

LVN Framework - South Texas College

What is an LVN?

LVN stands for Licensed Vocational Nurse and its program is an intensive three semester program that offers classroom instruction and related clinical practice in the four basic areas of nursing care: adults, mothers and newborns, children, and the elderly. Graduates of this program attain a foundation in nursing and acquire a wide array of opportunities for providing nursing care for patients in structured health care settings.

Below is a small chart that briefly outlines a broad question pertaining to the nursing field, specifically the Vocational Nursing (VN) program. The information is organized in a way that allows the educator to introduce information to the student in *small, appropriate increments* by grade level.

<u>Programs and Professions in Nursing</u>			
What degree can the student get in the nursing field?			
9th	10th	11th	12th
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nursing Introduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Types of schools to obtain certificate/ degree at 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Job Opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Job responsibilities ● Job statistics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pay ○ Job growth ● License Renewal ● Continuing Education

- **Ninth Grade**

- **Nursing Introduction**

- There are many different levels of professions available in the nursing field. The entry level for nursing is Vocational Nurse (VN), then Associate's Degree in Nursing (ADN), followed by a Bachelor Degree in Nursing (BSN), a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), and finally, a Doctorate in Nursing Practice (DNP). Each one of these levels takes different amounts of time to obtain, and have very different job opportunities and responsibilities.

<https://nursejournal.org/articles/types-of-nursing-degrees/>

- **Tenth Grade**

- **What are the types of schools the student can attend?**

- Technical schools

- Technical schools, also known as “vocational schools” offer targeted, shorter instruction at a lower tuition, or cost, leading to a certificate or an associate’s degree. Many technical schools in Texas offer dual enrollment opportunities for high school students.
<https://scitexas.edu/technical-school/>
 - Community College
 - A community college is an institution that offers short term certificates or two year associate’s degrees. Associate degrees transfer and often lead to four year degrees at partnering universities. Many community colleges in Texas offer dual enrollment opportunities for high school students. They typically offer less expensive education than four year universities. Most community colleges have open enrollment, meaning there are very few requirements for admission.
<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2012/03/what-is-community-college>
 - College
 - A college is a four year institution that offers degrees in specific areas of study (i.e. medicine or law). These degrees can lead to graduate or professional school. Colleges may have open enrollment or may have strict admission requirements.
<https://www.trade-schools.net/articles/college-vs-university.asp#university>
 - University
 - A University is a four year institution that offers many different degrees through multiple “colleges” located on the same campus. Typically a university may have a “College of Education” or a “College of Health Sciences”. Universities also usually offer graduate (Master, Doctorates) and professional degrees. Typically, universities have strict admission requirements that include grades, placements tests, and admissions tests like the SAT/ACT.
<https://www.trade-schools.net/articles/college-vs-university.asp#university>
- **Eleventh Grade**
 - **Where can a student work with an LVN certification?**

- Licensed Vocational Nurse
 - Nursing Care Facilities
 - Home Health Care Services
 - Rehabilitation Facilities
 - Community Care Facilities for the elderly
 - Medical and Surgical Hospitals
 - Physician's Offices

<https://nursejournal.org/practical-nursing/best-paying-lpn-nursing-jobs-careers/>

- **Twelfth Grade**

- **What responsibilities does an LVN have?**
 - Provide routine care following the Nursing Process
 - Care for patients with predictable outcomes
 - Observe patients' health
 - Report abnormal assessment findings
 - Carry out MD and NP orders
 - Implement appropriate nursing interventions
 - Communicate instructions to patients regarding medication, home-based care, and preventative lifestyle changes
 - Reinforce teaching on disease process
 - <https://www.practicalnursing.org/lpn-jobs-description>
- **How much does an LVN earn?**
 - The median pay for an LVN is about \$22.23 per hour - \$46,240 per year.
- **What is the projected job growth of LVNs?**
 - The projected job growth is 11%. The government expects to have 78,100 jobs available by 2028.
 - The local Economic Modeling Specialist (EMSI) indicates projected job growth of 29% for Starr and Hidalgo Counties. This model provides the Texas workforce Commission the necessary data required to meet the healthcare needs of the local community.

