

Spring 2012
Practical Nursing
Information Packet
One-Year Certificate



Accredited by:
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033-4097
404.679.4501

Approved by:
Virginia State Board of Nursing
Perimeter Center
9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300
Richmond VA 23233-1463
804.367.4515

Piedmont Virginia Community College
501 College Drive
Charlottesville, VA 22902
434.961.5239
asmith@pvcc.edu
www.pvcc.edu/LPNpgm

Introduction

The PVCC Practical Nursing (PN) Program prepares graduates to successfully function in the role of an entry-level licensed practical nurse under the supervision of a registered nurse or physician in structured settings, providing direct care to clients with common health problems that have predictable outcomes.

The purpose of the Practical Nursing Program is to educate individuals who are concerned with basic therapeutic, rehabilitative and preventative care for people of all ages and diverse cultures in various stages of dependency. The graduate of PVCC's PN program will be eligible to apply for licensure after successful completion of the NCLEX-PN examination.

The person with emergent health needs and the student with learning needs comprise the central focus for curriculum development. The problem-solving process is used as a framework for critical thinking and practice. Concepts that provide further structure for the development of practical nursing competency are assessment of patients with emergent needs, communication skills and development of professional attitudes and characteristics.

Nondiscrimination Statement

PVCC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, political affiliation, disability, veteran status, gender, age or sexual orientation in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Vice President for Instruction and Student Services, 501 College Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22902, 434.961.5206.

Practical Nursing Program Objectives

The PVCC Practical Nursing Program prepares graduates to successfully function in the role of an entry-level licensed practical nurse under the supervision of a registered nurse or physician in structured settings, providing direct care to clients with common health problems that have predictable outcomes. The graduate is expected to function in the following ways.

1. Promoting optimal health for clients at various points on the wellness-illness continuum by applying principles from the physical, biological and social sciences when delivering nursing care; conceptualizing illness as an opportunity for client growth; facilitating the client's assumption of primary responsibility for wellness recognizing that one or more of an individual's basic needs are not being met.

The PN student, with faculty guidance, promotes optimal health of clients who have overt disturbances of basic human needs.

2. Using the nursing process as a guide to maintain individual nursing care plans by:
 - a. collecting client data
 - b. implementing nursing actions and evaluating the effects of actions
 - c. contributing to the revision of nursing care accordingly

The PN student, with faculty guidance, uses the nursing process by collecting client data and implementing nursing actions.

3. Effectively communicating with clients, colleagues and others by:
 - a. utilizing appropriate communication modes and channels within clinical and community health-care settings
 - b. utilizing therapeutic communication techniques in developing and maintaining nurse-client relationships
 - c. utilizing communication theory and techniques to assess the verbal and nonverbal communication of clients
 - d. utilizing communication theory and techniques to gather client data and to implement and evaluate client care
 - e. evaluating the effectiveness of one's communications with clients, colleagues and others
 - f. recognizing that people communicate their needs in different ways

The PN student, with faculty guidance, effectively communicates with clients, families, colleagues and others in clinical settings.

4. Participating in teaching clients who need information or support to maintain health by:
 - a. identifying learning needs in collaboration with the client and family
 - b. implementing areas of the established teaching plan in collaboration with the client, family, registered nurse and/or physician

The PN student, with faculty guidance, implements teaching plans for individual clients who have overt learning needs.

5. Managing, with supervision in structured settings, the nursing care for clients who have common, well-defined health problems by:
 - a. setting nursing-care priorities
 - b. identifying the role of the practical nurse and other health-care team members in the clinical setting
 - c. coordinating and evaluating nursing care for a group of clients in collaboration with health-care team members and in accordance with agency policies

The PN student manages, with faculty guidance, nursing care for individual clients who have overt needs.

6. Functioning as a member within the profession of nursing by:
 - a. being accountable for one's nursing practice
 - b. practicing within the ethical and legal framework of practice roles
 - c. assuming responsibility for self development and continuing education
 - d. observing standards of practice established by the nursing profession
 - e. recognizing the impact of professional organizations, community groups and legislation as they influence health care

The PN student functions as a member within the profession of nursing by demonstrating knowledge of student practice roles and accountability, and assuming responsibility for self development and learning within the academic setting.

