

GREATER ALTOONA CAREER & TECHNOLOGY CENTER
PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY-ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. When does the next class begin?

A full-time class begins every August, runs one full year, and the students graduate in August. A part-time class begins every other August (even years), and runs two full years, with graduation in August.

2. What are the days and times of class?

This is a full-time nursing program, which involves a great deal of study and preparation time, in addition to regularly scheduled class and clinical hours.

Theory classes run Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Fall, Winter and Spring) or 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.(Summer) for the full-time program. Future students may be required to do an occasional evening or weekend shift. Clinical hours vary pending facility. Generally clinical hours are 7:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Theory classes for the part-time program are generally Tuesday through Thursday, from 4:30 to 9:30 p.m. Clinical hours also vary pending facility, but can be weekdays 4:30 to 10:30 p.m. and weekends from 7:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Students are required to do approximately 2-4 clinic days that are day time hours.

3. Is everyday spent at the Career & Technology Center?

A few days a week are spent in class at the C.T.C. and a few days a week are spent in clinical at the UPMC Altoona or one of our other affiliating agencies.

4. What is the cost of the Practical Nursing Program?

An application to the Practical Nursing program is \$40, which covers the cost of the pre-entrance exam. The 2015-2016 tuition is \$12,200 for the full-time program. Tuition for the 2014-2016 part-time program is \$12,000. In addition to the tuition, there are other costs of approximately \$3,000 for books, uniforms, insurance, and other professional fees. These figures usually increase every year depending on State funding.

5. Is there any financial aid available?

Yes. The P.N. Program is approved for a variety of funding sources, which are listed in our Program brochure and on our website at www.gactc.edu. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) can be completed anytime after January 1, 2014, at www.fafsa.ed.gov, during the year you are enrolling.

- 6. What is the pre-entrance exam about?**
It is a standardized test which covers the areas of Vocabulary, Math, Spelling, Science, Judgment and Vocational Aptitude. It gives both you and our faculty an idea of your high school-level strengths and weaknesses.
- 7. What is the next step after taking the pre-entrance exam?**
Approximately two weeks after your test date, your scores will be e-mailed by the test scoring company to the Practical Nursing office. A copy of your scores will be mailed to you. If you pass the pre-entrance exam, you will be scheduled for an interview with one of our nursing faculty.
- 8. What is the Interview about?**
The interview is for you to discuss your strengths and/or weaknesses on the pre-entrance test, including remedial course work which may be recommended. It also gives you an opportunity to ask questions about the Program and about financial aid, and gives the faculty the opportunity to ask you questions relevant to the health-care field.
- 9. If I do poorly on the test, may I take it again?**
Yes. The re-test fee is \$40 and is payable in cash or money order on the day of the test. We strongly recommend remedial work in weak areas prior to re-testing, in order to increase your knowledge in that area. The Community Education Center, at 200 East Crawford Avenue in Altoona, is one available resource center. They offer a wide range of remedial course work, including Math, Science, Spelling, Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension and situations dealing with reasoning skills and work ethics. They can be contacted at 946-8330 for further information.
- 10. After I graduate from the P.N. Program, am I then a Licensed Practical Nurse?**
No. At graduation you are considered a Graduate Practical Nurse (GPN). Within one year after you graduate, you must take the National Exam for Licensure. If you pass this exam, you will be granted a Pennsylvania license and you will be a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN). Our program currently has a 97% Licensure Exam pass rate.
- 11. Will I be able to get a job as a GPN? What are LPNs usually paid?**
Our graduating classes generally have a 100% hiring rate with two months of graduation. Starting wages for LPNs in the Blair County area average \$15.00 per hour.
- 12. What do LPNs do?**
The LPN is considered to be the bedside nurse who gives total patient care, including daily physical care, administering medications, injections, IV Therapy, and a variety of other patient-care procedures. They work in a variety of settings, including hospitals, doctor offices, nursing homes, labs, clinics, health-care agencies, industries, pharmaceutical supply offices and private homes, to name a few.