

ANDERSON COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Mission and Vision

The Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions (ACONHP) (<https://www.una.edu/nursing/>) vision is to improve health in the community by effecting change in systems and policies, and to promote research and scholarly activities that advance nursing and health care knowledge. The ACONHP mission is to graduate nurses and other health professionals who are prepared to assume professional roles in diverse health care environments.

The Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions (ACONHP) offers a **Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)** degree with four options for registered nurses:

1. **Family Nurse Practitioner Option** - students in this option will receive educational preparation that will enable them to provide patient-family centered evidence-based health care for individuals across the lifespan.
2. **Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Option** - students in this option will receive educational preparation that will enable them to assess, diagnose, and treat the mental health needs of patients.
3. **Leadership in Organizational Environments Option** - students in this option will receive educational preparation that will enable them to function at an advanced level in the health care environment concerning politics and legislation, budgeting and economics, leadership and management, such that these nurses may positively influence the management aspects of nursing and health care in society.
4. **Teaching-Learning Environments Option** - students in this option will receive preparation related to the direct care role of nurse educators and advanced teaching methodologies that provide graduates with tools necessary to facilitate the education of nursing students, health care clients, and health care colleagues.

All options are available online and each course is asynchronous in nature. All MSN courses are subject to online learning fees (See Expenses section). There are no mandatory campus-based components to the Teaching-Learning Environments option or the Leadership in Organizational Environments options. The Family Nurse Practitioner option and the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner option has a minimum of two mandatory on campus intensives.

Additionally, the Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions (ACONHP) offers a **Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)** degree (*effective Spring 2023 pending final approval from SACSCOC, The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges*) with three options for nurses currently holding a Master of Science or higher degree in nursing:

1. **Advanced Practice DNP:** With a focus on innovative, evidence-based practice, this track will provide advanced practice nurses with the competencies to provide transformational care in diverse health care environments. The DNP degree will provide advanced practice nurses with an educational background that is comparable to those of providers in other health care fields.
2. **Population Health Leadership and Simulation DNP Track:** The DNP in Population Health Leadership with a concentration in health care

simulation is ideal for master's prepared nurses who want to become population health-focused leaders in inpatient, outpatient, and community settings. Evidence-based knowledge will guide students to improve health outcomes for target populations in the continually evolving healthcare system. Learners will utilize simulation to educate themselves and others on topics such as climate change, disaster management, and safety and preparedness.

3. **Educational Leadership and Simulation DNP Track.** The DNP in Educational Leadership with a concentration in health care simulation is ideal for those master's prepared nurses who want to become *advanced* population and aggregate-focused educators and leaders that transform the future of healthcare. Current and emerging evidence and simulation best practices will be used as platforms to inform decisions, actions, and interventions that directly and indirectly impact the education and health of aggregates, individuals, families, and groups. Students will synthesize and evaluate systems-level thinking, advocacy, and integrate informatics to build partnerships within various settings.

The Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions retains the right to make modifications in its program/policies based on recommendations and mandates from the Alabama Board of Nursing and the Commission of Collegiate Nursing Education. Students currently enrolled in the nursing program will be required to adhere to any modifications made during their enrollment as a nursing major.

The baccalaureate degree program in nursing, master's degree program in nursing, and post-graduate APRN certificate program in nursing at the University of North Alabama are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.ccneaccreditation.org> (<http://www.ccneaccreditation.org/>)).

A Message from the Dean

Dr. Tera Kirkman

Welcome to the University of North Alabama, Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions.

In 1973, a pre-licensure Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program was established at the University of North Alabama. Since that time, the college has expanded its program offerings to include baccalaureate and master's degrees in nursing and health professions. The college has a history of consistently achieving national licensure and certification rates above accreditation and board of nursing requirements. Instruction and experiential learning experiences such as simulation takes place in Laura M. Harrison Hall, a state-of-the-art facility. Other clinical practice opportunities are conducted in Northwest Alabama and throughout the region. The mission of the ACONHP is to graduate nurses and other health care professionals who are prepared to assume professional roles in diverse health care environments.

