

February 2018

RN to BSN

A newsletter from
THE DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

AT SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

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SMSU RN to BSN Program Admission Requirement Changes

Exciting things continue to happen in the SMSU RN to BSN Program! Recently, we have focused on one of the tasks all of our students experience - applying to the RN to BSN Program. After hearing from our students, we are pleased to announce that there have been some notable changes in the application process. Applicants to the RN to BSN Program will no longer be required to provide evidence of a medical provider examination, or immunization/TB records, prior to admission to the RN to BSN Program. This will ease the application process for those students, allowing them to work on providing their medical records throughout their time in the RN to BSN Program, completing them prior to any clinical course.

The application process is now **As Easy As 1-2-3:**

1. Apply to SMSU
2. Apply to RN to BSN Program
3. Complete background study

We are pleased to share these changes in the RN to BSN Program, as we continually improve the RN to BSN Program to meet the needs of our students and those they serve.

Submitted by Laurie Johansen

Contingency Acceptance Requirement

The SMSU Department of Nursing continues to celebrate many successes since the launch of their RN to BSN Program in 2013. As we enter our fifth year of the SMSU RN to BSN Program, we look back on all we have learned from the SMSU nursing students, as well as nurses who are considering an RN to BSN Program. One result of listening to the needs of these students is a change in the admission criteria for the SMSU RN to BSN Program. The implementation of a new SMSU Department of Nursing policy allows students who are completing their final semester in an associate degree nursing (ADN) program to be accepted into the SMSU RN to BSN Program. This acceptance into the SMSU RN to BSN Program is contingent on successful completion of the NCLEX-RN and receipt of a Board of Nursing RN license prior to enrolling in SMSU nursing courses.

Admissions to the SMSU RN to BSN Program occur fall and spring semesters through an online application process. Applications to the SMSU RN to BSN Program are accepted in the order they are received, and when acceptance criteria are met. Through the enactment of the new admission policy, nursing students can secure admission to the SMSU RN to BSN Program, even before they graduate from their ADN program and are registered nurses. One more way SMSU strives to meet our student's needs!

Submitted by Laurie Johansen



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RN-BSN Students Present at SMSU Undergraduate Research Conference!

Submitted by Nancyruth Leibold

Twenty-two RN to BSN students presented their Evidence-Based Nursing projects at the 2017 SMSU Undergraduate Research Conference! A wide variety of topics were chosen by the RN to BSN students for the focus of their evidence-based projects as detailed below (see table of presenters and topics). Seven poster presentations were given and one oral podium presentation by Sarah Hunter and Ashley Wulkan. The poster: *Breastfeeding: Benefits, Tools, and Resources* by Megan Vangsness, Teresa Haase, David Haase, and Jennifer Jager was chosen to hang on long-term display in Founder's Hall! Congratulations to all the presenters!

Nursing Presenters	Presentation Topic
Bethany Block, Ashley Bohlsen, Olive Jones, & Edna Masese	Hand Washing and the Spread of Clostridium Difficile
Danna Steffen & Tenae Aston	Lice in Schools: Nit or Not
Megan Vangsness, Teresa Haase, David Haase, & Jennifer Jager	Breastfeeding: Benefits, Tools, and Resources
Darci Aslesen, Myckenzie Sefkar, & Josie Loll	Fall Prevention in Long-Term Care
Sarah Blom & Lindsay Mitlyng	Mandating Influenza Vaccines for Healthcare Workers and its Effects
Kayla Moser, Kim Anderson, Liz Bunjer, & Sheena St. Aubin	Keeping it at the Bedside
Sherry Helleksen	How Does Management Affect Nurse Retention?
Sarah Hunter & Ashley Wulkan	There's No Room in the Inn: The Need for Community Based Behavioral Health Care



Lindsay Mitlyng explains *Mandating Influenza Vaccines for Healthcare Workers and its Effects*. The project was by Sarah Blom and Lindsay Mitlyng.

Tenae Aston (left) and Danna Steffen (right) present their evidence-based poster, *Lice in Schools: Nit or Not*.



Nursing Curriculum Focus on Rural Populations

Did you know that there are 46.1 million U.S. inhabitants who are rural dwellers? That may sound like a lot of people. However, rural dwellers only account for approximately 14% of the U.S. population. Even more interesting, the 14% of the U.S. population that are rural dwellers live on 72% of the America's landmass. This creates a rural population with unique healthcare needs.

The SMSU RN to BSN Program weaves concepts of rural nursing throughout the nursing curriculum. Even though all nurses follow the same standards of practice for nursing, and utilize basic nursing skills, rural nurses provide a unique subspecialty of nursing to provide care to rural dwellers. Nursing students in the SMSU RN to BSN Program appreciate the opportunity to learn more about rural nursing, and how to provide quality care to rural dwellers. Even if our nursing students don't practice nursing in rural areas, they appreciate an awareness surrounding how to meet the needs of rural dwellers. It becomes evident that using general nursing models, developed in urban settings, don't always address the needs of rural dwellers. Caring for the rural population requires unique approaches emphasizing special needs of the rural population, like any unique culture.

In a recent survey of nursing students graduating from the SMSU RN to BSN Program, students ranked the quality of the curriculum to be a mean of 4.74, on a 1-5 scale. This is just one example of how SMSU has created and delivered a high quality nursing educational program to prepare nurses to advance human well-being while improving the quality of life for diverse populations, such as Minnesota and rural residents.

