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Pre-Nursing Track Fundamentals

Mercer University
Office of Academic & Advising Services
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Academic and Advising Services appreciates your input regarding this publication. Readers who note errors or inconsistencies in this handbook are urged to notify Dr. Carol Bokros (Bokros_c@mercer.edu) so that the appropriate corrections can be made.

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The Florence Nightingale Pledge

"I solemnly pledge myself before God and in the presence of this assembly, to pass my life in purity and to practice my profession faithfully.

I will abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous, and will not take or knowingly administer any harmful drug.

I will do all in my power to maintain and elevate the standard of my profession, and will hold in confidence all personal matters committed to my keeping and all family affairs coming to my knowledge in the practice of my calling.

With loyalty will I endeavor to aid the physician in his work, and devote myself to the welfare of those committed to my care."

1. THE NURSING PROFESSION

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree. According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE), and the American Nurses Association (ANA), the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) is the preferred foundational degree in nursing. These organizations recognize the BSN degree as the minimum educational requirement for professional nursing practice: “While graduates can begin practice as an RN with an associate degree or hospital diploma, the BSN degree is essential for nurses seeking to move up the career ladder and provide a higher level of quality care” (www.aacn.org; http://www.aacn.nche.edu/media-relations/fact-sheets/nursing-fact-sheet).

The Time Required to Become a Practicing Nurse. Typical pre-nursing students spend two years fulfilling the admission requirements for nursing school, then complete a two-year “pre-licensure” curriculum to earn the BSN degree and eligibility to earn the RN certification. This approach is often described as a “2+2” curriculum. Other students choose to earn a non-nursing bachelor’s degree before attending nursing school; such plans usually require at least 6 years to complete. These options are explained further in Sections 8-11.

2. BUILDING A STRONG APPLICATION FOR NURSING SCHOOL

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the mean income of a registered nurse (RN) in 2016 was over $72,000 and there is a fairly positive outlook for the field: http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes291141.htm. Note that the BLS includes advanced practice nurses in their statistics, so this number overestimates the median income of RN’s without advanced degrees.

Pre-nursing students must plan ahead carefully with a mind to creating a competitive nursing school application “portfolio” during their preparatory years. This means taking the appropriate coursework, performing well academically, and participating in appropriate extracurricular activities. Students should make choices about their undergraduate activities with the knowledge that, in general, nursing schools are looking for individuals with a record of academic success (especially in the science pre-requisites), excellent problem-solving abilities, emotional maturity and a positive attitude, the ability to function effectively under stress, compassion for others, strong interpersonal and communication skills (able to connect well with patients from various backgrounds), strong organizational skills, good leadership ability but with the ability to work on a team effectively as well, and high ethical standards and integrity.

It is also recommended that pre-nursing students gain some practical knowledge about the nursing profession by volunteering in a hospital or clinic or shadowing a nursing professional. Although many nursing schools do not expect their applicants to have such experience, it demonstrates to nursing schools that the applicant is confident in his/her decision to enter the nursing profession.
3. PREPARING FOR NURSING SCHOOL AT MERCER UNIVERSITY

Undergraduate students enrolled in Mercer University’s College of Liberal Arts (CLA) who plan to pursue a career in nursing are considered to be on the “pre-nursing” track. It is important to note that the pre-nursing track is not a traditional major offered by the CLA, and that there is no degree or certification for its completion. Students enrolled in Penfield College are considered to be on the “nursing prep” track. Such designations are made to ensure that these students receive specific advising about the requirements and protocols for their respective career path within their respective colleges. This Handbook focuses on the pre-nursing track offered by the College of Liberal Arts in Macon, but much of the advice and information presented is generalized and will be useful for students enrolled in Penfield College as well.

Pre-nursing students may complete only the pre-requisites before applying to nursing school (the “2+2 plan”) or may complete a non-nursing degree from their college before applying to nursing school (the “4+2” plan; see sections 4B and 11 for more information about the latter option).

Georgia Baptist College of Nursing: Most Mercer CLA pre-nursing (PNU) students plan to apply to Mercer’s Georgia Baptist College of Nursing (http://nursing.mercer.edu). The GBCN began its life as the Tabernacle Infirmary Training School for Christian Nurses in downtown Atlanta in 1902 and became Georgia Baptist College of Nursing in 1989. The college merged with Mercer University in 2001, and moved into its current home on Mercer University’s Cecil B. Day Campus in Atlanta the following year.

Mercer PNU students may also decide to apply to other nursing schools. Students who are considering application to a nursing school other than Mercer’s GBCN must investigate the pre-requisites for admission to the nursing school(s) to which they plan to apply. See section 8 for how to find information about the different accredited nursing programs in the U.S.

Pre-Professional Advising and Resources at Mercer University

4. ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

Pre-Nursing Students Enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts.

A. “2+2” Pre-Nursing Students: Like all Mercer University students, pre-nursing students enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts on the Macon campus will be advised during their first year by their UNV 101 instructor. During this time they will also maintain contact with the pre-health professions advisor (Dr. Carol Bokros: bokros_c@mercer.edu).

In the spring of their first year, pre-nursing students must declare their status officially as pre-nursing students with the University and Dr. Bokros will become their primary academic advisor. Her office is in the Office of Academic and Advising Services in the Penfield Hall Annex on the Macon campus (Bokros_c@mercer.edu).

Students who have viewed their track orientation presentation (https://youtu.be/fv5grC-5d4) and read this handbook may make an appointment to meet with her using the Starfish scheduling system through MyMercer (see right).

Dr. Bokros provides support for pre-health professions students and their advisors through information sessions, workshops, materials available on the Mercer Web site, emails, and a Facebook fanpage (“MercerPreHealth”).
B. "4+2" Pre-Nursing Students: Like all Mercer University students, pre-nursing students on the Macon campus will be advised during their first year by their UNV 101 instructor. During this time they will also maintain contact with the pre-health professions advisor (Dr. Carol Bokros: bokros_c@mercer.edu).

Mercer-Macon pre-nursing students who intend to earn a bachelor’s degree in a non-nursing discipline before matriculating into nursing school (see section 11) should declare their major no later than the fall of their second year. This declaration will result in the assignment of an advisor within their major field of study to help them make progress towards their degree. These students should also maintain contact with Dr. Bokros regarding fulfillment of their nursing school pre-requisites along the way.

The Orangeprint. Students are encouraged to use Mercer’s college and career-planning guide, The Orangeprint, to help them identify their strengths, define their goals, and make a plan to achieve them: https://aas.mercer.edu/for-students/orangeprint.cfm.

Pre-Nursing Students Enrolled in Penfield College. Mercer students enrolled in the non-degree Pre-Nursing Program offered by Penfield College in Macon or at one of the Centers (https://penfield.mercer.edu/programs/undergraduate/nursing-preparation/) will see the advisors available on their respective campuses.

Students are reminded that they must investigate the different nursing schools and programs available (see section 8) and decide which programs to target before creating their specific two-year plans.

5. CAREER ADVISEMENT

The Center for Career & Professional Development on the Macon campus offers advising for students who are investigating careers in the various health-related professions, students who are preparing for interviews with professional schools or potential employers, and students requiring alternative career advising (https://career.mercer.edu/). See also the document in Appendix C, Internet Resources for Exploring Careers in Nursing.

6. UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATION WITH PRE-HEALTH STUDENTS

Email: Students should note that official Mercer business is always conducted on Mercer University email, and so must check their MU email account regularly or forward their Mercer email to their personal email account.

Social Network: Students who subscribe to the social networking site Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/pages/MercerPreHealth/365563379357) are encouraged to become a fan of the MercerPreHealth fanpage to receive electronic reminders about events and deadlines. Note that this site is linked to Twitter, so students who subscribe to Twitter will receive this information via “tweets”.

