

Nursing

Associate of Applied Science Degree

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Nursing Program Options and Length: (Length includes pre-requisites, general education courses, and nursing courses)

Track 1: Traditional Day Program 5 semesters

Track 2: LPN to RN Transition Day Program 5 semesters

Track 3: Part-time Evening/Weekend: 10 semesters

Track 4: LPN to RN Transition Part-time Evening/Weekend: 8 semesters

About the Program: The Virginia Highlands Community College Nursing Program was part of the Virginia Appalachian Tricollage Nursing Program for nearly 50 years. While new as a stand-alone program the history and reputation of nursing at VHCC remains. The program follows the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) common curriculum as mandated for all VCCS nursing programs.

State Approval and Accreditation Status: The Associate degree nursing program at VHCC is located in Abingdon, Virginia and is approved by the Virginia Board of Nursing, Perimeter Center 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300, Henrico, VA 23233-1463 (804)367-4515. The VHCC Nursing program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) 3390 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 1400 Atlanta, GA 30326 (404) 975-5000, <https://www.acenursing.org/>. The most recent ACEN accreditation decision made by the ACEN Board of Commissioners for the Virginia Highlands Community College Associate degree nursing program is continuing accreditation. ACEN is officially recognized as the national accrediting agency for nursing education by the Council on Post-secondary Accreditation (COPA) and by the U.S. Department of Education.

Purpose/Mission/Goal: The purpose of the nursing program at VHCC and other nursing programs of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) is to provide affordable, community access to quality nursing education. The VCCS nursing programs prepare qualified students to provide safe, competent, entry-level nursing care in 21st century healthcare environments. Students are prepared to meet the ever-increasing complexity of the healthcare needs of the citizens of Virginia. After successful completion of the program, students are eligible to apply for the NCLEX RN exam provided by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing for licensure as a Registered Nurse.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Client Centered Care -Provide client-centered care promoting therapeutic relationships, caring behaviors, and self-determination across the lifespan for diverse populations.

Safety-Practice safe nursing care that minimizes risk of harm across systems and client populations.

Clinical Judgement-Demonstrate nursing judgment through the use of clinical reasoning, the nursing process, and evidence-based practice in the provision of safe, quality care.

Professional Behaviors-Practice professional behaviors that encompass the legal/ethical framework while incorporating self-reflection, leadership and a commitment to recognize the value of life-long learning.

Quality Improvement-Manage client care through quality improvement processes, information technology, and fiscal responsibility to meet client needs and support organizational outcomes.

Collaboration- Demonstrate principles of collaborative practice within the nursing and interdisciplinary teams fostering mutual respect and shared decision-making to achieve stated outcomes of care.

Program Outcomes

80% First-time pass rate of the NCLEX RN

65% Student Ontime Completion Rate of program length

85% Job Placement rate

Employment Opportunities: Employment opportunities for the Registered Nurse (RN) include, but are not limited to, staff positions in hospitals, nursing homes, health departments, physician offices, clinics, home health agencies, public schools, day care centers, and civil service.

Admission to Program: All Tracks admit once a year. Tracks 2, 3, and 4 admit students in the Summer session. Track 1 admit students in the Fall session.

Admission Requirements: Admission to the VHCC Nursing Program is a selective process. The program is open to applicants who are free of any physical or mental condition which might adversely affect performance as a member of the nursing profession. In addition to the requirements for admission to the college, the applicant must meet the following requirements:

