

# Salisbury University, School of Nursing

## Second-Degree BSN Program

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **1. Why is the second-degree program considered to be an accelerated nursing program?**

This program condenses the nursing content that would normally occur over 4 semesters into 3 semesters. Through extensive reading assignments, students must process and master a large amount of material in very short periods of time. This program will likely be much more challenging than your first-degree program due to the amount of content covered, the condensed program time, the self-discipline required, and the clinical time demands. In addition, if you have a family and other obligations outside of school, time management skills will be paramount to your academic success.

Current program structure:

The 16-month option begins in late August with courses offered in Fall, Spring, and the following Fall. There are no courses over the summer and graduation occurs in December. For example, if a student begins in August of 2023, they will graduate in December 2024.

#### **2. When do the nursing courses begin?**

Courses focused on nursing theory (learning about diseases and patient care) begin in your first semester and will be paired with a clinical (application) course, simulations, and a lab practicum. Theory courses are taught via a team approach with two to three faculty experts conducting classroom-based lectures/ activities.

#### **3. What is the faculty to student ratio in classroom-based and clinical courses?**

In the classroom setting, there are generally no more than 50-55 students per lecture section. For proper supervision of students, particularly in the early clinical experiences, there are usually no more than 8 students per faculty member.

#### **4. Will my schedule be the same each week?**

While the in-class schedule will remain consistent week to week, various outside of the class obligations can change weekly. Typically, an ideal week would include three half days of lecture and at least one to two clinical days (depending on which semester you are in). This does not include travel time to campus and clinical experiences and the necessary time required to complete out of class work. In the 12-month curriculum, the summer courses are even more accelerated.

## **5. When and where will I go for clinical experiences?**

Clinical rotations begin in the fall semester and continue throughout all three semesters of your program. Clinical courses are paired with related theory courses; the clinical component offers you the opportunity to apply theory to actual patient care. Locations of the clinical experiences can include hospitals and a variety of other inpatient and outpatient settings on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Delaware. Generally, facilities are no more than a one-hour maximum drive, and most are within 30 minutes of campus. Hospital settings most frequently used for medical-surgical (Adult Health) clinical include Tidal Health Hospitals in Salisbury, Maryland and Seaford, Delaware, and Atlantic General Hospital in Berlin, Maryland. For specialty courses such as psychiatric, maternity, and pediatric courses, experiences extend outside these traditional hospital settings. The Henson Medical Simulation Center on the Salisbury University campus is also used for a variety of clinical experiences.

## **6. What is involved in clinical experiences?**

Students generally spend between 8-12 hours between 7:00am and 10:00 pm at the hospital or related facility for clinical and in some cases, are required to go to the hospital/facility the day prior for 1 to 2 hours to meet their assigned patient and/or obtain the necessary information in preparation for the clinical day. Although rare, there may also be mandatory weekend clinical rotations that will be scheduled during your program. There is usually some type of written assignment (for example, a care plan or case study) that is submitted and graded in addition to the actual performance grade.

## **7. Will I need to provide my own transportation to clinical experiences?**

Students are responsible for providing their own transportation for clinical rotations but may carpool with members of their clinical group. Most clinical rotations are located within an hour's drive from Salisbury University. For some of the rotations, students will need their own vehicle as they are individually assigned to various locations on the Eastern Shore.

## **8. Do I have to go to clinical experiences?**

Yes. Clinical experiences are required of all students. These experiences are scheduled based on the availability at various health care facilities. Some experiences are in the evening, some are in the mornings, and some are occasionally on weekends. Aside from pre-clinical time, clinical experiences predominantly occur on Tuesdays and Thursdays; however, some experiences will occur on Mondays and Wednesdays as necessary. For summer clinical experiences in the 12-month curriculum, students can expect to be on-site 4 days per week.

**9. How much time per week will be expected of me to be successful in this program?**

The official recommendation by faculty is two-three hours per week, per credit hour, which would equate to approximately 36-45 hours per week. Throughout each week, you will be required to complete various online assignments, readings, homework, study for exams and quizzes, prepare for clinical and complete care plans/case studies. While this volume of work may seem overwhelming at first, it is very doable by staying organized, keeping track of your assignments week-to-week and planning for their completion in advance. The workload can vary week to week, and there will be weeks where you will be able to get ahead on various assignments. This truly emphasizes the importance of staying ahead and remaining organized to be successful in this program.

**10. Can I work while enrolled in the accelerated nursing program?**

Due to the rigorous nature of the accelerated nursing curriculum, **holding a job while enrolled in this program is highly discouraged!** There are extensive time demands, a rigorous curriculum, and variable clinical schedules. There are major time commitments required for studying, as well as for classes and clinical rotations. You should expect a much greater time commitment to be successful with this academic program than what you experienced in your first-degree program. If you must work, it is recommended that you only work part-time (no more than 10-12 hours/week). Time management skills are of utmost importance to be successful in the curriculum.

**11. What is the NCLEX-RN exam and what strategies are in place to enhance my success in passing this exam?**

This exam is the official licensing exam that all graduates must pass in order to work as a registered nurse upon graduation. In addition to the established well-rounded curriculum that is offered, students also are enrolled in an Adaptive quizzing program beginning in the first semester of the junior year. This computer-based learning system offers students the opportunity to take computer-based NCLEX-style questions in preparation for the NCLEX-RN exam. Other supplemental activities include use of the Lucy Tull Resource Center and the Henson Medical Simulation Center. These centers provide opportunity for skills practice, simulation experiences, and other resources to enhance learning.

**12. About how much money can I expect to spend during the first semester on supplies?**

(Approximately as of September 2023)

- In total, one can prepare for approximately **\$2,100** in supplies and preparation their first semester. Included within these total costs includes, but may not be limited to: Student Uniform (scrub package), Nursing Skill Supply Kit, Nursing Textbooks/Book bundle (this includes most textbooks required in future semesters and the Adaptive quizzing program), CPR/AED Certification(will need to continue to recertify every two years), Castlebranch Membership to upload background check/personal health records, Criminal Background Check (further background checks may be required depending on clinical placements), and Drug Screening tests.
- Future Costs **NOT** included within this list: Approximately **\$700** for remaining Nursing Textbooks, NCLEX examination costs, Maryland Board of Nursing License, and Criminal Background Check and Fingerprinting costs. This does not include NCLEX

review course per students' personal preference (although each student receives a remediation package from Elsevier after taking the HESI Exit RN exam), as well as any further travel cost for clinical sites, or future necessary costs on an as needed basis.

**13. How will I know about important program announcements and requirements?**

All official communication will happen through your SU email account. You must monitor this at least once daily (possibly more frequently) to remain abreast of current issues. This is expected of all students for all courses while at SU. There is also an orientation site through Canvas with important information during your first year in the program and an annual site for students beyond the first year.

**14. Can you tell me about student advising and the procedure for this?**

This is a cohort program, and you will receive program scheduling and advising assistance each semester as a group from the Second-Degree Coordinator who will be assigned as your academic advisor and can provide individual advising assistance when needed.

**15. How do I register for courses?**

For the first semester only, students will be registered into their required courses by the Second-Degree Coordinator. For each of the following semesters, students will need to register themselves using the GullNet system at Salisbury University. ***GullNet is a very important tool for you to use throughout your program at Salisbury University.*** It is the main communication tool for registration information, drop/add dates, graduation requirements, billing notices, semester deadlines, etc. Be sure to look at your GullNet account on a frequent and regular basis.

