

*Cover Memo for Proposed Admission and/or Standards Change (MTSU)*

**On-campus memo:**

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**TO:** Admission and Standards Committee

**FROM:** Dr. Jenny Sauls School of Nursing  
*(Department Chair or Program Coordinator)\** *(College, Program or Department)\**

**Contact Person:** Dr. Cathy A. Cooper, Chair SON Admissions Committee **EMAIL** cathy.cooper@mtsu.edu

**RE:** Revision of current School of Nursing Admission Requirements, including a title change to Admission & Progression Requirements  
*(Specify issue[s] being submitted to the committee.)*

**DATE:** February 2, 2015

**Level or area to which change(s) would apply:**

- University    College    School    Department    Program  
 Other? \_\_\_\_\_

**Program(s) and/or student population(s) affected:** Students declared as pre-nursing majors  
*(Note that an Impact Data Form must be submitted along with the proposal.)*

This change would fall into the following classification(s) (check all that apply):

- |                                                                                                         |                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proposed change in GPA for admission                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed change in policies or requirements for retention   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed change in GPA for retention                                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed change in policies or requirements for graduation  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed change in GPA for graduation                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed change in grading scale                            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proposed change in test or pre-requisite requirements for admission | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proposed change to academic program requirements |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proposed change in other requirements for admission                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed standards for a new program                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed change in policies or requirements for placement                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                                                       |
- 

**Description of Change Proposed:**  
*(Attach separate sheet as needed.)*

Please see attached.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Rationale/justification for change** *(Please ensure that all aspects and ramifications of the change are addressed. Attach separate sheet as needed.):*

Please see attached.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Dissemination of information:**

The following colleges, program or departments may be affected by this decision:

N/A. Not anticipated to affect other colleges, programs or departments except to the extent that students decide to change their major from prenursing.

I certify that I (or my representative) have consulted with each college or program that may be affected by the proposed changes.

Proposer's signature Cathy A. Croger 02/02/2015  
Date

**Other permissions sought:** *If this change is connected to curriculum or program development, have the appropriate forms been submitted to the general education, curriculum or graduate committees? If a proposal will/may impact enrollment in specific courses or programs, have concerned departments or programs been consulted? Please include dates of submission and/or approval as relevant.*

Submitted to the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences Curriculum Committee on January 9, 2015

**Approved by the University CC at their meeting on 01/30/2015**

**Other signatures needed for approval of proposal:**

Yvonne Saults 1-9-15  
Department Chair or Program Coordinator\* Date of initial proposal

John C. Clough 2/03/15  
College Dean \* Date of college approval

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair Admission and Standards Committee Date approved by ASC

\_\_\_\_\_  
Vice-President for Student Affairs / Vice-  
Provost for Enrollment & Academic Services Date approved by VPSA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Provost Date approved by Provost

\_\_\_\_\_  
President Date approved

\* Note: When the proposal does not come from an academic unit, replace titles as needed. If a proposal comes directly from a dean or higher, the first signature may be omitted.

**Admission and Standards Committee**  
**IMPACT DATA FORM for PROPOSED CHANGES**

Department or Program or University Office: School of Nursing

Brief Statement of Proposed Change: Revision of Admission & Progression Requirements Date: February 2, 2015

1. Detailed discussion of how proposed changes may impact students, prospective students, university programs and/or other. *(Use as much space as you need below. You may refer to cover memo and its attachments as needed to avoid repetition.)*

Please see attached description of proposed changes and rationale

Proposed Effective Date Fall 2015

2. Identify the student population(s) that will be affected.  
Pre-nursing students planning to apply for admission to upper division nursing.
3. Are there plans to make this proposal retroactive? If so, please indicate when (specify the date) and identify student population(s) who will be affected. *(For example, "students admitted under the 2004 catalog or earlier.")*  
Yes. Pre-nursing students who have completed all 3 required biology courses or both Biology 2010 and 2020 prior to Fall 2015 will be exempt. The revised admission requirements will apply to all pre-nursing students who have not completed all 3 required biology courses, or who earned a C (or below) in one (Biology 2010 or Biology 2020) course prior to Fall 2015.
4. Discuss the specific impact on students. Provide enrollment and/or other relevant **data for the past three years**, including appropriate demographic data (e.g. male, female, minority, part-time, older students etc.) to illustrate the possible impact on specific groups. *(For example, for a proposal to raise the GPA for graduation, provide a breakdown of graduating student GPA by different demographic groups.)* Attach supporting documentation.