Essential Functions and Standards for Successful Performance

To successfully complete the classroom and clinical components of the program, the nursing student must, either independently or with reasonable accommodation, be able to perform all of the following essential standards and functions of a practical nurse. Students who are unable to meet these standards are not eligible for admission to the program.

1. **Speech:** Establish interpersonal rapport and communicate verbally and in writing with clients, physicians, peers, family members and the health-care team from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds.
2. **Hearing and Comprehension:** Auditory acuity sufficient to respond to verbal instruction, perceive and interpret various equipment signals, use the telephone, understand and respond appropriately to verbal directions and hear faint body sounds.
3. **Vision:** Visual acuity sufficient to identify and distinguish colors, read handwritten orders and any other handwritten or printed data such as medication records or scales, chart data and provide for the safety of clients' condition by clearly viewing monitors and other equipment in order to correctly interpret data.
4. **Mobility:** Stand and/or walk eight hours daily in the clinical setting. Bend, squat or kneel. Assist in lifting or moving clients of all age groups and weights. Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (move around client to manually compress chest and ventilate). Work with arms fully extended overhead. Lift 50 pounds independently and 125 pounds with assistance.
5. **Manual Dexterity:** Demonstrate eye/hand coordination sufficient to manipulate equipment (syringes, infusion pumps, life support systems).
6. **Fine Motor Ability:** Ability to use hands for grasping, pushing, pulling and fine manipulation. Have tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment and manipulation of equipment.
7. **Mentation:** Ability to remain focused on multiple details and tasks for at least an eight-hour period of time. Assimilate and apply knowledge acquired through lectures, discussions and readings.
8. **Smell:** Olfactory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs.
9. **Writing:** Ability to organize thoughts and present them clearly and logically in writing.
10. **Reading:** Ability to read and understand written directions, instructions and comments in both classroom and clinical settings.

Health Status

All individuals admitted to the Practical Nursing Program will be required to submit documentation of a complete health assessment by his/her health-care provider. This will include documentation that specific immunizations and tests have been completed. A list of these immunizations may be obtained from the Health and Life Sciences Division Office in the Kluge-Moses Science Building, Room K224A.

Criminal Background Check and Drug Screening

All PVCC Practical Nursing students must complete the Authorization Form for Background Check and Drug Screening. No other processes may be substituted for this requirement. Forms and information will be mailed to students upon acceptance into the Practical Nursing Program.

This testing is completed through an outside vendor and all fees will be paid directly to this vendor. The testing will compare findings against the following criteria:

- Adult or child sexual offenses
- Adult, child or elder abuse or neglect
- Assault or battery
- Fraud
- Narcotics or other drugs, including prescription drugs
- Felonies of any type

The vendor will report only whether a student clears or does not clear the criteria listed above. All reports will be returned to the Dean of Health and Life Sciences. In the event that a student is not cleared, the student must make any clarifications directly with the vendor. The student may elect to involve the Dean in any clarification procedures. If no suitable arrangement can be made, the student shall be administratively withdrawn from the Practical Nursing Program.

Program Behavior Expectations

The PVCC Practical Nursing Program reserves the right to refuse admission to applicants if such refusal is considered to be in the best interest of the program. The Practical Nursing Program will not accept any student who has been dismissed from another college or program due to misconduct or threatening behavior, or who has been determined to be a potential threat. Students may be denied admission to the program if there is sufficient reason to believe that they present a danger to themselves, other members of the college community or clients in the clinical setting.

Curriculum for Practical Nursing Program

Course Number	Course Title	Credits
General Education Courses		
SDV 101	Orientation	1
BIO 100	Basic Human Biology	3
HLT 141	Medical Terminology	2
PSY 230	Developmental Psychology	3
ITE 119	Information Literacy	3
ENG 111	College Composition I	3
PNE Courses		
1st Semester (Spring)		
PNE 186	Nursing Concepts I	6
PNE 116	Nutrition and Diet Therapy	1
PNE 173	Pharmacology for Practical Nurses	2
2nd Semester (Summer)		
PNE 187	Nursing Concepts II	9
3rd Semester (Fall)		
PNE 174	Applied Pharmacology	1
PNE 188	Nursing Concepts III	6
Total Credits		40

Practical Nursing Program Prerequisites

Only applicants who have completed all program prerequisites prior to October 1, 2011 will be eligible for January 2012 admission.

