Introduction: This handbook contains information frequently requested by baccalaureate nursing students. It also serves as a general resource guide to the requirements of the program. It is not intended to duplicate information available in other documents of the university and the College of Nursing. Therefore, there are many links to information that is already available at other parts of the university and College of Nursing Web sites.

Additional useful sources of information include:

- **Montana State University-Bozeman 2012-2014 Graduate and Undergraduate Bulletin:** Link to [http://www.montana.edu/wwwcat/](http://www.montana.edu/wwwcat/)
- **Montana State University-Bozeman Schedule of Classes** (Fall 2013, Spring 2014, and Summer 2014): Link to [https://atlas.montana.edu:9000/pls/bzagent/bzskcrse.PW_SelTerm](https://atlas.montana.edu:9000/pls/bzagent/bzskcrse.PW_SelTerm); and
- **Montana State University-Bozeman 2013-2014 Student Academic and Grievance Procedures and Conduct Guidelines:** Link to [http://www2.montana.edu/policy/student_conduct/student_conduct_code.htm](http://www2.montana.edu/policy/student_conduct/student_conduct_code.htm)

**College of Nursing Vision, Mission, Goals, Philosophy, and Expected Outcomes for the Baccalaureate Program**

**Vision, Mission, Goals, and Philosophy:** Link to Policy A-3 [http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm](http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm);

**Expected Outcomes for the Baccalaureate Program:** Link to the Foundational Level and Terminal Program Objectives (Policy C-13) at: [http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm](http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm).

**Description of the Baccalaureate Program**

Majors in the MSU-Bozeman College of Nursing earn the Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing (BSN) and are eligible to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) when they complete the degree requirements. The baccalaureate program is a 120 semester credit curriculum which includes 65 semester credits of lower division (freshmen and sophomore) level coursework (including the University Core 2.0 requirements) and 55 semester credits of upper division (junior and senior) level coursework.

The BSN program includes two years of lower division study and two years of upper division study. It is possible for a student to complete most or all lower division courses at institutions other than MSU-Bozeman, including the five lower division nursing courses (15 semester credits). All transfer courses are carefully evaluated to ensure equivalent content when students transfer to MSU-Bozeman and the College of Nursing curriculum. While it is possible to complete the program in four years, this requires careful planning and uninterrupted progression through the curriculum. Delays in progression related to reduced credit loads, repeated coursework, securing upper division placement, a semester abroad or exchange
opportunity, or change of curriculum commonly result in the student taking longer than four years to complete the program.

Students may take the five required lower division nursing courses in Billings, Great Falls, Kalispell and Missoula prior to beginning upper division coursework, provided there are enough students to make this economically feasible. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to take courses on non-Bozeman campus sites. The upper division (junior and senior level) coursework is completed at one of the five upper division campus sites located in Billings, Bozeman, Great Falls, Kalispell and Missoula.

General Information

- **Admission to the BSN Program:** [Link to Upper Division Placement Application](http://www.montana.edu/nursing/academic/placement.htm).
- **Admission to the pre-nursing major:** Enrollment in the pre-nursing major is available for any student admitted to MSU – Bozeman who meets the minimum requirements. Pre-nursing students are assigned to advisors in the College of Nursing.
- **Admission to the nursing major:** Admission to the College of Nursing as a nursing major is achieved through the upper division application. Placement in the nursing major is based on the student’s grades in the required prerequisite courses for the nursing major. Pre-nursing majors (at MSU - Bozeman and transfer institutions) apply for admission to the nursing major during the Summer or Spring semester following the first year of lower division study. (See Upper Division Placement Application above.) Admission to the College of Nursing as a nursing major permits students to be enrolled in restricted entry sophomore, junior, and senior nursing courses.
- **Abilities required for Success in the BSN degree program:** [Link to Policy A-19](http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm).
- **Transfer Students/Transfer Credit:** The criteria and procedures for progression through the nursing curriculum apply to transfer students as well as MSU-Bozeman students. Students who have been enrolled as nursing students at any other institution (have nursing courses on their transcripts) must provide a letter from their Dean or Director regarding their status at the time they left the previous nursing program.

