



Students from class of December 2023

**Helena College University of Montana
Certificate of Applied Science
Practical Nurse**

Student Information and Application

Updated for **SPRING 2027 Start**

Application due by **Monday, November 2, 2026 5:00 pm**

Revised 6/12/2026

**Applications are subject to change from year to year. It is the student's responsibility to obtain the most current information/application prior to applying to the CAS PN Program*

OVERVIEW

The Certificate of Applied Science Practical Nurse (CAS PN) uses specialized knowledge and skills that meet the healthcare needs of people in a variety of settings under the direction of qualified health professionals. The curriculum focuses on preparation for employment. Students learn practical nursing skills through independent study, lectures, simulations, and practice in the skills lab. Under instructor supervision, students also provide patient care in a variety of healthcare settings. The program is approved by the Montana State Board of Nursing.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Applications for the CAS PN Program are accepted each Fall for a Spring semester start, with completion of the program at the end of the fall semester. The program admits up to 16 students each year based on the criteria found in this application. Student cohort size is limited by the availability of lab and clinical space. Because of this, the application process is competitive, and program applicants are accepted based on criteria found in this packet. **Should the number of qualified applicants exceed the available spaces, not all qualified applicants will be accepted.** Nursing skills labs and simulations will occur face-to-face with arrangements in the Helena area. Clinicals may be arranged in the student's hometown or surrounding area when possible at the discretion of the Director of Nursing.

All coursework is competency-based and is designed to prepare graduates with knowledge, skills, and attitudes to successfully enter the workforce after graduation. All didactic courses are taught in a Virtual-Blended format (VB) by Helena College Nursing Faculty. In this VB delivery method, most of the didactic course instruction will be done in a virtual synchronous mode (occurs at the same time) via the internet platform Microsoft TEAMS. There will be some online asynchronous assignments and coursework, which the student can complete independently within their schedule. Learning in an online environment requires the student to be self-motivated, resilient, and quickly adapt to learning new technology.

Students commit to a full week of Class, Lab, or Clinical work each week. This program is very fast-paced and challenging. There are many weekly reading assignments, written assignments, and quizzes that must be completed outside of class time. Students need to make sure they can dedicate enough time to being a successful student. A good rule of thumb is that for every class hour, at least 2+ hours in preparation or the completion of assignments will be needed.

PROGRAM EXPENSES

The CAS PN student will be required to purchase textbooks, software resources, personal equipment, supplies, and uniforms, pay any associated student tuition and course fees, and pay for transportation to clinical sites. Students will need a reliable computer with a camera and microphone and access to reliable high-speed internet. Accepted students must complete a background check prior to the start of the program. Information on the correct Background check and access to the background check platform will be sent upon acceptance to the program. If needed, students should begin planning for financial support early by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Assistance (FAFSA) and arranging for financial aid to meet their educational needs.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

Helena College University of Montana is committed to the provision of equal opportunity for education, employment, and participation in college activities without regard to race, color, religion, national origin,

sex, age, marital and family status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or political belief, service in the uniformed services (as defined in state and federal law), and veteran status.

APPLICATION DEADLINES

Applications for admission for **Spring 2027 are due by 5:00 pm on Monday, November 2, 2026@5pm.** Incomplete applications may result in disqualification. Helena College is not responsible for any late, lost, or missing information. Please submit completed applications to the Nursing Department in person, by mail, or online with the information below.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ADMISSION INTO THE CAS PN PROGRAM

**All application forms and documents are included in this application.*

Step 1: ADMISSION TO HELENA COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

Students must be admitted to the college **prior to** submission of the CAS PN Program application and be in good academic standing with the institution. No application will be reviewed if the applicant has not applied to Helena College. Please allow yourself time to obtain all official transcripts and/or transfer information from prior college courses to be submitted prior to your application, and allow time for the Registrar's office to review and approve your official transcript and transfer information. Transfer work must be from a regionally accredited institution.