It is an important time in the history of health care to become a registered nurse or health care professional. Nurses and other members of the health care team are the backbone of the healthcare delivery system. Advance practice nurses, nurse educators, nurse leaders, and nurse researchers are leading the way to assist in meeting the challenges of today's complex healthcare environment. According to the US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (<https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/fastest-growing-occupations-alt.htm>) nurse practitioners and respiratory therapist are among the fastest growing occupations through 2030. Registered nurses and nurse practitioners are among the occupations with the most job growth (<https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/occupations-most-job-growth.htm>) through 2030. These health care

providers deliver safe quality care in various settings that include but are not limited to hospitals, clinics, long term care facilities, and homes.

I encourage you to take a few moments to navigate our website. As you browse, you will learn more about our outstanding programs, exceptional students, highly qualified faculty, and incredible staff. We look forward to meeting you.

ROAR LIONS!!

Tera R. Kirkman, EdD, MSN, RN

Interim Dean & Professor

Degree Programs

- Doctor of Nursing Practice (<https://catalog.una.edu/graduate/nursing/dnp/>)
- Master of Science in Nursing-Family Practitioner Option (<https://catalog.una.edu/graduate/nursing/msn-family-nurse-practitioner/>)
- Master of Science in Nursing-Leadership in Organizational Environments Option (<https://catalog.una.edu/graduate/nursing/msn-leadership-organizational-environments/>)
- Master of Science in Nursing-Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Option (<https://catalog.una.edu/graduate/nursing/msn-mental-health-practitioner/>)
- Master of Science in Nursing-Teaching Learning Environments Option (<https://catalog.una.edu/graduate/nursing/msn-teaching-learning-environments/>)

Advisement

All students will receive advisement from graduate nursing faculty and/or the Coordinator of Online Nursing Enrollment. Students may seek to confer with an ACONHP advisor prior to preregistration each semester.

Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions (ACONHP) Goals

1. Provide high quality, innovative student-centered nursing and health related programs built upon scientific disciplines.
2. Graduate nurses and health professionals who are prepared to practice person-centered care in diverse local, regional, and global healthcare environments.
3. Promote scholarship, scholarly activities, teaching, service, and practice that advances quality, safety, and knowledge in healthcare.
4. Develop professional partnerships across professions to enhance healthcare within complex systems.
5. Optimize the use of information processes and technologies in healthcare practices.
6. Foster a spirit of professional excellence and resilience amongst a diverse population of students, faculty, and staff.

Graduate Program Outcomes

Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Post-Master's Certificate Student Outcomes

1. Develop competencies in advanced nursing practice, teaching, and/or leadership.
2. Facilitate quality care across the lifespan utilizing a systems approach.

3. Integrate ethical decision-making to provide culturally competent care.
4. Cultivate collaborative relationships across diverse disciplines to improve patient and population health outcomes.
5. Integrate evidence-based practice to advance the profession of nursing.
6. Incorporate current and emerging technologies to improve health outcomes.

Upon completion of the Family Nurse Practitioner Track of the MSN and PMC Programs and the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Track of the MSN Program, graduates are eligible to sit for the appropriate national board certification examination, which is required for practice approval and employment in Alabama and other states.

Doctor of Nursing Practice Student Outcomes

1. Construct a scientific knowledge base for nursing practice. (Essential I; Domain 1)
2. Incorporate current healthcare delivery approaches that guide person-centered care. (Essential II; Domain 2)
3. Summarize principles of safety and quality into practice (Essential II; Domain 5 & 7)
4. Assemble evidence-based nursing knowledge to improve population health outcomes. (Essential III; Domain 3 & 4)
5. Integrate present and emerging health technologies to deliver safe, high-quality healthcare. (Essential IV; Domain 8)
6. Cultivate a healthcare system that advocates for equitable healthcare across all populations. (Essential V; Domain 9)
7. Facilitate interprofessional collaboration that enhances patient or population outcomes. (Essential VI; Domain 6)
8. Generate strategies that promote improved health outcomes for all populations. (Essential VII; Domain 3)
9. Relate nursing knowledge to practice for the promotion of the profession. (Essential VIII; Domain 10)

