



Registered Nurse

Course Overview: Focuses on careers in planning, managing, and providing therapeutic services, diagnostic services, health informatics, support services, and biotechnology research and development.

Career Goal (O*NET Code): (29-1111) - Registered nurses set up plans for patient care. Registered nurses (RNs) provide and coordinate patient care, educate patients and the public about various health conditions, and provide advice and emotional support to patients and their family members.

Student Name: _____
Grade: _____
School: _____

SUGGESTED COURSEWORK

EXTENDED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Middle School	8th	HS Courses:	(Local districts may list high school credit courses here)	Curricular Experiences: *** Health Occupations Students of America	Extracurricular Experiences:*** Language Immersion Programs National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine School Newspaper Student Council UIL Academic Competitions Yearbook			
High School	9th	Courses*:	English I Algebra I or Geometry Biology			World Geography Foreign Language I Physical Education or Athletics	Career Learning Experiences: Career Preparation Internship Job Shadowing Clinical Rotations Certifications Clinical Volunteer Work (local hospitals & medical facilities)	Service Learning Experiences: Boy/Girl Scouts Campus Service Organizations Community Service Volunteer Medical Mission Trips Peer Mentoring / Peer Tutoring Special Olympics
		Career-Related Electives:	Principles of Health Science					
	10th	Courses:	English II Geometry or Algebra II Chemistry	World History Foreign Language II Elective				
		Career-Related Electives:	Medical Terminology and Pathophysiology					
	11th	Core Courses:	English III Algebra II or Pre-Calculus Physics	United States History Foreign Language III ** Professional Communications or Speech				
		Career-Related Electives:	Health Science					
12th	Core Courses:	English IV Pre-Calculus or Calculus 4th Science	Government/Economics Elective Elective					
	Career-Related Electives:	Practicum in Health Science						
How to Become a Registered Nurse Some registered nurses work in hospital operating rooms. Registered nurses usually take one of three education paths: a bachelor's of science degree in nursing (BSN), an associate's degree in nursing (ADN), or a diploma from an approved nursing program. Registered nurses must also be licensed.				Carrer Options (Sample of reported job titles)				
<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">Texas Southmost College</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">South Texas College</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">Texas State Technical College</td> </tr> </table>				Texas Southmost College	South Texas College	Texas State Technical College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Nurse (RN) • Staff RN (Staff Registered Nurse) • Staff Nurse • Charge Nurse • Operating Room Registered Nurse (OR RN) • Oncology RN (Oncology Registered Nurse) • Relief Charge Nurse • Cardiac Care Unit Nurse (CCU Nurse) • Certified Nurse Operating Room (CNOR) • Coronary Care Unit Nurse (CCU Nurse) 	
Texas Southmost College	South Texas College	Texas State Technical College						
Postsecondary	Nursing (AAS)		Nursing (AAS)	Professional Associations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Nurses Association • National League for Nursing • Registered Nurse RN • American Association of Colleges of Nursing • National Council of State Boards of Nursing • National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists • American Association of Nurse Anesthetists • American College of Nurse-Midwives • American Academy of Nurse Practitioners 				
	The University of Texas at Brownsville		The University of Texas - Pan American					
	Nursing (BS)							

* Students must meet local & state high school graduation requirements. ** Required course for the Distinguished Graduation Plan (in addition to other measures). *** Based on campus availability. Students may select other elective courses for personal enrichment purposes.

This plan of study serves as a guide, along with other career planning materials, for pursuing a career path and is based on the most recent information as of 2009. All plans meet high school graduation requirements as well as college entrance requirements.



Registered Nurse

TEA Industry Cluster	Health Science
SOC Code	29-1111
Identified by	JFF Software; TIP Strategies; TWC LMCI; Tech Prep Occupations
Projected Growth (2018)	32%
BISD Magnet School Available	Yes

Source: Demand Occupations by Cluster, updated June 27, 2012

Description

What Registered Nurses Do

Registered nurses set up plans for patient care.

Registered nurses (RNs) provide and coordinate patient care, educate patients and the public about various health conditions, and provide advice and emotional support to patients and their family members.

Duties

Registered nurses typically do the following:

- Record patients' medical histories and symptoms
- Give patients medicines and treatments
- Set up plans for patients' care or contribute to existing plans
- Observe patients and record the observations
- Consult with doctors and other healthcare professionals
- Operate and monitor medical equipment
- Help perform diagnostic tests and analyze results
- Teach patients and their families how to manage their illnesses or injuries
- Explain what to do at home after treatment

Some registered nurses oversee licensed practical nurses, nursing aides, and home care aides. For more information, see the profiles on [licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses](#); [nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants](#); and [home health and personal care aides](#).

Registered nurses sometimes work to promote general health by educating the public on warning signs and symptoms of disease. They might also run general health screenings or immunization clinics, blood drives, or other outreach programs.

Most registered nurses work as part of a team with physicians and other healthcare specialists.