See attached

## **Description of Proposed Changes**

The proposed revision to the MTSU School of Nursing (SON) Admission & Progression Requirements were approved by faculty in October, 2014, and replace the current Admission Requirements that were last approved in 2009 (web links were updated in October 2104). Substantive changes impacting admission to the upper division nursing program and completion of the academic program include:

1. Increasing the minimum required GPA to apply to the Upper-Division Nursing BSN program from 2.8 to 3.0 (See # 2 on page 1, and # 2 on page 4).
2. Establishing a minimum score of 75 on the standardized entrance exam (See # 3 on page 1).
3. Establishing minimum grades for the three required (prerequisite) biology courses (See # 7 on page 2).
4. Adding a statement to the general admission requirements for the traditional track students that all degree requirements must be completed within 4 years of beginning the upper division nursing courses (See # 13 on page 3).
5. Adding a statement describing conditional admission for RN to BSN track applicants (See # 2 on page 4).

## **Rationale for Proposed Changes**

Strengthening the MTSU SON admission requirements (increasing the minimum GPA, establishing a minimum score on the standardized admission exam, and minimum grade requirements for the 3 required biology courses) is consistent with admission requirements at several peer institutions (e.g. APSU, Belmont) and across the U.S. In addition, these enhanced requirements reflect the significance of achievement/mastery of knowledge in Anatomy & Physiology and Microbiology as foundational in preparing students for professional nursing practice. Data supports the science courses as indicators of both academic success and success in passing the NCLEX exam (the licensing exam for registered nurses).

Additional rationale relates to the nearly 1000 students who have declared pre-nursing as a major at MTSU. The SON admits 64 students each semester (128 per AY) through a competitive admissions process based on a composite score comprised of a student's overall GPA, entrance exam score, and an interview score. The higher the composite score, the more likely a student is to be admitted to upper division nursing. The average overall GPA for all cohorts admitted over the past 3 years has been ~ 3.50 (out of 4.00) or above. Strengthening the MTSU SON admission requirements will help the SON select those students most likely to be successful in completing the program, graduating, and passing the licensing exam. In addition, the importance of achieving academic excellence will be more accurately communicated to pre-nursing students. Students not selected for admission to the SON, or who do not meet the minimum criteria to apply can, in consultation with their academic advisor, be directed toward another healthcare or health related major, with the goal of avoiding both prolonging the timeframe and increasing cost to the student to earn a degree.

## Data Supporting the Proposed Changes to the SON Admission Guidelines

**Change in Minimum GPA for Admission:** The average GPA of cohorts admitted to upper division nursing for the past 8 semesters is published on the SON website, and attached to this Impact Data Form. Increasing the minimum GPA to 3.0 from 2.8 is not predicted to decrease the number of students admitted to upper division nursing. It is possible that some pre-nursing students, based on their GPA, will not be competitive in the application process, and would benefit from advising in selecting an appropriate alternate major.

**Establishing a minimum score on the entrance exam:** There is currently no minimum score on the entrance exam being used (HESI). Entrance exam scores are converted to a 100 point scale, and are included in a composite score. Establishing a minimum score of 75 will impact only a very few students (2 in the past 3 years). Average entrance exam HESI scores for the past 8 cohorts are also published on the SON website.

**Requiring a grade of B or better in both Biology 2010 and Biology 2020, and a C or better in Biology 2230 with one repeat of any one required Biology course permitted.** Foundational to nursing as an art and science, is an understanding of human anatomy and physiology, as well as microbiology. The nursing curriculum builds on this knowledge through courses such as pathophysiology, health assessment, and pharmacology. The MTSU SON has identified 3 sciences (biology courses) as prerequisites for admission to the upper division nursing program: Biology 2010: A & P I, Biology 2020: A & P II, and Biology 2230: Microbiology.

The MTSU School of Nursing (SON) pass rate for first time test takers of the licensing exam to become a registered nurse (NCLEX RN) has been relatively stable for a number of years, and above the national average pass rate in the mid 90<sup>th</sup> percentile. In summer of 2014, there was an unusually high number of graduates who failed the exam as first time test takers (N= 8 out of 51). In response, the SON sought to determine what factors may have contributed to this unanticipated result.

