

## **Nursing Assistant Program**

*Congratulations on your decision to become a Nursing Assistant! The following information is meant to provide you with the necessary information for participation in the Nursing Assistant program.*

**Program Summary:** The Nursing Assistant program prepares individuals for employment as an entry level nursing assistant in a health care facility where he/she will perform selected patient care tasks under the supervision of a licensed nurse. Some of the tasks include feeding, bathing, toileting, dressing, moving and walking the resident. The Nursing Assistant program includes 38 hours of classroom lecture and 82 hours of lab skills and nursing home experience, for a total of 120 hours. This is the course that is a requirement for admission into Wisconsin Technical College's Associate Degree Nursing programs, as it prepares the student nurse with bedside skills.

**Scheduled Offerings:** The Nursing Assistant program is offered on the La Crosse Campus as well as the Regional Learning Centers. Summer courses are also offered. Program offerings may be 4, 6, 8, 12, or 16 weeks in length.

Occasionally, a NA course with an internet option is available with 38 hours of video lecture with accompanying worksheets. Students meet face to face with the instructor and classmates for the remaining 82 hours of lab and clinical.

The schedule is available at <http://www.westerntc.edu/programs/>. Click on "Nursing Assistant" and view under Curriculum.

### Purpose of Program Overview

- Explain admission process to the program
- Provide specific program information
- Help to confirm your decision to enter the program

## Admission to the Program

The following are Nursing Assistant program admission requirements.

1. **WTCS application.** Complete and submit the Wisconsin Technical College System application. If you are interested in more than one program, you must complete an application for each program. A one time \$30.00 application fee (made payable to Western) must be submitted with the application. Application forms are available at Western's Welcome Center, (La Crosse campus) or at any Regional Learning Center. Application forms are also available online at <http://www.westerntc.edu/admissions>

A Nursing Assistant admission packet is available at the La Crosse campus or at any Regional Learning Center. You may request this packet by contacting Deb Kaiser at [kaiserd@westerntc.edu](mailto:kaiserd@westerntc.edu) or by phone at (608) 785-9078. When completed, the packet must be returned/mailed to the Welcome Center, 400 7<sup>th</sup> Street North, PO Box C-0908, La Crosse, WI 54602.

2. **Placement tests** (COMPASS, ASSET or ACT). You are required to take a placement test and meet the minimum scores unless the following applies:
  - If you have a bachelors or masters degree, you are not required to take placement tests.
  - If you have successfully completed (C grade or better) college level Written Communication or Beginning Communication, you are not required to take the Writing placement test.
  - If you have successfully completed (C grade or better) college level Basic Math or College Mathematics, you are not required to take the Math placement test.

Satisfactory placement scores for the Nursing Assistant program can be obtained at: [http://www.westerntc.edu/programs/program.aspx?PROGRAM\\_NBR=305431](http://www.westerntc.edu/programs/program.aspx?PROGRAM_NBR=305431) under the Admission Requirements.

Testing is available in La Crosse at the Western Technical College Campus Assessment Center or at the Regional Learning Center sites in Independence, Black River Falls, Tomah, Mauston, or Viroqua. For more information on placement tests, visit the assessment website at <http://www.westerntc.edu/admissions/assessment.asp>. If you take a placement test at another location, you must request that your scores be sent to Western.

Remediation courses in reading, math, and writing are available for you if you do not meet the placement scores for the program. Students must retest after remediation. All remediation coursework must be completed prior to being accepted into the program.

3. Complete the [Background Information Disclosure Form](#) The State of Wisconsin requires that individuals who will be working with vulnerable adults and/or children undergo a criminal background check. You must complete the form (<http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/Forms/F8/F82064.pdf> ) and submit the \$20.00 fee (made payable to Western Technical College) to order to meet this admission requirement. Western does not accept background checks conducted by third parties (i.e., your employer). You are required to disclose all past experiences with the law. Any arrests or new charges must be reported to Laurie Raddatz (608 785-9409), Associate Dean of Health and Public Safety, within five (5) working days. Failure to do so may result in program dismissal. In addition, if you have resided outside of Wisconsin in the past 3 years, you will be informed of how to obtain your out of state background check at your own expense.

