



UNIVERSITY OF PROVIDENCE

Rn-BSN 2024-2025 Student Handbook



Rn-BSN Student Handbook

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University of Providence

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program aligns curricular and learning activities with the Mission of the University of Providence (UP). The University continually and responsibly evaluates its operation and programs; the BSN program participates in this evaluation process. The University offers students a foundation for actively implementing UP values and the teachings within the Catholic tradition; it serves students of all beliefs who wish to take advantage of its programs. The faculty and staff of the UP join with students in a cooperative and enthusiastic search for truth, so that students may develop:

- Character - have a positive impact on the world and to the communities in which they live and work, particularly by recognizing and accepting personal accountability to themselves, to society, and to God;
- Competence - further their ability to live full and rewarding lives by becoming competent working members of society who know the basics of their professional field and have access to future learning;
- Commitment - find meaning in life which enables them to participate effectively in society while transcending its limitations, by living according to their moral and religious convictions, as well as respecting the dignity and beliefs of other people.

The University's Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing (BSN) major was developed in response to an initiative of and in partnership with Providence Health Services. Academic policies and procedures of the University of Providence are in effect as program policies and procedures unless otherwise stated.

Accreditation and Affiliation

UP is a private, Catholic university, incorporated under the laws of the State of Montana. The University has been empowered to grant diplomas and confer academic honors and collegiate degrees since 1932. The University is sponsored by the Sisters of Providence and operates within the jurisdiction of the Catholic bishop of Great Falls- Billings. UP is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and the United States Department of Education.

The baccalaureate degree program in nursing and master's degree program in nursing at the University of Providence are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 655 K Street NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001, 202-887-6791.

UP has approval to offer a Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN) by the Montana Board of Nursing.

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) For Licensed Registered Nurses

The RN-BSN program is a Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree Completion Program offered to license, practicing Registered Nurses. The RN to BSN completion program prepares graduates to be leaders in healthcare. The program is designed for working RNs, offering a 30-credit program over three semesters.

Nursing Program

In the tradition of the visionary Sisters of Providence; the University of Providence and PSJH created a partnership to develop and implement the RN-BSN program.

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This partnership between an academic institution and a healthcare system significantly impacts the education the student will receive and prepares each student for innovative nursing practice which is grounded in the mission of PSJH: *As expressions of God's healing love, witnessed through the ministry of Jesus, we are steadfast in serving all, especially those who are poor and vulnerable.* The students are also grounded in the PSJH values of: *Compassion, Dignity, Justice, Excellence, Integrity* and with the vision of *health for better world.*

BSN Program Themes

Compassion Ethics and Spirituality	Population and Community Health	Inter-Professional Collaboration
Patient and Family Centered Care	Transforming healthcare	Reflective Practice and Lifelong Development
Leadership and Effective Advocacy	Safety and Quality Outcomes	Evidence Based Practice
	Professional Accountability	

BSN Program Outcomes

A graduate of the BSN program will be a leader in healthcare. Graduates will be excellent communicators, clinicians and leaders of change. A graduate is a life-long learner and will enhance the nursing profession by providing evidence-based nursing practice that is population centered, as well as grounded in spiritual, ethical and compassionate care. UP's nursing curriculum is built to respond to the rapidly changing health care system, as well as to student's needs. The graduate of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program of UP is prepared to:

1. Integrate a compassionate and ethical understanding of the human experience into nursing practice using the foundations of a liberal arts education.
2. Apply leadership concepts, skills, and decision-making to engage healthcare teams in creating, promoting, and managing safety and quality outcomes.
3. Apply nursing practices that are informed by research, evidence-based practice, clinical judgment, clinical reasoning, and innovation to optimize health.
4. Utilize information technology to communicate, mitigate errors, and make improved clinical decisions related to the care of diverse populations.
5. Advocate to influence change in legal, political, social, and economic factors that transform healthcare delivery.
6. Collaborate with the inter-professional team to improve patient/family outcomes and the work environment.
7. Provide compassionate, spiritual, ethical, and culturally appropriate care across the lifespan and the continuum of care.
8. Practice preventive care, health promotion, and disease intervention across care settings for self, individuals, families, the community, and populations.
9. Assume professional accountability to uphold the standards of nursing practice as defined by the Nurse Practice Act (in the state in which the nurse practices) and the ANA Code of Ethics.
10. Demonstrate reflective nursing practice.

RN-BSN Program Format

- Three semesters for a total of 12 months

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- Mandatory live virtual Program Orientation prior to the start of the program
- Cohort model - students gain a sense of community and individual attention as they progress through the program with the same group of students.
- New Cohorts begin each Fall semester.