1. Graduation from high school or satisfactory completion of the GED.
2. Good standing with the most recently attended institution with a minimum GPA of 2.0.
3. Demonstrated competency in science as evidenced by
 - a. General Biology with lab (high school or college) with a grade C or better OR
 - b. Chemistry with lab (high school or college) with a grade C or better OR
 - c. Completion of BIO 141 and 142 with a C or better. Note: BIO 101 or CHM 5 can be taken to meet this requirement.
4. Demonstrated proficiency in mathematics as evidenced by
 - a. MTE1-5 or MDE10 either through the Virginia Placement Test (VPT or prescribed developmental work within the last 6 years. OR
 - b. HSGPA & Algebra II 3.0 or higher within the last 5 years,
 - c. GED Math score of 165 or above within the last 6 years,
 - d. OR SAT math score of 470 or ACT math score of 17 within last 5 years, OR
 - e. Completion of college-level math class equivalent to MTH 1-5 OR
 - f. ATI TEAS math score of 45th national percentile rank or an individual score of 65 or higher.
5. Demonstrated competency in English as evidenced by
 - a. Completion of VPT English with placement into ENG111 or ENG III + EDE 11 within the last 6 years. OR
 - b. OR Completion of a college level English course equivalent to ENG 111 with grade C or better
 - c. SAT English/Reading/Writing score 400 or ACT Reading and Writing score 15 within last 6 years OR
 - d. Successfully completed applicable English developmental courses within last 6 years OR
 - e. GED- English score of 165 within last 6 years OR
 - f. HSGPA 2.0 or higher within last 6 years.
6. Completion of the nursing entrance test (Test of Essential Academic Skills, or TEAS) with a **National Percentile Rank** of 45 or above prior to application. Nursing preadmission results will be accepted if completed within 5 years of applying to the nursing program.
7. A 2.5 cumulative grade point average (GPA) for ENG 111, BIO 141, PSY 230, ITE 119, and SDV 101. These courses must be completed prior to enrollment in nursing (NSG) classes.

Licensed Practical Nurse Transition Advance Placement: (Tracks 2 & 4):

The VHCC Nursing Program's Advance Placement or "Transition Program," is designed to grant advanced placement to LPNs who meet the pre-requisite requirements. This program is designed to recognize the common abilities of nurses and to bridge the difference between LPN and RN knowledge base.

In addition to meeting the above admission requirements LPN applicants must also:

1. Include a copy of current LPN license AND
2. Documentation of graduation from an approved LPN program AND
3. Proof of work experience: LPNs who graduated before May 15, 2018 must provide documentation of 2000 hours of LPN work experience in direct patient care during the past three years with written verification from employer at the time of application AND.
4. LPN to RN Transition applicants for Track 2 and Track 4 must also complete BO 142 and BIO 150

All applicants must complete a Nursing Application for each academic year interested in being considered for the Nursing Program.

Applications for the Nursing Program are online at <https://www.vhcc.edu/future-students/nurse-ready>. Students are encouraged to submit their application when they demonstrate proficiency in Math/English/Science and a TEAS National percentile rank score of 45th or higher. Students may be accepted on a contingency basis until completion of the following courses with at least a 2.5 GPA: SDV-101, ENG 111, PSY 230, BIO 141 and ITE 119. Once these criteria have been met an official acceptance letter may be sent to the applicant. The priority deadline for applications is March 15. Applications will continue to be accepted after the priority deadline only if seats are available.

The Admissions Office will suspend processing an application if all transcripts are not included. Transcripts from other Virginia Community Colleges are not required; however, any Virginia Community Colleges attended must be listed on both the Admissions Application and the Nursing Application.

Students residing in the college service area (Washington County, the western portion of Smyth County, or the city of Bristol) will be given priority consideration for admission to the program. Out-of-region applicants will only be considered for openings in the Nursing program after all qualified in-region applicants are considered (see Admission Priorities). To be considered in-region, an applicant must be domiciled within the service region for 12 months prior to the program application deadline.

Further details can be located at <https://www.vhcc.edu/future-students/nurse-ready>.

About the Nursing Application Selection Process:

The number of qualified applicants offered admission to the VHCC Nursing Program is contingent upon the space available in each track. When the number of qualified applicants exceeds the number of slots available, acceptance will occur using selection criteria consisting of the TEAS score and the overall GPA in ENG-111, BIO 141, SDV-101, PSY-230 and ITE 119.

Transfer of Nursing Credit: Students seeking to transfer credit from nursing programs at other institutions will be considered on an individual basis. Requested transfer courses will be evaluated for currency, comparability, relevancy to the nursing program degree, calculation of credit including didactic and clinical time and the grade earned. Transcripts of students transferring from non-regionally accredited colleges and universities will be evaluated on a course-by-course basis by the Coordinator of Admissions and Records.