Admission to MSN Program

All students admitted to the MSN program must meet all UNA graduate admission requirements (see General Regulations and Procedures (<https://catalog.una.edu/graduate/general-regulations-procedures/>)). All required admission material must be submitted by the deadline date. Additional requirements for admission to the MSN program are:

1. A completed application to the ACONHP graduate program (available online at <https://www.una.edu/graduate/>)
2. A cumulative undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or better on the BSN degree-granting institution transcript.
3. A Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from a professionally accredited nursing program in the United States.
4. A written statement of professional goals and the role of graduate education in achieving those goals.
5. A current unencumbered registered nurse license. Nurses with any restrictions or reprimands on their license, including participation in a voluntary disciplinary alternative program cannot be admitted.
6. Clinical practice is preferred, but not required.
7. All MSN applicants must complete a criminal background check and drug screen.

8. All Family Nurse Practitioner and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner track applicants must have a minimum of two completed recommendation forms.

Conditional admission to the Leadership and Teaching-Learning option is considered for applicants who meet the admission criteria in part. A student admitted conditionally must have a minimum of one year of full-time clinical experience as a registered nurse.

Conditionally admitted students must earn a grade point average of 3.0 or greater after the first nine hours of study. Conditionally admitted students who fall below 3.0 after nine hours of study may not continue in the program.

International students must meet all University and ACONHP graduate admission requirements and must have a minimum score of 550 on the paper-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or a minimum score of 213 on the computer-based TOEFL.

All applications for admission undergo review by the graduate nursing administration and/or faculty. Admission decisions will be made by the ACONHP graduate administration and/or faculty. Admission to the MSN major is competitive. Meeting the minimum admission requirements does not guarantee acceptance into the nursing program.

A student currently meeting the requirements for the post-master certificate and graduate studies at UNA can enroll in a Graduate Certificate Program in the Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions. Students are limited to enrolling in only the courses required for the certificates. Admission to the post-master certificate program is competitive. Meeting the minimum admission requirements does not guarantee acceptance into the certificate program.

Admission to DNP Program

The admission requirements for this post-masters DNP program are as follows:

- 1) A completed application to the ACONHP graduate program.
- 2) A 3.0 or better GPA in Master of Science in Nursing degree from a professionally accredited nursing program in the United States. Admission to the Advanced Practice Track requires an MSN in an advanced practice area. Official transcripts are required.
- 3) Submission of current resume.
- 4) Two letters of recommendation from professionals in academia or industry who can comment on your accomplishments, contributions to healthcare, leadership abilities, and other potential factors of success.
- 5) Submission of certification as an advanced practice nurse, if applicable.
- 6) Submission of current unencumbered registered nurse license with no restrictions or reprimands. Submission of current unencumbered advanced practice license with no restrictions or reprimands if applicable. Nurses with restrictions or reprimands on their license, including participation in a voluntary disciplinary alternative program cannot be admitted.
- 7) Submission of a professional statement that outlines a proposed project topic, a brief summary of the literature, and a discussion on a possible evidence-based Doctor of Nursing Practice project addressing the proposed topic. This should be in APA format and no more than one written page with a second page for references. The topic should be related to the desired track and should focus on a change that either directly or indirectly impacts healthcare. The topic should also have a systems or population/aggregate focus.
- 8) All DNP applicants must complete a criminal background check and drug screen.

- 9) Upon admission, applicants will be required to submit all required clinical documentation.

Readmission

Students who desire reinstatement to the graduate nursing program must write a letter of petition to the Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions (ACONHP). The letter is to be sent to the Chair of the ACONHP Graduate Programs and must include any extenuating circumstances that may have contributed to the failure to be successful in the previous attempt in the MSN program. The letter must also include a detailed plan for successfully completing the program, including specific strategies to ensure success.

