Graduate Entry Program in Nursing

For Students who have a Degree in a Field Other than Nursing and Do Not have an RN License

The Graduate Entry Program in Nursing (GEPN) offers post-baccalaureate entry to the Master of Science in Advanced Population Health Nursing (APHN), Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), and PhD in nursing programs. At the time of application to GEPN, the student selects a specialty area and graduate degree (i.e., MS, DNP, PhD). Once admitted to GEPN, a student may not change from the specialty track selected at the time of application. Transfer from one specialty area to another is not permitted. Transfer into or between the FNP or AGPCNP specialties is not permitted. Once enrolled in GEPN, a student may not apply as a new student to another graduate degree program.

Program Description

GEPN is designed for adult learners:

- Who have not attended an RN educational program
- Who have a baccalaureate degree in field other than nursing
- Who are leadership bound and seeking a career in advanced nursing

The program consists of an intensive pre-licensure year of study that is delivered across three continuous semesters. Emphasis is placed on health promotion and disease prevention as well as the care of the acutely ill person. The
AACN *Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice* (AACN, 2008) provides the framework for the pre-licensure year curriculum for professional nurses. A substantial amount of the curriculum is clinical practicum in community and hospital/health care settings where students are actively engaged in nursing care under the supervision of faculty. Threaded throughout the curriculum are research, patient safety, community nursing health, and cultural diversity as well as the various contexts (i.e., historical & social) of nursing, nursing roles, and the core values of the profession.

Upon completion of the first year, the student is eligible and takes the NCLEX-RN, the national licensing exam. The student transitions immediately into their graduate nursing specialty degree track and begin courses for their advanced degree.

**Fast Facts**

- Enables qualified nurse professionals to enter the workforce in a shorter period of time increasing the pool of nurses prepared to assume leadership roles in practice, education and research.
- The first year of intensive study is offered in a tri-semester format of 16 -18 credits per semester. Due to the rigor and scheduling, students are advised not to be employed during this year and are highly encouraged to not take any other courses.
- Students should plan on being physically present on the island of Oahu during the entire month of August and for the remainder of the pre-licensure year course work. The New Student Orientation is typically conducted the first week of August.

**Program Outcomes/Competencies**

The AACN *Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice* provides the framework for the
pre-licensure year curriculum for professional nurses (AACN, 2008). Copies or versions in other languages are available at the AACN Essentials website.

Outcomes/Competencies

A competent nurse:

1. demonstrates professional actions based on core nursing values, professional standards of practice, and the law.
2. develops insight through reflective practice, self-analysis, and self-care.
3. engages in ongoing self-directed learning and provides care based on evidence supported by research.
4. demonstrates leadership in nursing and health care.
5. collaborates as part of a health care team.
6. practices within, utilizes, and contributes to the broader health care system.
7. practices client-centered care.
8. communicates and uses technology effectively.
9. demonstrates clinical judgment/critical thinking in the delivery of care of clients.

At the completion of their program, the student is awarded one of three degrees:

- **Master of Science in Advanced Population Health Nursing** degree that prepares graduates for practice roles include education, case management, clinical practice, consultation, community outreach, research and management/administration.
- **Doctor of Nursing Practice** degree that provides graduates with the skills and knowledge for advanced nursing practice and organizational leadership.
  - Family Nurse Practitioner
  - Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner
- The **PhD** degree that prepares graduates with the knowledge and skills to conduct research and generate
The specific program outcomes/competencies for each degree are found on the degree overview pages.

**Informational Sessions**

The school GEPN Information sessions are conducted in-person with web teleconferencing for those unable to attend in person. Visit the school event page for upcoming GEPN informational session dates.

“When I entered the GEPN program, I had two small children and many family obligations. Going back to school in a full-time, accelerated program after being out in the working world was daunting to say the least. The program was intense, but I am so glad that I did it. The teachers are amazing — whether in the classroom or in the clinic, they work hard to support their students. The GEPN program gave me the opportunity to learn the art and science of nursing under skilled, knowledgeable, and caring mentors. Hawaii has great need for primary care providers, and becoming a family nurse practitioner will allow me to help address that need, as well as support my family. I am so grateful to UH for offering this program!” — Karen Rowan, MS, RN, GEPN Cohort 10, DNP-FNP, Class of 2021

“The GEPN program comprehensively and fully prepared me to take the NCLEX-RN exam. I felt confident and prepared for this licensure exam because of the in-person exam preparation...
review, access to question banks, and additional resources from the school. 100% of my original cohort passed the test on the first try! After completing the GEPN program and becoming an RN, we moved into our advanced nursing degree track. Some of my classmates got jobs in RN roles while going to school, while myself and others opted for tuition waivers working as graduate research assistants with various departments at UH. The ideals, professionalism, and collegiate atmosphere fostered between students during GEPN trained us to be knowledgeable, compassionate, hardworking, flexible and collaborative health care professionals. I truly feel like the GEPN program allowed me to enter the nursing profession with a strong foundation to build on as I further my studies.” – Michelle Quensell, MPH, BA, RN, GEPN Cohort 10, DNP-FNP, Class of 2021

“The GEPN program was the perfect opportunity for me to move back to Hawaii and pursue a nursing degree. Although the program was extremely rigorous, it enabled me to gain professional and clinical skills that I will use for the rest of my career. Through coursework, simulations, and clinical experiences I was exposed to a variety of scenarios that challenged me to think critically and develop my nursing skill set. The program also fostered a sense of community among my cohort and encouraged genuine connections with my peers and colleagues. I was able to take advantage of the opportunities the school provided to network with local healthcare organizations. Ultimately, the experience allowed me to become a professional registered nurse and prepared me to tackle an
advanced degree program to achieve my goal of becoming a nurse practitioner.” – Kal Peterman, BS, RN, GEPN Cohort 10, DNP-AGPCNP, Class of 2021

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Contact for applicants and current students in the Graduate Entry Program in Nursing (GEPN).

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