Pre-Health Information for

Nursing (for non-nursing majors)

Web site(s): "Direct Entry" or "Accelerated" master's in nursing (MSN) programs offer a direct route into graduate nursing studies for individuals with non-nursing degrees www.bestnursingdegree.com/programs/direct-entry-msn/. Many nursing programs have tracks/emphasis in specialty areas that must be selected at the time of application.
Application web site: The Centralized Application Service for Nursing Programs at https://portal.nursingcas.org is rather new and will not be used by all schools.
Admission/Entrance exam: Graduate Record Examination (GRE) - www.ets.org/gre/
Transcripts: Official transcripts from ALL institutions attended, including Marquette University, must be sent directly from the institution to the central application service and/or individual school (if central application is not available). If you completed study abroad courses that are on a transcript issued by another university, official transcripts from that institution must also be sent.
Course prerequisites: Course prerequisites vary greatly by program. Typical prerequisites include anatomy and physiology (or A&P), statistics, multiple psychology courses (introduction, development, and/or abnormal), nutrition, microbiology, and other science (biology, chemistry or physics).
Observation hours/experience: Most programs do not have a minimum hour/experience requirement. Schools are looking for well-rounded applications and for quality and depth of experiences rather than a specific number of hours. Direct exposure to health care, nursing professionals, service to others, leadership, etc. are all valuable experiences. The categories for reporting experience on NursingCAS include: certifications; community enrichment; health related certification training; honors and awards; licensure; other employment; and patient/health related experiences.
Minimum requirements to apply: Minimum requirements to apply vary by program. The direct-entry MSN program at MU has a minimum 3.0 overall GPA and will waive the GRE requirement for MU students that have at least a 3.2 overall GPA. Please keep in mind that centralized application systems usually require the reporting of all college level courses, including repeated attempts of the same course. As a result, the GPA calculated by the centralized application system may be lower than your Marquette GPA, which uses only the last grade earned in a class.
Personal Statement: This is a statement expressing your motivation or desire to become a nurse. NursingCAS allows for 5000 characters, which is about 700 words.
Letters of Reference (LOR): Since not all programs use the centralized application system for nursing, letters of recommendation may need to be sent to multiple locations. Please keep track of how individual programs want letters of recommendation submitted and be very clear to your recommenders how they should submit letters on your behalf.
Interview: Competitive applicants may be invited to participate in an interview process. Interviews may include faculty members, current students of the program, and/or practitioners. Interviews may be used to assess oral communication skills; professional behaviors; attitude; knowledge of the profession and/or of health care overall; problem-solving skills; etc. Go to your interviews with prepared questions about the school/program that show your interest in what the school has to offer (other than being close to home or low tuition).
Deadlines: Make sure you understand the program deadlines for each program to which you are applying. Programs may have multiple deadlines (preferred, priority or early decision) or operate on a rolling admission. Rolling admission means a program reviews applications as they arrive, so the earlier an application is submitted, the better the chance for acceptance. Keep in mind that processing of an application by the centralized application system may take four to six weeks once all materials have been submitted.