

PRACTICAL NURSE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions

Can you tell me about the Penn State Berks program?

Penn State Berks is pleased to deliver an 18-month, part-time evening and weekend non-credit Practical Nurse Certificate Program authorized by The Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing.

How Do I Qualify?

All candidates must first take the TEAS exam, a standardized pre-nursing exam which determines the core skills of the individual. If students achieve the Penn State Berks benchmark score, then they qualify for a personal interview with the program nursing faculty and staff.

What is required for the application?

Applicants must supply the following:

- official transcripts from high school and/or GED, and any college or technical school where course work was attempted or certificates were earned
- two letters of professional reference
- a single paged, double spaced essay describing their interest in a nursing career
- \$75 application fee

Are there prerequisites, can I transfer credits earned elsewhere?

The program is a *non-credit* clock hour program therefore all course work completed is recorded in hours and must be recorded through attendance in the Penn State Berks Practical Nursing program. There are *no prerequisites* and credits *do not* transfer into the Penn State program.

What is the class schedule?

Students will attend a combination of 25 hours of lecture and clinical per week. Classes meet Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 4:30 to 9:30 pm. Clinical is held every other Saturday/Sunday, from 6:30 am to 4:30 pm.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		4:30-9:30 pm Classroom	4:30-9:30 pm* Classroom	4:30-9:30 pm Classroom		6 am-4:30 pm Clinical
6 am-4:30 pm Clinical		4:30-9:30 pm Classroom	4:30-9:30 pm* Classroom	4:30-9:30 pm Classroom		
		4:30-9:30 pm Classroom	4:30-9:30 pm* Classroom	4:30-9:30 pm Classroom		6 am-4:30 pm Clinical
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*= possible clinical time, at the discretion of the program coordinator

Students should expect to spend an additional 10-15 hours per week of study time in addition to formal classroom/clinical time.

What is the cost of the program?

The program tuition includes all classroom instruction, clinical instruction, textbooks, uniforms, basic nursing clinical supplies, and an NCLEX preparation program. Tuition is paid in four payments, each payment prior to the start of a new module.

Other costs to consider that are not included in the program tuition are the ATI TEAS exam fee, PA Child Abuse report fee, CastleBranch secure platform document collection account service, transportation to and from campus and clinical nursing facilities, and basic nursing student supplies such as pencils/pens, notebooks, wristwatch with a second hand, etc.

Since the Practical Nurse program is non-credit, are students eligible for financial aid?

Yes! Practical Nursing students can complete the FAFSA application for state or federal grants and loan consideration. If the student qualifies for financial aid, they are responsible for completing loan counseling and submitting required paperwork/electronic signatures in a timely manner. Should an applicant not qualify or decline aid, the student is responsible for securing their own program funding and meeting payment due dates on all balances due throughout the program. Aid is awarded to students who maintain a 75% or higher in coursework and clock hour benchmarks are met.

What is required of the Practical Nurse student after being offered admission in the program?

Students are required to send in non-refundable seat deposit. Students are to obtain all the program/clinical requirements through our secure platform within 6 months of the program start date. Failure to do so will jeopardize a student's acceptance status. Students must maintain clock hours benchmarks each module of the program. Students are responsible for the timely make up of hours missed. Students must adhere to responsible and professional conduct, both in the classroom and at clinical facilities, comply with the uniform dress code, and maintain a 75% class average as required by the Pennsylvania Board of Nursing. Students who fall below a final grade of 75% at the end of a module will not be permitted to continue in the next program module. Commitment to the program throughout the 18 months is a must!

Can I remain employed while enrolled in the program?

The 18-month curriculum at Penn State Berks is designed to meet the needs of those students who choose to work while pursuing the Practical Nurse program. It is recommended that students not maintaining at least a 75% average should reduce their work hours until the program is completed.