Students must meet the admission requirements identified by the college and the VHCC Nursing Program. The student may be asked to provide course descriptions, documentation of completed direct patient care clinical time, course syllabi, achievement or progressive

testing scores, demonstration of competency in critical nursing skills, and selected data from the course instructor or program director in order to determine placement in the nursing program. Consideration will be subject to availability of space. Since there frequently are differences among nursing programs, students wishing to transfer should be aware that there may be an interruption in program progression. Applicants must be in good standing at their previous college with a "C" average or better and must provide documentation from the Nursing School Program Director of eligibility to return to that nursing program as well as documentation of the number of hours of clinical experiences providing direct patient care supervised by a qualified instructor. Nursing courses which are being transferred must have been completed within three (3) years prior to admission to the nursing program.

Decisions on admission offers to transferring applicants will be determined by the VHCC Nursing Program faculty following official transcript analysis, review of completed nursing course outlines, and space and faculty availability. A transferring student must demonstrate expected level proficiencies by testing including demonstration of competency in critical skills. The transferring applicant may have to repeat courses.

Notification of United States Department of Education Regulation

Pursuant to United States Department of Education (US DOE) regulation 34 CFR 668.43 (a) (5) (v), the Virginia Highlands Community College (VHCC) Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) program provides the following information for all prospective and current students:

The VHCC ADN program meets all Virginia Board of Nursing requirements for pre-licensure nursing education programs in the Commonwealth of Virginia. In addition, the VHCC ADN program meets all requirements for nationally recognized accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Education in Nursing.

The Commonwealth of Virginia participates with 32 other states in the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) National Licensing Compact (NLC) to allow nurses licensed in one state to provide nursing care across state lines in other compact states. The Uniform Licensing Requirements (ULRs) are found at: https://www.ncsbn.org/NLC_ULRs.pdf.

States currently in the NLC are found at: <https://www.ncsbn.org/nlcmemberstates.pdf>. Prospective and current students are strongly encouraged to evaluate all state requirements in jurisdictions where they intend to practice nursing. A list of all state requirements is found at: <https://www.ncsbn.org/14730.htm>.

VHCC has not determined if the ADN program meets the requirements of any other states.

This statement serves to meet the US DOE regulation until further notice.

Program Requirements: The VHCC Nursing Program is dependent on use of local clinical agencies to meet the experiential or clinical learning needs of its students. In order to protect patients and visitors as well as students, clinical agencies require that each student have proof of completion of clinical requirements. Students who do not complete and/or maintain clinical requirements by established deadlines will be prohibited from attending clinicals and will be administratively withdrawn from the nursing clinical course.

Prior to beginning clinicals, the student must provide the required clinical requirement documentation.

1. Forms required by clinical agency.

2. Annual Student Statement of Health Form.
3. Student Information; Physical, and Immunization Forms. The physical examination form must be completed by a medical practitioner, MD, PA, or CNP.
 - a. Immunizations include Tetanus, Mumps-Measles-Rubella (MMR), Varicella, Hepatitis B, Influenza, and COVID
 - b. Must complete the 2-Step tuberculosis testing or documented alternate requirement as applicable.
 - c. Documentation of ability to perform physical demands required in direct patient care activities.
4. Purchase a background check, drug screen, and medical document package.
5. Clearance of criminal background check and drug testing prior to enrolling in NSG clinical courses.
6. Copy of course completion card for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)- American Heart Association, Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Providers completed during the summer (May 15 – August 1) prior to admission to NSG courses and maintained throughout the program.
7. Proof of health insurance
8. Review of and adherence to Standards of Safe Clinical performance.
7. Hearing: Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs.
8. Visual: Visual ability sufficient for nursing observation and assessment.
9. Tactile: Tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment.

These guidelines serve as essential elements basic to eligibility requirements for clinical participation in the VHCC Nursing Program.

