and requirements (such as grading scale, attendance, course repetition, graduation requirements, etc.) are more rigorous and strict than general FVCC requirements. To assure progression through the program, the student must meet the total academic and clinical requirements. The student must demonstrate a continuing ability to assure patient/client safety and welfare. **Therefore, satisfactory academic performance does not, in and of itself, assure progression through the program.**

PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM PLACEMENT

The Practical Nursing Program has a limited enrollment capacity due to availability of resources. A new cohort of students is accepted each year at the FVCC Kalispell campus and may be accepted at the Lincoln County campus when there is a demand. The Lincoln County campus is a distance delivery site and has a smaller number of placements. If the number of qualified applicants exceeds available spaces, not all qualified applicants will be accepted. A competitive student selection process is necessary and program applicants are accepted based on the criteria found in a separate document containing the FVCC Practical Nursing Program Application Packet. **The contents and requirements listed in the application packet are subject to change – it is the applicant’s responsibility to obtain the most current packet before applying for placement.**

Kaplan Testing: All applicants will be required to take the Kaplan Nursing School Admissions Test as part of the application process. The test determines whether a student has the necessary academic skills to perform effectively in nursing school. Applicants will be assessed in the areas of reading, writing, math, and science. Applicants must achieve a minimum score of 65 or above to be considered for admission into the FVCC CAS Licensed Practical Nurse program. **Therefore it is highly recommended that you prepare for this exam.** Applicants may take the exam one time during an application cycle. There is no fee for the exam if it is taken on the FVCC/LCC campus on one of the group test dates proctored by the nursing department. If applicants choose to take the test on another date through the FVCC Testing Center, there is a \$25 fee. Other testing centers outside of Kalispell may be available and there is usually a fee. Please see the most current application packet for more information regarding the Kaplan Nursing School Admission test.

PRACTICAL NURSING (CAS) APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS:

Step I Application Review

All COMPLETE applications are reviewed and ranked, and **GPA verified with final semester grades.**

Step II Interview

An initial list of qualified applicants is compiled. The most qualified applicants are asked to participate in an interview as part of Step II in the selection process for the program. Applicants will be evaluated on the following areas during the interview:

- Communication skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Professional behavior

Step III Provisional Acceptance/Background Check and Immunizations

Those qualified applicants who are offered provisional placement into the program are required to agree to the following as **Step III (final step)** in the process of acceptance into the program.

- Upon provisional acceptance into the FVCC Nursing Program, a background check will be required and the following will be checked: County Criminal, MT Statewide Criminal, Fraud and Abuse Control Information Systems (FACIS Level 1), ID Trace, and National Sex Offender Public Registry. FVCC clinical partners require the background checks.
- Background checks are completed at the applicant's expense through a company called CastleBranch. Information on how to access and set up an account with CastleBranch to complete the background check will be provided once an applicant is provisionally accepted for placement.
- Any discrepancies found on the background check or self-reported will need documentation regarding circumstances and outcomes in order for the clinical partners to make an informed decision regarding access to patients/residents. **Discrepancies on a background check may result in applicants being denied access to patient/residents by clinical partners.** If an applicant is denied access to patients/residents by clinical partners, they will be unable to meet course objectives, which would result in failure of the course and program.
- Urine testing is part of the required background check and is requested by clinical partners.

- Applicant situations will be reviewed by the nursing program director and clinical partners for determination of access to clinical sites on a case-by-case basis. If an applicant is denied access to clinical sites/patients as a result of findings on a background check, applicants will not be offered final placement in the program.
- Immunizations and screenings are required by clinical partner facilities and based on Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines. Each applicant must demonstrate compliance with the requirements upon provisional admission to the nursing program and provide documentation while enrolled in the program of continued compliance of the following:

Provide proof of **required immunizations and screenings:**

- Proof of completed Hepatitis B Series including positive or reactive antibody titer results or proof the applicant has begun the series.
- Proof of Measles (Rubeola), Mumps and Rubella immunity either by dates of two vaccinations after your first birthday, a physician diagnosis of disease history, **or** laboratory verification of positive antibody titer (*need only one of these methods of verification*).
- Proof of Chicken Pox (Varicella) immunity either by a record of two vaccinations **or** laboratory verification of positive antibody titer, or documentation of proof of having chickenpox from your health care provider (*need only one of these methods of verification*).
- Proof of Tetanus w/ Pertussis (whooping cough): **Tdap** vaccination as an adult (not pediatric DTap and not Td tetanus diphtheria).
- Record of two negative TB skin tests in the last 12 months with the second test initiated between 7-21 days after the first negative test was read (if the test is positive, a chest x-ray is required); **or** Negative Quantiferon TB blood test; **or** fill out Positive Responder Form.
- Provide proof of current personal health insurance (FVCC Student Health Center does not meet this requirement).

Once all requirements are met, applicants will receive a letter of final acceptance into the program and a registration form allowing registration in the nursing courses. Nursing courses are closed to online registration.

(ASN) REGISTERED NURSING PROGRAM INFORMATION

(ASN) REGISTERED NURSING DEFINITION

FVCC's Registered Nursing program follows the HealthCare Montana Model for Nursing Curriculum, Montana Board of Nursing requirements, and the laws and rules in the State of Montana, which govern Registered Nursing.

The focus of FVCC Associate of Science Nursing curriculum is to prepare graduates in the performance of services requiring substantial specialized knowledge of the biological, physical, behavioral, psychological, and sociological sciences and of nursing theory as a basis for the nursing process. The nursing process is the assessment, nursing analysis, planning, nursing intervention, evaluation in the promotion and maintenance of health, the prevention, case finding, and management of illness, injury, or infirmity, and the restoration of optimum function. The term also includes administration, teaching, counseling, supervision, delegation, and evaluation of nursing practice and the administration of medications and treatments prescribed by physicians, naturopathic physicians, physician assistants, optometrists, advanced practice registered nurses, dentists, osteopaths, or podiatrists authorized by state law to prescribe medications and treatments. Each registered nurse is directly accountable and responsible to the consumer for the quality of nursing care rendered.

MCA 37-8-102. Definitions.

The professional nurse shall assess clients and formulate a nursing diagnosis and shall plan and implement and evaluate nursing care provided in a variety of health care settings. The graduate works together with other members of the health care team to manage the human, physical, financial, and technical needs of the client following ethical and legal standards of the profession of nursing.

Students who successfully complete all of the required courses (a minimum of 72 credits) earn an Associate of Science Registered Nursing degree. Graduates will be eligible to apply to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nursing (NCLEX-RN). Graduates may have taken appropriate coursework empowering them to pursue further educational goals, such as a bachelor's or higher degree, if desired.

Graduates who pass their licensure exam will perform services according to the Montana State Board of Nursing rules found in the *Administrative Rules of Montana, Chapter 24.159 Board of Nursing*

(ASN) Registered Nursing Educational Outcomes:

Upon completion of the Associate of Science (ASN)-Registered Nursing curriculum, the graduate will be able to:

- Develop and lead programs of health promotion and disease prevention that is cost-effective, comprehensive, and coordinated. Engage patient and families as partners in **evidenced-based**, ethical care, while **respecting applicant preference**.
- Analyze and integrate current research findings, expert opinion, clinical reasoning, and **patient preferences** in developing and implementing **plan of care**.
- Promote and lead cooperation, coordination, and **communication** among team members, patients, and community populations to improve **quality** and enhance patient **safety**.

- Provide ongoing assessment and analysis of patients and systems with the goal of providing the highest level of patient care and outcomes.
- Demonstrate the ability to utilize technology to gather and analyze data, manage information, and improve communication among team members and across systems to support clinical decisions.
- Participate as a team member to design, promote, and model effective use of technology to reduce the risk of harm to self and others.