In reviewing the biology grades of the 8 students who failed as first time test takers of the NCLEX exam in summer 2014, all but 2 had earned either a single C ( N=1), or more commonly, 2 or even 3 C's in these required science courses (See attached Student Tracking table). In reviewing the graduating cohort as a whole (N=51), 17 students had earned a C in either Biology 2010 or Biology 2020. Based on the proposed revised guidelines, these 17 students would have needed to repeat the biology course they earned the C in, and earn a B or better prior to applying for admission to the upper division nursing program. Strengthening the minimum grade requirements for the biology courses helps to ensure that students have acquired the foundational knowledge necessary to increase their chances for success in the nursing program.

The SON is currently collecting like data on additional cohorts of graduates (prior to spring 2014 and following) for analysis.

## Admission Data for Last 8 Semesters

| Semester    | Average GPA | Average HESI Score | Average Interview Score | Average Composite Score | Lowest Composite Accepted | Highest Composite Accepted |
|-------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Spring 2011 | 3.541       | 3.48 (87)          | 3.76                    | 10.86                   | 10.3                      | 11.7                       |
| Fall 2011   | 3.54        | 3.48 (87)          | 3.87                    | 10.96                   | 10.582                    | 11.498                     |
| Spring 2012 | 3.516       | 3.48 (87)          | 3.816                   | 10.846                  | 10.362                    | 11.685                     |
| Fall 2012   | 3.627       | 3.48 (87)          | 3.769                   | 10.822                  | 10.555                    | 11.76                      |
| Spring 2013 | 3.572       | 3.52 (88)          | 3.763                   | 11.0143                 | 10.64                     | 11.857                     |
| Fall 2013   | 3.583       | 3.52 (88)          | 3.817                   | 11.0134                 | 10.718                    | 11.670                     |
| Spring 2014 | 3.557       | 3.44 (86)          | 3.856                   | 11.0                    | 10.625                    | 11.679                     |
| Fall 2014   | 3.591       | 3.52 (88)          | 3.840                   | 11.079                  | 10.554                    | 12.048                     |

**Student Tracking:**

| <b>AdmGPA</b> | <b>Grad Date</b> | <b>NCLEX-1</b> | <b>NCLEX-2</b> | <b>API</b> | <b>APII</b> | <b>Micro</b> |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| 3.2910        | 5/14             | 7/24/14 F      |                | B          | C           | C+           |
| 3.2930        | 5/14             | 7/2/14 F       | 9/23/14 F      | C          | C           | B - CSCC     |
| 3.7000        | 5/14             | 7/11/14 F      |                | B          | B           | B+           |
| 3.4840        | 5/14             | 7/7/14 F       | 9/13/14 P      | C          | W/C         | B            |
| 3.0710        | 5/14             | 7/29/14 F      |                | B          | C           | C/B+         |
| 3.8000        | 5/14             | 7/15/14 F      | 9/11/14 P      | B          | A           | B+           |
| 3.6           | 5/14             | 6/14/14 F      |                | B          | C           | B            |
| 3.0170        | 5/14             | 7/11/14 F      | 9/8/14 P       | C          | C           | C            |
| 3.3660        | 5/13             | F              | F              | W/C        | D/A<br>MSCC | C            |
| 3.4           | 12/12            |                |                | B          | C           | C            |
| 3.13          | 5/13             |                |                | C          | C           | C+           |
| 3.448         | 5/13             |                |                | A          | C           | C            |

# PROPOSED REVISED REQUIREMENTS

## Admission & Progression Requirements for Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Degree Program

*School of Nursing – Middle Tennessee State University – Murfreesboro, Tennessee*

### **Admission Requirements:**

The School of Nursing (SON) at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) offers the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree. Students admitted to the Upper-Division BSN program must pursue one of two degree tracks: **Traditional or Registered Nurse (RN) to BSN**. All applicants planning to pursue a BSN degree at MTSU must formally apply for admission to the nursing program. Admission to MTSU **does not** guarantee admission to the BSN degree program. Applicants should thoroughly review and become familiar with the following Admission Requirements prior to making application.

### **All BSN Applicants (including Transfer Students):**

1. Must meet the general MTSU admission requirements for applicants seeking the BSN, and
2. Must meet the admission requirements to one of two BSN degree tracks: Traditional, or RN to BSN
3. Must fulfill requirements for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) by testing English Proficiency as designated by MTSU Admission Standards. See <http://www.ets.org/toefl>

### **General Admission Requirements for Traditional Track Applicants Seeking the BSN**

1. Must be tentatively or fully admitted to MTSU for admission to the Upper-Division nursing program. Review of applicants by the SON Admissions Committee will occur in the semester prior to admission.
2. Must have a posted **cumulative (overall) GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale** by the application deadline.
3. Must have **achieved a minimum score of 75** on the standardized entrance exam.
4. Must complete and submit all application materials to the SON: by **February 1<sup>st</sup>** to be considered for admission the following fall semester and by **October 1<sup>st</sup>** for the following spring semester. Applications that are mailed must be **RECEIVED** by the deadline date.