The following items must be satisfactorily completed in order to be considered for admission to the PVCC PN program. This is a competitive admissions process with limited enrollment and not all applicants will be granted admission. Completion of these prerequisites and any of the general education courses in the curriculum **does not** guarantee admission.

1. **Demonstrated competency in reading and writing (eligible to enroll in ENG 111)**
 - a. Completion of developmental English (1, 3, 4, 5) OR
 - b. COMPASS placement score demonstrating competency in this content OR
 - c. Completion of an acceptable college-level composition course with a grade of “C” or better OR
 - d. SAT verbal and writing score of 520 or an ACT score of 21
2. **Demonstrated competency in Algebra (within last eight years)**
 - a. Completion of developmental math courses (MTH 2, BSK 6, 8, 9) within last eight years OR
 - b. COMPASS placement test scores demonstrating competency in this content within last eight years
 - c. Completion of an acceptable college-level math course within the last eight years (Technical math, statistics, and certain liberal arts math courses will not satisfy this prerequisite.) OR
 - d. SAT quantitative score of 480 or ACT score of 20 within last eight years
3. **Biology (High school level)**
 - a. Completion of high school biology course with a “C” or better OR
 - b. Completion of acceptable college-level biology course OR
 - c. Completion of NAS 2 – Foundations of Life Science OR
 - d. Satisfactory completion of NAS 2 Placement Test

4. Curricular GPA of 2.5 or above

- a. The curricular GPA is the grade point average of all the non-PNE courses listed on the Practical Nursing certificate curriculum sheet that the student has completed by the application deadline. This would include BIO 100, SDV 100/101/108, ENG 111, HLT 141, PSY 230, and ITE 119.

5. Nursing Interest Essay

- a. Written essay of 300 words to evaluate written communication skills
- b. Must be done in PVCC's Testing Center. Call 434.961.5320 to schedule an appointment.
- c. Can only be done once and cannot be prepared ahead of the appointment

6. TEAS (Test of Essential Academic Skills) Exam

- a. Completion of the TEAS exam is a prerequisite for those students who do not have a previous college degree (associate, bachelor's or higher).
- b. A minimum score of 45% is required.
- c. Instructions for completion of the TEAS exam:
 - TEAS exams must be scheduled through PVCC's Testing Center. Call 434.961.5320 to schedule an appointment.
 - A picture form of identification must be presented at the time of the exam.
 - The exam cost is \$35 and a credit card is required for online payment. *Please bring a credit card as the Testing Center cannot accept cash or check payments for this exam.*
 - Practice exams and study information are available through the ATI Web site below.
 - Please see the TEAS brochure available outside the Nursing Office or at the Testing Center or contact ATI directly at www.atitesting.com or 1.800.667.7531 (toll free).
 - The TEAS exam may be taken up to two times per admission cycle.
 - TEAS scores are valid for up to two years.

7. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

- a. Completion of the TOEFL iBT with a standard score of 84 or above and a minimum speaking score of 26 is required for ALL nonnative English speakers.
- b. These scores are based on recommendations from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing for the level of English proficiency required to perform entry-level nursing safely and effectively.
- c. Any nonnative English speakers who do not take the TOEFL and are determined to be unable to understand and speak English at the required proficiency will be dismissed from the nursing program.

Factors Considered for Admission Decisions

Admission to the Practical Nursing Program is competitive and will be based on a ranking system that includes student performance in the general education courses in the Practical Nursing curriculum as well as TEAS scores. Each student's past and potential educational achievement is measured against all other students applying. Applicants must submit all official documentation and demonstrate minimum requirements for consideration by the posted deadline to be considered for acceptance. Coursework in progress at time of deadline will not be considered during the application process. Students meeting all of the minimum requirements for admission are not guaranteed acceptance and not all applicants will be granted admission. Priority is given to students residing in the PVCC service region (Albemarle, Buckingham, Charlottesville, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa and Nelson).