An application to the college may be obtained in one of three ways: 1) by accessing the application online at https://helenacollege.edu/admissions_enrollment/default.aspx 2) by visiting the campus Room 113 to pick up a paper copy, 3) calling the college (406) 447-6900.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Transfer Students will be required to have their **official** transcripts evaluated by the admissions department prior to applying to the nursing program. Transferability and acceptance of non-core curriculum nursing credits into the Helena College Nursing Program is not guaranteed.

Step 2: PREREQUISITE COURSEWORK

The following courses must be completed prior to admission into the CAS PN Program and must be completed with a minimum grade of "C" (not a C-) in each course and a minimum cumulative GPA in prerequisite coursework of 2.5. Applicants may retake two courses (one retake each) for a higher grade. **A maximum of 2 prerequisite retakes are allowed.** The most recent verifiable grade will be used for scoring (even if it is lower).

Prerequisites		13 credits
Course #	Course Name	Credits
BIOH 104	Basic Human Biology w/Lab (BIOH 201/211 A&P I, A&P II accepted)	4
PSYX 100	Introduction to Psychology	3
M120	Math with Healthcare Apps (M121 College Algebra accepted)	3
WRIT 101	College Writing I	3

If you are taking your prerequisites at the time of application, please include proof of current grade with your application. A photo or screenshot is acceptable. Final grade will be verified and you may be excused from the program if the final grade is lower than originally projected, withdrawn, or failed.

Prerequisite coursework must have been taken within the last fifteen years (within the last 5 years for science courses) prior to admission to the nursing program to fulfill program requirements.

Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the registrar's office and may include the discretion of the director of nursing.

Step 3: TEAS TEST

Students applying to the CAS PN program are required to take the TEAS test and obtain a minimum score of 65. Arrangements can be made at Helena College Business Office to schedule and pay for this exam in the Testing Center at least 48 hours in advance of your desired test date. The test cost is \$95 per attempt, max of 4 attempts allowed. Study resources and Practice test are available at atitesting.com and in the Helena College Library.

Step 4: PHYSICAL EXAM

Student will be required to complete a physical exam with their healthcare provider within the past 12 months to assure physical readiness and functional abilities required for the program. Forms are required to be submitted with the application. Please use the forms provided on the last pages of the application.

Step 5: APPLICATION AND PROGRAM ENTRY

The CAS PN Program prepares graduates to provide direct care to clients, individuals, or groups in a variety of structured settings with clear policies and procedures. Due to limited clinical sites for client care experiences and State Board of Nursing regulations regarding student-to-faculty ratio, the Director and Nursing Faculty will determine acceptance into the program.

Admission to the Helena College CAS PN Program is competitive. **Meeting eligibility requirements does not guarantee admission.** The PN program standards and requirements in relation to the grading scale and attendance are stricter and more rigorous than general college requirements, which is necessary to prepare students for the PN-NCLEX exam and to ensure graduates are prepared for professional employment in the nursing field.

To be eligible to apply for admission into the CAS PN Program, applicants must:

- Apply to Helena College with a complete admissions file. (Please check that you have provided all required documentation before submitting your application.)
- Be in good academic standing with Helena College.
- Have completed all prerequisite coursework with a "C" (not C-) grade or higher, and a minimum prerequisite GPA of 2.5. It is the applicant's responsibility to confirm with the Registrar's Office that transfer courses are equivalent to the program's prerequisites and are transferable to Helena College.
- Print a copy of the TEAS test results with a score of 65% or higher and attach it to the application.

- Achieve Total calculated application points of 45 or higher for preference admission (see application scoring).
- Submit a complete application. (Missing documents may disqualify the applicant.)

Step 6: SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all requirements are met by the established deadline. Deadlines, guidelines, and policies apply equally to all students. **Late applications will not be accepted.** Helena College is not responsible for any late, lost, or missing information.

Helena College CAS PN Program does not maintain a waiting list. Applicants must reapply each year.