### **Application materials include:**

- Application Form which is available online, or in the Cason Kennedy Nursing Building (CKNB) outside Room 201.
- Documentation of prior or current work experience, if applicable. **For further details please refer to the Admissions Requirements section titled, "Optional Work Experience"**
- Official undergraduate college transcripts from all universities attended other than MTSU. Students taking classes at other institutions must show proof of courses in which they are enrolled and provide final official transcripts to the SON.
- Copy of standardized entrance exam report with scores for all required categories



5. Complete all General Education and required pre-nursing courses as outlined in the MTSU Undergraduate Catalog by:

- Earning a passing grade in all General Education and required pre-nursing courses. A passing grade is defined as a grade of "C" (2.00) or better, an "S" (satisfactory), or a "P" (Pass for courses graded Pass/Fail).

OR

- Receive written approval for substitution/waiver of a course by the Director of the School of Nursing and Dean of the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences.

OR

- Receive credit-by-examination for General Education course requirements as determined by MTSU (see *MTSU Undergraduate Catalog* for General Education Requirements).

6. Students planning to enter the Upper-Division BSN Program in spring semester must successfully complete all General Education and required pre-nursing courses by the end of fall semester. Students planning to enter in fall semester must successfully complete all required courses by the end of the summer term.

7. **Students must achieve a grade of B (3.0) or better in both Biology 2010 and Biology 2020, and a C (2.0) or better in Biology 2230.** Students must have achieved and posted the minimum grade in at least **one** required biology course by the application deadline. **One repeat of any required Biology course will be permitted.** (All biology courses must be completed and grades posted within the past **seven years.**)

8. **All eligible applicants must be interviewed.** If a student is not available for an interview, the opportunity is forfeited and their application is deemed incomplete.

9. Students will be selected for admission on a competitive basis according to the admission criteria that results in a calculated composite score. The composite score is calculated based on: overall GPA, the standardized admission entrance exam score, interview score, and credit for work experience, if applicable.

10. The number of students admitted is limited based on the availability of faculty and clinical sites. A list of alternates eligible for admission will be established based on their composite score. The admission of non-Tennessee resident applicants is limited based on TBR policy. **At least 80% of the total number of students enrolled in the SON must be Tennessee residents.** Residency classification is determined by information submitted on the MTSU admission application and subsequent fee classification questionnaire.

11. Students who are not admitted to the Upper- Division nursing program, but wish to be considered for admission in subsequent semesters **must reapply.**

12. Accepted students must confirm acceptance of admission into the Upper-Division BSN program as outlined in the Admission Requirements section titled **Accepted Applicants.**

**13. Accepted students must complete all degree requirements of the Upper Division BSN program within 4 years of beginning the Upper-Division nursing courses.**

### **Optional Work Experience**

Any applicant can receive one-half (0.5 ) point added to their composite score if documented evidence of clinical experience **providing direct patient care** for a period of at least **380 hours within two years prior to applying** to the Upper-Division BSN program is submitted with the application materials. The documentation may be supplied in the following ways:

- Pay stubs, including the name of the institution and hours worked, accompanied by a **signed** letter of verification describing the type of work experience . Must be on official letterhead stationery.

OR

- **Signed** letter of verification from manager or supervisor (e.g. head/charge nurse, unit manager, Director of Nursing, etc.) on official letterhead stationery. Letter must state the number of hours worked (if not verified by timesheet/ pay stubs), the type of setting, and type of work experience.

NOTE: Direct patient care experience includes providing assistance with activities of daily living (feeding, bathing, grooming, dressing, toileting), taking vital signs, calculating intake and output, ambulation of patients, emptying Foley catheter bags, Certified Nursing Assistant work in hospitals, nursing homes, long term care facilities, home health agencies, and hospice.