Although the form itself refers to crimes, criminal convictions, and pending criminal charges, the information that comes back from the background check does include all contacts with law enforcement whether or not a criminal conviction occurred. Therefore, include contacts such as non-criminal traffic matters, arrests, charges for which you were acquitted, and charges that were pled down to an ordinance violation or forfeiture. If your background check reveals past experience with the law, two clinical sites will be contacted to determine the likelihood of your being able to complete a clinical experience at those sites.

**Clinical sites have the right to refuse clinical placement to any student based on the background check results. You will be informed of the decision of the clinical sites to assist you in understanding the likelihood of being able to complete this program.** If you have charges on your background check, we are unable to guarantee that you will be able to be placed for multiple clinical experiences that other programs require. It is your decision whether or not to enter the program based on the uncertainty of being accepted at clinical sites.

4. Complete the [Immunizations Form](#): The immunization information can usually be obtained from your personal physician. **IMPORTANT:** The immunization form **MUST** be signed by a physician, physician assistant, nurse, or nurse practitioner.

You must have a negative TB test for the past two years. If you do not have two consecutive years of TB testing, you must have a “two-step” TB test done. TB tests are done at your local physician’s office, and county health department. Students with 6 or more credits enrolled at Western, Viterbo, or UW-L can receive TB tests at the UW-L Student Health Center located at the Health Science Center in La Crosse. Appointments are required wherever the test is done.

Hepatitis B series: It is your choice whether or not to have the series. If you elect to do the Hepatitis B series, you need to *start* the series, but do not have to *complete* the series in order to submit the immunization form. You must submit the remaining dates when the series is complete.

5. Read and complete the [Essential Functions](#) form. Essential Functions are a listing of the physical, cognitive, and mental/emotional abilities you will need in order to complete the program.

A change in your ability to perform any of the Essential Functions must be reported to Laurie Raddatz, Associate Dean, 608 785-9409, or to your instructor immediately.

Read the Essential Functions and complete, sign, and return the Essential Function signature page with your admission forms. If you have a documented disability, your requested accommodations will be addressed by Western's Disability Services Department. Contact the Disability Services Department at Western Technical College (608-785-9875) if you are in need of more information.

**NOTE:** Admission requirements are subject to change without notice. This website will be updated at a minimum on October 15 and February 15 of each year.

### **Student Accident Insurance**

All students involved in a clinical course as part of their program will be automatically enrolled in Western Technical College's Accident Only Insurance Plan.

This insurance covers injuries that you may incur on the way *to or from* any clinical experience, and any injury that you might sustain *at the clinical site while performing your clinical duties as a Western Technical College student*. This insurance **ONLY** covers you for injuries related to these student experiences; your choice of insurance for other portions of your life remains your responsibility. This insurance is considered a secondary insurance to any primary insurance you may have. There is no deductible for this coverage at this time.

Once you start the course, your instructor will provide further information and details on how to obtain your insurance card. Answers to questions can be found at [www.gallagherkoster.com/WesternTech](http://www.gallagherkoster.com/WesternTech).

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Body Art or Piercing**

In the Health and Public Safety Division, you may display no Body Art or Piercing that might be considered offensive. Most employment settings have policies that are generally broad, however they do reserve the right to deny employment and student clinical/practicum or fieldwork placement if body art or piercings are found to be offensive to those in that setting. The wearing and displaying of jewelry in the health care delivery setting is generally limited to wrist watches and wedding rings or small non-dangling earrings. The purpose of this limitation is related to infection control and public perception of the employees while they are on duty.