Financial Requirements:

In addition to the usual college tuition and fees, the nursing program requires pre-admission testing and other expenses in which students are responsible for. These include a digital device such as a laptop or tablet to use in classroom and lab, uniforms/shoes, watch, stethoscope, standardized program progressive products, textbooks, electronic technology, CastleBranch Criminal Background, drug screening, and document manager, CPR certification, Physical exam and Immunizations, and Tuberculosis testing, and Health Insurance. Students are responsible for these costs as well as the cost of transportation to and from the College and health agencies used for clinical experiences. Refer to the VHCC Nursing Handbook for further details. Refund of cost of tuition is dependent on the academic calendar last day to drop and receive a refund. Refund of other costs such as health physical examination, immunizations, CPR, and CastleBranch are not refundable. Cost associated with textbooks, ATI, uniforms (and accessories) are contingent upon the individual vendor.

Financial Aid

VHCC strives to assure that no one be denied the opportunity of attending the College for financial reasons. Students are encouraged to contact the Financial Aid office at VHCC to determine eligibility. Refer to the Financial Aid section in the Student Catalog for requirements. Potential scholarships are available through the VHCC Foundation.

Student Accommodations Statement: Students admitted to the VHCC Nursing Program can be expected to complete course requirements that prepare them to perform essential job functions as a registered professional nurse. Those functions or skills that are essential to the profession must be performed with or without accommodations. Any student who thinks he/she does not possess one or more of these functions should contact the Office of Disability Services. Provisions for accommodations will be made in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Course Requirements: The academic calendar will be followed and is available on the VHCC website. Course calendars provided by faculty follow the academic calendar and students are expected to abide by the course calendar. Students must complete all courses listed in the first year of the curriculum before entering the second year. Exceptions due to unusual circumstances must be approved by the Dean of Nursing. A student must have a “C” (80%) or above in theory plus “satisfactory” in clinical performance in all nursing courses to remain in the program. A grade of “C” or above in any related requirement is a prerequisite for continuing in the nursing program.

The student is required to complete a sequence of courses and learning experiences provided at the college and selected community agencies such as hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, physicians’ offices and comparable facilities. The nursing faculty will supervise and evaluate the student’s suitability for nursing and direct patient care. The nursing program faculty reserves the right

The cost of these requirements is the responsibility of the student.

Criminal Background Checks/Barrier Crimes: The State Board of Nursing has the authority to deny license to any applicant who has violated any of the provisions of 54.1-3007 of the Code of Virginia. Most healthcare organizations are prohibited from hiring persons who have been convicted of certain criminal acts (For a list of crimes under this category refer to the [Virginia Board of Nursing webpage](#) under the heading, Licensure/Applicants: Article 90-55, click on the link, [Joint statement of the Department of Health and The Department of Health Professions on Impact of Criminal Convictions on Nursing Licensure or Certification and Employment in Virginia, Revised December 2020](#)). Students with criminal convictions must meet with the Dean of Nursing. Permission for clinical assignments must be received from clinical affiliations for applicable students. Clinical facilities that will not approve student placement results in students being unable to complete program requirements and ineligible to continue the program. Students with positive drug screens are addressed individually and may results in being prohibited from clinical activities and therefore, unable to complete the program requirements. Contact the Dean of Nursing for clarification of specific issues.

Performance Standards for Clinical Laboratory Assignments:

Students must be able to perform all essential job functions or performance standards in clinical settings with reasonable accommodation. The following performance standards are consistent with those identified by the Southern Regional Education Boards and include, but are not limited to:

1. Critical thinking: Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment and delivery of safe patient care.
2. Interpersonal abilities: Interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with clients, families and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds.
3. Communication: Communication abilities sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and written form.
4. Mobility: Physical abilities sufficient to move from room to room and maneuver in small spaces.
5. Motor skills: Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective nursing care.
6. Physical demands: Physical demands in this program include duties that frequently require squatting, bending, kneeling, reaching, and stair climbing; lifting and carrying up to 50 pounds; frequent pushing and pulling up to 200 pounds with assistance; occasional lifting up to 200 pounds with assistance and occasional carrying up to 51-74 pounds.

to recommend, through appropriate channels, the withdrawal of any student who does not exhibit suitable demeanor/attendance.

Course Delivery

Nursing courses are delivered face to face, online, hybrid or a combination of delivery methods, Extenuating circumstances may alter the method of course delivery.

Program Progression, Reapplication/Readmission

Requirements: All nursing courses in the curriculum, must be completed in sequence prior to progressing to the next semester. Students must earn a minimum grade of "C" (80) in all nursing courses, a minimum grade of "C" in all non-nursing courses and maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 to remain eligible for continued enrollment in the nursing program. In addition, during the NSG 106 or NSG 115 course, a Comprehensive Drug Calculation Exam (CDCE) will be administered to verify skills. Students must achieve at least 90 percent or higher score on the CDCE with no more than three attempts in order to achieve a passing grade in the course. Any student who earns a final grade lower than a "C" in a required course (either general education or nursing courses) must repeat the course and earn a final grade of "C" or better before taking the next course in the sequence.

Clinical performance in a course is graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. A student who does not meet the clinical learning outcomes will fail the course.

The following are program progression policies according to the VCCS Common Curriculum:

1. Students who are not successful in any first semester nursing (NSG) course must reapply to the nursing program.
2. Any student who drops or withdraws from NSG 106 or NSG 200 must also drop or withdraw from NSG 100 due to the inability to complete clinical requirements.
3. A student may continue in NSG 200 regardless of dropping or withdrawing from NSG 100 and/or NSG 106.
4. Any student who drops or withdraws from NSG 252 or NSG 270 must withdraw from the other course.

VHCC Nursing Progression Policies:

1. A student is allowed two enrollments for the traditional student Tracks 1 and/or Track 3 and two enrollments for the LPN to RN Tracks 2 and/or 4. A withdrawal is considered an enrollment. However, due to the pandemic for the academic years 2019-2021, a withdrawal will not be considered an enrollment for this period only.
2. Re-admission must occur no later than three years from successful completion of NSG 100 or 115, otherwise the student will have to repeat all nursing courses.
3. A student who wishes to reenter the nursing curriculum at any other level (e.g., NSG 152, 170, 210, 211, 230, 252, 270) must write a letter to the program Dean requesting readmission in the semester prior to the semester of enrollment. Each student's application for readmission will be considered by the nursing faculty and the decision to readmit will be based on additional requested data, prior performance in the nursing program, and space availability. Based on the course(s) that must be repeated, the student who is readmitted may be required to complete a skills competency course or demonstrate competency in critical nursing skills before beginning the repeated course.
4. According to the VCCS Policy 5.7.4, "A student will normally be limited to two enrollments in the same credit course." Any exception to this policy must be approved by the program Dean and the vice president of instruction and student services.

A student must obtain permission from the Dean of VHCC Nursing Program to continue in the Nursing Program under the following conditions:

- Repeating a course with a grade below "C";
- Withdrawal from a nursing course;
- Cumulative GPA below 2.0.

Any student who is not enrolled in nursing courses for one semester or longer must meet clinical agency requirements including a new criminal background check and drug screen; documentation of current CPR and health insurance, statement of health, and physical prior to returning to reenrolling in nursing courses. A student who is not enrolled in nursing courses for one semester or longer, will be required to demonstrate competency in critical nursing skills including head-to-toe assessments, before reenrolling in the program. Failure to demonstrate skills/assessment competencies before the course begins will result in the student not being allowed to reenroll in the program. If competency is not demonstrated the student may be required to repeat NSG 106 and/or NSG 200.

Clinical Contracts: The VHCC Nursing Program has contracts with clinical agencies for both student and patient safety. If students cannot comply with these contractual requirements, they will not be able to participate in clinical activities and will be asked to withdraw from the program. General guidelines follow:

1. Clinical agencies reserve the right to dismiss a student from their agency at any time with due cause. This will be done with advance notice except in an emergency.
2. Published policies of the clinical agency must be followed. Each student must successfully complete an orientation program prior to participating in activities at any clinical facility.
3. Clinical facilities require that all students have documentation of ability to perform the physical demands required in direct patient care activities.
4. Immunizations must be current.
5. Student releases any clinical agency, its agents and employees from any liability for any injury or death to himself or damage to his property arising out of agreement or use of the clinical agencies.
6. Proof of HIPAA and CPR completion must be provided.
7. Clinical facilities require a criminal background check and drug screen clearance as a condition for student placement.
8. Proper uniform and name badge must be worn when participating in clinical activities.
9. Proof of Health Insurance