



**UNDERGRADUATE
NURSING
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Robert Morris University
School of Nursing and Health Sciences
Department of Nursing
Undergraduate Student Handbook

I. Welcome

Congratulations on being accepted into the nursing program at Robert Morris University. Your success depends on many factors, including a commitment to academics, communication with faculty, as well as an ability to utilize and understand the resources available to you at Robert Morris University. This handbook will serve as a guide to assist you throughout your years in the nursing program. There are several helpful web links which are underlined. The School of Nursing and Health Sciences (SNHS) website is rich with information to assist you in achieving success as a nursing student:

[Robert Morris University-School of Nursing and Health Sciences](#)

A. Academic Calendar

The academic calendar has important dates including registration, tuition due dates, course withdrawal, and semester start and end dates. [Click here](#) to view the RMU Academic Calendar:

B. Course Catalog

The course catalog contains information regarding courses, dates, and times which are helpful when scheduling. [Click here](#) to access to the RMU course catalog:

C. Department of Nursing Faculty

The Department of Nursing is committed to hiring well-qualified faculty members who have expertise in nursing and education. We encourage you to form scholarly relationships with your faculty and to seek individual assistance when needed. Our faculty are committed to assisting students achieve success while maintaining the high standards required by the nursing profession. Here is the link to view a listing of the [Nursing faculty and staff of the Department of Nursing](#):

D. Accreditation and Approval

Robert Morris University Department of Nursing Undergraduate Program received accreditation by CCNE (Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education) for the maximum length of time for a new program (five years) in the fall of 2005. A visit for continued accreditation is scheduled in the Fall, 2009.

The BSN Program earned full approval by the Pennsylvania State Board

of Nursing in the Fall, 2007.

E. Registration

All nursing students need to have their course selections approved by their advisor prior to registration for the fall and spring terms. You must schedule an appointment with your advisor and then register through the website at your assigned time. Without receiving approval or the “electronic signature” of the advisor, the nursing student is unable to register for the upcoming term.

F. Curriculum

The RMU Department of Nursing offers two ways for prelicensure students to earn their Baccalaureate degree and earn eligibility to take the State Licensure Exam. The Traditional track is for those students who do not have a previous bachelor’s degree. The Second Degree track or accelerated option is for those students who have earned a previous bachelor’s degree in another field.

1. Traditional Track

Click on the following link to view a sample of the traditional track curriculum:

[Robert Morris University - Sample Curriculum - BS in Nursing, Traditional Track](#)

2. Second Degree /Accelerated Track

Students in the Second Degree track should have the following courses satisfied by either acceptable course completion at RMU, advanced standing, or transfer credits from another college or university before starting the accelerated portion of the program:

Chemistry with lab
Anatomy & Physiology I & II with labs
Microbiology with lab
General Psychology
Human Growth & Development (lifespan course)
History or Political Science
Nutrition
Principles of Sociology
Survey of Economics
Humanities: Art & Music
Statistics (3 credits of college-level math is a prerequisite for statistics at RMU)
Communications Skills

Students accepted into the Second Degree track should plan to take nursing courses (i.e., Intro to Professional Nursing,

Pathophysiology, and Nursing Assessment and Health Promotion) prior to the accelerated portion of the Second Degree track at RMU. These three nursing courses are offered in the spring and summer terms at RMU. Click on the following link to view the sample curriculum.

[Robert Morris University - Sample Curriculum - BS in Nursing, Second Degree Track](#)

II. Policies / Procedures

A. Nursing

The Department of Nursing has specific policies which guide our academic practices. The following link provides access to the Department of Nursing undergraduate policies and procedures. Students should take the time to view this important page.

[Robert Morris University Department of Nursing - Undergraduate Policies & Procedures](#)

B. Robert Morris University

The following link provides access to the undergraduate academic policies and procedures of RMU.

[Robert Morris University - Undergraduate Policies and Procedures](#)

C. Attendance

Attendance at all classes, lab, and clinical is extremely important and is an expectation of nursing students that is critical to success.

III. Clinical / Skills Lab Information

A. Health Insurance

All students in the nursing program are required to carry health insurance while a nursing major. If you need health insurance, this can be obtained through Robert Morris University. If you have your own coverage, you must enter your health insurance information on the RMU website each

academic year or you will be automatically invoiced for the health insurance offered through RMU. The following link has information for students regarding student health insurance coverage:

[Robert Morris University - Student Insurance.](#)

The following link will enable you to add your health insurance Information via the RMU website:

B. Transportation

Each student will be responsible for his/her own transportation to assigned sites for student clinical experiences.

C. Uniforms

Uniforms are required for nursing lab and clinical experiences. Required uniform items include a scrub set of top and pants, and lab coat with the official RMU patches affixed by the company. The scrubs are navy blue; the lab coat is white. The uniforms are ordered from the company designated by the Department of Nursing, and information about ordering uniforms is given before the term of the first lab or clinical experience. Clean, white shoes are required for clinical (no open toed, or fabric shoes permitted).