Pre-nursing students are cautioned to maintain a respectable online presence, being mindful that their posts could have a negative impact on their acceptance to nursing school and/or on their professional lives in the future. See https://www.ncsbn.org/347.htm and https://www.ncsbn.org/NCSBN_SocialMedia.pdf.

Mercer Science & Pre-Health Google Calendar. All pre-health advising events, pre-health and science-related student organization events, and science department seminars and events are listed on the Mercer University Science & Pre-Health Google Calendar available at http://tinyurl.com/ns95vb7.
7. THE PRE-HEALTH PROFESSIONS RESOURCE LIBRARIES

Two library collections are maintained on the Mercer-Macon campus for pre-health students: the Pre-Health Collection in the Tarver Library and a smaller Pre-Health Resource Library in the Academic Resource Center. The Pre-Health Collection in Tarver library contains materials about the health-related professions in general, personal statements, and professional school interviews. Also included are works of fiction and non-fiction that encourage students to consider various aspects of the practice of medicine. A content listing of this collection can be found on the Web site at http://libraries.mercer.edu/tarver/subject-guides/pre-health/pre-health.

The Pre-Health Resource Library includes materials on study skills, test-taking, and preparation for standardized tests. Students are free to use these materials any time during ARC hours, but may not remove them from the ARC.

Pathways to the Nursing Profession

8. WHERE TO FIND INFORMATION ABOUT NURSING SCHOOLS

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) maintains a search engine for member programs that is the best starting point for students researching nursing schools and for general advice about nursing as a profession (http://directory.ccnecommunity.org/reports/accprog.asp). Other useful Web sites are those run by the American Nurses Association (http://www.nursingworld.org/), and Johnson & Johnson’s nurse recruitment campaign (http://www.discovernursing.com/).

Choosing a Nursing School. Pre-nursing students should consider the following information to help them decide if a particular school would be a good match for them: pre-requisites; location; mission; focus (if any); curriculum structure (e.g., curriculum delivery style, structure of clinical training program); academic and clinical resources; student services (e.g., academic assistance, clubs and associations, housing); matriculant statistics (e.g., the mean or median GPA’s and standardized test scores of accepted students); and tuition and financial aid information.

9. “2 + 2” PLANS FOR THE B.S.N.

The pre-nursing program offered by the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) at Mercer University in Macon is designed to help students complete the requirements for admission to Mercer University’s Georgia Baptist College of Nursing (GBCN). Students who plan to attend a non-Mercer nursing program will need to fulfill the pre-requisites for admission to the particular nursing school(s) to which they plan to apply (see section 8). These students are advised to seek the advice of the admissions counselors at their target nursing schools regarding which of Mercer’s courses will fulfill their admission pre-requisites.

General Education Requirements. CLA students completing only the pre-requisite coursework for a given nursing school at any of Mercer's Colleges do not need to complete the general education requirements for a bachelor’s degree.

However, that taking nursing school requirements that also fulfill general education requirements for the College of Liberal Arts is an excellent way to develop a back-up plan for use in the event that admission to nursing school is not achieved.)

GBCN Admission Requirements. The requirements for admission to the GBCN include the following courses:

- 2 semesters of English composition;
- 1 semester of general psychology;
- 1 semester of developmental psychology;
- 1 semester of psychopathology or abnormal psychology;
- 2 semesters of human anatomy and physiology (with labs);
- 1 semester of general microbiology (with lab);
- 1 semester of human nutrition;
- 1 semester of either economics or political science;
- 1 semester of either sociology or anthropology;
- 1 semester of a course.
in religion; 1 semester of statistics; 1 semester of a course designed to enhance cultural appreciation (foreign language is preferred); 1 semester of philosophy or ethics; 1 semester of public speaking; 1 semester of any general education requirement; and 1 semester of a course in the fine arts or humanities (fulfillment of this requirement with a course in religion is strongly recommended (http://nursing.mercer.edu/admissions/pre-requisites/)).

Students enrolled in the CLA fulfill these requirements using the courses listed in Appendix A; these course recommendations allow progress to be made on the CLA’s general education requirements as part of a back-up plan to earn a bachelor’s degree before (or instead of) matriculation to nursing school. Note that the fine arts course must have an academic component; courses in applied music or art (e.g., choir) do NOT fulfill this requirement.

10. THE CLA’S SPECIAL CONSIDERATION PROGRAM FOR NURSING

Mercer University offers a Special Consideration Program for first-year pre-nursing students (SCP-Nursing) enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts (http://cla.mercer.edu/) who plan to attend the nursing program at Mercer's Georgia Baptist College of Nursing (http://nursing.mercer.edu/).

**Eligibility.** The SCP-Nursing is available for first-time college students enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts. Transfer students (students who have taken college courses at institutions other than Mercer’s College of Liberal Arts after they graduate from high school) are no longer eligible for the SCP-Nursing. Eligibility cannot be attained for this program by declining transfer credits.

**Declaration of Intent.** CLA students who are interested in this program and who are eligible to participate must submit a completed “Declaration of Intent” Google form to the Mercer University pre-professional advisor by November 15 of their first year at Mercer-Macon. That form can be accessed here: https://goo.gl/forms/xMQGWHYk42pKzwlo63.

**Coursework and Residency Requirements.** In order to participate in the SCP-Nursing, students must complete all of their pre-nursing coursework at the College of Liberal Arts (see checklist and suggested plan in Appendices B and C), which must total at least 60 credit hours. **At least 48 credit hours must be earned “in residence” at the College of Liberal Arts over four regular semesters to satisfy Special Consideration Program requirements.**

Note that the CLA course recommendations allows progress to be made toward completion of the CLA’s general education requirements, which makes earning a bachelor’s degree before matriculation to nursing school a viable back-up plan.

With the approval of the GBCN’s Associate Dean for the Undergraduate Program, dual enrollment credit (college courses taken by a student while s/he is still in high school) may be accepted to fulfill certain pre-nursing requirements, though no class in which a student earned a grade below a “C” will transfer to Mercer. Similarly, AP and IB credits may be used to fulfill certain pre-nursing requirements. CLEP credit will be considered on a case-by-case basis. **However, these types of credit do not count toward the 48 hours required in residence.** Under certain extenuating circumstances, students may seek permission from the GBCN’s Associate Dean for the Undergraduate Program to take up to 6 credit hours of non-science elective coursework away from the College of Liberal Arts.

**Repeated Coursework:** Although Mercer University has a policy which allows students to replace the first grade earned for a class with that earned on the second attempt (if the student earned a D, F, or U on the first attempt; see the University Bulletin), the GBCN will calculate the mean of the grades earned for repeated courses.

**Academic Progress and Performance.** To matriculate into the GBCN Bachelor of Science in Nursing program (the “pre-licensure” program), an SCP-Nursing student must complete a minimum of 60 credit hours, to include 48 hours earned in residence at Mercer and successful completion of all nursing pre-requisites by the end of the spring semester of his/her second year and comply with all guidelines set forth in this document.
The TEAS should be taken in November or December of year 2, and applications submitted to the GBCN by January 15 of year 2.

ABC

Students may not elect to be graded on a pass/fail or “S/U” basis in those math and science courses required for the pre-nursing curriculum.

The overall and science GPA’s of SCP-Nursing students will be reviewed at the end of the first year. If a student’s overall GPA or science GPA is below 3.0 at that time, program eligibility is lost. Students who have lost program eligibility may still follow the pre-nursing track and apply to nursing school, but acceptance will not be automatic. Students who have lost eligibility will be advised to declare a CLA major and work towards its completion before application to nursing school.

Advising. SCP-Nursing students must view the pre-nursing orientation presentation in the fall of their first semester. That presentation can be accessed here: https://youtu.be/YvuuOvY8Nqk. SCP-Nursing students must also participate in any advising event or program presented on the Macon campus by representatives from the Georgia Baptist College of Nursing.