**Positions that do not include direct patient care** (e.g. dietary aide, volunteer, pharmacy technician, lab technician, dental assistant, anesthesia technician, EKG technician, ultrasound technician, etc...) **do not qualify for optional work experience credit**

### **Transfer Students:**

Transfer students with previous nursing courses taken from an accredited BSN nursing program:

1. Receive an evaluation of previous nursing course(s) to determine advanced placement in the Upper- Division BSN program. Evaluation may include, but is not limited to:

- Review of catalog and course syllabi from transferring institution
- Completion of written examination, and
- Clinical practice demonstration/skill validation

2. Must take MTSU's Upper-Division BSN nursing course(s) **if** prior nursing course(s) is/are lacking hours or content as determined by MTSU SON faculty.

3. Students with failures in any upper division (i.e. 3000 level or higher) nursing course from other institutions will **NOT** be considered for admission to the MTSU Upper-Division BSN Program.

## General Admission Requirements for RN to BSN Track Applicants

Registered nurse students:

1. Must be tentatively or fully admitted to MTSU for admission to the Upper-Division nursing program. Review of applicants by the SON Admissions Committee will occur in the semester prior to admission.
2. Must have a **posted cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale** by the application deadline. **Students may be conditionally admitted to the Upper-Division BSN Program if their overall GPA is < 3.0 on a 4.0 point scale, provided they achieve a 3.0 or > overall GPA after completion of 9 credit hours.**
3. Must provide evidence of: (a.) graduation from an accredited nursing (Diploma or ADN) program, (b.) proof of a current/active, unencumbered RN license, & (c.) current criminal background check documentation.
4. Must complete and submit all application materials to the SON by March 1<sup>st</sup> to be considered for admission in the summer term; by April 1<sup>st</sup> for the following fall semester and by October 1<sup>st</sup> for the following spring semester. Applications that are mailed must be **RECEIVED** by the deadline date.

Application materials include:

- Application Form which is available online or in the Cason Kennedy Nursing Building (CKNB) outside Room 201.

5. Complete all General Education and required pre-nursing courses as outlined in the MTSU Undergraduate Catalog by:

- Earning a passing grade in all General Education and required pre-nursing courses. A passing grade is defined as a grade of "C" (2.00) or better, an "S" (satisfactory), or a "P" (Pass for courses graded Pass/Fail).

OR

- Receive written approval for substitution/waiver of a course by the Director of the School of Nursing and Dean of the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences.

OR

- Receive credit-by-examination for General Education course requirements as determined by MTSU (see *MTSU Undergraduate Catalog* for General Education Requirements).

6. Students planning to enter the Upper-Division BSN Program in spring semester must successfully complete all General Education and required pre-nursing courses by the end of fall semester. Students planning to enter in the summer term must successfully complete all required courses by the end of spring semester. Students planning to enter in fall semester must successfully complete all required courses by the end of the summer term. Students taking classes at other institutions must provide final official transcripts to the SON before permits to register for classes are released.

7. Will receive advanced standing credit for selected courses from their previous nursing program. Advanced standing credit is awarded in the semester prior to graduation from MTSU. Hours are held in escrow until the RN student has successfully completed NURS 3010, 3030, 3040, 3111, 3170, 3370, and 3570. (Total of 43 hrs.)

8. Must complete all degree requirements of the Upper Division BSN program within 4 years of beginning the Upper-Division nursing courses.

### **Accepted Applicants for Both Tracks**

Upon official acceptance into one of the tracks, students must complete and submit documentation of the following requirements by the established deadline to receive permission to register/enroll in Upper-Division BSN courses.

1. Signature Page (acknowledges student acceptance of placement in the entering class)
2. Authorization for release of information
3. Copy of MTSU Student ID card (transfer students will obtain Student ID card upon acceptance of placement and must have this card prior to beginning class) (***Traditional track students Only***)
4. Transcripts from colleges or universities (other than MTSU) that include all courses completed following the admission decision
5. Current record of history and physical examination

6. Evidence of current American Heart Association cardiopulmonary resuscitation certification (CPR) for the "Healthcare Provider" (*RN to BSN students only upon acceptance*). See **Progression Requirements (below) for CPR requirement for Traditional track students**
7. **Documentation of immunizations and blood tests/titers.** For further details see <http://www.mtsu.edu/nursing/immunization.html>
8. Acknowledgement of current physical, emotional and cognitive ability to meet the performance standards established by the MTSU SON. (see Appendix A, Core Performance Standards)
9. Evidence of current medical health insurance
10. Must have a cumulative undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of no less than 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, to include General Education and required nursing prerequisite courses with a passing grade as defined by SON policy.