D. Clinical Clearances

Pennsylvania Child Abuse History, Pennsylvania Criminal Record Check Clearances and FBI Criminal History Background Check are due prior to starting the nursing courses with a clinical component. Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance Form (CY-113) and Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Record Check Form (SPA-164) are the full names of these forms to apply for the clearances. According to the policies and procedures for the Department of Nursing, the clearances are considered valid for one year. Instructions and forms to apply for the clearances can be obtained from the following website:

Forms for the Pennsylvania Child Abuse History and Pennsylvania Criminal Record Check Clearances can be obtained at the following website:

<https://www.dpw.state.pa.us/>

Payment by money order is required for each clearance.

However, the Criminal Record Check can be obtained quickly online:

<https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>

Payment by credit card is required for a clearance obtained through epatch.

If you obtain your clearance through the epatch website (PATCH Systems), please print out the “Certification Form” from the website before submitting it to the Nursing Advisor.

FBI Criminal History Clearances are obtained by submitting requested identifying information, a set of fingerprints on a special set of cards, and a certified check or money order payable to the “US Treasury” for \$18.00 in US Funds. Alternatively a credit card can also be used to obtain the FBI Clearances.

NOTE: A charge or a conviction of a felonious act may prevent students from attending clinical experiences. Inability to fulfill clinical objectives could result in failure in the course and/ or dismissal from the program.

E. Handheld Computing Device (HCD)

Each nursing student will receive a HCD prior to the first course with clinical. This HCD is a required tool to be used in both the clinical and classroom setting. Research has supported the use of HCDs for nurses to assist in providing safe care for their patients. The RMU Department of Nursing website has helpful information regarding the PDA’s:

[Department of Nursing Technical Support](#)

F. Cognitive / Sensory Requirements

Each nursing student must be able to meet the cognitive and sensory requirements necessary to function as a professional nurse. Please review the following requirements. Your healthcare provider will assure that these can be met when completing the health appraisal forms:

[Robert Morris University - Nursing Program, Cognitive and Sensory Requirements](#)

G. Health Forms

1. An initial health evaluation is required prior to the start of the first course with clinical. The Department of Nursing requires a separate health evaluation to comply with Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing regulations as well as contractual agreements of clinical agencies where students are placed. The form is available on the Department of Nursing website.

[Robert Morris University - Nursing Program, Student Health Evaluation Forms.](#)

Original forms completed by the healthcare provider are submitted by the student to the Nursing Advisor by the given due date. Always keep a copy of any important documents that are submitted.

2. A health exam is required yearly after the initial health evaluation for as long as the student is enrolled in the nursing clinical courses. The form is available on the Department of Nursing website.

[Robert Morris University - Nursing Program, Student Health Evaluation Forms](#)

H. CPR Certification

Current CPR certification is required prior to the first clinical course. The certification required is the American Heart Association “Healthcare Provider” Level or the American Red Cross “Professional Rescuer.” Students are responsible for the cost of certification. A copy of the CPR card is submitted to the Nursing Advisor by the given due date and is kept in the student file. The student keeps the original.

I. International Experiences

Nursing students are given the opportunity to travel internationally.. Dr. Carl Ross serves as Director, International Activities. The following link provides helpful information regarding this innovative program.

[Robert Morris University - SON - International Activities](#)

J. Simulation Lab

The Department of Nursing incorporates the use of High Fidelity Human Patient Simulators in the educational process. This innovative technology allows students the ability to demonstrate the nursing role in a safe, controlled environment. The following link provides information regarding this innovative instructional technique.

K. Student Liability Insurance

Students are covered by a group policy through the Department of Nursing.

L. Nursing Student Equipment

Purchase of stethoscopes, pen lights, bandage scissors, etc., is done by the student as needed/required.

IV. Student Resources

A. Student Health Center

The student health center provides primary care services to residential students.

[Robert Morris University - Student Health Services](#)

B. Center for Student Success

The Center for Student Success provides services that include but are not limited to counseling, tutoring, and disability services. If you need assistance in classes, please contact your faculty member in addition to the Center for Student Success. The tutoring schedule is now available online.

[Robert Morris University - Center for Student Success](#)

C. Student Advising

Students who are in the first two years of the program are advised by the Nursing Advisor. Nursing students in the last two years of the program are reassigned to a faculty member for advisement. The Nursing Advisor and faculty are located in John Jay Center. The Nursing Advisor is Mrs. Anne Canny and she can be reached at 412-397-3878 or by email at canny@rmu.edu.

