HOW CAN I GET THERE?

- **Degree Programs**
  - Associates Degree in Nursing
  - Traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing
  - Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing
  - Entry Level Master of Science in Nursing (No BSN needed)
    - Examples of potential specialties
      - Gerontology
      - Family Nurse Practitioner
      - Nurse Anesthesia
      - Nurse Educator
      - Nurse-Midwifery/Women's Health Nurse Practitioner
      - Post Master's Certificate Option
- **Tailor pre-requisites to the schools of interest**
  - No central application
  - Each school has its own requirements (most overlap)
    - Anatomy with lab
    - Physiology with lab
    - Microbiology with lab
    - Chemistry
    - College-level math/statistics
    - Oral communication
    - English
    - Sociology/Anthropology
    - Nutrition
    - Growth and Development
    - Psychology
    - Research Methods

APPLICATION

- Start early to plan for:
  - Transcript orders
  - Letters of recommendation
  - Multiple drafts for essays
  - Early submission of an application (recommended)
- **Research schools of interest**
  - Independent research
  - Which ones have the degree programs you want/need?
  - Check for accreditation
    - Both of the university or college and the accreditation of the nursing program itself
      - California Board of Registered Nursing: http://www.rn.ca.gov/
      - National accreditation: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/
- Evaluate yourself honestly but do not devalue your experiences
  - Academic performance
  - Future goals
  - Degree programs of interest
  - What you bring to the schools you choose to apply to?
- **Do not be afraid to call schools or schedule appointments with advisors**
- Apply widely
  - However, be aware of financial commitment
    - Fees typically range from $40-$75
  - Give enough attention to each application no matter how many you apply to
  - Have schools in each category (reach, realistic, safe)
TEAS: Test of Essential Academic Skills

- Evaluation tool that helps nursing students identify their own strengths and weaknesses in areas related to nursing
- Assists nursing schools strengthen their current nursing curriculum so that students do well
- Some schools will not accept students who do not pass the TEAS exam while others use it as a measuring tool to offer remediation.

**Breakdown**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Areas Tested</th>
<th>Total: 170 Items/3 Hr 29 Min</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 1 - Reading</td>
<td>Paragraph Comprehension, Passage Comprehension, Inferences and Conclusions</td>
<td>48 Items/58 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2 - Mathematics</td>
<td>Whole Numbers, Fractions and Decimals, Ratio and Proportion, Metric Conversions, Algebraic Applications, Percentages, Data Interpretation</td>
<td>34 Items/51 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3 - Science</td>
<td>Stating Hypothesis, Data Collection and Measurement, Design and Control Procedures, Drawing Conclusions, Earth and General Science, Life (Biological) Science, Chemistry, Physics, Human Body Science</td>
<td>54 Items/66 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4 - English Language and Usage</td>
<td>Grammar Usage, Sentence Structure, Punctuation, Spelling, Word Meaning in Context</td>
<td>34 Items/34 Minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- TEAS is administered in **two formats** so check if the nursing school has a preference
  - On the computer or as a paper and pencil test
- Calculators may NOT be used for the test.
- Test results available 48 hours after completion of the test.
- Study tips
  - Create a study plan.
    - Content to study with a timeframe for studying the information
    - Check the test date schedule and plan the study schedule accordingly
    - [SFSU](http://www.sfsu.edu/~testing/tests/teas/index.htm)
    - Ideally give yourself around two months, and you should study about one to two hours a day (could be condensed into shorter time period if necessary)
  - Consider being a part of a study group.
  - Use a study guide. List of recommended study guides
    - **Unofficial materials**
      - "McGraw-Hill's Nursing School Entrance Exams with CD-ROM"
    - **Official materials**
  - You can find more information on the ATI website at [www.atitesting.com](http://www.atitesting.com)
GOAL/PERSOAL STATEMENT BRAINSTORM

Why do you want to become a nurse?
- What has drawn you to nursing?
- What qualities do you possess that would make you a good nurse?

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Determine your long-term nursing goals.
- What type of nurse you want to become, if you know (e.g., pediatric, OR, acute care, etc.).
- List further education you plan on pursuing, if any

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List your experiences that relate to the field of nursing.
- Volunteer or work, could be in a nursing home or any other type of medical field
- Need to show you are serious about pursuing careers in nursing.

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What difficult situations if any have you faced in the past?
- How were you able to overcome it?
- What have you learned from it?

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If this is a second degree or accelerated BSN for you:

- What changed?
- What inspired you to pursue nursing instead of the field in which you received your first degree?

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What do you see as the major issues facing the field of nursing?

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How do you plan on picking nursing schools? What is important to you about the school you attend?

