

NURSING

Programs

Bachelor of Science Curriculum

- Nursing Major
- Second Degree BSN Program

The four components of the Egan School undergraduate nursing program are:

Core Curriculum

Nursing students must complete the core curriculum that is required of all Fairfield undergraduates.

Natural and Social Sciences

Students take one semester of chemistry and three semesters of biology that include anatomy and physiology, and microbiology. Because the social sciences form an important part of the foundation for nursing practice, students also take developmental psychology and a social and behavioral science elective.

Nursing Courses

Classroom instruction in nursing theory begins in the freshman year and continues throughout the undergraduate program. Instruction in nursing skills begins in the sophomore year. Nursing courses include theoretical and clinical components. With each semester, clinical hours increase. To insure that students obtain the breadth and depth of clinical experience needed, the school has associations with many clinical facilities, including private hospitals, veterans' hospitals, clinics, outpatient departments, rehabilitation centers, public health departments, long-term care facilities, home care agencies, community health centers, and schools. Students provide their own transportation to clinical agencies, and all costs associated with clinical placements including travel, parking, background checks, and health and professional requirements, are the responsibility of the student.

Electives

Free electives in the curriculum provide students with an opportunity to explore topics of interest including the liberal arts, nursing, and minor options.

Eligibility Requirements

The curricula leading to degrees in nursing from Fairfield University requires students to possess essential non-academic skills and functions required to engage in clinical practice. It is within the sole determination of Fairfield University and the Egan School of Nursing and Health Studies to assess and determine whether a student meets these skills and functions. Eligibility requirements for participation and completion in the nursing program shall include, but are not limited to, the following six capabilities:

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment; student must be able to examine, interpret, analyze, and synthesize material for problem solving and evaluation of patient situations and own performance.

- Ability to assess, plan, establish priorities, implement and evaluate patient outcomes.
- Ability to calculate appropriate dosages for specific medications.
- Ability to use good judgment in establishing priorities and making appropriate decisions in client care.

Interpersonal and Communication

Relationship and communication abilities appropriate for interacting sensitively with individuals, families, groups and inter-professional team members from a variety of social, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds. Ability to accurately and clearly communicate appropriate information regarding evidence-based practice, patient status and response to care, both orally and in writing.

- Interpersonal skills to communicate effectively with patients/families and members of the (inter-professional) healthcare team.
- Ability to gather and record patient data concerning history, health status and response to care.
- Ability to follow and give verbal and written reports, presentations and directions to patients, families, and members of the inter-professional health care team.

Sensory Abilities

Ability to observe, identify, and obtain information in order to assess, plan, provide and evaluate nursing interventions; student must possess adequate sensory abilities or be able to demonstrate appropriate and safe compensation for deficits.

- Visual acuity necessary to observe physical changes in health status, prepare and administer medications, and gather reference material and patient data from written and digital sources.
- Auditory ability to differentiate normal and abnormal heart, lung, & bowel sounds.
- Tactile ability to differentiate temperature and anomalies of the skin, as well as unsafe patient care devices.
- Cognitive ability sufficient to read and understand directions, assignments, and patient documents.

Motor Skills and Mobility

Sufficient mobility, including the gross and fine motors skills needed to provide safe and competent nursing care, both routine and emergency.

- Sufficient motor skills necessary to perform physical care such as ambulating, positioning, and assisting with activities of daily living as needed.
- Fine motor skills needed for basic assessment such as palpation, auscultation, and percussion.
- Mobility sufficient to carry out patient care procedures such as suctioning, positioning, and drawing up medication into a syringe.

Emotional Stability

Emotional stability for providing care safely to patients and their families within a rapidly changing and often stressful healthcare environment; the ability to monitor and identify one's own and others' emotions, and use the information to guide thinking and actions.

- Integrity needed to make ethical decisions and honor the professional code of nursing.
- Emotional ability to maintain calm in a crisis and emergency situation.

- Ability to develop mature relationships with the health care team and modify behavior in response to constructive feedback.

Physical Health and Abilities

Physical health and stamina sufficient to provide care to diverse patient populations.

- Sufficient energy and ability to manage a typical patient assignment in a variety of settings for a full seven hour clinical day.
- Physical health necessary to care for those who are immuno-compromised, incapacitated, and/or otherwise vulnerable.

Standards for Admission and Progression in the Nursing Curriculum

Students are required to successfully complete clinical practica involving direct patient care. By accepting admission in the Marion Peckham Egan School of Nursing, the student understands the program eligibility and progression requirements. Nursing students must follow all University educational policies and general regulations including those regarding academic progress.