<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/licensed-practical-and-licensed-vocational-nurses.htm>
- **When and how often does a Licensed Vocational Nurse have to renew their license?**

- In Texas, Vocational Nurses have to renew their license every two years. However, the renewal time could be different depending on which state the student moves to.

https://www.bon.texas.gov/education_continuing_education.asp#D

○ **Does an LVN have to take Continuing Education (CE) courses?**

- Once the student has completed the LVN program, they must attend continuing education courses throughout their career to keep their license. LVNs must complete 20 contact hours of continuing nursing education (CNE) in the nurse’s area of practice OR demonstrate the achievement, maintenance, or renewal of a board-approved national nursing certification in the nurse’s area of practice within the licensing period and meet the applicable targeted continuing education requirements.

https://www.bon.texas.gov/education_continuing_education.asp#D

<u>Academic Pathway</u>			
What coursework should be taken to become a nurse?			
9th	10th	11th	12th
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dual Enrollment ● GPA Relevancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relevant Coursework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dual v. AP Coursework ● Transferability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Required GPA

● **Ninth Grade**

○ **What is dual enrollment?**

- The term dual enrollment refers to students being enrolled—concurrently—in two academic programs or institutions. The term is used in reference to high school students taking college courses while they are still enrolled in high school (i.e., a *dual-enrollment student*), or to the programs that allow high school students to take college-level courses (i.e., a *dual-enrollment program*). For this reason, the term *early college* is a common synonym for dual enrollment.

<https://www.edglossary.org/dual-enrollment/>

- The student needs to be aware that the grades they receive in any dual or concurrent enrollment courses will stay with them

throughout their college career. These grades will be averaged into their overall college GPA.

- **Is high school coursework relevant to the nursing field?**

- The student might not realize it, but preparing for a future career starts in high school (or even earlier). For example, did you know that nurses use algebra when calculating medication dosages? What the student learns in high school builds the foundation for their college education and career. If a student is considering nursing, they should take classes *now* that will prepare them for college *later*.

<https://www.ic4n.org/become-a-nurse/preparation-for-nursing-school/>

- **Does high school GPA matter?**

- The STC VN program entry requirement is HS Diploma or GED, however, the VN program is a selective program and awards points based on college coursework. Points are awarded for As and Bs therefore, a college GPA must be a B or better to receive points. Grades in prerequisite courses may be considered separately. *These are minimum requirements and ***to be competitive, the student should aim much higher***. When interest exceeds available spots, grades are often an important factor. [Getting-into-a-nursing-program.html](#)

- **Tenth Grade**

- **What are examples of courses to take in high school to best prepare for nursing school applications?**

<https://www.ic4n.org/become-a-nurse/preparation-for-nursing-school/>

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Anatomy & Physiology
- Physics
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Psychology
- Speech
- Foreign Language
- Health courses

- **Eleventh Grade**

- **What is the difference between AP and Dual Enrollment?**
 - Dual enrollment courses allow students to get early access to college courses. AP courses are different because they only result in college credit if a student earns a particular score on the AP exam at the end of the course, and if the college that the student enrolls in, accepts AP scores as course credit. This means students who complete a dual enrollment program have a college transcript at the end of their high school career and can enroll directly into that college or transfer these courses if they move to another institution. AP courses on the other hand result in an AP score that can be submitted to a college. The college can then decide if the score will amount to any college credit.
<https://blog.ed.gov/2019/07/burning-questions-dual-enrollment-answered/>

- **Will Dual Enrollment coursework transfer to all colleges and universities?**
 - Academic dual credit can be applied toward the core curriculum or to other specific degree program requirements of an academic associate degree or baccalaureate degree. Students who want more information about the transferability of their dual credit courses should seek guidance from an advisor at the institution offering the dual credit.
<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/institutional-resources-programs/public-community-technical-state-colleges/transfer-resources/dual-credit-initiatives/>
 - If the student has course credit from South Texas College, they may check if a course will transfer to a college or university in Texas at www.tccns.org. For information regarding transferability of courses to institutions *outside* of Texas, students should check with the institution receiving the credit.
<https://www.southtexascollege.edu/dual/faqs.html>

- **Twelfth Grade**
 - **What GPA does the student need in order to apply?**
 - While most universities and colleges have a minimum GPA posted for acceptance, they accept students with a GPA much higher on average. This is why it is important to achieve the highest GPA possible and maintain it throughout schooling.

<u>Admissions</u>			
What does the student need in order to apply for the LVN program?			
9th	10th	11th	12th
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TSI Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Description ○ Test Outline ○ Prep ○ Exemptions ○ Recommended time to test ● GPA requirements & how it coincides with program acceptance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduce certification programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● STC VN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● STC VN program admission requirements

- **Ninth Grade**

- **Are there any exams that the student needs to take in order to apply for the LVN program?**

- A student interested in applying to a VN program, will need to take the Texas Success Initiative exam. TSI Assessment is a program designed to help an institution determine if the student is ready for college-level coursework in the general areas of reading, writing and mathematics. This program will help determine what type of course or intervention will best meet the students' needs to help them become better prepared for college-level coursework if they are not ready.