(ASN) Registered Nursing Program Outcomes:

1. Graduates' performance on the NCLEX will be at or above the national average.
2. 80% or more of students who enter the program will successfully complete the program.
3. Graduate Satisfaction surveys will reflect a >80% satisfaction
4. Employer Satisfaction surveys will reflect a >90% satisfaction
5. 80% or more of graduates will report being employed or planning to continue on as full-time students

REGISTERED NURSING (ASN) PROGRAM APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The Associate of Science Registered Nursing is a 5-semester program. This includes 14 credits of pre-requisite courses which must be completed or in the process of being completed at the time of application. Applicants must complete the FVCC Application for Admission (degree-seeking) and follow the steps for enrolling at Flathead Valley Community College. **Admission to Flathead Valley Community College does not guarantee acceptance into the ASN Registered Nursing Program.**

Applicants must have successfully completed or be in the process of completing the prerequisite courses listed before applying to the Registered Nurse program. Fulfillment of the minimum requirements does not guarantee acceptance into the Registered Nursing Program. There is a formal application process and applicants must be accepted into the program before they may register for NURSING (NRSG) courses. This process is outlined in a separate document: the FVCC Registered Nursing Program Application Packet.

LPNs wishing to continue their education toward an RN degree follow the ASN application process.

A minimum 2.75 GPA is required in the 4 pre-requisite courses. All non-nursing courses must have a grade of "C" or higher with the exception of BIOH 201 and BIOH 211 which require a "B-" or higher unless they were taken before Fall of 2016. CHMY 121 Chemistry, BIOH 201 A&P I, BIOH 211 A&P II, and BIOM 250 Microbiology must be taken within 5 years of acceptance into the program. Applicants who have completed these courses outside of the 5-year requirement may request evaluation by the Nursing Program Director for a possible exception.

If an applicant has courses from prior degrees, out-of-state colleges, or non-Montana University System colleges that they wish to be considered as an equivalent or substitution for any of the RN prerequisites, the courses must first be evaluated by FVCC registrar. Official transcripts must be sent from the colleges or universities to FVCC in order to be evaluated.

If courses are not equivalent to FVCC pre-requisite courses, applicants may request review by the Nursing Program Director for consideration as substitutions **prior to application deadline**.

When applicants have completed prior degrees, applicant's courses are not generally listed on an FVCC transcript, only the degree, so it is important to work with our academic advisors when transferring courses to ensure courses being used as pre-requisites are evaluated.

The evaluation process may involve having faculty who are experts in specific content area review course information. Be prepared to supply course descriptions for the courses to be reviewed. Providing a syllabus for course/courses to be evaluated is even better, if they are available. This process of evaluating classes can take several weeks so plan ahead.

**ASN CURRICULUM prerequisites:
Pre-requisite courses may be repeated only one time.**

Applicants are presumed to possess basic computer skills (use of word processing & presentation software and ability to use the Internet & send/receive email). Applicants with little or no computer background should enroll in a basic computer course.

Course	Title	Credits
	Semester One (can be taken any semester prior to acceptance into ASN program)	
BIOH 201	Human Anatomy & Physiology I w/Lab*	4
CHMY 121	Intro. to General Chemistry w/Lab *	4
M140	College Math for Healthcare	3
	Math courses below may be considered for substitution if taken before Fall 2018:	
M115 or M121 or M152 or M153 or M171	Probability and Linear Math	3
	College Algebra	3
	Precalculus Algebra	4
	Precalculus Trigonometry	3
	Calculus I	5
WRIT 101	College Writing I	3
TOTAL		14

**Must have been taken within 5 years of acceptance into the Registered Nurse program*



APPLICATION AND ADMISSION TO THE REGISTERED NURSING PROGRAM IS REQUIRED BEFORE INDIVIDUALS MAY BEGIN TAKING THE REQUIRED NURSING (NRSG) COURSES.