Please submit completed applications to the Nursing Department in person, by mail, or online with the information below:

<p>TO THE NURSING PROGRAM COORDINATOR: Program Coordinator Nursing Department DON Room 113 (406)447-6946</p>	<p>BY MAIL: Helena College University of Montana Attention: CAS PN Nursing Program 1115 N Roberts Helena, MT 59601</p>	<p>SUBMIT ONLINE Email to: nursingapplications@helenacollege.edu</p>
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NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE

Students will be notified of acceptance into the program via the email listed on the application. Accepted students must notify the nursing department of their intent to accept their admission by the date indicated on the acceptance notification letter. **All future correspondence will be sent to the students' Helena College email address.**

Students who are accepted to the program should plan on attending the mandatory nursing orientation. Students new to Helena College should also plan to attend Helena College New Student orientation.

NURSING PROGRAM POLICY: STUDENT BACKGROUND CHECKS

To promote patient safety and decrease institutional liability, most clinical agencies require students to have a clear background check before students are permitted in the clinical setting. To meet these requirements, the program **requires that the check be done prior to starting the CAS PN Program.**

- Background checks are done at the student's expense through Verified Credentials. Approximate cost, \$49. Students with background checks that reveal a finding will be evaluated individually to determine whether they will be eligible for clinical placement and state licensure for their respective degree program.
- Students will be given information on the background check upon acceptance into the program. **Do not do this before being accepted into the program.**
- Nursing students are **required** to provide a copy of their background check to the nursing office before the beginning of the semester.

NURSING PROGRAM POLICY: STUDENT IMMUNIZATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Helena College of Nursing is required to comply with the vaccination policies and requirements of our clinical partners for all student clinical experiences. A complete list of vaccinations and certifications can be found below. A link to submit proof of these vaccinations and certifications will be shared with the applicant after acceptance to the Nursing Program. DO NOT submit immunizations with your application.

Helena College of Nursing cannot guarantee clinical placements for students who are not compliant with clinical agency requirements. **If a clinical agency requires vaccination for its employees, as a student learner, you will not be allowed in the facility for clinical learning unless you comply with the facility guidelines.** Vaccination declinations/waivers are at the discretion of each of the clinical facilities. If you cannot complete clinicals, you will not be able to meet the course learning objectives and, hence, cannot successfully pass the clinical course. There are multiple clinical courses embedded in this program that may be impacted. We are committed to your education and hope that the student's clinical compliance issues can be resolved at a future date. We will make every effort to facilitate your successful re-entry into the Helena College nursing program to complete your degree; however, because of space limitations, we cannot guarantee placement or re-entry at a particular time.

IMMUNIZATIONS/CERTIFICATIONS REQUIRED

Upon acceptance into the program you will receive information on a link to upload the immunizations and certifications below to Verified Credentials. Approximate cost is \$35. Most students can request a copy of their vaccination records from imMTrax in Montana or your local health department or provider's office. <https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/immunization/copyofimmunizationrecord>

Immunization Records: ****For students unable to locate childhood immunization records titers/boosters are required.***

- Childhood immunizations (Polio, DPT, MMR)
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B (series of 3)
- Current Influenza Vaccine (Flu) or signed declination
- Varicella vaccination or titer
- Negative TB skin test, Negative QuantiFERON TB gold, or negative chest x-ray indicating no active disease
- Current BLS with AED for Healthcare providers (Must be through the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross only with in person skills test. Online only courses not accepted.)

DRUG SCREEN

Helena College of Nursing is required to comply with the drug screen policies and requirements of our clinical partners for all student clinical experiences. Not all clinical partners require a drug screen therefore, we will provide information and a link to Verified Credentials for your drug screen only if required by your clinical placements. Individual clinical sites have varying policies regarding placement if the drug screen is positive for marijuana, therefore positive results will be assessed and determined at the time of testing and based on clinical placement. Inability to comply with the outlined clinical readiness requirements may interfere with a student's ability to participate in the nursing program clinical requirements, making the student ineligible to progress in the major.