After the graduate faculty and chair review the requests for readmission, recommendations are made to the Dean of the ACONHP who will notify students of the decision(s). Readmitted students must follow any recommendations or stipulations proposed by the dean and faculty as conditions for readmission.

Unclassified Students

Students who wish to take courses without enrolling in the MSN program of study may take a maximum of six hours as an unclassified (non-degree seeking) student with permission from the director/chair of the MSN Program. Students must complete the MSN application form and have transcripts sent to UNA. Permission will be granted only if space is available in the requested course(s). Students must be enrolled in the MSN program in order to take more than six hours.

No assurance is given that credit earned while in unclassified status may subsequently be applied to the MSN degree program or be transferable to another institution. Satisfactory completion of MSN courses while in unclassified status does not assure the student of admission to the MSN program.

Transfer Credit

See Special Regulations (<https://catalog.una.edu/graduate/general-regulations-procedures/special-regulations/>) in the General Regulations and Procedures section of the catalog. Any course submitted for transfer credit will undergo evaluation by the graduate nursing faculty who will determine the granting of transfer credit. The maximum number of transfer hours is six and only grades of B or above will receive transfer credit.

Graduate Student Academic Requirements

- Satisfaction of degree and program requirements includes an overall grade average of B or better (3.0) on all work attempted
- Students must maintain a grade average of B or better (3.00) on work attempted
- No more than two courses with a C grade may be applied toward the degree
- No grade below C may be applied towards the degree; however, all grades are included in the calculation of the cumulative GPA
- Any student who earns three grades of C or below will be dismissed
- Any student who earns two grades below C will be dismissed
- Students will receive an academic warning letter if any of the following situations occur:
 - One grade of C or below
 - Two grades of C or one grade of C and one grade below C

- A student may repeat any course in which a grade of C, D, or F was received. The highest grade will be used in determining progression, but the previous grade(s) will remain on the transcript record and all grades will be counted as work attempted in determining the grade point average (GPA).
- A grade of B or better is required in the following courses: NU 508, NU 607, NU 614, and all practicum courses. (NU 641, NU 642, NU 643, NU 644, NU 645, NU 651, NU 652, NU 653, NU 654, NU 655, NU 680, NU 681, NU 682, and NU 683).
- Students must complete all coursework within seven years from the original date of enrollment.
- Students whose nursing and/or advanced practice license becomes encumbered (restrictions or reprimands), including participation in a voluntary disciplinary alternative program, will not be able to continue in the program. Admission can be denied based upon verbal disclosure of substance use or abuse.

NU 683). Students not meeting these requirements may be withdrawn from the registered clinical practicum course.

Assumptions

The UNA Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions Master of Science in Nursing degree builds on the preparation of students at the BSN level with the following assumptions:

- students have experience in professional nursing practice
- students have background knowledge of nursing theory and research
- students understand and use the nursing process
- students are able to communicate effectively
- students are involved in professional activities
- students have leadership abilities
- students can use technology effectively

The above assumptions are expanded throughout each option of the graduate program as the student prepares to assume their new role as a nurse educator, nurse leader, or advanced practice clinician.

Clinical Requirements

All students are to have submitted **all** of the following documents prior to beginning clinical practicum courses:

- physical examination
- proof of required immunizations or titers
- current tuberculosis screening
- proof of BLS for Healthcare Providers
- health insurance
- OSHA/HIPAA training
- proof of liability insurance with student coverage
- current nursing license
- confidentiality statement

An Intent of Relationship form, Practicum Application, and Professional Profile for the approved preceptor are required clinical documents. Some facilities may require an additional Urine Drug Screen/Criminal Background Check within the past 12 months. Students must hold a current registered nurse license with no restrictions or reprimands (unencumbered) in the state(s) in which they complete clinical practicum experiences. All clinical practicum forms should be submitted a minimum of eight (8) weeks prior to registration for a clinical course (NU 641, NU 642, NU 643, NU 644, NU 645, NU 680, NU 681, NU 682, and/or