Prerequisites

The science and psychology courses are sequential and are prerequisites to designated nursing courses. Strong foundational knowledge in the science and psychology courses is critical to success in the nursing program. Thus, students may not progress to the next semester with an incomplete in a prerequisite course. BIOL 1107 Human Anatomy and Physiology I, BIOL 1108 Human Anatomy and Physiology II, BIOL 1151 Elements of Microbiology, CHEM 1184 General Chemistry for Health Science, and PSYC 1110 Developmental Psychology for Non-Majors must be completed successfully with a minimum grade of C (73) for students to progress to the next semester in the course sequence for the nursing major. The final grade for CHEM 1184 is calculated based on grades for both the lab and theory portion.

Students unable to complete these courses successfully are expected to repeat coursework in the next semester or the summer session immediately following or they will be dismissed from the Egan School. Students consistently achieving minimum passing grades in prerequisite courses will be placed on Academic Warning. Students who do not obtain a grade of C or better in a prerequisite course may repeat the course once. If a grade of C or better in the repeated class is not earned, then the student will be dismissed from the program. A grade of less than C in three or more prerequisite courses will result in dismissal from the nursing program in the Egan School.

Nursing Courses

Nursing courses are sequential, beginning with foundational courses and progressing to increasing levels of complexity and challenge throughout the program. As students move through the curriculum, new content is integrated and builds upon previously learned material. Thus, all students must earn the minimum grade of C+ (77) in all nursing courses to progress to the next semester and continue in the program.

Further, students may not progress to the next semester with an incomplete in any nursing course. Students who do not obtain a grade of C+ or better in a nursing course may repeat the course once. A grade of less than C+ in two nursing courses (including a repeated course) will result in dismissal from the Egan School. The clinical component of all clinical nursing courses is graded on a pass/fail basis. Students must pass the theory and clinical component of a course to pass the entire

course, regardless of their grade in the theory component. Students who fail to earn the minimum grade in either component of a clinical course must repeat the entire course.

Health and Professional Requirements

All clinical agencies require documentation of various professional and health information. Nursing students must be certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) before starting clinical in their sophomore year and remain certified throughout the nursing program. Students must receive their certification through either the Health Care Provider course offered through the American Heart Association or the Professional Rescuer or CPR/AED for Lifeguard Certification course offered through the American Red Cross. All health requirements and OSHA training requirements must be met each year prior to clinical practica.

To attend clinical, students must have a physical examination, a non-reactive TB skin test or a negative QuantiFERON Gold Blood Test (if positive results, proof of a clear chest x-ray must be provided), and proof of influenza vaccine yearly. Proof of immunization or immunity must be provided for the following: hepatitis, varicella, measles, mumps, rubella, and diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis. History of disease is not acceptable as proof of immunity; laboratory results of blood titers must be provided. CastleBranch.com is the immunization tracking system used by Fairfield University nursing students to house their health information. Students are responsible for uploading information and keeping all required information updated throughout their clinical experience. Students unable to comply with agency requirements will be dismissed from the program. All costs associated with agency requirements are the responsibility of the student.

Student Background Checks and Drug Testing

The undergraduate nursing program at Fairfield University requires the successful completion of the clinical component of the curriculum. Most clinical sites require students to complete a criminal background check and drug screening before participating in clinical placements. In addition, national certification agencies may determine that persons with criminal convictions are not eligible to sit for national certification examinations and state laws may restrict/prohibit those with criminal convictions from acquiring a professional license to practice following graduation. Therefore, it is the policy of the Egan School that all admitted nursing students must satisfactorily complete a criminal background check and drug screens prior to participating in the clinical component of the curriculum. These will be completed at the student's expense at a location designated by the University, and may be required more than once depending on the agency. Fairfield University and the Egan School have no obligation to refund tuition or otherwise accommodate students in the event that a criminal, drug, or immunization history renders the student ineligible to complete required courses or clinical placement(s).

Continuous Assessment

All nursing students participate in a comprehensive nationally standardized assessment program. This total testing program allows close monitoring of student progress and serves as the basis for individualized advisement. A testing fee will be included for all nursing students in appropriate semesters.

Licensure

All nursing students graduate with a bachelor of science degree in nursing. To obtain initial licensure as a Registered Nurse, students apply to the State Board of Nursing in the state in which they plan to practice.

In addition, students register to take the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) at a conveniently located testing center.

All students are expected to pass the licensure exam on the first attempt. Application procedures vary by state. Information may be obtained on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing website: <http://www.ncsbn.org>.

Graduation from the nursing major does not insure eligibility for state licensure. A candidate who has been convicted of a felony or another crime in any state may be required to submit documentation about this conviction to the State Board of Nursing in which licensure is sought. Each State Board of Nursing reserves the right to make a decision on whether to grant licensure to practice as a registered nurse.

Scholastic Honors

Sigma Theta Tau, International Honor Society

The Mu Chi Chapter of the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing was established at Fairfield University in 1992. Since then, the Chapter has grown to nearly 1000 members. The Society is committed to fostering nursing leadership, research and creativity. Standards for membership include demonstrated excellence in scholarship and/or exceptional achievement in nursing.