Entrance Test (Test of Essential Academic Skills, or TEAS). SCP-Nursing students are required to the Test of Essential Academic Skills, or TEAS, and obtain a passing score (passing score varies year-to-year; see section 19) before they submit their application to the GBCN.

Application to the GBCN. SCP-Nursing students are required to apply to the GBCN between September 1 and January 15 of their second year. Details about the application process can be found at http://nursing.mercer.edu/admissions/bsn-admission/ and/or sections 17-22 of this document. Final acceptance into the nursing program may be contingent upon a successful interview with the program’s faculty.

Pre-Nursing Curriculum Completion and Withdrawal from the CLA. Students who have received their official acceptance to the GBCN should complete a Non-Returning Notification form and submit it to the registrar before the end of their last spring semester in Macon. The reason for withdrawal should be listed as “going to nursing school at the GBCN”. That form is available on the Mercer Web site here: https://registrar.mercer.edu/macon/forms.cfm.

11. OTHER WAYS TO PREPARE FOR NURSING SCHOOL

The “4+2” Plan/ BSN as a Second Bachelor’s Degree. Students who opt to complete a non-nursing bachelor’s degree before attending nursing school (or those who have completed a non-nursing bachelor’s degree before deciding to pursue nursing) may major in any discipline they choose, as long as they also complete the pre-requisite coursework for admission to the nursing program of their choice. Refer to section 8 for where to find information about different nursing schools.

Mercer pre-nursing students who wish to complete a bachelor’s degree in a non-nursing field before attending nursing school should declare a major in their chosen field after earning 30 credit hours but before earning 60 credit hours. Almost any major is acceptable, but Biology, Psychology, Global Health, Sociology, and Public Health are logical choices. After the declaration, students will be advised primarily by their major advisor and will keep in contact with the pre-professional advisor (Dr. Bokros) regarding pre-nursing issues only.

Students should note that scholarships and financial aid are often more difficult to attain for a second bachelor’s degree. Students should investigate their options for financing a nursing education using the resources in Appendix B.
“Direct Entry” Master of Science in Nursing Programs. Students who plan to finish a non-nursing bachelor’s degree before attending nursing school may choose to attend a “Direct Entry Master of Science in Nursing” program. These programs lead to master’s degrees in nursing in addition to providing the training necessary for students to sit for the national licensing exam for registered nurses (NCLEX). Most of these programs require completion of typical nursing school pre-requisites for admission, so students need to investigate their options early so that they know exactly which courses to take during their undergraduate years. Refer to section 8 and Appendix C for how to investigate program options.

Pre-Nursing Coursework and Activities

12. PRE-NURSING COURSEWORK: SCHEDULING, MINORS, CLEP CREDIT

Appendix A contains the pre-requisites for admission to Georgia Baptist College of Nursing, and Appendix B displays the suggested scheduling of the required pre-nursing courses at the College of Liberal Arts. Mercer-Macon students are urged to attend the pre-health advising workshop entitled, “Creating a Four-Year Plan for the Pre-Health Tracks”, which is conducted at least once every semester (see the Mercer University Science & Pre-Health Google Calendar available at http://tinyurl.com/ns95vb7) for help with creating their own, individualized plan.

Mercer’s Mathematics Placement Policy. To enroll in statistics (STA 126) at the College of Liberal Arts, a student must demonstrate a minimum mathematics competency that is equivalent to college algebra (MAT 095) or higher; this may be demonstrated through credit for MAT 095 or its equivalent, or through a score of 11 or higher on the math placement test. Information about the math placement test can be found online here: http://departments.mercer.edu/math/student/placement.html.

Students who plan to include a year of general chemistry as part of their preparation for nursing school should note that to enroll in CHM 111 at Mercer, a student must demonstrate a minimum mathematics competency that is equivalent to pre-calculus (MAT 133) or higher; this competency may be demonstrated through credit for MAT 133 or its equivalent, through a score of 15 or higher on the math placement test, or by scoring 50% or more on the CLEP pre-calculus exam (https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam).

CLEP Credit In General. Students who find it difficult to schedule their pre-requisite coursework may consider taking a CLEP exam instead of taking a class (https://clep.collegeboard.org/). However, actual college coursework is always preferable to CLEP credit, and students should not consider seeking CLEP credit for their science courses or upper-level coursework like PSY 245 or PSY 265, as it will probably not be accepted by most nursing schools.

Mercer-Macon Minors. A minor is not required for the BSN degree offered by the GBCN. However, as of fall 2016, pre-nursing students who attend GBCN may earn a minor offered by one of the traditional colleges on the Macon campus upon graduation from GBCN with their BSN, if all requirements for the minor can be fulfilled during the 2 years preparing for GBCN. Students should consult both the pre-nursing advisor (Dr. Bokros) and an advisor in the minor department to determine if it is possible.

General Chemistry. Students who are interested in attending one of the nursing programs offered by the University System of Georgia and/or who plan to pursue graduate training in nurse anesthesia should consider adding at least one semester of general chemistry coursework to their program.

13. EXPECTATIONS FOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, only about 45% of applicants in 2014-15 were accepted to nursing programs (http://www.aacn.nche.edu/news/articles/2015/enrollment). Pre-nursing students must therefore realize that admission to nursing school is very competitive, and construct an application portfolio carefully during his or her first two undergraduate years.
Minimum vs. Competitive Grade Point Averages. Nursing schools will assess an applicant’s academic abilities and work ethic by looking at his/her cumulative grade point average (GPA) and the GPA earned in core nursing requirements (sometimes called the Nursing Grade Point Average, or NGPA). Many nursing programs require a minimum GPA of 2.5 - 3.2 in pre-nursing coursework before an application will be considered (e.g., GBCN requires minimum GPA’s of 3.0 for application). Students should keep in mind, however, that the mean GPA of students accepted by nursing schools is always higher than the reported minimum for application to those schools. **Pre-nursing students must therefore strive to maintain a GPA well over 3.0 to be competitive nursing school applicants.**

The mean grade point averages of this year’s matriculants to some of the nursing schools in Georgia:

- Georgia Baptist College of Nursing, 2016: Mean Overall GPA = 3.38; Mean Science GPA = 3.32 ([http://nursing.mercer.edu/admissions/faqs-transfer-students/](http://nursing.mercer.edu/admissions/faqs-transfer-students/))
- Augusta University College of Nursing, 2015: Mean Overall GPA = 3.45 ([http://www.augusta.edu/admissions/hs-programs/nursing.php](http://www.augusta.edu/admissions/hs-programs/nursing.php))
- Emory University School of Nursing, 2016: Mean Overall GPA = 3.5 ([http://www.nursing.emory.edu/admission-and-aid/faqs.html](http://www.nursing.emory.edu/admission-and-aid/faqs.html))

Students who need help calculating their own grade point averages are encouraged to use the GPA calculator posted on the Mercer registrar’s pages on the Mercer registrar’s Web site: [http://www.mercer.edu/registrarcalc/](http://www.mercer.edu/registrarcalc/).

Scheduling of Science Coursework. Students should also be aware that many nursing school, including the Georgia Baptist College of Nursing, most require that core science coursework be completed **within the five years before matriculation.** Science coursework that was completed more than five years ago should therefore be repeated.

Course Loads. Because the nursing school curriculum is so rigorous, admissions committees will also look to an applicant’s ability to carry a full academic load as s/he completes the pre-nursing curriculum. Unless there are extenuating circumstances that prevent him/her from doing so (e.g., employment, family circumstances), a pre-nursing student is expected to carry a full course load each semester.

Repeated Coursework. As a general rule, most professional schools will calculate the *mean* of all grades earned for any course that has been repeated, even if the undergraduate college has a grade replacement policy in place. Students are advised to check with their preferred nursing schools about their individual policies.

Pass/Fail, AP, IB, & CLEP Credit. Students are advised to check the Web sites of their preferred nursing schools about their policies regarding college credit earned on a pass/fail basis or through Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and the College Level Examination Program.