Course	Title	Credits
Semester Two		
BIOH 211	Human Anatomy and Physiology II w/lab*	4
NRSG 230	Nursing Pharmacology	3
NRSG 231	Nursing Pharmacology Lab	2
NRSG 232	Foundations of Nursing	3
NRSG 233	Foundations of Nursing Lab	3
Semester Three		
NRSG 234	Adult Nursing I	3
NRSG 235	Adult Nursing I Clinical	2
NRSG 236	Health and Illness of Maternal Nursing	2
NRSG 237	Health and Illness of Maternal Nursing Clinical	1
NRSG 256	Pathophysiology (Requires a B- as is a NRSG course)	3
PSYX 100	Introduction to Psychology*	3 or 4
Semester Four		
NRSG 244	Adult Nursing II	3
NRSG 245	Adult Nursing II Clinical	2
NRSG 246	Health And Illness of Child and Family Nursing	2
NRSG 247	Health And Illness of Child and Family Nursing Clinical	1
NRSG 254	Mental Health Concepts	3
NRSG 255	Mental Health Concepts Clinical	1
SOCI 101	Introduction to Sociology*	3
Semester Five		
NRSG 259	Adult Nursing III	3
NRSG 260	Adult Nursing III Lab	1
NRSG 261	Adult Nursing III Clinical	2
NRSG 266	Managing Client Care for the RN	2
NRSG 267	Managed Client Care for the RN Clinical	2
BIOM 250	Microbiology for Health Sciences w/lab *	4
Total		59
Total including prerequisites		72/73

* **NON-NURSING** COURSES LISTED IN THE CURRICULUM OTHER THAN PRE-REQUISITES CAN BE TAKEN IN ANY SEMESTER OR PRIOR TO ACCEPTANCE INTO THE ASN PROGRAM. BIOH 211 and BIOM 250 MUST HAVE BEEN TAKEN WITHIN 5 YEARS OF ACCEPTANCE INTO THE ASN RN PROGRAM.



A grade of “B-“ or higher is required in BIOH 201 and 211 as well as ALL NRSNG courses listed on page 15.

A grade of “C” or higher will be accepted in BIOH 201 and BIOH 211 if the courses were taken in the last 5 years and before Fall of 2016. Be advised that acceptance of C grades will impact applicants’ grade point average.

LPNs who have completed the pre-requisites as part of their LPN degree will have the 5-year rule waived. If BIOH 201 and 211 were taken before Fall 2016, a grade of C is acceptable. Please see application packet for further information.

The Registered Nursing Program standards and requirements (such as grading scale, attendance, course repetition, graduation requirements, etc.) are more rigorous and strict than general FVCC requirements. To ensure progression through the program, individuals accepted into the program must meet the total academic and clinical requirements. They must demonstrate a continuing ability to ensure patient/client safety and welfare. **Therefore, satisfactory academic performance does not, in and of itself, ensure progression through the program.**

Once accepted into the Nursing program, individuals must achieve an 80% (B-) or higher in each nursing course to advance through the program. Individuals receiving a C+ (79 %) or lower grade in nursing courses will not be able to continue on to the next semester of the program or graduate from the program. An individual CANNOT progress to the next semester of courses or graduate if he/she is not passing all current semester nursing courses. If a course has a co-requisite lab/clinical course, individuals must successfully complete both the classroom and lab/clinical courses to progress to the next semester or graduate.

Nursing Courses must be taken in sequence. It is essential to work with your nursing academic advisor to ensure proper selection and sequencing of courses. Third (3rd) semester courses cannot be started until all courses in the second (2nd) semester are successfully completed, etc.

PROGRAM PLACEMENT FOR (ASN) REGISTERED NURSING

The number of applicants accepted into the ASN Registered Nursing Program is limited due to availability of resources. A new cohort of individuals is accepted once per year for placement in either the Fall or Spring Semester at the FVCC Kalispell campus. Applicants may be accepted to the FVCC Lincoln County Campus dependent upon demand and resources and only in the Fall semester. If the number of qualified applicants exceeds available spaces, not all qualified applicants will be accepted. A competitive applicant selection process is necessary and program applicants are accepted based on the criteria found in a separate document containing the FVCC ASN Program Application Packet. **The contents and requirements of the application packet are subject to change – it is the individual’s responsibility to obtain the most current packet before applying for placement.**