ADDITIONAL APPLICATION POINTS

Applicants may obtain additional points on the application in the following ways:

- Completion of at least 3 prerequisites from Helena College = 1 point or Completion of COLS 101 First Year Seminar from Helena College
- At least 12 months of work experience as a CNA, CMA, Surgical Tech or Military Medic = 1point
 - If claiming work experience, please include verification from a workplace official which includes the name of the official, name and address of the organization, role in which you worked, and duration of time in that role. Military documents will be accepted.
- Academic Degree (1-2 points) – Prior Associate's = 1 point Prior Bachelor's or higher = 2 points

CAS PN PROGRAM COURSEWORK AFTER FORMAL ACCEPTANCE

Once enrolled in the CAS PN Program the courses for the program are required and are laid out in the by semester and must be taken in sequence. A minimum of 78% and a letter grade of “C” in all courses each semester is required in order to progress to the next semester.

The courses for the program are required and must be completed in the following sequence:

Semester 1	SPRING	14 credits
Course #	Course Name	Credits
NRSG130	Fundamentals of Nursing	3
NRSG 131	Fundamentals of Nursing Lab	3
NRSG 135	Nursing Pharmacology	3
NRSG 136	Nursing Pharmacology Lab	1
NRSG 152	Gerontology and Community Nursing	2
NRSG 153	Gerontology/ Community Nursing Clinical	2
	SUMMER	
	No summer course work – Students on Break	
Semester 2	FALL	13 credits
Course #	Course Name	Credits
NRSG 140	Adult Health Nursing	4
NRSG 141	Adult Health Nursing Clinical	2
NRSG 142	Nursing Care of Women and Children	3
NRSG 143	Nursing Care of Women/Children Clinical	1
NRSG 148	Leadership Issues for Practical Nurses	2
NRSG 149	Leadership Issues for PN Clinical	1
Total PN Program Credits = 40		

***PLEASE RETAIN PAGES 1-6 FOR YOUR RECORDS AND SUBMIT APPLICATION PAGES 7-12**

HELENA COLLEGE NURSING – CAS PN APPLICATION

Applicant Information

Full Name: _____
Last First Middle Initial

Address: _____
Mailing Address Apartment/Unit #
City State ZIP Code

Home Phone: (____) _____ Cell Phone: (____) _____

Helena College Student ID: #770 _____

Email wish to use for program acceptance notification: _____

Have you ever attended an LPN or RN Program? Yes No

If yes, where _____

Reason for leaving _____

Have you retaken any prerequisites? (Max of 2 prerequisite retakes allowed) Yes No

If yes, which ones and when _____

- For applicants who have retaken a prerequisite course, the most recent verifiable grade will be used for scoring GPA calculations

Attach the following Completed Documents in this order

- Initial Admission to Helena College – letter of acceptance
- Transfer course acceptance with completed Course Substitution forms (if applicable)
- Proof of prerequisite coursework grades
 - Proof of grades = unofficial copy of transcripts
 - **If currently enrolled** in pre-requisite courses, include proof of midterm or current grade (a picture or screenshot is acceptable)
- Copy of TEAS Test results - must be taken within the last 5 years
- Credit for prior work experience (if claiming for application points)
- Proof of completion of COLS 101 First Year Seminar (if claiming for application points)
- Proof of prior academic degree (if using for application points)
- Completed Physical Exam forms (Part I, Functional Abilities, Part II)

APPLICATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET

Please fill in the chart below to the best of your knowledge. Use the points rubric on the next page to calculate scores.

If you are currently taking a required prerequisite course and will not receive a grade in that course before the application deadline, please indicate “currently taking” status in the chart below and write your current grade.

As soon as your final grade becomes available, submit proof of your final grade to the Nursing Department to be attached to your application.