Course Withdrawals. Nursing school admissions committees review applicants’ transcripts carefully to assess the students’ academic abilities and levels of commitment and motivation. While withdrawing from a course is preferable to earning a D or F, students should be aware that multiple withdrawals on a transcript can signal that the student has difficulty with either commitment or with time management. Pre-nursing students should therefore withdraw from courses only on rare occasions and in extreme circumstances.

**Pre-nursing students are urged to follow the steps outlined in Appendix D of this document and to seek the advice of their advisors if they are unsure about their most prudent course of action.**

14. DEVELOPMENT OF A BACK-UP PLAN

Because the pre-nursing track is very challenging and nursing schools are so selective, pre-nursing students should develop a back-up plan to implement in the event that adequate progress is not made on their pre-nursing track (i.e., GPA’s below 3.2) or acceptance to nursing school is not achieved.
One way to increase competitiveness is to complete a bachelor’s degree followed by reapplication. Students are therefore advised to complete the nursing school admission requirements with a mind towards concurrently fulfilling the general education requirements for the College of Liberal Arts. Courses that fulfill a CLA general education requirement are shown in bold type on the checklist in Appendix A; see also the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>GBCN Admission Pre-requisite</th>
<th>CLA General Education Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FLL 111¹</td>
<td>Cultural Appreciation</td>
<td>Foreign Language Competency I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLL 112</td>
<td>Gen Ed – Fine Arts/ Humanities or</td>
<td>Foreign Language Competency II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STA 126</td>
<td>Gen Ed – Any</td>
<td>Mathematical Reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIS 105</td>
<td>Cultural Appreciation</td>
<td>Western Heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHI 176, 190, 195</td>
<td>Philosophy or Ethics</td>
<td>Western Heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHI 260, 265, or 269</td>
<td>Philosophy or Ethics</td>
<td>Creative Expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART, MUS, ENG, THR, WLT, etc.²</td>
<td>Gen Ed – Fine Arts/ Humanities or</td>
<td>Creative Expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFR 230, ENG 225, REL 110, 130, 150, 170</td>
<td>Gen Ed - Religion</td>
<td>Religious Heritage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ – Foreign Language & Literature
² – Consult the CLA General Education Requirements, Creative Expression Block for list of acceptable courses

Students may also consider a complete change of career goals; students are advised to consult the Office of Center for Career & Professional Development (Mercer-Macon) and their advisors for guidance in this regard. The Suggested Four-Year Plans in Appendix B (B-2 and B-3) are examples of reasonable back-up plans.

15. HEALTH CARE EXPERIENCE

**Nursing Experience.** Although experience is not required for admission to most nursing schools, pre-nursing students are advised to spend some time shadowing a nurse or working in a health care setting if possible as a way of confirming their interest in that field. Although many nursing programs do not require that applicants obtain such experience before matriculation, doing so can give students confidence in their choice and demonstrates to nursing programs that the applicants have verified their career decisions.

**Approaching Facilities to Work or Volunteer.** In most cases, students contact professionals directly to ask permission to shadow. To make the best impression, students are advised to dress in “business casual” attire and visit the facility in person to speak to the clinic’s nursing staff and/or office manager directly. Students are advised to leave a professional-style resume and cover letter describing their request. All phone or email communication should be formal and professional.

**Possible Shadowing Requirements.** Some facilities require certification of college enrollment before they will allow student shadowing. Students should inquire exactly what is required, as the following options are available from the University: Official certification of enrollment can be obtained from the University registrar, and a simple letter of introduction with unofficial verification of enrollment can be obtained from Dr. Bokros in Academic & Advising Services.

**Dress & Behavior in the Clinical Setting.** Students who are shadowing a nurse or working in a clinic are advised to dress and behave as professionally as possible while in the clinical setting. Students should follow the dress code for employees of the facility where they will be working, which probably stipulates closed-toe shoes and minimization of the amount of exposed skin. Perfume or after-shave should not be worn, and make-up & jewelry should be minimal and conservative. **Students who are ill should refrain from shadowing until healthy.**

The student shadower/ volunteer should show respect and gratitude to everyone in the clinical setting. A note of thanks sent to the professionals and the clinic after the experience is expected.

**Maintaining a Record of Experience.** Pre-nursing students should keep a “volunteer journal” in which they record dates, times, contacts, and experiences. Such a journal can be an invaluable resource when the time comes to build a professional resume, and journaling about one’s experiences allows reflection about what has been witnessed and learned. Students are invited to use the “electronic portfolio” Excel file available from Dr. Bokros (a copy is emailed to students at the start of every academic year, along with the latest track handbook).
Health Care Volunteerism. Volunteering in a health care facility and/or participating in a medical mission trip are excellent opportunities for a student to serve his or her community and gain first-hand knowledge about the health care field in general. This type of experience gives students perspective about the role of the occupational therapist on a health care team, and can give them confidence that they have made the right career decision.

Students are encouraged to read the article about volunteering on the Web site of explorehealthcareers.org: http://explorehealthcareers.org/en/issues/news/Article/213/The_Value_of_Volunteering and to follow the advice offered in this handbook and in the article here: http://www.kevinmd.com/blog/2010/06/tips-students-shadow-doctors.html. Some of the facilities in Macon that welcome volunteers are listed below:

**Hospitals & Clinics:**


The Coliseum Medical Centers. [http://coliseumhealthsystem.com/about/volunteers.dot](http://coliseumhealthsystem.com/about/volunteers.dot)


**Houston County Volunteer Medical Clinic.** [https://www.hhc.org/About-Us/Houston-County-Volunteer-Medical-Clinic](https://www.hhc.org/About-Us/Houston-County-Volunteer-Medical-Clinic)

**Houston Medical Center.** [https://www.hhc.org/About-Us/Volunteer-Opportunities](https://www.hhc.org/About-Us/Volunteer-Opportunities)

**Hospice:**

**Compassionate Care Hospice (Southeast).** [http://cchnet.net/southeast/georgia/macon/](http://cchnet.net/southeast/georgia/macon/), [http://cchnet.net/volunteers/how-to-volunteer/](http://cchnet.net/volunteers/how-to-volunteer/)

**Hospice Care Options, Warner Robins.** [http://www.hcoga.com/](http://www.hcoga.com/). Contact Richard Weires at rweires@healthcoga.com


**Medical Missions.** Mercer University sponsors multiple mission trips for students and faculty every year. Some of these trips have a medical focus and allow students to gain practical clinical and patient care experience as well. For more information about Mercer on Mission trips, visit the Web site: [http://www.mercer.edu/mom/](http://www.mercer.edu/mom/)

16. **EXTRACURRICULAR INVOLVEMENT**

Involvement in group organizations can help students develop their organizational, communication, teamwork, and leadership skills, and is also an avenue for the formation of supportive and satisfying friendships. Students will benefit from involvement in almost any organization (health-related, non-health-related special interest, religious, Greek, etc.); a complete list of campus organizations at Mercer can be found here: [http://studentaffairs.mercer.edu/campuslife/org_list.cfm](http://studentaffairs.mercer.edu/campuslife/org_list.cfm).

Mercer “fosters an environment that challenges every student to engage in leadership opportunities that educate and advance them as servant leaders” ([http://studentaffairs.mercer.edu/leadership/](http://studentaffairs.mercer.edu/leadership/)), and pre-health students should take full advantage of this. Leadership-building opportunities on campus are listed on the Student Affairs Web site here: [http://studentaffairs.mercer.edu/leadership/1mu/](http://studentaffairs.mercer.edu/leadership/1mu/).

