

**Texas Tech University Health  
Sciences Center School of  
Nursing  
Tips for a Successful Application to the  
Graduate Programs (MSN, Post-Master's Certificate, and BSN to DNP)**

The School of Nursing faculty members are committed to selecting and advancing nurses able to provide leadership for the nation's healthcare systems now and in the future. We seek highly motivated students who are committed to the nursing profession and desire to expand their clinical and leadership skills. The application process is your opportunity to present your personal and professional strengths and showcase why you should be selected for the graduate program. Please read the following tips closely as they will guide you to prepare and submit the best application possible.

1. Involvement in professional organizations is a hallmark of an aspiring nurse leader. Be sure your application clearly shows membership and activities in professional nursing organizations.
2. The personal statement and track-specific questions provide the review committee with important information about you, your background, your professional goals, and your ability to be successful in graduate studies. Clearly and concisely cover the content requested in all sections of the application. The importance of correct sentence structure, grammar, spelling and punctuation cannot be overemphasized. Track-specific essay questions are designed to reflect your understanding of your chosen specialty area. Researching professional specialty organizations' websites and discussions with professionals in the field will enhance your ability to write a knowledgeable response.
3. The review committee looks for ways you have demonstrated growth as a professional nurse and nursing leader, which may include:
  - ❖ Being appointed or elected to serve on committees within your organization.
  - ❖ Achieving certification in your specialty area.
  - ❖ Being promoted beyond an entry-level position, or taking other opportunities to advance your leadership skills within your organization or within professional organizations.
  - ❖ Participation in research activities. These can be within your undergraduate program or within your organization, such as data collection or QI projects.
  - ❖ Poster or podium presentations within your organization and/or at local, state, regional, or national conferences.
  - ❖ Publications in organizational newsletters or professional journals.For applicants who are just completing their first nursing degree, advancement in leadership skills may be demonstrated through involvement and leadership in nursing school activities or through activities from other jobs or in volunteer organizations.
4. Involvement in any type of community service is an indicator of your potential as a leader and your ability to influence others. Provide a clear description of your participation in volunteer work and community activities. Include global health experience and service in a military community if applicable.

5. References provide a strong indication of your leadership potential, problem solving abilities, and clinical practice. Choose wisely and guide them to stress these areas. References from people who are already in your aspiring specialty are highly desirable.
6. Pay attention to the basics: Read the instructions for the application process very carefully. Be sure you apply to the correct program and track. Be sure all required application materials are received by the deadline date and that the application is entirely complete and submitted by the deadline.
  - Make or use a checklist of all of the materials needed for the application and note the dates you submit the materials in order to ensure you have submitted all required materials.
  - Request your official transcripts and letters of recommendation early to be sure required materials are received before the application deadline.
  - Be sure to complete the application process! Scroll all the way down to the bottom of the submission page and click on the Submit button

Since we value all applicants, we encourage you to share your personal and professional strengths and achievements with the review committee!