Some nurses have jobs in which they do not work directly with patients, but they must still have an active registered nurse license. For example, they may work as nurse educators, healthcare consultants, public policy advisors, researchers, hospital administrators, salespeople for pharmaceutical and medical supply companies, or as medical writers and editors.

Registered nurses' duties and titles often depend on where they work and the patients they work with. They can focus on the following specialties:

- A specific health condition, such as a diabetes management nurse who helps patients with diabetes or an oncology nurse who helps cancer patients
- A specific part of the body, such as a dermatology nurse working with patients who have skin problems
- A specific group of people, such as a geriatric nurse who works with the elderly or a pediatric nurse who works with children and teens
- A specific workplace, such as an emergency or trauma nurse who works in a hospital or stand-alone emergency department or a school nurse working in an elementary, middle, or high school rather than in a hospital or doctor's office.

Some registered nurses combine one or more of these specialties. For example, a pediatric oncology nurse works with children and teens who have cancer.

Many possibilities for specializing exist. The following list includes just a few other examples of ways that some registered nurses specialize:

Addiction nurses care for patients who need help to overcome addictions to alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and other substances.

Cardiovascular nurses treat patients with heart disease and people who have had heart surgery.

Critical care nurses work in intensive care units in hospitals, providing care to patients with serious, complex, and acute illnesses and injuries that need very close monitoring and treatment.

Genetics nurses provide screening, counseling, and treatment of patients with genetic disorders, such as cystic fibrosis and Huntington's disease.

Neonatology nurses take care of newborn babies.

Nephrology nurses treat patients who have kidney-related health issues that are attributable to diabetes, high blood pressure, substance abuse, or other causes.

Rehabilitation nurses care for patients with temporary or permanent disabilities.

Advanced practice registered nurses may provide primary and specialty care, and, in most states, they may prescribe medicines. All states specifically define requirements for registered nurses in these four advanced practice roles:

- **Clinical nurse specialists** provide direct patient care and expert consultations in one of many nursing specialties, such as psychiatric-mental health.
- **Nurse anesthetists** provide anesthesia and related care before and after surgical, therapeutic, diagnostic, and obstetrical procedures. They also provide pain management and emergency services.
- **Nurse-midwives** provide care to women, including gynecological exams, family planning advice, prenatal care, assistance in labor and delivery, and care of newborns.
- **Nurse practitioners** serve as primary and specialty care providers, providing a blend of nursing and primary care services to patients and families.

Training Opportunities Linked to Those Jobs (Degree Types and Colleges/Universities)

How to Become a Registered Nurse

Some registered nurses work in hospital operating rooms.

Registered nurses usually take one of three education paths: a bachelor's of science degree in nursing (BSN), an associate's degree in nursing (ADN), or a diploma from an approved nursing program. Registered nurses must also be licensed.

Education

In all nursing education programs, students take courses in nursing, anatomy, physiology, microbiology, chemistry, nutrition, psychology and other social and behavioral sciences, as well as in liberal arts. BSN programs typically take four years to complete; ADN and diploma programs usually take two to three years to complete.

All programs also include supervised clinical experience in hospital departments such as pediatrics, psychiatry, maternity, and surgery. A number of programs include clinical experience in extended and long-term care facilities, public health departments, home health agencies, or ambulatory (walk-in) clinics.

Bachelor's degree programs usually include more training in the physical and social sciences, communication, leadership, and critical thinking, which is becoming more important as nursing practice becomes more complex. They also offer more clinical experience in nonhospital settings. A bachelor's degree or higher is often necessary for administrative positions, research, consulting, and teaching.

Generally, licensed graduates of any of the three types of education programs (bachelor's, associate's, or diploma) qualify for entry-level positions as a staff nurse.

Many registered nurses with an ADN or diploma find an entry-level position and then take advantage of tuition reimbursement benefits to work toward a BSN by completing an RN-to-BSN program. There are also master's degree programs in nursing, combined bachelor's and master's programs, and programs for those who wish to enter the nursing profession but hold a bachelor's degree in another field.

Important Qualities

Critical-thinking skills. Registered nurses must be able to assess changes in the health state of patients, including when to take corrective action and when to make referrals.

Compassion. Registered nurses should be caring and sympathetic, characteristics that are valuable when treating patients.

Detail oriented. Registered nurses must be responsible and detail oriented because they must make sure that patients get the correct treatments and medicines at the right time.

Emotional stability. Registered nurses need emotional stability to cope with human suffering, emergencies, and other stresses.

Organizational skills. Nurses often work with multiple patients with various health needs, and organizational skills are critical to ensure the patient is given proper care.

Patience. Registered nurses should be patient so they can provide quality care under stressful or hectic circumstances.

Speaking skills. Registered nurses must be able to talk effectively with patients to correctly assess their health conditions. Nurses need to clearly explain how to take medication or give other instructions. They must be able to work in teams with other health professionals and communicate the patients' needs.

Licenses

In all states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories, registered nurses must have a nursing license.

To become licensed, nurses must graduate from an approved nursing program and pass the National Council Licensure Examination, or NCLEX-RN.