Due to the large number of interested students, Practical Nursing Program personnel are not able to schedule individual appointments to review application documents. In an effort to provide students with the most current and comprehensive data, information sessions will be held during the fall semester. During these sessions, the Director of Nursing Programs will review the applications process, prerequisites, and the competitive ranking criteria. All applicants are highly encouraged to attend one of these sessions. This information will also be available as an online presentation. In addition, there are advisors available in the Admissions and Advising Center daily.

Evaluation Process

1. Practical Nursing applicants complete online Practical Nursing Program application and complete all required prerequisites prior to October 1 deadline. Applications or documentation received after the deadline will not be considered. THIS PROGRAM APPLICATION IS IN ADDITION TO THE PVCC COLLEGE APPLICATION.
2. All application documents are compiled by division and admission office personnel.
3. The Director of Nursing Programs will do preliminary screening of all applicants to determine the applicants who have met the minimum prerequisites and are eligible for admission.
4. The Director of Nursing Programs will then review the applications and academic records of eligible candidates.
5. Applicants are ranked according to the following criteria in order of importance:
 - a. The number of general education courses completed by the application deadline
 - b. The GPA earned in those completed courses
 - c. The TEAS scores
 - d. The quality of the nursing essay

The one-page nursing admission essay is intended to evaluate each applicant's written communication skills. The essay is prompted by a choice of questions and is completed in word-processing format in the PVCC Testing Center by appointment. It is not a test of knowledge and cannot be prepared ahead of the scheduled appointment. The essay will be evaluated using the college-wide writing rubric which can be found at <http://www.pvcc.edu/about/gep>.

6. Letters to all applicants will be mailed the week of November 15, 2011.
 - a. Applicants will be accepted, placed on the waiting list, or not accepted. Notification of status will be **posted on the practical nursing application Web site** on November 15, 2011.
 - b. A waiting list of qualified applicants will be maintained in the event that selected students are not able to accept their place in the program. The waiting list will only be maintained until the week before classes start for the spring semester and is not continued from year to year. All students who were not admitted for their desired year will have to reapply for admission in subsequent years.
 - c. Students seeking readmission into the program or advanced placement transfers will be considered on a space-available basis. Applicants for readmission must have submitted their letter requesting readmission by **April 15** for summer readmission and **July 15** for fall readmission. Students desiring readmission into PNE 186 must apply as **new** applicants.



Frequently Asked Questions



1. HOW DO I APPLY?

The application to the program is online. Go to <http://www.pvcc.edu/lpn> and select “Apply/Register.” Create a username and password that is unique to you and complete the remaining information that is requested on the online form. Select “Register” at the bottom when you are done. To ensure that all required documentation is received, students are encouraged to submit supporting documents (i.e., transcripts) as a single package. You may obtain copies of evaluated transcripts from the Registrar’s Office.

2. HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO COMPLETE THE PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM?

The Practical Nursing Program curriculum, including general education courses, can be completed within a one-year period. However, this full-time course load is a very difficult and time-consuming one, especially if the student has work or other nonschool obligations. For this reason, many students elect to take many or all of their general education courses before beginning the sequence of nursing courses.

3. AM I A LPN WHEN I COMPLETE PROGRAM?

NO. Once you have earned the Certificate in Practical Nursing, you are eligible to take the State Board Licensing Examination (NCLEX-PN). Upon passing this examination, you are eligible to apply to the Virginia Board of Nursing for licensure.

4. ARE THERE ANY COSTS INVOLVED IN THE NURSING PROGRAM?

Yes. In addition to tuition and the cost of transportation to clinical sites and parking, students are responsible for the following items (estimated):

Criminal Background Search/Drug Screen	\$90
TEAS exam	\$35
Uniforms/Supplies	\$300 estimated
Books	\$500 estimated
Learning System	\$90 per semester
NCLEX-PN exam (after graduation)	\$200

5. WHERE ARE THE CLINICAL ASSIGNMENTS IN THE PROGRAM?

Western State Hospital, Westminster-Canterbury of the Blue Ridge, The Laurels, Charlottesville Health and Rehabilitation, HealthSouth, Pediatric Associates, Charlottesville Family Medicine, Madison Family Physicians, Charlottesville/ Albemarle Regional Jail, Triple C Camp, Camp Holiday Trails and Rockingham Memorial Hospital are the current clinical settings. Other facilities may also be used. Please note that while we make every effort to consider driving distances in all clinical assignments, we cannot guarantee to accommodate any individual schedule or site request. Carpooling with fellow students is highly encouraged.