Submitted by Laurie Johansen

SMSU Nursing T-shirt - SMSU Nursing Students or Alumni who refer a nurse to the SMSU RN to BSN Program will receive a SMSU Nursing t-shirt once the student is enrolled in the nursing program!

Rural Populations and Rural Nursing

The Southwest Minnesota Nursing Honor Society hosted an Education Webinar for nurses at 7 pm on November 13, 2017. Dr. Laurie Jo Johansen, Associate Professor of Nursing at Southwest Minnesota State University presented Rural Populations and Rural Nursing.

Dr. Laurie Jo Johansen is also the Director of Nursing and Chair of the Department of Nursing at Southwest Minnesota State University. Dr. Johansen has been a Registered Nurse since 1995. She completed her PhD in Nursing at the University of North Dakota. Her doctoral dissertation was titled: *Commuting Away: The Experiences of RNs Who Live in Rural Communities and Commute Away for Employment in Non-Rural Communities*. Dr. Johansen has multiple professional journal publications, book chapters, and professional conference presentations on the topic of Rural Nursing.

This Education Webinar was an Education Webinar hosted by the Southwest Minnesota Nursing Honor Society. Attendees received a certificate of attendance.

Submitted by Nancyruth Leibold



Pictured:
Dr. Laurie Johansen
Director of Nursing

SMSU and Minnesota West Community & Technical College Collaboration

People thinking about pursuing a career in nursing frequently come to SMSU and Minnesota West Community and Technical College (MN West) with questions about how to become a nurse. They experience the path to becoming a nurse confusing, finding different types of nursing and different educational opportunities to become a nurse. There are Licensed Practical Nursing degrees (LPN), Associates Degrees in Nursing (ADN), and Bachelor of Sciences Degrees in Nursing (BSN). Deciding the type of nursing you want to pursue, and how to do so, is essential to plan your future nursing career path.

SMSU and MN West collaborate to help nurses find an educational path that meets the needs of many nursing students. Together, they offer an education path that is flexible, while being dedicated to the personal growth of future nurses.

Here's how it works:

Year 1 - Practical Nursing (LPN) at MN West (Diploma degree)

Year 2 - Professional Nursing (RN) at MN West (Associate degree)

Year 3-4 - Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) at SMSU (Bachelor degree)

Many students appreciate the opportunities this plan offers.

Benefits include:

Quality education

Accredited programs

Transfer of credits

Decreased tuition costs

Living where you choose, with no on-campus housing required

Pursuing education while working and earning a wage as a nurse

Learning through experiences

Flexibility in educational pathway

Stopping or taking a break after each step, or continuing through entire program

Learning in a classroom or from home (first 2 years)

Learning in a predominantly online setting (years 3-4)

Part time or full time educational opportunities

Through the SMSU/MN West collaboration, students can identify the path to becoming a nurse that calls to them, leading them a future in the rewarding professional of nursing.

Submitted by Laurie Johansen

Application to the SMSU RN to BSN Program is As Easy As 1-2-3:

- Apply to [SMSU](https://www.smsu.edu/admission/apply-online.html) at <https://www.smsu.edu/admission/apply-online.html>
- Apply to RN to BSN Program
- Complete background study

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Our SMSU Nursing Faculty Member in the spotlight is Dr. Ruth Van Heukelom.

Dr. Van Ruth Heukelom has been a cornerstone of the SMSU RN to BSN Program since before the nursing program began. Dr. Van Heukelom has been instrumental in the development of the SMSU RN to BSN Program. Her involvement on the Task Force on the Development of a Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree Program at SMSU, during the development of the RN to BSN Program prior to 2013, was instrumental in the development of a quality nursing program. Many of you may already know Dr. Van Heukelom, as her teaching experience spans from 1991 to the present with roles ranging from classroom, lab, and clinical instruction to the role as Director of Associate Degree Program at Minnesota West Community and Technical College. Dr. Van Heukelom's continued willingness to serve as an adjunct instructor has strengthened the SMSU RN to BSN Program, bringing clinical, teaching, and service expertise to SMSU. Her historical knowledge about the development of the SMSU RN to BSN Nursing Program, and her commitment to SMSU and nursing students, are outstanding features that lead to our successes at SMSU.

Although Dr. Van Heukelom lives in Iowa, she always makes it very clear that she is only a phone call away! Beyond her role in the SMSU RN to BSN Program, she enjoys spending time with her husband, children, and six young grandchildren. Camping, biking and sewing are favorite ways to spend her free time.

Submitted by Laurie Johansen



Pictured: Dr. Ruth Van Heukelom

RN to BSN Applications

The SMSU RN to BSN Nursing Program continues to admit nursing students every fall and spring semester. We are still accepting applications for fall 2018 and spring 2019. Information is available at <http://www.smsu.edu/academics/programs/rntobsn/>.

***New to SMSU:** Associate Degree nursing students may apply in the last semester of their nursing program, with acceptance into the program contingent upon successful completion of their NCLEX-RN exam.*



SMSU Department of Nursing

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Mark Your Calendar!

- Mar. 5-9 Spring Break
- Mar. 23 Fall 2018 Registration Begins
- Apr. 27 Last Day of Classes
- May 4 Nurse Pinning Ceremony
- May 5 Commencement
- May 21 Summer 2018 Session Begins