Student Affairs connects students with different campus events on their Web site here: [http://studentaffairs.mercer.edu/campuslife/events.cfm](http://studentaffairs.mercer.edu/campuslife/events.cfm). Many of the health- or science-related organizations on campus collaborate on events throughout the year. These groups post their meetings and events on the **Mercer Science & Pre-Health Google Calendar**, which can be accessed here: [http://tinyurl.com/ns95vb7](http://tinyurl.com/ns95vb7).
The Value of Reading. The ability to communicate well in both oral and written form is valued highly by most health-related professional schools. The ability to read quickly, efficiently, and critically will help students succeed in college, in professional school, and in their professional lives. Reading increases a student’s vocabulary by exposing the reader to new words and phrasing and helps develop writing skills by exposing him or her to new patterns and arrangements of composition. Robert and Michele Root-Bernstein state in their 2011 article, *Turning STEM into STREAM: Writing as an Essential Component of Science Education*,

“Writing isn’t just wordsmithing. It also teaches mastery of the creative process. Whether one is writing fiction or nonfiction, creative nonfiction or poetry, the process of taking inchoate facts, trends, feelings, impressions, images, and emotions and translating them into words requires mastery of all the tools for thinking required to perform any other creative activity. Moreover, since words are our primary means of communicating, anyone who has not mastered their creative use is simply underprepared for any discipline, including STEM [science, technology, engineering and mathematics] subjects.” (bolding mine; [http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/3522](http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/3522))

Pre-health students should therefore make it a habit to read at least one or two unassigned books per semester. Reading in this way will help students investigate their career choice more deeply, practice their critical reading skills, explore issues outside of their major field of study, and – of course - feed their imaginations. Students are also encouraged to participate in reading or discussion groups to help them explore themes and make connections, and to invest themselves fully in all of their college writing assignments. See the reading list on the Tarver Library’s Pre-Health Professions Collection Web site for suggested titles: [https://libraries.mercer.edu/research-tools-help/research-guides-tutorials/tarver-guides/pre-health](https://libraries.mercer.edu/research-tools-help/research-guides-tutorials/tarver-guides/pre-health).

17. WHEN TO APPLY TO NURSING SCHOOL

When pre-nursing students begin preparing their nursing school applications will depend upon their personal goals, but in general pre-nursing students should plan on applying to the nursing schools of their choice between six and twelve months prior to beginning their nursing programs. Pre-nursing students must make themselves aware of the specific application procedures followed by the nursing school(s) they plan to apply to, and of the supplemental materials required by the specific schools to which they are applying. (Students participating in the SCP-Nursing should consult section 10 about their application process and deadline.)

Applicants should note that many of the published deadlines for applications are receipt deadlines, so should plan to complete their application materials (both for application services and for individual schools) well in advance of the published deadlines to maximize their chances of acceptance.

Applicants should be aware that only pre-requisite courses in which a grade of “C” or higher was earned are acceptable as fulfillment of pre-requisites, and that the grades for courses taken more than once will be averaged by nursing schools as they calculate a candidate’s cumulative grade point average. Also, science courses completed more than five (5) years ago require validation by faculty before credit can be granted. If validation is not granted, the applicant must repeat that coursework.

18. NursingCAS

Some of the nursing schools in the U.S. are now requiring applicants to use the centralized application service, NursingCAS ([http://nursingcas.org/](http://nursingcas.org/)).

Centralized application services like NursingCAS allow students to submit a single set of application materials in order to apply to multiple professional programs and allow students to monitor their application status online throughout the application process.
At the time of this publication, Georgia Baptist of Nursing does not participate in NursingCAS, but Augusta University and Emory do participate, and its popularity has been increasing (https://nursingcas liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/landingPagePrograms).

Instructions on how to use the CAS can be found online here: http://www.nursingcas.org/application-instructions/.

**Cost.** The fee to submit an application to one school through the 2017-18 NursingCAS is $45. Additional schools can be added for $30 each (http://www.nursingcas.org/prepare-to-apply/fees/).

**Timing.** Students should begin the application process at least 5-6 weeks before their earliest posted deadline. Applicants should print out and read through the official instructions before they begin to fill out the actual application. Applicants should refer to the instructions and use their best judgment as they complete the application, and contact the application service directly if they encounter problems or have specific questions.

**Personal Statement.** NursingCAS allows applicants to submit a Personal Statement in which you may “express your motivation or desire to become a Nurse.” More about personal statements can be found in section 20.

**References.** NursingCAS allows applicants to submit up to 6 letters of reference/letters of recommendation. More about letters of reference or recommendation can be found in section 21.

19. **ENTRANCE EXAM: THE TEST OF ESSENTIAL ACADEMIC SKILLS (TEAS)**

Many nursing programs require applicants to submit scores for a standardized test as part of the application process. Mercer’s GBCN, like many nursing schools, requires applicants to take the Test of Essential Academic Skills (ATI TEAS; https://www.atitesting.com/Solutions/pre-program/TEAS.aspx).

The ATI TEAS is a test of math, science, reading, English/language usage skills, and reading comprehension. The latest version of the test takes almost 4 hours to complete; test scores are usually made available within 48 hours of the test date.

The GBCN requires the national average composite score for the year in which the test was taken. As of August 2016, the minimum required score is 74% composite. The GBCN considers only the first two TEAS scores in a given application year, so students must prepare for this exam carefully.

**Cost.** The fee for the exam is currently $80.00 - $115.00, depending on the testing location and if transcripts are included or not.

**Registration and Scores.** To register for the TEAS test, visit the ATI “store” on the ATI Web site (https://www.atitesting.com/ati_store/). Students may register to take the TEAS at an ATI center or at a PSI center – see menu on the left of that page.

The PSI center testing fee includes one transcript, and students should select “GA Baptist CON” as the school to which to have the test transcript sent.

The ATI centers do not include a score transcript, so student taking the test at an ATI testing site must also pay a transcript fee of $27.00 each to have the TEAS scores sent to nursing schools. The code for MU’s Georgia Baptist College of Nursing is listed as “GCON” or “GA Baptist CON”.

**Preparation.** Pre-nursing students should familiarize themselves with the test and give themselves ample time to prepare for it. Preparation for any standardized test should include the completion of several full-length practice tests; while taking each practice test, a student should observe the time limits of the actual test. This type of practice prepares students for the format and timing of a particular test. There is no substitute for full-length practice test sessions, and failure to make this commitment will result in a significant disadvantage when
taking one of the admission tests required for professional programs/schools. Practice test results should then be carefully evaluated: students should review each wrong answer and determine why the incorrect choice was selected. This way students may identify problem areas (lack of knowledge, lack of careful reading of the question or answer choices, etc.) and refine their test-taking strategies to address them.


A set of study guides are available for Mercer PNU students in the Academic Resource Center, but students are encouraged to purchase their own practice exams.

**Retesting.** Students must consult their target schools for the number tests allowed in a single application year, and about recommended wait times between test.

The GBCN will only consider two TEAS scores for an applicant within a given application year, and expect students to take at least 4 weeks to prepare for the second exam.

### 20. THE PERSONAL STATEMENT/ ESSAY

The GBCN (and many other nursing schools) requires a personal statement or essay as part of their application materials. This essay offers a way for admissions committees to get to know the applicant on a more personal level and gives admissions committees insight into why s/he has chosen to pursue nursing as a profession.

If appropriate, applicants may explain any extenuating circumstances that might have influenced their educational pursuits (*e.g.*, hardships, obstacles, or challenges). Note that any such explanations should attempt to turn negative experiences into positive ones by focusing on lessons learned and how these challenges have helped prepare them for their future.

The personal statement might be limited to a specified number of characters (spaces usually included). While GBCN does not have a limit, they ask that statements be limited to 1-1.5 pages in length.

A few guidelines for writing the Personal Statement:

- Students should treat their PS as any other college-level composition: it should be written in a formal style, have a **central theme** to unify the different ideas, and should be crafted with an **introduction, a body, and a conclusion**. Of course, the theme should agree with any prompts or directions that may have been given by the nursing school. A title is optional but can highlight the central theme.