In order to facilitate transcript evaluation, transfer students must apply to MSU-Bozeman and provide their official transcripts to the MSU Admissions Office. In addition, out-of-state transfer students must provide course syllabi from their former institution(s), for any courses that transfer as “electives.” Transfer equivalencies are available at [https://atlas.montana.edu:9000](https://atlas.montana.edu:9000) for many out-of-state as well as in-state institutions. Students need to carefully plan their course of study in order to complete required lower division courses prior to upper division placement.

- **LPN to BSN students:** Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) wishing to become Registered Nurses (RNs) may select either an Associate Degree in Nursing (ASRN) or a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing (BSN) program. At this time,
either program will prepare the graduate to take the National Council Licensing Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN). MSU-Bozeman offers a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing (BSN) program which prepares the graduate for independent professional practice as a generalist in a wide variety of structured and unstructured settings. A baccalaureate degree also provides the necessary academic base for future graduate study and specialized advanced nursing practice. LPNs, with a current unrestricted license in Montana, may waive NRSG 115 and 220 and may challenge the sophomore level nursing courses, NRSG225, NRSG238 and NRSG258 by passing the challenge examinations. Arrangements for advisement and taking the challenge exams can be made by contacting the Undergraduate Program Assistant at (406) 994-3785 or dmccray@montana.edu. Link to http://www.montana.edu/nursing/academic/lpn.htm and Policy C-11 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.

- Generic BSN students: Link to http://www.montana.edu/nursing/academic/bsn.htm

- Required Computer Access and Skills:

  Access to and skill in using computer hardware and software are required for students entering and continuing in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program. Because some of the courses in the nursing program are web-based or web-enhanced, students must have access to and skills in using a computer and a printer. They must also have a reliable connection to the Internet with a current Internet browser. Word processing skills are required. Microsoft Word is recommended. Questions about requirements can be directed to the College of Nursing Information Technology Coordinator at (406) 994-5752 or fpettis@montana.edu.

- Degree Requirements: Link to http://www.montana.edu/nursing/academic/bsn.htm.
- Pinning Ceremony: Link to http://www.montana.edu/nursing/about/pinning.htm.
- Commencement: Link to http://www.montana.edu/registrar/commencement.

Curriculum
Students need to carefully plan their course of study in order to complete required lower division courses prior to upper division placement.

- COMMUNITY-BASED PROFESSIONAL NURSING, CURRICULAR THREADS, FOUNDATIONAL OBJECTIVES, and TERMINAL OBJECTIVES: Link to Policy C-13 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.
- Curriculum Plan (Sample Plan of Study based on CORE 2.0 and new common course numbering (last updated 1/4/13): (see below).

Progression through the Nursing Program

Satisfactory Progress/Grading System:
Acceptable Performance in Required Undergraduate Courses: Link to Policy C-1 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.

Acceptable Performance in Undergraduate Clinical Nursing Courses: Link to Policy C-2 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.

Grading of Laboratory Performance: Link to Policy C-14 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.

College of Nursing Scholastic Committee: Link to Policy A-8 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.

Clinical Information

Students may not be enrolled in any clinical nursing course prior to obtaining the required Background Check through VerifiedCredentials.com at: http://www.montana.edu/nursing/student/undergrad.php. Link to Policy A-36 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.

The cost of the Background Check is $60.

Additional Expenses: Nursing students have additional expenses beyond those normally required in other curricula. Nursing students must have a uniform, current professional lifespan CPR card, and all immunizations before enrollment in clinical coursework (NRSG225). Other special purchases include, but are not limited to, bandage scissors, a penlight, stethoscope, etc. In addition, there is a $200 application deposit (see section on Application Procedure for Placement in Nursing Major), and the undergraduate nursing program fee each semester of full-time enrollment or prorated when enrolled part-time in nursing courses. Student Liability Insurance is provided for nursing students at no additional cost.

