

RNFA Program for APRNs - FAQ's

Question:

What is the process for getting admitted to the RNFA post graduate certificate program?

Answer:

1. Apply to the graduate program. From the RNFA Program web page (http://www.angelo.edu/dept/nursing/registered_nurse_first_assis.htm) click on the link to the College of Graduate Studies in the upper right hand corner. At the top of that page, click on "APPLY". This will take you to the Apply Texas website. Here you will set up an account and apply as a non-degree additional certification student. Do not apply for the CNS, NP, or CNE programs.

On this site, you will upload your required documents (RNFA Application Form, RNFA Verification of Eligibility, Student Immunization Record, two letters of recommendation, and proof of medical malpractice insurance that specifically covers first assisting at surgery.) Required documents are downloadable PDF files located on the RNFA Program website.

When the ASU Department of Graduate Studies receives all required documents, your completed application will be sent to the department of nursing. It is advised to contact the Department of Graduate Studies to ensure that your application is complete.

2. Register for NUR 6309 didactic and NUR 6401 clinical practicum.

Question:

How many students are in a class?

Answer:

The number of students admitted to a class varies. Minimum number of students required for the class to make is five students. Maximum number is 10

Question:

How can clinical skills be taught online?

Answer:

The majority of the didactic content for this program is delivered

asynchronously online. There is a required three day onsite hands on lab that must be successfully completed prior to beginning the clinical practicum.

Question:

How much time should I plan to commit to the didactic portion of this program? (NUR 6301)

Answer:

Because this is an online program, there is a significant amount of reading involved for this class. At the beginning of the program there will be open book timed online quizzes to ensure minimum mastery of content. Students will be required to participate in asynchronous online discussions at least twice a week. In addition, reflective learning diaries, documenting time spent reading and participating in the class must be submitted online to the instructor on a weekly basis. A minimum of 5-10 hours a week should be anticipated early in the semester.

Question:

What do I need to know about the clinical practicum?

Answer:

1. It is important that before you begin this program, that you have located a surgeon who will commit to being your preceptor in order to complete the 180 hours required. You are required to have a letter of commitment to precept from a surgeon prior to acceptance into the program.

Students who do not line up a preceptor in advance have a very difficult time completing the program on time. Students who do not complete the required hours for NUR 6401 have up to one year from the end of the semester to complete the required hours. Most students do not finish both the didactic and practicum in one semester. However, it is more cost efficient for the student to register for both NUR 6309 and NUR 6401 at the same time. You will have to complete NUR 6309 in one semester.

2. You can have more than one surgeon preceptor. If you do, each you must submit a signed preceptor agreement, and a CV/ Biographical Data form for each surgeon prior to beginning the clinical practicum. These documents will be available for you to

download in Blackboard on the first day of class.

3. Your clinical practicum can be in one specialty or it can be in several. The didactic portion will cover many specialties, but your practicum can focus on the specialty of your choice.

4. ASU must have a facility agreement with the hospitals or ambulatory surgery centers where you will be doing your clinical practicum. On the ASU RNFA Program page, there is a link to Clinical Agencies on the left hand side of the page. Click on that link to determine if your facility is listed. If it is not, follow the instructions at the top of the page to get the facility contract set up. This can take up to three months so get started as soon as possible. Here is the direct website for the clinical contract instructions.

http://www.angelo.edu/dept/nursing/clinical_contractinstructions.html

Your contact person at the ASU Department of Nursing for Clinical Facility Agreements is Felicia Armstrong (felicia.armstrong@angelo.edu)

5. Case logs for the clinical internship are very detailed and will be required to be completed, signed by your surgeon preceptor and submitted every two weeks once you have started your clinical practicum.

6. You may count 8 hours of observation in the operating room as part of your clinical practicum. Time spent managing patients preoperatively and postoperatively either in the hospital or in the clinic can be applied to your total hours for the clinical practicum however, **140 hours must be time spent in the operating room assisting at surgery.** You may begin counting your intraoperative time from the time the patient enters the operating room IF you are present in the room and assist with positioning, prepping and draping of the patient. If you do not come into the room until this has been completed, you may count the incision time as the beginning time (as documented by the circulating nurse). IF you apply dressings, assist with transferring the patient from the OR table and accompany the patient to the post anesthesia care unit, you may count your end time as the time the patient is discharged to the PACU. If you do not, you shall count the end time as the closure of incision time as recorded by

the circulating nurse.

Time spent making rounds between cases are counted as noted above but may not be included in the intraoperative hours.

Question:

When I complete this program, will I be eligible to sit for the RNFA Certification exam offered by the Credentialing and Certification Institute (CCI)?

Answer:

No, the CRNFA exam is only available to APRNs who have completed an accepted RNFA program and have logged 2000 hours of first assisting. An APRN who is not a certified perioperative nurse (CNOR) is not required to have the CNOR certification to sit for the CRNFA exam like non APRN RNFAs, but they are required to have the requisite 2000 hours of practice.

Question:

Do I have to obtain the CRNFA Certification to Practice as an APRN RNFA/First Assistant?

Answer:

No. As an APRN, you do not need this certification to practice or to bill for first assistant services. You do need to have successfully completed an RNFA educational program accepted by the CCI. This course meets those requirements. At the conclusion of this program, you will receive a post-graduate certificate of completion for this course. This is not the same as a specialty certification.

Question:

What computer/technical skills will I need to take this class?

Answer:

1. You will need access to high speed internet service and be proficient in its use.
2. You must be able to send, receive email
3. You must be able to create, send, receive and open and save word files and PDF files.
4. Course work that does not require a signature will need to be submitted electronically as an attached file.
5. There are some videos to watch through Blackboard so your internet service speed should be capable of buffering video files

quickly.

6. Since this is primarily an online course, we will be using Blackboard, the online learning management system as our 'virtual' classroom. If you are unfamiliar with Blackboard, and you want to get an idea about what it looks like you can go to Blackboard's Quick Tutorial Library

(<http://www.blackboard.com/quicktutorials/quicktutorials.htm>).

If you would like to look at videos of Blackboard being used prior to enrolling as a student, there are many available on YouTube. Just search "Blackboard Tutorial".

Question: How much does the program cost?

Answer: The cost will be determined by the current tuition rate for graduate courses plus university fees. This does not include textbooks. The student will need to plan for a trip to San Angelo for a three-day onsite lab that is required for NUR 6309.

NUR 6309 is 3 Credit Hours.

NUR 6401 is 4 Credit Hours.

Example:

Approximate Total Cost of Program is \$2144.36

Tuition \$1480.36

Instructional Enhancement Fee \$70.00

Distance Education Fee \$350.00

Financial Records and Service Fee \$63.00

Library Fee \$56.00

Technology Services Fee \$125.00