Grade points are calculated using the current catalog criteria, which include +/- weights. (i.e., A&P grade of B+ = 3.3 x 4 course credits = 13.2). **Grade x Credits = Calculations.**
Add all Calculations for the Total Calculation Score. Divide by 13 to get prerequisite GPA.

(A) = 4 (A-) = 3.7 (B+) = 3.3 (B) = 3 (B-) = 2.7 (C+) = 2.3 (C) = 2

Prerequisite Course	“X” if currently taking	Grade received or current grade	Course Credits	Calculations	*Maximum points possible
BIOH 104 Basic Human Biology w/ Lab			4		16
M120 Math for Allied Health			3		12
PSYX 100 Introduction to Psychology			3		12
WRIT 101 College Writing			3		12
				Enter Total Calculation Score (sum of all calculations)	52
				Enter Prerequisite GPA: (Divide total calculation score by 13)	4.0
				Enter GPA points earned: (*see points rubric)	20-50
Enter TEAS score:				Enter TEAS points earned: (*see points rubric)	10-30
Other points earned (*see points rubric):					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work experience (1 point) • Prerequisite courses taken at HC or COLS 101 (1 point) • Academic degree (1-2 points) 					1-4
Total Score: add GPA points + TEAS points + Other points .				=Total points	Minimum score of 45 required to apply
In case of a tie, we will consider the following criteria: First: grade in BIOH 104 Second: TEAS score Third: Veteran service with proof					

APPLICATION POINTS

Selection into this nursing program is competitive. To assure you receive credit for all earned points, please have **ALL** documentation attached to your application by the application deadline. **Meeting the minimum requirements does not guarantee admission into the Nursing Program.**

Use the points rubric below to find your points earned for each category and enter those numbers in the worksheet above. The minimum number of points eligible to apply is 45. The reason for a minimum number is to help ensure student success in both didactic testing and the NCLEX-PN exam required for licensure.

POINTS RUBRIC:

GPA points: Prerequisites 20-50 points	TEAS points: 10-30 points	Other Points: Work Experience (min 1 year): 1 point	Other Points: Prerequisites/course credits from HC: 1 point	Other Points: Academic Degree: 1-2 points
3.75—4.00 50 3.50—3.74 45 3.25—3.49 40 3.00—3.24 35 2.75—2.99 30 2.50—2.74 20	85—100% 30 80—84% 25 75—79% 20 70—74% 15 65—69% 10 <65% 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CNA • Med Tech • CMA, Surgical Tech, EMT, Military medic (Other experience used will be at the discretion of the Director of Nursing.)	Taken at least 3 prerequisites from Helena College: or has taken COLS101 from Helena College	Prior certificate of applied science or Associates degree(s) = 1 Bachelor's degree or higher = 2
*See previous page for calculations	*Attach printout of TEAS exam results	*Attach letter from employer confirming work experience	*Attach a copy of Helena College unofficial transcripts	*Attach Transcripts showing the degree awarded

PHYSICAL EXAM FORM - PART I (filled out by student) -Take all 3 pages to the provider appointment

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Middle Initial _____
 Primary Phone _____ Message Phone _____
 Student ID _____ Date of Birth _____
 Emergency Contact (Name & phone) _____

PERSONAL MEDICAL HISTORY: If checked YES, please provide additional details.

YES	NO	
		Has there been any significant medical illness, injury, or weight loss in the past 12 months?
		Are you taking any medication? List:
		Are you under a physician's care for continuing medical problems?
		Have you been an inpatient in a hospital in the last 12 months?
		Have you ever had an accident resulting in a disabling injury?
		Have you ever had a fractured bone? List/date:
		Have you ever had a surgical operation? List/date:
		Any history of a concussion, blackout, fainting, seizure, recurrent dizzy spells, heat exhaustion/heat stroke?
		Do you wear eyeglasses, contact lenses, dentures, or a hearing aid
		Do you have any allergies to medications, food, or the environment? List:
		Are you missing any organs or other body parts?
		Do you have a history of high blood pressure, heart disease, irregular heart rate, palpitations, diabetes, thyroid condition, liver, or kidney problems?
		Any history of sudden death in your family? (under age 50)
		Have you ever failed a physical exam for military service, employment, insurance, or athletic competition?