Kaplan Testing: All applicants will be required to take the Kaplan Nursing School Admissions Test as part of the application process. The test determines whether an individual has the necessary academic skills to perform effectively in nursing school. Applicants will be assessed in the areas of reading, writing, math, and science. Applicants need to achieve a minimum score of 70 or above to be considered for acceptance into the FVCC ASN Registered Nurse program. ***Therefore it is highly recommended that you prepare for this exam.*** Applicants may take the exam one time during an application cycle. There is no fee for the exam if it is taken on the FVCC/LCC campus on one of the group test dates proctored by the nursing department. If applicants choose to take the test on another date through the FVCC Testing Center, there is a \$25 fee. Other testing centers outside of Kalispell may be available and there is usually a fee. Please see the most current application packet for more information regarding the Kaplan Nursing School Admission test.

(ASN) RN APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS:

Step I Application Review

All COMPLETE applications are reviewed and ranked, and **GPA verified with final semester grades.**

Step II Interview

An initial list of qualified applicants is compiled. The most qualified applicants are asked to participate in an interview. Applicants will be evaluated on the following areas during the interview:

- Communication skills
- Problem solving skills
- Professional behavior

Step III Provisional Acceptance/Background Check and Immunizations

Those qualified applicants who are offered provisional placement into the program are required to agree to the following as **Step III (final step)** in the process of acceptance into the program.

- Upon provisional acceptance into the FVCC Nursing Program, a background check will be required and the following will be checked: County Criminal, MT Statewide Criminal, Fraud and Abuse Control Information Systems (FACIS Level 1), ID Trace, and National Sex Offender Public Registry. FVCC clinical partners require this step.
- Background checks are completed at the student's expense through a company called CastleBranch. Information on how to access and set up an account with CastleBranch to complete the background check will be provided once an applicant is provisionally accepted for placement.

- Any discrepancies found on the background check or self-reported will need documentation regarding circumstances and outcomes in order for the clinical partners to make an informed decision regarding access to patients/residents. **Discrepancies may result in applicants being denied access to patient/residents by clinical partners.** If an applicant is denied access to patients/residents by clinical partners, they will be unable to meet course objectives, which would result in failure of the course and program.
- Urine testing is part of the required background check and is requested by clinical partners.
- Applicant situations will be reviewed by the nursing program director and clinical partners for determination of access to clinical sites on a case-by-case basis. If an applicant is denied access to clinical sites/patients as a result of findings on a background check, applicants will not be offered final placement in the program.
- Immunizations and screenings are required by clinical partner facilities and based on Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines. Each student must demonstrate compliance with the requirements upon provisional admission to the nursing program and provide documentation while enrolled in the program of continued compliance of the following:

Provide proof of **required immunizations and screenings:**

- Proof of completed Hepatitis B Series including positive or reactive antibody titer results or proof the applicant has begun the series.
- Proof of Measles (Rubeola), Mumps and Rubella immunity either by dates of two vaccinations after your first birthday, a physician diagnosis of disease history, **or** laboratory verification of positive antibody titer (*need only one of these methods of verification*).
- Proof of Chicken Pox (Varicella) immunity either by a record of two vaccinations **or** laboratory verification of positive antibody titer, or documentation of proof of having chickenpox from your health care provider (*need only one of these methods of verification*).
- Proof of Tetanus w/ Pertussis (whooping cough): **Tdap** vaccination as an adult (not pediatric DTap and not Td tetanus diphtheria).
- Record of two negative TB skin tests in the last 12 months with the second test initiated between 7-21 days after the first negative test was read (if the test is positive, a chest x-ray is required); **or** Negative Quantiferon TB blood test; **or** fill out Positive Responder Form.
- Provide proof of current personal health insurance (FVCC Student Health Center does not meet this requirement).