University of Providence Bachelor's Degree Core Requirements

The RN-BSN program requires students to complete modified university core requirements. Core requirements are met by university ILC-350 course and content within the Nursing courses. Core requirements are waived for students with a Bachelor's degree in another field as per university policy. The Registrar reviews all transcripts and will make that determination. Core requirements for the baccalaureate degree can be reviewed on the university website.

RN-BSN Nursing Courses

Students are required to have an active, unencumbered RN license to apply for the RN-BSN program. No additional pre-requisite courses are required for the RN-BSN program.

After acceptance into the RN-BSN program, the student will progress, with a cohort, to graduation in three semesters. Each class must be completed successfully in order to progress in the curriculum.

Courses are offered in an 8-week format, with 2 classes in each 8-week block.

Table 1. RN-BSN Program of Study

Course	Course Title	Credits	Direct Practice Experiences
Semester 1- 1st 8 Weeks	Spring or Fall		
NRS 301	Research Methods and Statistics	3	
NRS 405	Pathophysiology and Pharmacology Concepts	3	X
Semester 1- 2nd 8 Weeks			
NRS 402	Evidence-Based Practice	3	
NRS 407	Public Health: Nursing Care of Populations	3	X
Semester 2- 1st 8 Weeks	Summer or Spring		
NRS 408	Health Promotion in Nursing	3	X
NRS 419	Quality & Safety in Nursing Leadership	3	
Semester 2- 2nd 8 Weeks			
NRS 403	Nursing Ethics and Spirituality in Nursing Care	3	
NRS 242	Nursing Informatics	3	
Semester 3- 1st 8 Weeks	Fall or Summer		
NRS 418	Global Perspectives in Healthcare	3	
NRS 420	Advanced Issues in Nursing Leadership	3	
Semester 3- 2nd 8 Weeks			
NRS 494	Nursing Capstone	3	X
ILC-350	University Core Course	3	

Clinical Practice Experiences

Selected nursing courses use a combination of clinical practice experiences which include direct or indirect care, and laboratory simulation activities to ensure students achieve the program outcomes.

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- **Direct care:** refers to a professional encounter between a nurse and an actual individual or family, either fact to face or virtual, that is intended to achieve specific health goals or achieve selected health outcomes. Direct care may be provided in a wide range of settings, including acute and critical care, long-term care, home health, community-based settings, and telehealth. (AACN, 2021)
- **Indirect care:** refers to nursing decisions, actions or interventions that are provided through or on behalf of individuals, families, or groups. These decisions or interventions create the conditions under which nursing care or selfcare may occur. Nurses might use administrative decisions, population or aggregate health planning, or policy development to affect health outcomes in this way. (AACN, 2021)

Program Costs

Tuition and fees information are updated regularly and are available on the University Website.

In addition, students in the RN-BSN will need to purchase/obtain other educational requisites including:

- Computers and Educational Computer Software
- Course Texts
- SPSS Software

Tuition each semester is due no later than the first day of classes for that semester. Students must pay the balance on their accounts or have a payment plan set up to pay their tuition by the first day of classes. For additional information, contact the student accounts office at (406) 791-5202.

Payment Plans

Payment plan information is provided within your invoice at the beginning of each semester. Payment plans have an enrollment fee of \$45.00 per semester; it will need to be set up each semester you plan to utilize them. Information regarding payment plans can be found on our website under Financial Services.

Refunds

Tuition and Fees are nonrefundable after the first day of class.

Financial Aid

Students who are interested in applying for federal student aid will need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid form (FAFSA), available at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>. The required school code for the University of Providence is 002527. Students must be enrolled in 6 or more credits (half time) to be eligible to use Federal Student Loans. Pell Grants are based on both Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and enrollment and may be available for less than half time enrollment. For additional information about UP financial aid, contact the University Financial Aid Office at (406) 791-5232.

Grants

The FAFSA application determines a student's eligibility for federal grant funding. Examples of grants include:

- Federal Pell Grant is a grant for undergraduate students who have not already earned a bachelor's degree. Pell Grants are awarded based on the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) determined by the FAFSA application. Pell Grants generally will be paid for fall and spring

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semesters only, but dependent on enrollment, may also be used in the summer semester as well.

- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) is a grant for exceptionally needy undergraduate students. This is a first-come, first-served fund. The university gets limited funding each year. The SEOG award is limited to students who have a 0 EFC and have completed the FAFSA early.