If you have significant visible body art and piercings, we are unable to guarantee that you will be able to be placed for the multiple clinical/practicum or fieldwork experiences that most programs require. You may be asked to cover the body art with clothing or dressings or remove the piercings in order to complete your rotation. If your program has a more restrictive policy on body art or piercings, it will be enforced. It is your decision whether or not to enter the program based on the uncertainty of being accepted at those sites.

### **How do I make an inquiry or register for the program?**

Interested students may go to any Western campus or contact the campus by phone to request an application packet for the Nursing Assistant program. (Independence 715-985-3392, Black River Falls 715-284-2253, Tomah 608-374-7700, Mauston 608-847-7364, Viroqua 608-637-2612. In La Crosse, see Deb Kaiser in the Welcome Center, or call 608-785-9078.) The application and other required forms are contained in the packet. All admission requirements as listed in the packet must be completed and returned to Deb Kaiser before you can register. *Please remember that all items in the packet are to be submitted at one time when completed.* Nursing Assistant classes fill very quickly, so don't delay with your application.

### **When should I register?**

It takes time to complete the testing and immunization admission requirements. The earlier you get started and complete the requirements, the more likely you will get the class you desire. Evening and weekend classes are very popular and tend to fill quickly. It is important to plan ahead because classes fill quickly. You will be notified by letter when you can register.

**Where do I go for clinical?** There are 50 hours of clinical experience scheduled in the Nursing Assistant program. It is necessary for you to travel to the nursing homes where you will care for residents. Students are responsible for their own transportation to clinical agencies.

**Will I be required to wear a uniform?**

Students are required to purchase a uniform for their clinical experience. It is not necessary to have the uniform prior to the start of the class. Uniform requirements are reviewed and explained on the first day of class. They include appropriate pants/skirt and top, shoes, and watch with a second hand.

**How do I get on the Nursing Assistant Registry?**

Students who successfully complete the program are required to take the Nursing Assistant Registry Exam offered by Pearson Vue if they desire employment in a federally funded health care facility, that is, a facility that accepts Medicare and Medicaid patients. The exam must be taken within one year of program completion. Nursing Assistant candidates must be successful in both written and skills portions of the exam to be placed on the Nursing Assistant registry. The current cost for the exam is \$115.00\*. Students are responsible for the cost of testing. Students who do not complete the exam within one year and still desire to be on the Nursing Assistant Registry in Wisconsin must repeat the entire Nursing Assistant course.

\*Testing fee is set by the testing agency. The fee could change without notice.

**Where are nursing assistants employed? What do they earn?**

There are many opportunities for nursing assistants to be employed in nursing homes, hospitals, group homes, and home care. The median part-time wage for 2009/2010 graduates (the last statistics available) was \$11.35/hour. Graduates employed full-time earned a median wage of \$11.92/hour. (Median wage is the midpoint between the highest wage and the lowest wage reported.)

**How important is attendance?**

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services requires the student to attend the entire 120 hours of the program. Missing any class time will result in mandatory makeup assignments. Absence of greater than 8 hours will result in failure of the course.

**Why is attendance important?**

The Nursing Assistant program is a competency based course that prepares you for employment in healthcare. Consider this course as your opportunity to gain experience in demonstrating qualities desired by employers.

## Program Contacts

For inquiries about admission, class openings and registration questions regarding the program and for space availability in the Nursing Assistant classes contact:

Debra Kaiser, Enrollment Services Advisor  
(608) 785-9078  
[kaiserd@westerntc.edu](mailto:kaiserd@westerntc.edu)

To learn more about the Nursing Assistant program at Western Technical College contact:

Dawn Summerfield, Program Head  
(608) 789-6105  
[summerfieldd@westernnc.edu](mailto:summerfieldd@westernnc.edu)

Paula Zastrow, Administrative Program Assistant  
(608) 785-9409  
[zastrowp@westernnc.edu](mailto:zastrowp@westernnc.edu)