Information for USM Students who are Interested in the Nursing Program

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Introduction

This document is designed for USM students who are interested in pursuing a bachelor of science (BS) degree in Nursing. It also includes information about other health-related majors that USM offers. We’ve included information about advising, academic assistance, and frequently asked questions about acceptance to the Nursing program.

Admission to the Nursing Program

There are two ways that current USM students may enter the Nursing program:

Change of Major to Nursing

First-year students admitted to a major other than Nursing (including Undeclared), may change their major to Nursing when they meet all of the following requirements in 32 or fewer college credits:

- math readiness
- writing proficiency
- successfully completed, with a grade of C or better, the following courses:
  - a science for nursing (anatomy & physiology I or chemistry),
  - college writing
  - two social sciences for nursing: (Introduction to Psychology, Introduction to Sociology, Multicultural Human Development),
- Achieve a minimum 3.0 USM GPA

Students admitted to USM in the “GO” program also need to complete additional requirements before being considered for the Nursing program. These requirements are described at this link: [http://www.usm.maine.edu/success/go-academic-requirements](http://www.usm.maine.edu/success/go-academic-requirements).

Transfer to Nursing

The Nursing program admits transfer students from USM and other institutions each fall through a competitive application process referred to as the ‘transfer pool.’ The application deadline is January 15 each year.

The minimum requirements which a student must meet in order to be considered for admission through the transfer pool are:

- math readiness
- writing proficiency
- minimum 3.0 GPA in all prior college work
- minimum 2.67 GPA in the nursing sciences (anatomy & physiology I & II, chemistry, microbiology & lab, human nutrition, and pathophysiology). The science GPA is calculated from the sciences that the student has completed, no matter where they were taken.

Please note that meeting the minimum requirements does not guarantee admission to the Nursing program.
How to Apply
As outlined above, the application process for the Nursing program is based on the number of credits that a student has completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Student Action</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between 0 and 32 credits</td>
<td>Complete a change of major Form and submit it to your advisor</td>
<td><a href="http://usm.maine.edu/sites/default/files/reg/Changeofprogram.pdf">http://usm.maine.edu/sites/default/files/reg/Changeofprogram.pdf</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 or more credits</td>
<td>Submit the Supplemental Nursing Application, resume, and essay directly to the School of Nursing by January 15 for the following fall.</td>
<td><a href="http://usm.maine.edu/sites/default/files/nursing-supplemental.pdf">http://usm.maine.edu/sites/default/files/nursing-supplemental.pdf</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assistance in meeting the requirements for the Nursing program

**Advising**

Your advisor can assist you in creating a plan of study that will help you meet the requirements for the Nursing program. You will find your USM advisor’s name listed in your Student Center on MaineStreet. If you have a declared major, please call that department to make an appointment with your advisor. If you are undeclared, please call the Student Success Center to make an appointment with your advisor:

- 119 Bailey Hall, Gorham, (207) 780-4555
- 119 Lewiston-Auburn College, Lewiston, (207) 753-6536
- 119 Payson Smith Hall, Portland, (207) 780-4040

For more information about Student Success locations and hours, please visit [www.usm.maine.edu/success](http://www.usm.maine.edu/success)

To stay on track with your academic goals, meet with your advisor on a regular basis. During your first meeting, your advisor will review classes needed and will explain their progression to you.

[The Advising Network](http://usm.maine.edu/success/advisingnetwork) is a collection of resources to support you in your partnership with your advisor. On this website you will find an advising timeline, learning modules, links, GPA calculator, forms, and much more.

**Tutoring**

USM students can receive free tutoring services in math, writing, English as a Second Language (ESL), and technology support. Our tutors are trained to assist students with improving their comprehension and skills in these subject areas. They have scheduled hours throughout the week and at multiple locations. Students can take the opportunity to:

- better understand math concepts
- improve the quality of their writing
- learn how to use a variety of software programs
- learn how to become more effective and efficient learners

Whether on the Portland, Gorham, or Lewiston-Auburn campus, students can schedule a face-to-face or online tutoring appointment by visiting [http://usm.askonline.net/](http://usm.askonline.net/) (PLEASE NOTE: students visiting this site for the first time will need to activate their AskOnline account, which will only take a few moments.)

In addition to self-scheduling through the AskOnline website, appointments for Portland and Gorham can also be scheduled by calling 780-4228, or by visiting The Learning Commons at University libraries ([http://www.usm.maine.edu/learningcommons](http://www.usm.maine.edu/learningcommons)). Lewiston-Auburn appointments can be scheduled by calling 753-6513 or emailing writingcenter@usm.maine.edu

Additional math support is offered on a walk-in basis through the Math Department, located in 301 Payson Smith Hall on the Portland campus.

**Disability Services Center**

The DSC provides a wide range of services to qualified enrolled USM students with physical, psychological and learning. In order to receive special accommodations, students must register with DSC. Please visit [http://usm.maine.edu/dsc](http://usm.maine.edu/dsc) for more information and locations.