6. IF I AM TRANSFERRING FROM ANOTHER COLLEGE, CAN I GET CREDIT FOR SOME OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES?

Yes. Once your transcripts are on file in the Registrar's Office, you may request that the Registrar complete a transcript evaluation and send you written confirmation of courses accepted for transfer to PVCC. The Transcript Evaluation Request form can be found online at http://www.pvcc.edu/forms_central/.

7. CAN I USE BIO 141 AND BIO 142 IN PLACE OF BIO 100?

Yes. Students may take BIO 141 and BIO 142 in place of BIO 100 for the Practical Nursing Program. Please note that BOTH of those courses must be taken to satisfy the curricular requirement.

8. IF I AM GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL IN JUNE, WHAT SHOULD I DO TO BE CONSIDERED FOR ADMISSION INTO THE NURSING PROGRAM?

It is highly recommended that students coming immediately out of high school enroll and complete the majority of the general education requirements of this program before actual admission into practical nursing; however, applicants with strong academic records, especially in science and math, who are spring high school graduates will be considered for admission.

9. IS THERE FINANCIAL AID AVAILABLE TO PRACTICAL NURSING STUDENTS?

Yes. There are a number of financial aid opportunities. For further information, please contact the Financial Aid Office (434.961.6545) at your earliest convenience. It is best to complete your financial aid application by March 31 for the following fall semester.

A Message from the PVCC Math Department Regarding Placement Tests

Dear Student,

Please keep in mind the following suggestions as you prepare to take your placement exam. Most students place appropriately. On occasion, however, students are not prepared and do not place into the proper level. This letter is written especially to help prevent placing below your true level.

- Take the exam **very** seriously. The exam determines your starting level in mathematics and, therefore, how many mathematics courses you will need to finish your program. **Retakes of the placement test are allowed only every four months or after significant learning has occurred.**
- Give yourself the time you need. The test is not timed! If you are pressed for time, come back early on a different day and take the test when time will not be a factor. Use the time to carefully and seriously answer the questions. *A little time wisely spent on the placement exam can save a semester or more of work!*
- Remember that the correct answer is in front of you, and process of elimination/careful consideration of the choices will help. You want your placement score to reflect what you truly know.
- You are allowed the use of a graphing calculator on this test. If you find yourself without the proper calculator, please ask for assistance at the desk.
- Brush up on your mathematics before the test, but don't try to cram and learn things beyond your knowledge. You can obtain practice problems for the Compass test in mathematics from PVCC's Learning Center and on the Internet at www.act.org/compass. The Jessup Library at PVCC has math texts on reserve for your review. You may also visit the PVCC Math Center for personal assistance prior to taking the math placement test. The Learning and Math Centers are located in PVCC's Main Building, room M617.
- Many students will have to take both mathematics and English placement tests. Consider taking these placement tests on separate days to minimize the effect of test fatigue.
- In summary, do yourself justice and place where you truly are in math by being serious and smart about your time.

Practical Nursing Program Admission Checklist

Use this as a tool to assure completion of the Practical Nursing Program requirements by October 1, 2011.

Application Requirement	How Met?	Date Completed
Complete PVCC Application www.pvcc.edu	Online Application	
Complete Practical Nursing Program Application www.pvcc.edu/LPN	Online Application	
Submit college transcripts to the Office of Admissions and Advising and ask for evaluation for transfer credit	Have colleges send official transcripts to the Office of Admissions and Advising and complete request form to have courses evaluated for transfer credit	
Submit high school transcript or GED to the Office of Admissions and Advising	Have high school send official transcript to the Office of Admissions and Advising	
Complete biology prerequisite requirement	HS transcript, or college transcript, or completion of NAS 2, or test-out of NAS 2	
Complete English prerequisite requirement	COMPASS test or college transcript	
Complete math prerequisite requirement	COMPASS test or college transcript	
Complete TEAS test if no college degree	Online test scheduled through Testing Center	
Complete Practical Nursing Admission Essay	Complete paragraph of up to 300 words in PVCC Testing Center	
Complete TOEFL iBT if non-native English speaker	TOEFL iBT scheduled through the PVCC Testing Center	