LIFESTYLE QUESTIONS

YES	NO	
		Do you smoke?
		Do you exercise regularly?
		Do you drink alcohol or take medication to relieve stress?
		Do you have a problem with your weight?
		Do you go for routine medical/dental checkups?
		Have you ever gone for cancer screening
		Is your immediate family in good health
		Have you or a member of your family ever been a victim of a violent crime?
		Have you used the emergency room for routine medical problems?

HEALTH INSURANCE: Private Insurance _____ Medicaid _____ Student Health Insurance _____

All information on this physical examination form is confidential and cannot be released without a student's written consent.
 The above information is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge. **I authorize the release of this information and the results of this examination to Helena College Nursing Department.**

Signature of Student _____ Date _____

HELENA COLLEGE UM - STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL ABILITIES

(To be completed by student and reviewed by healthcare provider)

HC Nursing Department requires each student to be able to regularly perform the following activities:

1. Stand for long periods of time
2. Work at a fast pace for long periods of time
3. Lift heavy objects (25 pounds or more) three or more times a day
4. Speak clearly and distinctly
5. Respond appropriately to stressful situations (physically, emotionally, and mentally), including the ability to perform activities under pressure and in the presence of distractions
6. Communicate effectively with patients, patients' families, physicians, providers and staff
7. Hear vital signs with a stethoscope to assess blood pressure, heart rate, and lung, vascular, and abdominal sounds; hear the telephone
8. Hear the patient calling for help
9. Hear beepers, alarms, etc., requiring quick responses
10. Read very fine or small print on medication containers, read physician's orders
11. See nurse call/emergency light
12. Visually assess the patient appropriately
13. Read monitors and other equipment
14. Demonstrate manual dexterity to don sterile gloves and gown
15. Demonstrate manual dexterity to prepare medications aseptically (i.e., IV, PO, & IM)
16. Demonstrate manual dexterity using sterile technique (i.e., insert catheters, IV needles, etc.)
17. Demonstrate the ability to utilize equipment needed to carry out patient care
18. Demonstrate the ability to move in small spaces in an emergency situation
19. Able to obtain and maintain BLS certification throughout the duration of program attendance

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the "Functional Abilities" requirements and can perform them unless otherwise indicated.

Print Student Name _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

HELENA COLLEGE UM – DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION FORM - PART II (to be completed by primary healthcare provider)

Height _____	Vision: Glasses: Yes ___ No ___	Contact lenses: Yes ___ No ___	
	Right 20/ _____ Left 20/ _____		
Weight _____ lbs.			
Blood Pressure _____ / _____		Pulse _____ Respirations _____	
Lab work /tests (if indicated by Health Provider):			
Hgb/Hct _____		UA _____ Other _____	

Significant Medical History:

Significant Family History:

Are there abnormalities of the following?

	Yes	No	Describe
Head, Ear, Nose, or Throat			
Respiratory			
Cardiovascular			
Gastrointestinal			
Hernia			
Eyes			
Genitourinary			
Musculoskeletal			
Metabolic / Endocrine			
Neuropsychiatric			
Skin			
Allergies			

Depression screening: Yes ___ Score ___ No ___

Is this person pregnant? Yes ___ No ___

Is the student currently under treatment for any medical or emotional condition? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, describe: _____

Is this student physically/emotionally capable of being in the nursing program? Yes ___ No ___

Please indicate any Restrictions/Precautions (refer to Statement of Functional Abilities) _____

Signature Physician/Provider _____ Clinic Name _____

Physician/Provider Printed Name _____ Date _____