Once all requirements are met, applicants will receive a letter of final acceptance into the program and a registration form allowing registration in the nursing courses. Nursing courses are closed to online registration.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PERSONAL EFFORT AND COMMITMENT FOR SUCCESS

FVCC's Nursing Programs, as with most nursing programs, expect a substantial time commitment to fulfill the intensive requirements of the program in the classroom, nursing laboratory, and clinical settings. Student success is dependent upon a collaborative working partnership by students and faculty. The nursing program philosophy and faculty view learning as an interactive process with faculty facilitating learning. We are truly committed to assisting you to succeed in the program. However, learners must assume responsibility for their own learning and participate in shaping their own learning experiences. Students must acknowledge and understand the expectations of the program:

1. There is a ***minimal*** study expectation of two hours of study per week for each credit enrolled. For example, a course that is 4 credits of theory would require minimal 8 hours of study and a 3-credit lab 6 hours of study per week. Most successful students spend three to four hours of study time per credit.
2. Although we hold an appreciation for your possible need to work to support yourself and/or a family, most students find it extremely difficult to work full-time while attending classes for the Nursing Program. Clinical practicums are scheduled when facilities have available space and **are subject to change with short notice**. **Clinical/class hours will include evenings, weekends and night shifts**. Students are expected to be available for the scheduled clinical hours. Clinical hours will include evenings, weekends, and night shifts.
3. Students are expected to attend all classes and clinicals. Missed clinical time may result in failure of courses and dismissal from the nursing program. **Please do not make vacation plans that would affect attendance in class or clinical. Absences cannot be made up due to the fast pace of material presented in class and the limited availability of clinical experiences.**
4. In general and given the same amount of student effort, nursing students may not achieve the grades they have received in non-nursing courses. Learning a "new language" and being exposed to in-depth, comprehensive nursing concepts and principles may require more effort on your part to learn and understand. Though grades may have been the primary focus of previous courses, the focus in the nursing program is learning and comprehension of information needed to deliver safe and competent care to patients/residents.
5. You are expected to be prepared for class, lab, and clinical. This will include extensive reading, pre-clinical preparation, and other assignments prior to your attendance in class, lab or clinicals.
6. Most exams given in nursing courses are structured similarly to the nurse licensing exam. This means that most of the items on the exams are application, analysis, and synthesis type questions rather than simple knowledge and recall. These questions require a higher-order of thinking to answer correctly.

7. We provide you with learning and test-taking strategies to assist you in developing critical thinking and clinical judgement skills necessary for success on the nursing course exams and the NCLEX licensure exam.
8. The nursing program is very different and much more difficult than past educational experiences. It is designed to deliver a quality program that prepares individuals to give safe and competent nursing care, to successfully pass the licensing exam, and to promote lifelong learning.

PROGRAM COSTS

In addition to tuition, fees, and program fee, nursing students should be aware that required nursing textbooks/reference materials are expensive and that many courses require several texts. Students should also plan for a number of out-of-pocket expenses related to uniforms, clinical supplies, and other course/program requirements. If you would like an estimated cost of attending, please contact the Nursing department at 406-756-3385 or e-mail cfabel@fvcc.edu.

**Many scholarship opportunities exist.
Visit the FVCC Financial Aid Office for more information.**



APPLICATION EVALUATION

Practical Nursing

Applications for the Practical Nursing program are evaluated in the following areas:

1. Residency- Flathead and Lincoln County residents receive maximum points in this category
2. Kaplan Admission Test –minimum score 65
3. GPA-minimum to qualify for consideration is 2.50
4. Interview Score

ADDITIONAL APPLICATION POINTS FOR THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

5. **Previous healthcare experience.**
6. **Completion of BIOH 201 and 211 with a grade of B- or better.**

Registered Nursing

Applications for the Registered Nursing program are evaluated in the following areas:

1. Residency-Flathead and Lincoln County residents receive maximum points in this category.
2. Kaplan Admission Test –minimum score 70
3. GPA-minimum to qualify for consideration is 2.75. (Applicants must have a B- in BIOH 201 Human Anatomy and Physiology I, unless taken before Fall 2016).
4. Interview Score

ADDITIONAL APPLICATION POINTS FOR THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

5. **Previous healthcare experience.**
6. **Completion of BIOH 211 and/or BIOM 250 with a grade of B- or better.**

Please review your application packet carefully to ensure all items are completed by the deadline noted.