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How do you tend to handle a stressful situation?
- Describe your methods for managing multiple tasks and time management

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Cater the personal statements to the individual school. Do not forget to organize and proofread!
CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

- **Amount**
  - Try to aim for at least 50-100 hours
  - Longer term generally looks better and shows more dedication

- **Types**
  - Ideally experience includes direct patient care working with nurses
  - Volunteer experience
    - Hospitals
    - Clinics
    - Medical office
    - Nursing homes
    - Home health
    - Emergency response
  - Part time or summer job (may need licensure)
    - Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)
    - Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN)
    - Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)
    - Care Taker
  - Research experience
    - Mainly if you have interest in the research based nursing specialties

- **How to pick a volunteer/job experience?**
  - Explore various fields and choose based on interest
  - Ask your family doctor for people to contact
  - Call/go to local hospitals or doctor’s offices
  - Check with labs, nursing homes, and clinics
  - Bulletin board outside science faculty offices
  - Network for more contacts that would be willing to help
  - Anything that has worked for you?

NETWORKING

- **Definition:**
  - To interact or engage in informal communication with others for mutual assistance or support

- **Professional networking**
  - Pre-nursing students/peers
  - Nursing students
  - Nurses
  - Get into conversations with advisors (pre-nursing and nursing school)

- **Motivation**
  - Leads to clinical experience opportunities
  - Contact with advisors and admissions board members
  - Academic assistance
  - Emotional support

- **How do I network? Demonstrations**
  - Introduction
    - Make a good first impression, share name and title, shake hands and good eye contact but do not be forceful
  - Getting contact info
    - Have your contact information ready and make sure to ask them for the best ways to reach them
  - Working on the relationship
    - Stay in contact- be persistent without being bothersome
  - Best locations for finding contacts
    - Daily life
    - Events
    - Conferences
    - Classes
    - Active searches
CAREERS IN NURSING
http://www.nurse.com/students/careersinnursing.html

**Nursing Positions**
- Case Manager
- Certified Nurse Midwife
- Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Director/CEO
- Manager/Administrator
- Nurse Anesthetist
- Nurse Educator
- Nurse Practitioner
- Staff Nurse

**Nursing Specialties**
- AIDS Care Nurse
- Ambulatory Care Nurse
- Cardiac Rehabilitation Nurse
- Case Management
- Correctional Nurse
- Enterostomal Therapy Nurse
- Gastroenterology/Endoscopy Nurse
- Genetics Nurse
- Infection Control Nurse
- Intravenous Therapy Nurse
- Long-Term Care Nurse
- Managed Care Nurse
- Nephrology Nurse
- Neuroscience Nurse
- Occupational Health Nurse
- Oncology Nurse
- Ophthalmic Nurse
- OR (Perioperative) Nurse
- Orthopaedic Nurse
- Otorhinolaryngology Nurse
- Pediatric Nurse
- Perianesthesia Nurse
- Perinatal Nurse
- Primary Care/Office Nurse
- Psychiatric Nurse
- Reconstructive Surgical Nurse
- Rehabilitation Nurse
- Respiratory Nurse
- School Nurse
- Subacute Care Nurse
- Telephone Triage
- Transplant Nurse
- Trauma Nurse

**Nursing Alternatives**
- Entrepreneur/Consultant
- Flight Nurse
- Forensic Nurse
- Holistic Nurse
- Medical Editor/Writer
- Military Nursing
- Nursing Informatics
- Parish Nurse
- Pharm/Med Sales
- Research Nurse
- Supplemental Nurse
- Travel Nurse
PERSPECTIVES

From the point of view of a nurse educator:

What are the characteristics of a good nurse?
Reliability and competence. You need a sense of humor and a good attitude. You have to be willing to work with difficult people at times.

What are the wrong reasons to choose a career in nursing?
Money. It pays good but not great. Don’t chose it thinking it is glamorous like on TV. Mostly, it is not.

What are the right reasons to choose a career in nursing?
It is very interesting work most of the time. The pay is good and some jobs pay very well, but money alone is not a reason to choose this profession. There are usually jobs available even in a down economy.

Any advice for potential nursing students?
My advice to potential students is to check out nursing before entering the program. Most high schools have programs that allow students to work in medical related fields. Do this or volunteer in the local hospital and see if it is really what you want before investing a lot of time.

Are there advantages to being an older student?
A lot of our students are career changers. We have cops, chemists, and a psychologist in the current class. Older students seem to be more motivated and don’t have some of the issues that younger students have. For example, they don’t have the pressure to party and have fun and not study.

Why do you think so many new nurses leave the profession?
Most nurses leave because they either “burn out” or they never realized what working all hours, weekends and holidays was like when they were in school. Also, nursing is used as a “stepping stone” profession by some–going into administration or other related fields.

As a male in a female dominated field, what advice would you give to men who are considering a career in nursing?
Men should consider that nursing has a lot of advantages for them. Nursing pays well and overtime work is readily available. There is great job security even in recessions. It also offers the chance to get into many other related fields, such as anesthesiology. Also, becoming a Nurse Practitioner is an option. Nursing is such a female dominated profession that sometimes being in the minority is beneficial–some employers are looking to balance staffs with more men.

General Advice/Experience Blogs
Assistance about and from: students, practicing nurses, specialty fields, organizations, travel nurses

Visit: http://www.rncentral.com/nursing-library/careplans/100_best_blogs_for_nursing_students

There are plenty of forums that provide very useful information but make sure that you do not focus too much on comments people make on the pages. It could be daunting.