Traditional Master’s Program: Frequently Asked Questions

• What is the difference between the accelerated and traditional masters’ programs?
The accelerated or Graduate Entry Pathway (GEP) program prepares individuals with a bachelor’s degree in another field to become professional nurses for generalist entry-level practice through initial RN licensure then completion of a nurse practitioner track area in the Master’s program. The Traditional Master’s program prepares nurses who already have a bachelor’s degree in nursing to be prepared as advanced practice nurses in a nurse practitioner track or as a nurse educator.

• What is the difference between an adult-gerontology acute care nurse practitioner vs. adult-gerontology primary care nurse practitioner, and a nurse educator?
Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioners (AGACNP) function in acute or critical care areas caring for adults through older adults. Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioners (AGPCNP) function in ambulatory or community-based settings caring for adults through older adults. Nurse Educators work in faculty or staff development, providing teaching skills and strategies that address student, program and patient outcomes as well as leadership skills to improve health care.

• Can an RN with a diploma or associates degree apply to the master’s program?
The Pre-master’s Pathway into the Master of Science program is designed for applicants who are registered nurses with an associate’s degree or diploma in nursing and a bachelor’s degree or higher degree in a field other than nursing. This pathway offers alternative means of qualifying for admission to the GSN at UMass Worcester, based on transfer of academic courses and course enrollment. Although the Pre-master’s Pathway does not grant a bachelor’s degree in nursing, it can enable students who are nurses with other degrees to meet the criteria for admission into the Master of Science program.

• Can an RN with a non-nursing master’s degree apply?
An RN applicant must have a master’s degree in science to apply to the program.

• Can an RN with a master’s degree in nursing apply to become a nurse practitioner?
An RN with a master’s degree in nursing can apply to become a nurse practitioner student.

• Can an RN with a master’s degree in nursing apply to become a nurse educator?
An RN with a master’s degree in nursing can apply to become a nurse educator.

• How long and when are classes held in the master’s program?
The traditional master’s program is two years full-time or three years part-time. In general, classes are held one day a week in the traditional master’s program with the exception of evening classes which may be held on a separate night. Please refer to the umassmed.edu/GSN website under “Academic Programs’ section for master’s plan of study for further details.

• Is it a full-time program or can I go part-time?
You may go full time or part time upon declaring your applicant and entry status.

• Is there any financial aid or scholarships available?
Descriptions, forms and instructions of all federal student financial programs can be found at www.umassmed.edu/financialaid. Scholarship opportunities can be found under umassmed.edu/GSN website in the “Current Students” section.

• Can I take any courses prior to becoming a student?
An applicant is allowed to transfer 3 courses or a total of 9 credits upon acceptance into the program as a matriculated student in the GSN.
• Can I work while in the master’s program?
  A student may work while in the master’s program. We highly encourage part-time work status for students in the full-time program based on the amount of student course preparation and effort required for the graduate master’s program.

• When can I apply to the master’s program?
  The GSN has rolling admissions: applications are considered as soon as they are complete. The link to the Nursing CAS application is on the Graduate School of Nursing Web site at www.umassmed.edu/gsn

• How do I set up an interview?
  Qualified applicants will be contacted by the Director or Coordinator of the Nurse Practitioner or Nurse Educator tracks to schedule an interview.

• Can I go on and get my doctorate degree in the traditional master’s program?
  A Bachelor’s to PhD Pathway is available for applicants to consider applying to. Graduates of the master’s program may consider applying to the Master’s to PhD Program pathway.