**Counseling services**

The Counseling Center has professional staff to help you. Students who are registered in a minimum of six credit hours per semester are eligible for up to 12 free visits per academic.[http://usm.maine.edu/uhcs](http://usm.maine.edu/uhcs)
Frequently Asked Questions about the Change of Major Process

Q: Is there a limit to the number of students who can change their major to Nursing each year?
A: No, the School of Nursing will accept all USM students who meet the requirements to change their major to Nursing as first year students.

Q: I failed one of the courses required to change my major to Nursing. Can I repeat it?
A: Yes. If your grade in a course is below the minimum grade of C, you may repeat the course. However, you still need to be at or below 32 credits when you meet the requirements to change your major.

Q: I’m taking NUR 100- Introduction to Nursing. What’s the minimum grade I need to achieve in that course?
A: As of fall, 2014, the minimum acceptable grade in all Nursing (NUR) courses is a C+.

Q: I couldn’t get into a science course during freshman year. Now what?
A: If you successfully complete a required science for Nursing in the summer and meet the other requirements within 32 credits, you may change your major to nursing.

Q: But I don’t live near USM in the summer. What can I do if I need to take a course required for the change of major?
A: We accept science and social science courses from many other colleges, including community colleges in Maine and other states. Check with the transfer office at transfer@usm.maine.edu to determine if a course at another institution will meet our requirement.

Q: When can I submit my change of major form?
A: You may submit the form as soon as grades are posted and you have met the requirements. Please ask your advisor to sign the form. It is then sent to the School of Nursing for approval.

Q: What if I don’t meet the change of major requirements in 32 or fewer credits?
A: You should apply to the transfer pool for the following fall. Complete the Supplemental Application for Nursing and submit it by January 15 with your resume and essay, directly to the School of Nursing. You must meet the minimum requirements for transfer students (see above) to be considered for the program.

Frequently Asked Questions for USM Students Applying to the Transfer Pool

Q: How do I apply?
A: Complete the Supplemental Application for Nursing, and submit it by January 15 with your resume and essay directly to the School of Nursing.

Q: Does it cost anything to apply? Do I need to fill out the USM Undergraduate application?
A: No, there is no fee for currently matriculated USM students to apply to Nursing, nor do you need to complete the USM undergraduate application.

Q: Do I need to submit transcripts from other colleges that I’ve attended?
A: If you’ve taken courses at other colleges since you matriculated at USM, you should submit those transcripts.

Q: Does the USM School of Nursing admit students to nursing in the spring?
A: Transfer students are only accepted to Nursing for fall semester. First year students who qualify to change their major to Nursing may do so in fall, spring, or summer.

Q: Do I need to submit letters of recommendation?
A: The School of Nursing does not require letters of recommendation at this time.
Q-Do you conduct interviews for the Nursing Program?
A-No, The School of Nursing does not currently conduct interviews.

Q - Are there any prerequisite courses required to apply? 
A – Generally, applicants must have completed at least one Nursing science to be considered for the program. The application asks for information about clinical prerequisite courses that you have taken or plan to take so a plan of study can be developed for each accepted student, including assignment to a clinical cohort.

Q. May I take my clinical prerequisites at another college or university? 
A. Before taking courses at another institution, you should check the transfer equivalency information that is available online via MaineStreet. To access the information, click on Transfer Course Equivalencies under the Quick Links on the left side of the page. If you do not see the college/university or a particular course listed, and for other information regarding the transfer credit evaluation process, please contact the Office of Transfer Affairs at (207) 780-5340 or transfer@usm.maine.edu. Please work with your advisor for help in selecting the correct courses. Refer to this link: Plan of Study for Transfer Students. You will also need to have an official transcript sent from that institution to the USM Registrar office. (113 Corthell Hall, Gorham, ME, 04038). For more information, please call: (207) 780-5230.

Q-Do I need to submit proof that I’m enrolled in the courses that I listed on the application? 
A-No, but if you are taking courses at another college, be sure to submit transcripts as soon as grades are available.

Q-How do you calculate my GPA? 
A-We calculate GPA for all courses taken through the fall semester (including winter session) before the January due date, whether taken at USM or elsewhere. If you have a prior bachelor’s or masters degree, we calculate your grades from your degree GPA and any courses that you took after your degree was completed. Your science GPA is calculated for the Nursing sciences (anatomy & physiology I & II and labs, chemistry, microbiology and lab, human nutrition, and pathophysiology) that you’ve completed through fall semester before the January due date.

Q. How do you decide who is accepted? 
A. Applicants are reviewed based on undergraduate GPA in prior college work, the number of clinical prerequisites completed, resume, and essay. Admission is also based on the available space in the program. Meeting the minimum requirements does not guarantee admission.

Q. I've heard that it's almost impossible to be accepted to the Nursing program. Is that true? 
A. Unfortunately, the School of Nursing cannot accept every qualified applicant because of limited space in the program. In 2014, we accepted applicants with GPAs that ranged from 3.0 to 4.0. Of 108 qualified applicants, 70 were admitted.