- The TSI is a state of Texas exam that requires the student to demonstrate a level of competency in the key areas of reading, writing, and mathematics for all students enrolled at public institutions of higher education. To

demonstrate college-readiness in reading, writing and mathematics, a student must either meet a TSI Exemption requirement or pass the TSI Assessment. https://www.depts.ttu.edu/tsi/what_is.php

- If they are *not* taking dual enrollment, students should aim to take the TSI their junior year of high school - typically after they have completed the Algebra 2 course. If they choose to wait until after they graduate to take it, it is considerably more expensive when taking it at the collegiate level.
- If they *are* taking dual enrollment or are attending an early college high school, they have to take it before their first college course. That time varies, depending on the school and when they decide to allow students to begin college courses.
- The TSI consists of three sections: reading, writing, and mathematics.
 - The required passing scores for each are as follows:
 - Reading: 351
 - Mathematics: 350
 - Writing: Essay score of 5 (not 4-per the TSI site) or 340 (multiple choice) and essay score of 4
- Not all incoming students need to take the TSI Assessment. There are many ways to be exempt. Qualifying for a TSI Assessment exemption means the student can enroll in any entry-level college course without restrictions. In other words, there are no prerequisites for enrollment in college-level courses. The student may be exempt if they:
 - Have met the minimum college readiness standard on SAT®, ACT, or a statewide high school test
 - Have successfully completed college-level English and math courses
 - Have enrolled in a Level-One certificate program (fewer than 43 semester credit hours)
 - Are not seeking a degree
 - Have been, or currently are, in the military

If the student thinks they may be exempt, please have them contact an advisor at their institution. For more information visit our website at

www.thecb.state.tx.us/DE/TSI (See #1 and click on TSI/Exemptions)

<https://ugs.utexas.edu/tsi/tests/TSI-Assessment-Preparation>

<https://ugs.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/accuplacer-texas-s>

[uccess-initiative-assessment-student-brochure.pdf](#)

https://ugs.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/TSIASSESSMENTSampleTestQuestionsJuly2013_%282%29.pdf

<https://ugs.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/TSIASSESSMENTWritePlacerSampleEssaysJuly20132.pdf>

- **What is a good GPA to maintain and how will it affect the student's academic career?**
 - GPA is also known as Grade Point Average. The GPA is a 4-point scale that will reflect the student's academic performance.
 - It is important for the student to keep their GPA at a higher level since it is one of the many factors that colleges and universities look at when it comes to determining the application decision. The main attribute universities look for is a steady improvement in the student's grades over the years.
<https://www.crimsoneducation.org/us/blog/average-gpa-ivy-league>

- **Tenth Grade**

- **What certifications are available that are related to the VN program?**
 - There are certification exams the student may take, even while in high school, that allow students to gain hands-on experience useful in the nursing program/career fields.
 - While not all school districts offer every one, the certifications listed below are some examples of certification programs offered at regional school districts.

- Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA)
- Phlebotomy Technician
- Certified Electrocardiogram Technician
- Certified Medical Assistant (CMA)
- Dental Assistant
- Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)
- Certified Pharmacy Technician
- Ophthalmic Assistant
- Veterinary Technician

- **Eleventh Grade**

- **What is the VN program at South Texas College?**
 - STC offers a 3 semester VN program. The program offers classroom instruction and related clinical practice in the four basic areas of nursing care: adults, mothers and newborns, children, and

the elderly. Graduates of this program will have a wide array of opportunities for providing nursing care for patients in structured health care settings. <https://nah.southtexascollege.edu/vn/index.html>