- Being a formal statement of an applicant’s goal to pursue nursing, the Personal Statement should not contain slang terminology, contractions, unconventional punctuation, or acronyms. An exception can be made for an abbreviation or acronym if its use is essential for the narrative, but it must be defined fully in its first usage. Clichés, obvious exaggerations, and negativity should be avoided.

- There may be a space limit given (*e.g.*, 4,500 characters, spaces included), so students should read instructions carefully and express ideas succinctly.

- Pre-nursing students should take advantage of the resources offered by Mercer University:
  - Personal Statement workshops offered by the pre-health professions advisor
  - Writing tutors at the Academic Resource Center
  - The advisors at the Center for Career & Professional Development

**When to Write the Personal Statement.** Applicants should not wait until the last minute to write their Personal Statement. Preparation of a first draft of the Personal Statement early in the application process (*e.g.*, the summer before the third academic year begins) allows an applicant the time to get feedback and to make multiple revisions, and therefore submit a polished product on their medical school applications.
Feedback on Personal Statements. Students are advised to have multiple people read and give feedback on their personal statements before submitting it as part of the application. Dr. Bokros will give comments on essays within a week or receipt if you email it to her as a Word document. Note that she will give comments on an original draft and one revision only. The writing tutors in the ARC are also a good source of feedback, as are the counselors at the Center for Career & Professional Development.


21. LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION/ LETTERS OF EVALUATION

Many nursing schools require letters of recommendation (LOR’s) or evaluation (LOE’s) as part of their application process. Nursing schools vary in their requirements for letters of recommendation, so students should consult the Web sites of their target nursing schools for the number and types of recommendation letters required. Of particular value are the recommendations from science faculty who have taught the applicant in courses in which the applicant performed well.

References Through NursingCAS. Nursing schools that require LOR’s and who use NursingCAS will accept references (letters of recommendation) through that centralized application service.

Proper Etiquette for Requesting a Letter of Recommendation. When requesting a letter of evaluation from an individual, students should contact the potential writer 2-3 weeks before the letter’s receipt deadline. If the potential writer agrees to provide a letter of recommendation, the student should provide him/her with the following:

- a current resume,
- a brief statement of purpose describing exactly what you will be applying for and, if available, a list of the student’s characteristics/attributes that are important to address in the letter,
- the receipt deadline for the letter, and
- a stamped addressed envelope for each letter to be sent or instructions about how to upload an electronic document.

It is customary for an LOR to be confidential, so a student may be asked to sign a waiver of his/her right to see the letter. Waiving this right is customary and expected; this practice ensures that a candid letter of evaluation or recommendation is written.

22. INTERVIEWS

Some nursing school admissions committees will invite applicants who look promising “on paper” to visit their school for an interview. The interview offers committees the chance to judge how an applicant presents him/herself in person and how well s/he communicates and interacts with nursing school faculty, staff, and students.

Applicants are advised to behave as if the interview began when their application was submitted and won’t end officially until a letter of acceptance has been procured.

Interviews are usually highly structured, and may involve spending time with a series of individual interviewers or groups of interviewers, who may be faculty, staff, and/or students. Because applicants may have limited time with each interviewer, first impressions are very important. Applicants are therefore urged to attend a Pre-
Health Professions Interview Skills seminar to help them prepare, and arrange at least one mock interview with a faculty member or a counselor from Center for Career & Professional Development.

In general, applicants should dress and behave as professionally as possible. They should smile and be pleasant, know their own application well, know the school at which they are being interviewed and show enthusiasm for its programs. Applicants are also advised not to show discouragement, to disparage other applicants, their former classmates, or undergraduate professors, or to use inappropriate or “off-color” humor. Applicants are also advised not to smoke, chew gum, or bite their nails during the interview.

Although there is no way to predict exactly what the interviewer will ask an applicant, applicants should prepare by anticipating some of the obvious questions and practicing their answers. Some examples of interview questions for professional school applicants are shown below.

- Tell me about yourself. Tell me about your family.
- Why nursing? Why not medical school?
- If nursing didn’t exist, what would you do instead?
- What have you done to test your interest in nursing?
- What DON’T you like about nursing?
- When did you decide on nursing?
- How do your personal values and morals fit with nursing?
- Do you want to specialize? In what?
- What problems face the field of nursing today?
- How did you study for the TEAS?
- How would you be a good fit for our school?
- What other schools have you applied to and why?
- What makes you different from/better than our other applicants?
- What will you do if you aren’t accepted?
- What was your favorite class? Least favorite? Why?
- What types of people do you have trouble working with?
- What is the biggest challenge you have faced in your life?
- What are your hobbies? What do you do for fun?
- Describe your leadership experiences.
- I see that you did research on XXX. Can you describe the project and what you learned from it?
- How do you think the people who wrote your letters of recommendation described you?
- Tell us about a time when your morals were questioned. How did you handle it?
- Name three books that you read this year. What impact did each have on you?
- Name three people that you admire and tell me why you admire each.
- Teach me something not related to nursing.
- If your house was burning, what three objects would you save? Why?
- Where are your most of your graduates distributed?
- What sub-specialties do most of your graduates go into?
- How do your students score on the NCLEX exam?
- Tell me more about your program in XXX.
- What types of clinical sites are used?
- Is there administrative training as part of your program? Legal training? Bioethics training?
- How has health care reform affected this school?
- What kind of mentor/advisor system is used?
- Tell me about the clinical sites, cafeteria, library, parking, computers, etc.
- What support staff is available?

Lastly, nursing school applicants should remember that ALL communication with ANY member of the nursing school is considered part of the interview, from emails and phone calls to admissions officers, to casual conversation with nursing students who eat lunch with the applicant, to the official interview with the admissions committee members.
23. **AFTER ACCEPTANCE/ PREPARING TO MOVE TO ATLANTA**

**Notify the Registrar.** Pre-nursing students who have been accepted to nursing school should complete a Non-Returning Notification form for the College of Liberal Arts before the end of their final spring semester. That form is available on the Mercer Web site here: https://registrar.mercer.edu/forms.cfm. Students should complete the second choice (see right, circled in red; “I will complete the current term of (spring 20__) but not return because I will be attending the GBCN in the fall”, and check the box below that lines that indicates that they will not be returning to the CLA.

Students should then take that form to Dr. Bokros in Academic & Advising Services for her signature before submitting the form to the registrar.

**Pre-Clinical Requirements.** Pre-nursing students who have been accepted to nursing school will be notified that participation in clinical education requires students to provide proof of immunizations and of CPR certification, among other things.

The American Heart Association **Healthcare Provider Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification** is often required; the College will not accept the Family and Friends or Heartsaver courses as substitutions for the Health Care Provider certification. **Mercer-Macon’s Physical Education course in CPR (PED 161) does NOT fulfill this requirement.** Georgia Baptist College of Nursing usually offers Healthcare Provider CPR courses prior to the start of fall classes. This course is ONLY open to accepted and registered GBCN nursing students. Pre-registration is required; please see the nursing enrollment page for reserving your space in the course.
APPENDIX A: Checklist of the CLA Coursework for GBCN