Financial Aid Warning and Suspension

Undergraduate students will be evaluated at the end of each semester to ensure they are making satisfactory academic progress toward their degrees. To make satisfactory academic progress and remain in good financial aid standing, students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 and must pass at least 67% of the credits attempted. 'W' grades will be counted in attempted credits and may affect your financial aid standing. Students who fail to meet either the GPA or completion requirement will be placed on Financial Aid Warning (1st offense). No appeal is necessary with a status of Warning. If a student falls below the standard in a consecutive semester, while on Warning, he/she will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension. A Financial Aid Suspension does not rectify itself with time away from the institution.

University Financial Aid Appeal Process

A Financial Aid Suspension may be appealed for extenuating circumstances only. Consideration will be given to extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control (e.g., serious personal illness, injury, the death of an immediate family member, or other extreme duress). To appeal a suspension, the student is required to prepare a clearly written statement describing the circumstances leading to suspension and the student's plan for success in future semesters.

Documentation to support the appeal, such as a letter from a physician, obituary notice, etc. must accompany the written statement. The appeal will be reviewed by the appeal committee. The student will be notified in writing of the committee's decision. The decision of the committee is final.

Admission and Enrollment

Application to University of Providence

Admission to the RN-BSN Program of Study **requires** all transcripts from previous institutions. Before that the student first applies to the University of Providence.

To facilitate transcript evaluation and advisement, a student must apply to the University of Providence and indicate their major as **RN-BSN**.

- Students who have not been formally accepted to the RN-BSN program may not take NRS designation courses.
- Students may transfer credits from other higher educational institutions that may be applied to the UP required Core Curriculum courses. Transfer equivalency is determined by the University Registrar's office.

Academic Advisors

The Academic Success Center is assigned as the initial advisor for each student during the application period. Students will then be assigned to a Faculty Advisor. The faculty advisor works with the student until graduation. Communication between the advisor and student can occur via the telephone and/or email. Students are highly encouraged to confer with the nursing advisor if any academic problem,

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conflict, or concerns arise. The nursing advisor also consults with the Department Chair to work individually with students that are needing consultation.

Nursing Program Application Requirements:

- Graduate of an Associate program in Nursing
- Active and unencumbered Registered Nurse License
- Completion of the Application for Admission as a “RN-BSN student”
- Submission of transcripts—to the registrar’s office-- for ***every college or university attended***
 - Once the student is ready to formally apply for placement, official transcripts are required; failure to submit official transcripts from every college or university attended may result in the application not being processed for review.

Technical Standards for Admission, Academic Progression, and Graduation

Any applicant or student who seeks accommodation prior to or immediately after enrolling in the nursing programs must also request an assessment of the types of reasonable accommodation needed.

Applicants who disclose a disability are considered for admission if they are otherwise qualified so long as such accommodation does not significantly alter the essential requirements of the curriculum.

Registration for Courses

Once students are accepted to the RN-BSN program, they may register for their BSN courses. Once registered for classes, tuition and fees are assessed and students will receive an invoice. Students are responsible for paying each semester's tuition and fees or making an approved payment arrangement by the due date. Students are also responsible for completing all required documents and actions to accept financial aid to apply toward each semester's charges. All outstanding amounts resulting from nonpayment of tuition and fees are the responsibility of the student. Withdrawal from school, officially or unofficially, will not cancel any financial obligation already incurred. Additionally, failure to pay all financial obligations may result in debts being turned over to a collection agency. Collection costs, including attorney fees and other charges necessary for collection of any amount due, will be added to the student's account balance.

Students may request an incomplete in a course and will be bound by the University's policies about completing the course. Students who have an incomplete in a course and wish to register for a course that requires the incomplete course as a pre-requisite, must finish and receive a final grade for the course before they will be allowed to register for sequential nursing courses.

Student Participation in Governance

Once accepted to the RN-BSN program, students have the opportunity to participate in governance through the Student Governance Committee. A faculty representative from each BSN track is available as a liaison between the students and faculty; student representatives from each track represent their programs. Meetings occur each semester and on an as needed basis. The faculty representatives will arrange for a Collaborate Ultra[®] meeting for the students on an agreed upon time/date in those months. A standing agenda for each meeting includes these topics:

- Class and clinical experiences
- BSN, program and curriculum changes
- Student recruitment and orientation
- Student retention and graduation

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- Faculty update report
- Other

Academic Policies

Academic Policies of the University of Providence can be found in the University of Providence catalog.

BSN Grading Requirements and Grading Scale

Final grades for each course can be obtained by students one week after the last day of the semester. Grading timelines for each course will follow the University's grading schedule. Please contact the Registrar's office for additional information. To pass a course with a clinical component, students must have a passing grade in both the clinical and the didactic portion of the course. Students who fail either element will not pass the course. Final grades will be rounded up using standard rounding rules.