- **Twelfth Grade**

- **What are the requirements to get in the VN Program?**

- Must have a high school transcript, GED and or HS equivalency on file with the STC Admissions office
- HESI A-2 Scores with 70% or better in all sections
- Attend an VN Program information session at Mid-Valley Campus (MVC), Nursing Allied Health Campus (NAHC-A) or Starr County Campus (RIO) and receive an Attendance Certificate. Submit a completed Vocational Nursing program application
- Earn a minimum grade of "B" in Anatomy & Physiology courses
- Satisfy program specific requirements for clinical practice. (i.e. Drug Screening, Criminal Background Checks, Immunizations, CPR, etc.)
- And have in possession the BON Blue Clearance Card or Outcome Letter.
- After the completion of the program, the student must take the NCLEX-PN test to receive a license to practice. This is a standardized, national test that every state regulatory board uses to determine if a candidate is ready to become licensed as an entry-level nurse.
- The cost of the program is based on \$75 per credit hour. The program length is 45-49 credit hours, so the cost can be between \$3,375 - \$3,675 plus additional fees including books, uniforms, and support products. The total cost per semester is approximately \$4,000.
 - <https://catalog.southtexascollege.edu/tuition-fees/>

<u>Programs and Professions in Nursing</u>			
What exams do the students need to take for the nursing program they're interested in?			
9th	10th	11th	12th
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduce Nursing Examinations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HESI A2 ○ NCLEX 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HESI A2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Description ○ Outline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NCLEX-PN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Description ○ Outline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NCLEX Remediation

- **Ninth Grade**

- **Introducing the Student to Nursing Examinations**

- The HESI A2 is an exam that needs to be taken *before* applying to the VN program. The score from this exam and the grades from the required prerequisite courses will determine whether the student will be considered for the VN program or not.

<https://nah.southtexascollege.edu/vn/index.html>

- The NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination) is a national licensure exam that the student must take after completing and passing the VN program. This national exam will determine if the student has retained the information learned, is qualified for licensure, and is ready to enter the workforce setting.

<https://nursejournal.org/articles/6-things-to-know-about-the-nclex-examination/>

- **Tenth Grade**

- **HESI Outline**

- The HESI A2 is an exam that some colleges require the student to take before applying for their nursing program. The subjects that are tested are English Language (Reading, Grammar, Vocabulary), Math, and Science (Anatomy and Physiology). The student can register for the exam at [Evolve.Elsevier.com](https://www.evolve.com). The location of the exam can vary by location. When registering the student can select where to take the exam. To prepare for the exam the student can use a HESI A2 workbook that can be bought online or at a bookstore. To pass the exam they must score on each section 70% or higher which will be calculated into an average.

<https://nah.southtexascollege.edu/adn/pdf/HESI-Exam-Info.pdf>

- **Eleventh Grade**

- **NCLEX-PN Outline**

- In order to become a practicing Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN), the student must pass the NCLEX-PN in order to obtain licensure. The test is made up of four sections. The first section is *safe effective care environment*. This is about being able to maintain sterile hygiene and control infections. The second section is *health promotion and maintenance*. This section revolves around

preventative healthcare, which is one of the fastest growing subsections of medicine today. Third, there is *psychosocial integrity*. This looks at the student's ability to cope with the stresses of being a nurse and also focuses on being able to deliver mental health care. The final and largest element of the NCLEX-PN exam is *physiological integrity*, the student's ability to deliver proper nursing care.

- In order to register for the NCLEX-PN, the student must ask their State Board of Nursing for licensure. If they accept, the student will be allowed to take the NCLEX-PN, and will receive an Authorization to Take the Test (ATT) letter. There is no letter or percentage grade for the NCLEX-PN. It is a pass/fail test. If the student fails the NCLEX-PN, there is a Candidate Performance Report (CPR) telling them what they need to work on. The official results for the exam will come six weeks after the exam. However, there is an option to pay a fee to see the unofficial results two days after the exam. The location for testing depends on where the student lives. One of the websites below can tell the student the closest testing location to where they live. If the student wants to prepare for the NCLEX-PN, there are different online preparation courses that they can use like Kaplan, NRSNG, and HURST.

<https://www.ncsbn.org/nclex.htm>

<https://nursejournal.org/articles/6-things-to-know-about-the-nclex-examination/>

<https://wsr.pearsonvue.com/testtaker/registration/SelectTestCenterProximity/NCLEXTTESTING?conversationId=519306>

<https://nurse.org/articles/top-nclex-review-courses/>

- **Twelfth Grade**

- **What happens if the student fails the NCLEX-PN? Can they retake the exam?**

- The NCSBN retake policy allows candidates to retake their exam 45 days after administration of the exam. Candidates who have applied for licensure/registration with a participating nursing regulatory body (NRB) will be permitted to take the NCLEX-PN eight times a year and there must be 45 test-free days between each examination. <https://www.ncsbn.org/1224.htm>

Want to learn more about becoming a Vocational Nurse? Visit the STC VN Page here:
<https://nah.southtexascollege.edu/vn/index.html>