Note that a single course cannot satisfy more than one pre-requisite: each category below must be satisfied with a different course. A total of 60 credit hours must be completed before matriculation into nursing school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Abbreviation and Title</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interdisciplinary Courses &amp; Writing Instruction</strong> (6-8 semester hours)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ INT 101: Understanding Self &amp; Others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ INT 201: Building Community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First-Year Student Experience</strong> (1 semester hour)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ UNV 101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Education Requirements</strong> (9 semester hours) (See the College of Liberal Arts General Education Requirements for a list of classes that fulfill these requirements; PNU students should take courses that can be used to fulfill the CLA’s general education requirements as well as the GBCN admission pre-requisites so that a back-up plan of earning a bachelor’s degree is in place.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ A General Education Elective from the Humanities or Fine Arts1; (recommended: a course that fulfills the Creative Expression, Western Heritage, or Foreign Language competency block)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note that a fine arts course must have an academic component; courses in applied/ performance in music do not fulfill this requirement. (Group “a” Creat. Exp. classes are all acceptable. Consult GBCN about specific courses in group “b”.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ A General Education Elective from the Religious Heritage general education block: ____</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Any General Education Elective: _____</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(recommended: one of the general education blocks not fulfilled by the course above)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human and Behavioral Sciences</strong> (15 semester hours)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ PSY 101: General Psychology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ PSY 245: Developmental Psychology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ PSY 265: Abnormal Psychology2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ POL 101, ECON 150, or ECON 151: American Government or Economics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ SOC 101, 210, ANT 101, ANT 250: Sociology or Anthropology, GHS/ ANT 310: Medical Anthropology3, SOC 323: Medical Sociology4, WGS 180: Gendered Lives, GEO 111: Human Geography, or SST 180: Intro to Southern Studies; BIO/ ANT 382: Biological Anthropology4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural Appreciation</strong> (3-4 semester hours) (A foreign language course is preferred; Also acceptable are POL/IAF 253, AFR 190, AFR 210, AFR/POL 330, AFR/SOC 295, ANT 250, SOC 330, GHS 200, WGS 180, HIS 105, or SST 180)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ ______</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Philosophy or Ethics</strong> (3 semester hours)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ PHI 190, 195, 176, 180, 198, 220, 230, 237, 240, 247, 250, 260, 265, 269, 290, 293; GDS 215; REL 230, 335, or 354: ____</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communications</strong> (3 semester hours)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ COM 200, 210, 220, 230, or 250; SOC 330; PBH 301: This requirement can be fulfilled by taking an upper level (200+) foreign language course if the student is working towards a foreign language minor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nutrition</strong> (3 semester hours)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ GHS 101: Nutrition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statistics</strong> (3 semester hours) (Note that this course has a pre-requisite of competence in basic algebra. Students may be asked to take the math placement exam and/or take MAT (95 before registration for this course.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ STA 126: Elementary Statistical Methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Biology</strong> (12 semester hours, all with labs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ BIO 202: Human Anatomy &amp; Physiology I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ BIO 203: Human Anatomy &amp; Physiology II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ BIO 102: Elements of Microbiology (BIO majors may take BIO 303: Principles of Microbiology, but this requires completion of CHM 111, BIO 211, and BIO 212 first)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 AP credit for English Composition transfers in to the College of Liberal Arts as ENG 108, which will be applied to the checklist as a General Education Elective from the Humanities or Fine Arts. If a student maintains strong GPA’s in the first year, ENG 108 can count as INT 201 instead.

2 Students may also seek permission to take Penfield College’s equivalent course, PSYC360. This requires special permission; see Dr. Bokros

3 This course requires a pre-requisite or permission of instructor

4 The pre-req for this course is ANT 101 or BIO 212 (this is an appropriate option for BIO majors)

- Courses listed in red are those used to calculate the core nursing GPA
- Courses listed in **bold italics** fulfill a CLA gen ed requirement (as part of a back-up plan)
- CLEP credit can fulfill an admission requirement, but not for lab sciences or for courses numbered 200-level or higher. Actual college courses are always preferable to CLEP credit. An absolute maximum of 18 hr of CLEP credit is accepted.
APPENDIX B-1: Suggested 2-Year Plan for Pre-Nursing Students at the CLA

The plan and course list below is specific for Georgia Baptist College of Nursing. Students targeting different nursing schools will need to modify this plan to suit their particular goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>UNV 101</td>
<td>BIO 102, BIO 203, or another course from list of requirements</td>
<td>Optional: Electives from list of required coursework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIO 202 or another course from list of requirements</td>
<td>PSY 101 or another course from list of requirements</td>
<td>Study for TEAS?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSY 101 or another course from list of requirements</td>
<td>INT 101 or another course from list of requirements</td>
<td>STOP: If GPA is below 3.0 at the end of year 1, consider Back-Up Plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>INT 101 or another course from list of requirements</td>
<td>6-9 hours from required coursework list</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 hours from required coursework list</td>
<td>Declare PNU Major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BIO 202 or another course from list of requirements</td>
<td>BIO 102, BIO 203, or another course from list of requirements</td>
<td>If accepted, complete &amp; submit a “Non-returning” form to registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIO 102 or another course from required coursework list</td>
<td>PSY 245</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSY 265 (or PSYC360)</td>
<td>6-10 hr from required coursework list</td>
<td>Submit application to GBCN by Jan. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-10 hr from required coursework list</td>
<td>Study for and take the TEAS before end of semester</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study for and take the TEAS before end of semester</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Courses listed in bold are only taught in the semesters shown.

1. PSY 101 must be taken before the end of year 1, as it is the pre-requisite for both PSY 265 and PSY 245.
2. INT 101 should be taken during the first year.
## APPENDIX B-2: Back-Up Plan for Pre-Nursing Students – B.S. Biology, Chemistry Minor Option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| First | UNV 101  
BIO 202 or CHM 111<sup>2</sup>  
PSY 101 or another course from list of requirements<sup>1</sup>  
3-6 hours from list of required coursework<sup>1</sup> | BIO 203 or CHM 112<sup>2</sup>  
STA 126 or another course from list of requirements<sup>1</sup>  
6-9 hours from list of required coursework<sup>1</sup>  
(MAT 133 if MIDX below 950) | Optional: Electives from required coursework list<sup>1</sup> |
| Second | BIO 202 or CHM 111<sup>2</sup>  
PSY 265 or 3 hours from required coursework list<sup>1</sup>  
6-9 hr from list of required coursework<sup>1</sup>  
 Declare BIO Major | BIO 203 or CHM 112<sup>2</sup>  
BIO 211  
3-6 hr from list of required coursework<sup>1</sup> | Optional: Electives from required coursework list<sup>1</sup> |
| Third | CHM 221  
BIO 212  
3-4 hr from list of required coursework<sup>1</sup>  
PSY 265 or 3 hours from required coursework list<sup>1</sup> | CHM 222  
6-8 hours of BIO requirements<sup>4</sup>  
3-4 hr from list of required coursework<sup>1</sup>  
PSY 245 or 3 hours from required coursework list<sup>1</sup> | Optional: Electives from required coursework list<sup>1</sup> |
| Fourth | 11-12 hours of BIO requirements<sup>2</sup>  
PHY 141<sup>2</sup> or 3-4 hours from required coursework list<sup>1</sup>  
Apply for May Graduation | 6-8 hours of BIO requirements<sup>4</sup>  
PSY 245 or 3 hr from required coursework list<sup>1</sup>  
PHY 141<sup>2</sup> or 3-4 hours from required coursework list<sup>1</sup> | |

1. This list should include the science classes shown here plus the remaining general education requirements not yet completed in year 1. If nursing school remains a goal, the admission requirements for nursing school must also be on that list. PC = Penfield College.
2. Pre-requisite for this course is MAT 133
3. This course fulfills the admission requirement for nursing school for microbiology and can count towards the BIO degree.
4. In addition to the courses shown on this schedule, the BS in BIO requires completion of BIO 211, 212, 300/01/02, 310, 370, a 400-level lab, and 10 additional hours of upper division BIO coursework. Because 3 hour of BIO 202/203 can be counted towards this total, only 7 more hours of BIO electives are required.

Courses listed in bold are only taught in the semesters shown.