Nursing Program Grading Scale
A = 92-100%
B = 83-91%
C = 75-82%
D = 66-74% ****Course failure
F = 65%-below ****Course Failure

Minimum Grade for Progression in Nursing Courses

- A minimum grade of "C" is required in all *nursing* courses.

Unsatisfactory Student Performance

Students should exhibit high standards of academic conduct. All acts of dishonesty in academic work constitute academic misconduct. Such acts include:

- **Cheating:** use or attempted use of unauthorized material or the work of another student in any academic assignment, paper, or examination.
- **Plagiarism:** representation of another's work as one's own. This includes the unauthorized and unacknowledged use of the phrases, sentences, paragraphs, ideas, illustrations, drawings, photographs, or computer programs of another whether by using exact or nearly exact words without quotation marks or by omitting citations or both.

Should a student disagree with an instructor's judgment, the student may appeal the instructor's decision by following the "Academic Related Appeals Process."

The minimum penalty for an act of academic misconduct shall be a grade of "F" (failure) on the paper, assignment, or examination involved. More severe penalties may be enforced by individual instructors, provided that such penalties are identified in the course syllabus. The maximum penalty for plagiarism that may be levied is a grade of "F" (failure) for the course. Copies of plagiarized work will be placed on file with the Coordinator of Student Faculty Relations. Severe or repeated instances of academic misconduct will result in more severe sanctions up to and including expulsion.

University Academic Warning, Probation, and Suspension

Undergraduate students will be evaluated at the end of each semester or upon attempting a minimum of nine (9) semester credits, to ensure they are making satisfactory academic progress toward their

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degrees. To make satisfactory academic progress and remain in good academic standing, students must maintain a semester and cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 and must pass each clinical course in order to pass the entire course.

Students should work closely with their faculty in each course, as well as their faculty advisor to facilitate success.

University Academic Appeal Process

An Academic Suspension may be appealed for extenuating circumstances only. Consideration will be given to extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control (e.g., serious personal illness, injury, the death of an immediate family member, or other extreme duress). To appeal a suspension, the student is required to prepare a clearly written statement describing the circumstances leading to suspension and the student's plan for success in future semesters. Documentation to support the appeal, such as a letter from a physician, obituary notice, etc. must accompany the written statement. The appeal will be reviewed by the appeal committee. The student will then be notified in writing of the committee's decision. The decision of the committee is final. The process for this appeal can be found in the UP-student handbook.

Nursing Program Appeals and Reinstatement to the Nursing Program

The nursing program policies found in this handbook are an extension of the university academic policies and student handbook. If an appeal is not upheld, students may not continue in the program and must submit a written request to be reinstated to the nursing program. The request for reinstatement should be addressed to the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Nursing Programs. A review of the student's records, scholarship eligibility, and any other pertinent information will be conducted. Students submitting a letter requesting reinstatement must show a clear plan for success in the program, fully addressing issues which caused the withdrawal/ failure.

If approval for re-instatement is made, the student will resume the program at the point of entry which allows for smooth progression to the next sequence as determined by the Associate Dean of the Undergraduate Nursing Programs. Decisions are made in part with consideration of student-to-faculty ratios and program resources to offer courses. A statement of the students' problems/reasons for withdrawing or being suspended and the solution for correcting these problems will be signed both by the student and the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Nursing Programs prior to the student resuming classes.

Withdrawal from the Nursing Program and Scholarship Funds

A student who withdraws (for any reason) from a nursing semester must follow university policy. Because the nursing program courses are sequential, the student wishing to re-enter the program will be required to apply for placement in the next cohort. Although every effort will be made to accommodate students re-entering the program, placement in the next cohort may not be possible due to limited clinical capacity.

Withdrawing from a semester also has potential implications related to scholarship awards. Students who withdraw must also pay close attention to the university catalog for dates related to the tuition refund schedule. If a nursing student withdraws after the date on which tuition is nonrefundable, the student will be responsible for paying for the semester in which they return to the program.

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Graduation

Information related to graduation, including graduating with honors, can be found on the university website on the Registrar page. If students need further information, they may contact the registrar by email or at 406-791-5202.

Use of the University Logo for Professional Nursing Posters and/or other Publications

All nursing students must submit a request to the Dean for Undergraduate Nursing for approval prior to using the University logo on any materials.

Student Concerns Process

Students at the University of Providence who have a concern regarding the University's online courses or programs can submit a comment or follow the appeals process located in the student handbook. Concerns must follow the University of Providence customary resolution procedure prior to being referred to the Montana University System and NC-SARA procedures. Grade appeals and student conduct appeals are not allowed under SARA guidelines.