Other requirements for licensing vary by state. Each state's board of nursing can give details. (For more on the NCLEX-RN examination and a list of state boards of nursing visit the [National Council of State Boards of Nursing](#).)

Certification

Nurses may become credentialed through professional associations in specialties such as ambulatory care, gerontology, and pediatrics, among others. Although certification is usually voluntary, it demonstrates adherence to a higher standard, and some employers may require it. Certification is required for all registered nurses serving in any of the four advanced practice registered nurse roles.

Advancement

Most registered nurses begin as staff nurses in hospitals or community health settings. With experience, good performance, and continuous education they can move to other settings or be promoted to positions with more responsibility.

In management, nurses can advance from assistant unit manager or head nurse to more senior-level administrative roles, such as assistant director, director, vice president, or chief of nursing. Increasingly, management-level nursing positions require a graduate degree in nursing or health services administration. Administrative positions require leadership, communication and negotiation skills, and good judgment.

Some RNs choose to become advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs). APRNs work independently or in collaboration with physicians. They may provide primary care, and, in most states, they may prescribe medications. APRNs require at least a master's degree. Each state's board of nursing can provide the specific regulations regarding APRNs.

Some nurses move into the business side of healthcare. Their nursing expertise and experience on a healthcare team equip them to manage ambulatory, acute, home-based, and chronic care businesses.

Employers—including hospitals, insurance companies, pharmaceutical manufacturers, and managed care organizations, among others—need registered nurses for jobs in health planning and development, marketing, consulting, policy development, and quality assurance.

Other nurses work as postsecondary teachers in colleges and universities. For more information, see the profile on [postsecondary teachers](#).

Texas Southmost College	South Texas College	Texas State Technical College	The University of Texas at Brownsville	The University of Texas - Pan American
Registered Nurse (AAS)	Registered Nurse (AAS)			Registered Nurse (BSN)

Local Employers

Employer	City	Employer	City
A Better Choice Home Health	Brownsville	All Home Care Inc	Harlingen
A One Health Svc Agency	Brownsville	All Texas Healthcare	Harlingen
A Touch Home Health Care Inc	Brownsville	Amigos Del Valle Inc	Harlingen
Aarp/Scsep	Brownsville	Angelcare Haven	Harlingen

Career Options (Specific Job Types)

Sample of reported job titles:

- Registered Nurse (RN)
- Staff RN (Staff Registered Nurse)
- Staff Nurse
- Charge Nurse
- Operating Room Registered Nurse (OR RN)
- Oncology RN (Oncology Registered Nurse)
- Relief Charge Nurse
- Cardiac Care Unit Nurse (CCU Nurse)
- Certified Nurse Operating Room (CNOR)
- Coronary Care Unit Nurse (CCU Nurse)

Salary Ranges

The wage occupation **Registered Nurses** aggregates data for these 4 occupations:
Nurse Anesthetists ----- Nurse Midwives ----- Nurse Practitioners ----- **Registered Nurses**

Location	Pay Period	2011				
		10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
United States	Hourly	\$21.62	\$25.85	\$31.71	\$38.65	\$46.46
	Yearly	\$45,000	\$53,800	\$66,000	\$80,400	\$96,600
Texas	Hourly	\$22.46	\$26.21	\$31.54	\$36.94	\$44.08
	Yearly	\$46,700	\$54,500	\$65,600	\$76,800	\$91,700
Brownsville-Harlingen, TX MSA	Hourly	\$22.03	\$26.05	\$32.16	\$39.55	\$45.49
	Yearly	\$45,800	\$54,200	\$66,900	\$82,300	\$94,600
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX	Hourly	\$22.16	\$27.46	\$33.44	\$40.21	\$45.36

Location	Pay Period	2011				
		10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
MSA	Yearly	\$46,100	\$57,100	\$69,600	\$83,600	\$94,300

Professional Associations Linked to the Careers

For more information about registered nurses, including credentialing, visit

[American Nurses Association](#)

For more information about nursing education and being a registered nurse, visit

[National League for Nursing](#)

[Registered Nurse RN](#)

For information about undergraduate and graduate nursing education, nursing career options, and financial aid, visit

[American Association of Colleges of Nursing](#)

For information about the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN) and a list of individual state boards of nursing, visit

[National Council of State Boards of Nursing](#)

For information about clinical nurse specialists, including a list of accredited programs, visit

[National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists](#)

For information about nurse anesthetists, including a list of accredited programs, visit

[American Association of Nurse Anesthetists](#)

For information about nurse-midwives, including a list of accredited programs, visit

[American College of Nurse-Midwives](#)

For information about nurse practitioners, including a list of accredited programs, visit

[American Academy of Nurse Practitioners](#)

Sources

The information provided in this document was collected from the following sources:

- Occupational Outlook Handbook (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>)
- O*NET OnLine (<http://www.onetonline.org/>)
- Texas CARES (<http://www.texascaresonline.com/>)
- CareerOneStop (<http://www.careeronestop.org/>)