D. Scholarship and Financial Aid Information

[Scholarship Information](#)
www.rmu.edu/finaid.
www.pheaa.org

E. Student Email

Email is used by the nursing advisor as well as the faculty to contact nursing students with important information. RMU student email should be read daily. NOTE: If you have another email address, that you currently use, you may have your RMU student email forwarded to that address. Please contact the RMU IT Help Desk for assistance.

F. RMU Library

The RMU library is staffed by qualified librarians to assist you in your scholarly projects. There are also many nursing professional journals located in the library in print format. In addition, the RMU Electronic Library is a helpful service to search databases while off campus.

V. Graduation Information

A. Pinning Ceremony

The Department of Nursing hosts a pinning ceremony prior to graduation during the Fall and Spring Semesters. This ceremony is used to celebrate your accomplishments during your years at RMU. Family and friends are invited to attend and celebrate with you. The dates are announced at the beginning of the semester. Family and friends are invited to attend and celebrate with you.

B. Commencement

RMU hosts a formal commencement ceremony each May that includes both the December and May graduates. The dates are included in the academic calendar. This formal academic ceremony is rich with tradition and includes the academic procession of administrators, faculty, and students, a pertinent message delivered by a guest speaker, and the presentation of your diploma. Academic regalia are worn. Family and friends can attend. Note: Students who complete all courses for their degree by the end of the summer session following the May commencement are to attend the May ceremony. **Students must apply for graduation in the first two weeks of the semester in which they will graduate. Please see the website for details.**

C. State Board Website

Prior to graduation, the student submits an application for the Registered Nurse Examination for Licensure in Pennsylvania or any other state or territory. Nurse licensure candidates take the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) on a computer at test centers. The use of the same examination by all jurisdictions facilitates licensure by endorsement from one board of nursing to another. The Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing has important information with respect to application for the temporary practice permit and NCLEX exam. In addition, this website provides access to current Pennsylvania RN law and regulations:

[Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing.](#)

1. National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX)

- Fee \$200

- Students register for this exam at www.vue.com/nclex

2. Pennsylvania Nurse Licensure Application/ Temporary Practice Permit (TPP)

- \$35 fee
- School sends completed application to Pennsylvania State Board after all of the student's graduation requirements have been met.

The following link provides helpful information related to the licensure exam: [BPOA: Licensure Information](#)

PLEASE NOTE: *A conviction for a violation as noted below may prevent a graduate from being licensed as a Registered Nurse.**

State Board of Pennsylvania Rules and Regulations. Section 6. Fees; Qualifications for Licensure.

No application for licensure as a Registered Nurse shall be considered unless accompanied by a fee determined by the Board by regulation. Every applicant, to be eligible for examination for licensure as a registered nurse, shall furnish evidence satisfactory to the Board that he or she is of good moral character, has completed work equal to a standard high school course as evaluated by the Board, and has satisfactorily completed an approved program of professional nursing.

The Board shall not issue a license or certificate to an applicant who has been convicted of a felonious act prohibited by the Act of April 14, 1972 (P.L.233, No. 64), known as "The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act," or convicted of a felony relating to a controlled substance in a court of law of the United States or any other state, territory or country – unless: (1) at least ten (10) years have elapsed from the date of the conviction; (2) the applicant satisfactorily demonstrates to the Board that he has made significant progress in personal rehabilitation since the conviction such that licensure of the applicant should not be expected to create a substantial risk of harm to the health and safety of patients or the public or a substantial risk of further criminal violations; and (3) the applicant otherwise satisfies the qualifications contained in or authorized by this act.

As used in this subsection, the term "convicted" shall include judgment, an admission of guilt, or a plea of nolo contendere. An applicant's statement on the application declaring the absence of a conviction shall be deemed satisfactory evidence of the absence of a conviction, unless the Board has some evidence to the contrary.

3. Licensure in a State other than Pennsylvania

Students apply for licensure in the State or territory in which they wish to be licensed by contacting that state's Board of Nursing.

VI. Extracurricular Activities

A. Student Nurse Association of Pennsylvania (SNAP)

RMU has a SNAP chapter on campus. Faculty advisors are Professor Lisa Locasto and Professor Kathi Perozzi. SNAP meets regularly to discuss community service involvement and fundraising to support their activities.

B. Dean's Student Advisory Board

Two representatives from each class are elected to serve on this advisory board. The committee discusses nursing program-related ideas and concerns with the Dean of the School of Nursing, and meets two to three times per term.

C. RMU Honor Society / Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI)

This group promotes scholarship in the profession of nursing. It is an honor to be selected for membership and there are specific criteria for selection. *Upsilon Phi* is a chapter of Sigma Theta Tau, the international honor society of nursing. For students who become eligible and are invited, membership is strongly encouraged.

D. Student Activities

Robert Morris University offers many services and activities for both resident and commuter students, including clubs, fraternities and sororities, Division I Athletics, intramural sports, marching band, and theatre.