Student Responsibilities

Contact Information

It is the student's responsibility to keep his/her email, phone and address current and available in the School of Nursing. The student should notify the program manager at their campus and should also update ArgoExpress whenever there are changes in his/her status and name.

Computer Proficiency Requirements

It is the student's responsibility to have access to a computer and the internet. Students are required to routinely check electronic course materials to meet course requirements. During the program, students will be required to know and use Microsoft Word, Power Point and Excel programs. Students must have a personal laptop for the online nursing program.

Email

All students will be assigned a University email account with the expectation that students will check their email at least every 48 hours. Faculty will primarily communicate with students via email and Moodle, the e-learning environment used by the University for online courses.

Software

Students will be required to have access to a computer and internet for all online courses. Students will be required to use Microsoft Office software to complete assignments (this includes Word, PowerPoint, and Excel). Other software may be required for some courses.

Textbooks

Each course syllabus includes the list of required and recommended textbooks for each course. Students may order textbooks from the UP online bookstore, or a student may choose to purchase the textbooks locally or online through a different vendor.

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Moodle

Moodle® is the learning management system which supports interactive video class meetings via Collaborate Ultra®. Nursing students are automatically enrolled in Moodle when they are registered for classes at the University. Students will receive a Moodle account upon registration. Students are expected to log into Moodle **at least 2-3 times/ week** or more to obtain course information, materials, and assignments. Students will be required to submit assignments in a timely manner according to the instructor's syllabus and instructions.

Late or Passed Due Assignments

- Penalty for late work will include a 10% deduction per day the assignment is late.
- Extensions for late work are allowed with prior permission from the instructor.
- Zero will be given for non-prior notification.

Class Attendance

The nursing students are required to follow the University of Providence Attendance Policy as well as the BSN course attendance policies described in this student handbook and in course syllabi.

Professional Behavior Expectations

Refer to the University of Providence student handbook for the university code of conduct. The following professional behavior expectations are your guiding principles to transition you from the ADN direct entry nursing role to the BSN role. Professional guidelines are leveraged in accordance with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Baccalaureate Essentials (2021) and the American Nurses Association (ANA) Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice and the Code of Ethics for Nurses, University of Providence BSN Program students will:

1. Accept responsibility for one's own actions and attitudes.
2. Demonstrate the ability to develop and maintain therapeutic relationships and appropriate personal boundaries.
3. Demonstrate a respectful, sensitive, and non-judgmental manner when communicating with others. In this policy, "others" refers to peers, faculty, clients, families and facility and school staff.
4. Provide prior notification to the appropriate faculty when he/she is unable to meet commitments or requirements, detailing how and when he/she will make up requirements.
5. Participate in course activities as scheduled throughout the nursing program.
6. Report on scheduled activities on time and well-rested.
7. Complete assignments and tests as required and scheduled.
8. Demonstrate professional appearance, conduct, and professional presentation in course meetings.
9. Demonstrate personal and professional ethics, honesty and integrity.
10. Demonstrate the ability to use good judgment in decision making.
11. Demonstrate accountability in preparation course activities, such as presentations.
12. Respect others during course activities (i.e., no talking while others are talking, cell phones are silenced, and no inappropriate use of electronic devices).
13. Demonstrate respect to all individuals regardless of culture, ethnicity, religion, work experience, gender, age and sexual orientation.
14. Communicate with others with respect, sensitivity and care in all forms (including verbal, nonverbal, written, and electronic).
15. Maintain Standards of confidentiality, for example regarding a fellow student's presentation.

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APPENDIX A: Course Descriptions

Semester 1: Fall semester, 12 Credits

First 8-Weeks

- NRS 405: Pathophysiologic and Pharmacologic Concepts
- NRS 301: Research Methods and Statistics

Second 8-Weeks

- NRS 402: Evidence-Based Practice
- NSR 407: Public Health: Nursing Care of Populations

Semester 2: Spring semester, 12 credits

First 8-Weeks

- NRS 408: Health Promotion and Disease in the Community
- NRS 419: Organizational Leadership in Quality and Safety

Second 8-Weeks

- NRS 403: Ethical Decision Making and Spirituality
- NRS 424 Nursing Informatics

Semester 3: Summer semester, 12 credits

First 8-Weeks

- NRS 418: Global Perspectives in Healthcare
- NRS 420: Advanced Issues in Nursing Leadership

Second 8-Weeks

- NRS 494: Senior Seminar
- ILC 350 What Does it Mean to be Human