### **Progression Requirements: All Admitted Students – Both Tracks**

In order for students to progress through the nursing curriculum, they must:

1. Submit evidence of current American Heart Association cardiopulmonary resuscitation certification (CPR) for the "Healthcare Provider" (*prior to beginning second semester Upper Division nursing courses for Traditional track students*), and maintain current certification throughout the nursing program (all tracks).
2. Maintain current documentation of professional liability insurance (prior to beginning clinical courses), medical health insurance, and all clinical agency requirements.
3. Achieve a minimum grade of "C" (2.00) in all Upper-Division BSN theory courses, as well as, a "Pass" in each co-requisite lab/clinical course. Nursing courses taken at MTSU with a grade less than "C" must be repeated at MTSU. Only one repeat of any nursing course is permitted.
4. Schedule an appointment with their assigned academic advisor each semester to monitor their progress.

### **General Progression Considerations – Traditional Track**

1. If a student must interrupt their program of study, or decides to exit the program, an ***Interruption of Program*** form must be completed and submitted to the SON Admission Committee Chair. Students are encouraged to meet with their academic advisor prior to completing the form.
2. Students seeking readmission to the Upper Division BSN program should email or send a letter addressed to the Chair of the Admissions Committee, stating their request of consideration for readmission, and the semester they intend to return. **This notification must be received by the Admissions Committee Chair in the semester prior to the semester the student requests to return.**
3. Students who have interrupted their program of study for one academic semester ***may be asked*** to complete a cognitive and/or skills assessment in determining their readiness to continue in

the Upper Division BSN program. Students who have interrupted their program of study for greater than one academic semester **will be expected to** complete a cognitive and skills assessment in determining their readiness to continue in the Upper Division BSN program.

4. Students will be readmitted on a space available basis, and reviewed for readmission to Upper-Division BSN nursing courses according to the following criteria:
  - a. Evidence that admission requirements to the degree program have been met or maintained.
  - b. Demonstrate knowledge, and/or satisfactory performance of skills, completed prior to interrupting their program of study, needed for progression. Students being readmitted for either fall or spring semester must complete the skill validation prior to the beginning of classes.
5. Students seeking readmission to the Upper-Division BSN program will be readmitted according to the following prioritization:
  - a. Students accepted into the nursing program who interrupted their program of study for health reasons.
  - b. Students accepted into the nursing program who failed one class, and/or, interrupted their program of study for another reason. (Only one repeat of a nursing (NURS) course is permitted.

#### **General Progression Considerations – All Tracks**

Students may be dismissed from the nursing program for a variety of reasons, which include, but are not limited to:

1. Failure to progress due to unsuccessful completion of requirements: Students are dismissed from the program if they receive a second failing grade in any combination of two or more nursing courses (required theory or clinical), regardless of the semester in which they occur.
2. Violation of the School of Nursing Honor Code. Refer to Student Honor Code found in the SON Student Handbook <http://www.mtsu.edu/nursing/forms/Handbook.pdf>
3. Breach of ethics or gross professional negligence
4. Use of mind-altering drugs or alcohol when engaged in any nursing activity in or outside of class
5. Evidence of any other disciplinary offenses (e.g. Academic Misconduct) as outlined in the MTSU Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Final Draft # 5; Approved on 10/17/2014

# Admission Requirements for Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Degree Program

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*School of Nursing – Middle Tennessee State University – Murfreesboro, Tennessee*

The School of Nursing (SON) offers the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree. Students admitted to the Upper-Division BSN program must pursue one of two degree tracks: Traditional, and Registered Nurse (RN) to BSN. All applicants planning to pursue a BSN degree program at MTSU must formally apply for admission to BSN degree program. Admission to MTSU does not guarantee admission to upper division nursing. (See guidelines below.) Review of applicants by SON Admission Committee will occur in the semester prior to admission.

Applicants must thoroughly review and become familiar with the Admission Requirements prior to making application.

## **All BSN applicants must meet**

1. General MTSU admission requirements for applicants seeking the BSN, and
2. Admission requirements to one of the two BSN degree tracks: Traditional, or RN to BSN

## **General admission requirements for applicants seeking the BSN**

1. Be tentatively or fully admitted to MTSU by September 1<sup>st</sup> for Spring Upper-Division nursing admission and January 1<sup>st</sup> for Fall Upper-Division nursing admission.
2. Must have a posted cumulative GPA of 2.8 on a 4.0 scale by the application deadline.
3. Complete and submit application materials to the SON enclosed in a large letter-size envelope by February 1<sup>st</sup> for the following Fall semester and October 1<sup>st</sup> for the following Spring semester to include:
  - SON Information Sheet for the BSN program (form available on SON website at <http://www.mtsu.edu/nursing/forms/bsninformation.pdf> or CKNB, Suite 224
  - Application to SON (Blue form available online at <http://www.mtsu.edu/nursing/forms/Blueform.docx> or in CKNB, Room #224/201
  - Documentation of prior work experience, if applicable. For further details please refer to page 3 of the Admissions Guidelines, "Optional Work Experience"
  - All official undergraduate college transcripts from Universities attended other than MTSU.
4. Complete all general education and pre-nursing courses as outlined in the MTSU Undergraduate Catalog by:

- Earning a passing grade in all General Education and Pre-Nursing courses. A passing grade is defined as a grade of “C” (2.00) or better, an “S” (satisfactory), or a “P” (pass for courses graded pass/fail).

OR

- Receiving written approval for substitution/waiver of a course by the director of the School of Nursing and dean of the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences.

OR

- Receiving credit-by-examination for General Education course requirements as determined by MTSU (see *MTSU Undergraduate Catalog* for General Education Requirements).
- Students taking classes at other institutions must show proof of courses in which they are enrolled and provide final official transcripts to the SON.

5. Fulfill requirements for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) by testing English Proficiency as designated by MTSU Admission Standards. See <http://www.ets.org/toefl>
6. Confirm acceptance into the SON Upper-Division program according to the Admission Requirements as outlined on page 5 of this policy.

**NOTES:**

1. *Students who desire to be considered for subsequent semesters must reapply for admission consideration.*
2. *The admission of non- Tennessee resident applicants is limited based on TBR policy. At least 80% of the total number of students enrolled in the SON must be Tennessee residents. Residency classification is determined by information submitted on the MTSU admission application and subsequent fee classification questionnaire.*

**Admissions requirements specific to the Traditional Track**

1. Students planning to enter in Spring semester must successfully complete all general education and required nursing prerequisite courses (listed at <http://www.mtsu.edu/nursing/immunization.html>) by the end of the Fall semester. Students entering in Fall semester must complete all courses required by the end of the Summer semester.
  2. Students must post a passing grade for at least one required biology course by the application deadline. (All biology courses must be complete and posted within the past seven years.)
  3. Standardized admission entrance examination score must be included in the SON application packet by application deadline.
  4. All eligible applicants must be interviewed. If the student is not available for interview, the opportunity is forfeited and the application deemed incomplete.
  5. Students taking classes at other institutions must show proof of courses in which they are enrolled.
- Note: Students will be chosen for admission on a competitive basis according to admission criteria that results in a calculated composite score. The number of admitted students is limited based on the availability of faculty and available clinical sites. If the number of eligible applicants exceeds the number of seats available, a list of eligible alternates for possible admission based on their composite score will*



*be established. A composite score is calculated based on GPA, standardized admission entrance exam score, interview score, and credit for work experience, if applicable. (e.g. GPA 3.6 + Exam Score 3.5 + Interview Score 3.2 + Work Experience 0.5 = 10.8)*

### **Optional Work Experience**

Any applicant can receive one-half (1/2) point added to his/her composite score if documented evidence of clinical experience providing direct patient care for a period of at least 380 hours within two years prior to making application to Upper-Division nursing is submitted at the time of application. This information must be supplied in the following form:

Either--

Pay stubs, including the name of the institution and hours worked accompanied by a letter of verification describing type of work experience on official letterhead.

Or--

Letter of verification from manager of work area (e.g. head/charge nurse, unit manager, etc.) on official letterhead. Letter must address number of hours worked (if not verified by timesheet/ pay stubs), type of setting and nature of work.

Acceptable clinical experience includes providing direct patient assistance with activities of daily living (feeding, bathing, grooming, dressing, toileting), taking vital signs, calculating intake and output, ambulation of patients, emptying Foley catheter bags, Certified Nursing Assistant work in hospitals, nursing homes, long term care facilities, home health agencies, and hospice.

Positions that do not include direct patient care are not acceptable (e.g. dietary, volunteer, pharmacy technician, lab technician, dental assistant, anesthesia technician).

Transfer students with previous nursing courses from an accredited nursing program will:

1. Receive an evaluation of previous nursing course(s) to determine advanced placement in the
2. Nursing program. Evaluation may include, but is not limited to:
  - Review of catalog and course syllabi from transferring institution,
  - Completion of written examination, and
  - Performance of a clinical practice demonstration
3. Take the MTSU nursing course(s) if prior B.S. nursing course(s) is/are lacking hours or content as determined by MTSU nursing faculty.
4. Students with failures in any upper division nursing course from other institutions will NOT be considered for admission to the MTSU Upper Division Nursing Program.

## **Admission Requirements specific to the RN to BSN Track**

Student must complete all requirements as outlined for the Traditional Track with the addition of

1. Provide evidence of graduation from an accredited nursing program.
2. Provide proof of current/active Tennessee RN license.
3. Receive advanced standing credit for selected courses (Contact your SON advisor for further information). Advanced standing credit is awarded in last semester prior to graduation at MTSU. Hours are held in escrow until the RN has completed NURS 3010, 3030, 3040, 3111, 3170, 3370, and 3570 (total 44 credit hours).
4. Provide current criminal background check documentation.

Note: RN to BSN applicants track have the option to:

1. Submit SON application by selected deadline dates of February, March, April, May, June, July, October, and November. (Contact the assigned SON advisor for further information.)
2. Eliminate time limitation for required biology courses.
3. Eliminate standardized admission entrance examination and the interview process.
4. Eliminate calculation of a composite score.

## **Accepted Applicants for All Tracks**

Upon official acceptance into one of these tracks, students must complete the following requirements prior to enrolling in Upper-Division courses:

- Signature Page (clarifies student acceptance of placement in the entering class).
- Authorization for release of information and acknowledgement of acceptance of admission slot.
- MTSU Student ID card (transfer students will obtain Student ID card upon acceptance of class placement and must have this card prior to beginning class).
- Transcripts (from colleges or universities other than MTSU) that include courses completed following admission decision.
- Current record of history and physical examination.
- Current cardiopulmonary resuscitation certification (CPR) by American Heart Association "Healthcare Provider".
- Acknowledgement of current physical, emotional and cognitive ability to meet the criteria required for clinical skills (see Appendix A, Core Performance Standards).
- Current professional liability insurance.
- Evidence of current medical health insurance.
- Documentation of immunizations and blood test/titers. For further details see <http://www.mtsu.edu/nursing/immunization.html>
- Must have a cumulative undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of no less than 2.80 on a 4.0 scale, to include general education and required nursing prerequisite courses with a passing grade as defined by SON policy.

## **Progression Requirements for students admitted to all tracks**

In order for students to progress through the nursing curriculum, they must:

1. Maintain current documentation in the SON as outlined above.
2. Achieve success in nursing courses in the order outlined in the BSN Upper-Division nursing curriculum with a minimum grade of "C" (2.00) in all theory courses, as well as, a "pass" in each co-requisite lab/clinical course. Course taken at MTSU with a grade less than "C" must be repeated at MTSU. Only one repeat is permitted.
3. Schedule an appointment with their assigned nursing faculty advisor each semester to monitor progress.

## **General Considerations**

If a student must interrupt her/his program of study or exit the program, a letter must be submitted to the SON Admission Committee Chairperson requesting to interrupt/exit the program. The student will be readmitted on a space-available basis. The student will be reviewed for readmission to Upper-Division nursing courses according to the following criteria:

- Evidence that admission requirements to the degree program have been met.

Students seeking readmission to the Upper-Division nursing program will be readmitted by the following prioritization:

1. Student who had been accepted into the nursing program but took a semester off for health reasons.
2. Student who has been accepted into the nursing program but failed one class, and/or, who has interrupted the educational process for another reason. (Only one repeat of a nursing (NURS) course is permitted.
3. Qualified students transferring from other Upper-Division nursing programs. Students can be dismissed from the nursing program for a variety of reasons, which include, but are not limited to:
  - Failure to progress due to unsuccessful completion of requirements: Students are dismissed from the program if they receive a second failing grade in any combination of two or more nursing courses (required theory or clinical), regardless of the semester in which they occur.
  - Violation of the School of Nursing Honor Code. Refer to Student Honor Code found in the School of Nursing Student Handbook.
  - Breach of ethics or gross professional negligence.
  - Use of mind-altering drugs or alcohol when engaged in any nursing activity in or outside of class.
  - Evidence of any other disciplinary offenses as outlined in the MTSU Rights and Responsibilities of Students.

*Updated 10/13/2014*