EXP can fit anywhere
## APPENDIX B-3: Back-Up Plan for Pre-Nursing Students – Non-Science Major

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td><strong>UNV 101</strong></td>
<td><strong>BIO 203</strong> or 3-4 hours from required coursework list&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Optional: Electives from required coursework list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BIO 202</strong> or 3-4 hours from required coursework list&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td><strong>STA 126 or another course from list of requirements&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>PSY 101</strong></td>
<td><strong>6-9 hours from list of required coursework&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>STA 126 or another course from list of requirements&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td><strong>3 hours from list of required coursework&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3 hours from list of required coursework&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td><strong>BIO 202</strong> or 3-4 hours from required coursework list&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td><strong>BIO 203</strong> or 3-4 hours from required coursework list&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Optional: Electives from required coursework list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9-12 hours from required coursework list&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td><strong>9-12 hours of electives from required coursework list&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Declare Major</em></td>
<td><strong>Required coursework list&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>12-16 hours from required coursework list&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>12-16 hours from required coursework list&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Optional: Electives from required coursework list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>15-18 hours from required coursework list&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>15-18 hours from required coursework list&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Apply for May Graduation</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

<sup>1</sup> Student may choose whatever major and minor most interests him/her. Students are urged to consult their University Bulletin and/or the checklists available on the web site (e.g., [http://cla.mercer.edu/current-students/checksheets/](http://cla.mercer.edu/current-students/checksheets/)) to consider all major options, then consult an advisor in the department(s) s/he is most interested in for advice.

Student must create a personalized list of courses based on the requirements of his/her selected major and minor. If nursing school remains a goal, the admission requirements for nursing school must also be on that list. Student must keep in mind that PSY 265 (abnormal psychology) is only offered in the fall and PSY 245 (developmental psychology) is only offered in the spring.

Courses listed in bold are only taught in the semesters shown.

EXP can fit anywhere.
APPENDIX C: Internet Resources for Exploring Careers in Health Care

Mercer’s Pre-Professional Web site
- http://aas.mercer.edu/pre-professional-tracks/
  Contain information for students interested in applying to medical, dental, podiatry, optometry, veterinary, PT, OT, PA, AA, nursing, and pharmacy schools.

Mercer’s Center for Career & Professional Development Web site
- https://career.mercer.edu/  Information about TypeFocus, SuccessTrak, Career Day, and other services for students

The U.S. Department of Labor’s Web site on Health Care Careers

For More Information About Careers in Healthcare
- http://www.explorehealthcareers.org/
- http://www.mynextmove.org/
- http://sowega-ahec.org/recruit/  (Click on Health Careers in Georgia to download their health careers publication as a pdf.)

Links for Information About Nursing and Nursing Schools
- American Academy of Nurse Practitioners: http://www.aanp.org/
- American Academy of Nursing: http://www.aannet.org/
- American Association of College of Nursing: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/
- American Nursing Association: http://www.nursingworld.org/
- Johnson & Johnson’s Nursing Recruitment site: http://www.discovernursing.com/

Links for Information About Scholarships for Nursing School
- American Association of College of Nursing: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/students/financial-aid#undergraduate and http://www.aacn.nche.edu/students/scholarships
- Johnson & Johnson’s Nursing Recruitment site: http://www.discovernursing.com/scholarships#no-filters
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: http://www.hrsa.gov/loanscholarships/scholarships/nursing/
- Foundation for Nursing Education: http://www.nln.org/professional-development-programs/grants-and-scholarships/foundation-for-nursing-education-scholarship-awards

Selected Links for Professional and Graduate Schools in the Southeast
- Armstrong Atlantic State University: http://www.armstrong.edu/Majors/degree/nursing
- Brenau University School of Nursing: http://www.brenau.edu/healthsciences/department-of-nursing/
- Clayton State University: http://www.clayton.edu/health/nursing
- Emory University: http://www.nursing.emory.edu/index.html
- Georgia Southern University: http://chhs.georgiasouthern.edu/nursing/
- Georgia College & State University: http://www.gecsu.edu/health/nursing/nursing-bsn
- Augusta University College of Nursing: http://www.augusta.edu/nursing/
- Kennesaw State University’s WellStar School of Nursing: http://www.kennesaw.edu/chhs/son/degrees.html
- Middle Georgia State College: http://www.mga.edu/health-sciences/nursing/default.aspx
- North Georgia College and State University: http://ung.edu/nursing/
- University of West Georgia: http://nursing.westga.edu/
- Wesleyan College: http://www.wesleyancollege.edu/academics/undergraduate/majorsminors/Nursing-Major-Home-Page.cfm
APPENDIX D: Course Withdrawals

Steps to Take in the Decision-Making Process

1. Get the Facts
   Calculate your projected grade in the class using the formula given in your syllabus for your course grade. Do the calculations using the grades you have earned so far, then project what grades you might earn for the rest of the semester and plug them into the formula. Do this to create a “worst case scenario” in which you earn poor grades for the remaining exams, and a “best case scenario” in which you earn improved but reasonable grades (e.g., 75-85%). The results will give you a realistic range of possible grades for the rest of the semester. Keep in mind that having a firm grasp of the course’s foundational concepts is often required for success. Increasing your grades to the 80% range after scoring in the 30-50% range requires backtracking to learn the concepts that you didn’t learn well the first time.

   If your calculations reveal that there is no way you can pass the class with a C or higher, then withdrawing is recommended. If your calculations reveal that there is a way that you can still earn a solid C* or higher in the class, then proceed to step 2.

2. Talk with Your Instructor
   If your calculations reveal that there is a way that you can still earn a solid C or higher in the class, then the next step is to meet with your instructor. Talk honestly about how you are studying and how much time you are spending on the material, and get an idea from the instructor about his/her impression of whether you are likely to fall on the low side of your grading scale or on the high side.

   [FYI: Claiming that there is a “disconnect” between your learning style and the professor’s teaching style is a dangerous way to go… it can sound like an excuse. Pre-health students must find a way to be flexible in their learning styles. The staff of the Academic Resource Center can help students identify their best learning style and offer suggestions about how to adapt to multiple teaching styles. (Students with learning disabilities are urged to seek supportive assistance from Carole Burrowbridge at the office of ACCESS and Accommodation: http://studentaffairs.mercer.edu/disabilityservices/.)]

3. Be Honest With Yourself
   Ask yourself how willing you are to fight to earn a passing grade in order to continue moving forward on your track. This will be a true test of your determination. If you are still hypothetically able to earn at least a C, and you are willing to either double the amount of time you are spending on the class or to change the way you spend time on the class, then it is worth your while to stay in the class.

   If you have already “moved on” mentally and won’t or can’t put forth more effort to conquer the class, then it is best to withdraw and make alternative plans to continue progressing. Note: If you are not willing to do what it takes academically to make yourself into a competitive professional school applicant, then you should re-examine your professional goals.

4. Consider the Consequences BEFORE Withdrawing
   A. Make a revised plan in which you have withdrawn from the class and – for SCP students - consider how withdrawing will affect your program eligibility. Does making that class up at a later date affect your ability to make progress on that track? Will withdrawal force you to take summer classes? Are you able to take summer classes (time-wise and financially)?

   B. Check with financial planning to make sure that withdrawing will not impact your financial aid or scholarship or loan status.

5. The Withdrawal Process
   Complete a withdrawal form. Have your instructor sign it and your primary advisor sign it. Submit the signed form to the registrar’s office by the published withdrawal deadline.
APPENDIX E: Advising Worksheet for CLA-Pre-Nursing Students

(Bring this form and your coursework checklist to your advising meeting with Dr. Bokros)

Student Name: _______________________________  MUID: _______________________________
Primary Advisor: ____________________________  Date: _______________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Progress/Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCP Declaration of Intent</td>
<td>Nov. 1, year 1 (if applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coursework for target nursing schools (GBCN – see Appendix A)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative GPA</td>
<td>3.0 minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIO GPA (BIO 202, 203, and 102)</td>
<td>3.0 minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEAS</td>
<td>Take by Dec. or Jan., yr 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEAS</td>
<td>Minimum score earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Submit by Jan. 1, yr 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declaration of major as back-up plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coursework for back-up plan of CLA degree before nursing school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your Four-Year Plan for Mercer CLA:  
Circle the semester that you are being advised for.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>