Uniform Information:

Students enrolled in clinical nursing courses will need to wear a student uniform and have the appropriate accessories when practicing in the clinical facilities. The same uniform style is worn in both lower and upper division; however, one uniform should be sufficient during the lower division semester(s). Navy blue Cherokee Unisex scrub tops (#4777) and drawstring pants (#4100) are widely available online.


1. Name tags: A nametag is provided to the student when enrolled in NRSG 225. If students change their name or lose their nametag, they will be responsible for replacing the nametag at their own expense. Replacements are purchased at CatCard in the Strand Union Building (SUB) for $5.00.

2. MSU arm patches: To be sewn on the left sleeve with the top edge two inches below the shoulder seam. The MSU patches are sold by *MSNA for $2.50.
3. Watches: Must have a second hand to use when calculating vital signs.

*In addition to the MSU arm patches, the Bozeman MSNA chapter sells stethoscopes, bandage scissors and penlights to support various MSNA projects. Although a stethoscope is not required in NRSG 225, they are used in NRSG 238 (Health Assessment across the Life Span) and upper division as well as later as a professional nurse. All prices are subject to change.

- Travel and Transportation: Access to an automobile is necessary particularly for clinical work in the community including home visits. Public transportation is not adequate in the cities with upper division campuses. Students are responsible for providing their own transportation. Link to Policies A-39 and A-40 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.
- Varied Schedules: Students are expected to participate in clinical experiences in a variety of community agencies and at variously scheduled times. Therefore, students must arrange to accommodate an irregular academic schedule that may include evening and weekend hours.
- Student Refusal of a Clinical Assignment: Link to Policy C-12 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.
- Removal of Undergraduate Students from Clinical Settings: Link to Policy C-6 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.
- Student Attendance at Clinical Course Orientation: Link to Policy C-7 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.
- Undergraduate Student Skills Inventory: Link to Policy C-10 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.
- Summer Internship: Link to MRO for NRSG 498 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/mro.htm; and Policy C-8 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.
- Evaluation of Faculty by Students: Link to Policy E-6 http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.

Health and Immunization Requirements
- University requirements: Link to http://www.montana.edu/wwwhs/

Student Resources
- Library: Link to http://www.lib.montana.edu/.
- Writing Center: Link to http://www1.english.montana.edu/wc/.
- Student Health Service: Link to http://www.montana.edu/wwwhs/.
- Counseling and Psychological Services: Link to http://www.montana.edu/wwwcc/.
- Disability, Re-Entry and Veterans Services: Link to http://www.montana.edu/wwwres/.
- MSU American Indian Research Opportunities: Link to http://www.montana.edu/wwwai/.
- College of Nursing Caring for Our Own Program (CO-OP) for Native American students: Link to http://www.montana.edu/nanurse/.

Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Class/Clinical Attendance
Children Attending College of Nursing Classes: Link to Policy A-3
http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.

- Grade Grievance Procedures: Link to
  http://www2.montana.edu/policy/student_conduct/student_conduct_code.htm
- Professional Behavior - Standards of the Nursing Profession: Link to
  http://www.montana.edu/wwwcat/programs/colnur.html#standards.

Participation in University, College of Nursing and Professional Governance

- University: ASMSU Link to http://www.montana.edu/wwwasmsu/.
- College of Nursing:
  - Student Forum: Check with the Campus Director on your individual campus.
    Student Forum Constitution at:
    http://www.montana.edu/nursing/student/undergrad.htm.
  - Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee (UAAC): Link to Policy G-1, Article XI
    http://www.montana.edu/nursing/facstaff/policies.htm.
- Professional: Student Nurses’ Association
  - Montana Student Nurses’ Association:
    (check on your local campus)
  - National Student Nurses’ Association: Link to http://www.nsna.org/.