Nursing

History

Nurses have existed in various forms in every country, continent and culture since the beginning of time. In the English cultures, nurses were typically women who cared for others’ children. Some nurses even nursed the children in their care. By the fifteenth century, the definition of nursing expanded to providing care for another person, not just providing care for a child.

The first organized forms of nursing started in the military and in convents where nuns provided care for the community. Some pioneers in the field of professional nursing are Florence Nightingale, Agnes Elizabeth Jones and Linda Richards. Following the Crimean War, Nightingale wrote the book *Notes on Nursing: What it is and what it is not* (1860), laying out guidelines for nursing procedures and principles. Jones and Richards opened high quality nursing schools in both the United States and Japan. In 1873, Richards graduated from the New England Hospital for Women and Children in Boston and became the first official nurse in the United States.

From this time on, numerous other services, including The American Red Cross Nursing Service, American Nurses Association and The United States Navy Nurse Corps were founded. Today, nursing has matured into a vast medical profession and includes management roles, research positions and many other employment opportunities in hospitals, clinics and private care facilities.

Nursing as a Career Today

Today there are various levels of nursing, each with its own requirements, job criteria and benefits. A high school diploma is necessary for all nursing positions. Many nursing schools require applicants to take the National League for Nursing Pre-Admission Exam. After the examination there are several paths to different nursing degrees.

Aptitude

The practical nursing exam looks at five levels of aptitude: academic, spelling, information in the natural sciences, judgment and comprehension in practical nursing situations and vocational adjustment index. The academic aptitude portion is comprised of verbal, arithmetic and nonverbal parts. Its function is to test a person’s ability to learn reason, comprehend and draw conclusions. The spelling portion is designed to test a person’s written communication skills. The natural sciences portion covers biology, chemistry, health and safety topics taught in the BSN or Associate’s degree program.
As with all healthcare professions, it is important to use sound judgment in dealing with sensitive and private health issues. The judgment and comprehension section measures how an individual would react in those stressful scenarios. Finally, the vocational adjustment index examines personality and behavior traits as well as lifestyle suited to someone in the nursing profession.

**Education**

As for the education requirements, a high school diploma is necessary for acceptance into nursing school. Many nursing schools also recommend and/or require the student to have completed two to four years of math and science, four years of English, one to two years of health studies, and some foreign language and computer skills.

The most general nursing degree is a Bachelor of Science Nursing (BSN). This degree is obtained at a four-year college or university and prepares nurses to practice in all health care settings. A BSN is a very good starting point for a nurse because it is a requirement for many higher level positions, such as those in management, military nursing and public health.

An alternative to receiving a BSN is the Associate’s degree. This degree is obtained in a two- to three-year program at a community college and is often an affordable alternative to four-year BSN programs.

Similar to the Associate’s degree, in some facilities it is possible to receive training directly from the hospital and earn a Hospital diploma. Lastly, there is the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) degree. With this degree the nurse is required to care for the sick under the supervision of a registered nurse or a physician.

Once the chosen educational path is completed, it is necessary to take the NCLEX-RN or the NCLEX-PN exam to become a licensed advanced practice nurse, registered nurse or practical/vocational nurse. Nurses must be licensed in the state in which they will be working.

Beyond basic nursing degrees, there are also many other advanced degrees which offer higher salaries to nurses taking on more responsibilities. First, there is the Master’s degree (MSN), which allows nurses to obtain more individual roles such as a Nurse Practitioner or Nurse Anesthetist. Having a Master’s degree also opens doors to faculty roles, nursing management and administration. Generally, a Master’s program is one to two years long and can be completed at a college or university.

The next level above a Master’s degree is the Doctoral degree. A Doctoral degree and be a PhD, Eddy or a DNS. A Doctoral degree prepares nurses to take on leadership positions, conduct research and obtain high level roles in academia such as being the
dean of a nursing school. Finally, a Post-Doctoral program provides advanced training in research methods for nurses who have already obtained a Doctoral degree.

**Nursing Programs in Louisiana**

Baton Rouge General Medical Center, School of Nursing, Baton Rouge, LA; for further information, visit [http://www.brgeneral.org/school_nursing.php](http://www.brgeneral.org/school_nursing.php)

Delgado Community College Charity School of Nursing, New Orleans, LA; for further information, visit [http://www.dcc.edu/campus/charity/index.html](http://www.dcc.edu/campus/charity/index.html)

Dillard University, Division of Nursing, New Orleans, LA; for further information, visit [http://www.dillard.edu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=106&Itemid=91](http://www.dillard.edu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=106&Itemid=91)

Grambling State University, School of Nursing, Grambling, LA; for further information, visit [http://www.gram.edu/nursing](http://www.gram.edu/nursing)

Louisiana College- Rife & Carolyn Saunders Division of Nursing, Pineville, LA; for further information, visit [https://www.lacollege.edu/nursing/index.php](https://www.lacollege.edu/nursing/index.php)

Louisiana State University, Associate degree program, Department of Nursing, Alexandria, LA; for further information, visit [https://www.lacollege.edu/nursing/index.php](https://www.lacollege.edu/nursing/index.php)

Louisiana State University, Associate of Science degree program, Eunice, LA; for further information, [http://www.lsue.edu/academic/career.html](http://www.lsue.edu/academic/career.html)

Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, School of Nursing, New Orleans, LA; for further information, [http://nursing.lsuhsc.edu/AcademicPrograms/Undergraduate/BSN/BSN.html](http://nursing.lsuhsc.edu/AcademicPrograms/Undergraduate/BSN/BSN.html)

Louisiana Tech University, Division of Nursing, Ruston, LA; for further information, [http://www.latech.edu/ans/nursing/index.shtml](http://www.latech.edu/ans/nursing/index.shtml)

Loyola University, City College, Department of Nursing; New Orleans, LA; for further information, [http://css.loyno.edu/nursing](http://css.loyno.edu/nursing)

McNeese State University, College of Nursing, Lake Charles, LA; for further information, [http://www.mcneese.edu/colleges/nursing/general.asp](http://www.mcneese.edu/colleges/nursing/general.asp)

Nicholls State University, College of Nursing and Allied Health, Thibodaux, LA; for further information, [http://www.nicholls.edu/nursing](http://www.nicholls.edu/nursing)
Our Lady of Holy Cross College, New Orleans, LA; for further information, visit http://www.olhcc.edu/x290.xml

Our Lady of the Lake College, accelerated Associate of Nursing programs, in New Orleans and Baton Rouge, LA; for further information, visit http://www.ololcollege.edu/Nursing_AS_rev04.html

Southeastern Louisiana University, School of Nursing, Hammond, LA; for further information, visit http://www.selu.edu/acad_research/depts/nurs/index.html

Southern University and A & M College, School of Nursing, Baton Rouge; for further information, visit http://web.subr.edu/index.php?id=558

University of Louisiana at Monroe, College of Nursing, Monroe, LA; for further information, visit http://www.ulm.edu/nursing/nurseinfo.html

University of Louisiana at Lafayette, College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions, Lafayette, LA; for further information, visit http://www.nursing.louisiana.edu

William Carey College, Joseph and Nancy Fail School of Nursing, New Orleans, LA; for further information, visit http://www.nursing.louisiana.edu

Special Scholarship Opportunities

Foundation of the National Student Nurses’ Association Promise of Nursing Scholarships
US Department of Health and Human Services Nursing Scholarship Program
Nursing Scholarship. US
The National Nursing Education Initiative (NNEI)

Salaries

On average a Registered Nurse earns just under $50,000 annually, but can earn as much as $64,000 annually. Additional education and degrees increase nursing salaries significantly. The annual salary of a Nurse Practitioner ranges from $65,000 to $80,000. With even more specialization, such as a Nurse Anesthetist, salaries can rise above $100,000 annually.
Professional Associations

American Academy of Nursing (AAN)  
http://www.aannet.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1

American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
http://www.aacn.nche.edu

American Nurses Association  
http://www.nursingworld.org

American Nurses Foundation  
http://www.anfonline.org

American Assembly for Men in Nursing  
http://aamn.org

International Council of Nursing  
http://www.icn.ch

Minority Nurse  
http://www.minoritynurse.com

Additional Web Resources

http://allnurses.com  
http://www.discovernursing.com  
http://www.nurse.com  
http://www.nurseweek.com/career/advice.asp