Q-When will I know whether or not I’m accepted to the program? 
A-The School of Nursing’s goal is to notify applicants in writing in early April.

Q-Do you have a waiting list? 
A-The School of Nursing doesn’t maintain an ongoing waiting list. We may keep a short-term waiting list in order to fill a specific clinical cohort.

Q. Where can I get more information? 
Visit the School of Nursing degree page http://www.usm.maine.edu/nursing/bs-nursing on a regular basis. This is the primary source of information about the BS in Nursing program.

Attend an information session about transferring to the Nursing program: http://www.usm.maine.edu/nursing/information-session-reservation-form In these sessions, students learn about the Nursing program, the plan of study, requirements, and the admission process.
Q. I applied several times and didn’t get into the nursing program. Nursing is the only career I want. I don’t think I have any choices left. What should I do?

A. Please work with your current advisor to explore options that will help you be successful, or contact the Student Success Center. [http://www.usm.maine.edu/success](http://www.usm.maine.edu/success) USM offers other health-related degrees. Please see the next section of this document for more information.

Career Exploration in other Health Fields

It is recommended that from your first semester at USM you work with your advisor regularly to learn about the wide variety of exciting health fields that may be career possibilities for you. In addition, please keep in mind that USM’s nursing program is academically rigorous, especially in the science courses. We strongly encourage you to carry out the Career Decision Review outlined below. In addition, we’ve provided some helpful websites in the chart below.

Career Decision Review

Did you decide many years ago that you wanted to be a nurse? Since you may still be in the early stages as a college student, we challenge you to take a moment and recall the reasons why you have chosen nursing as your career goal. The suggested decision-making steps listed below may help confirm your decision, or help you to consider other options. The benefit to investing time in this step-by-step process is that it can help you feel satisfied about your career choices for many years.

Steps:

A. **Identify your goal or decision:** i.e. – “I want to help people.”

B. **Determine your options/alternatives:** In addition to Nursing, what other health careers would you consider? Try to come up with a list of at least three.

C. **Explore/ Research/ Gather information:** Find out more about nursing and other careers that you may have identified in “B”. This step may include talking with professors in various departments, job-shadowing professionals in the field, researching professional career organizations web site,s such as in athletic training, occupational therapy, or other fields.

   Another excellent resource is the Occupational Outlook Handbook, compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ online network, which includes background information of thousands of careers [http://www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org)

D. **Evaluate the pros and cons of each option/ alternative career:** Ask yourself, “Can I do well in the subjects required- especially in the sciences? Do I like the courses that are required? Will I be happy with the choices? Should I rewrite my goal?”

E. **Make an action plan:** Write the steps and a timetable that you need to accomplish your goal. Be willing to reevaluate your goal by using this decision making process each semester. The benefit to investing time in this process is that it should help you feel satisfied about your career choices.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Programs Offered</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>BS in Nursing</td>
<td>Karen Martel 207-228-8182 <a href="mailto:kmartel@usm.maine.edu">kmartel@usm.maine.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BS in Nursing - Accelerated Program</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MS in Nursing - for Non-Nurses with a Baccalaureate Degree - The Options program</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minor in Holistic Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreation and Leisure Studies</td>
<td>BS in Therapeutic Recreation</td>
<td>Laurie Nickerson: 207-780-4172 <a href="mailto:lnickerson@usm.maine.edu">lnickerson@usm.maine.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minor in Nature Based Tourism</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Minor in Recreational Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exercise, Health, and Sports Sciences</td>
<td>BS in Athletic Training</td>
<td>Kathryn Masters 207-780-5782 <a href="mailto:kmasters@usm.maine.edu">kmasters@usm.maine.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BS in Exercise Science - Exercise Physiology</td>
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<td>BS in Exercise Science - Health Fitness</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BS in Health Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Biological Sciences</td>
<td>BS in Biology: Biotechnology specialization</td>
<td>Ann Perry 780-4260 <a href="mailto:aperry@usm.maine.edu">aperry@usm.maine.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BS in Biology: Human Biology specialization</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Certificate in Pre-medical studies (Postbaccalaureate)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Certificate in Pre-veterinary studies (Postbaccalaureate)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Concentration in Biology: Pre-pharmacy program</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Minor in Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapy Master’s Degree</td>
<td>Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT)</td>
<td>Luisa Scott 753-6500 <a href="mailto:lscott@usm.maine.edu">lscott@usm.maine.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Jumpstart Option</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Located on the LAC campus)</td>
<td>(for those who don't have a prior degree)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

You might also want to consider exploring USM’s majors in Linguistics (780-4582), Social Work (780-4120), or Psychology (780-4250).
Resources

USM Change of Major to Nursing Process, from a Student Perspective (Youtube video)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZmznyBfKwE

Exploring Health Care Majors at USM: