

GRADUATE STUDIES



Are you considering pursuing **graduate studies**? Here is a guide to some popular graduate programs, their average student age, application requirements, typical outcomes, and average costs. You can meet with a career counselor to discuss whether or not graduate school is right for you!

TYPES OF PROGRAMS

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA) PROGRAMS

Average Age: Full-time MBA programs: 27-30 years. Part-time or Executive MBA programs: 30-40 years.

Average Cost: Average tuition for a two-year full-time MBA program ranges from \$50,000 to \$150,000 per year. However, prestigious programs at top-tier universities can have higher costs, exceeding \$200,000.

Typical Outcomes:

- Career Advancement
- Entrepreneurship
- Industry Switch
- Networking
- Salary Increase

Application Requirements: Bachelor's Degree, 2-5 years of Work Experience, GMAT/GRE Scores, Transcripts, Letters of Recommendation, Personal Statement or Essay, Resume/CV, Interview.

Note: *There are other specialty masters programs that are similar to an MBA, but allow students to focus on a specific area of interest. For example, [Questrom Specialty Masters Programs](#) may allow students to reach their goals without a traditional MBA.*

LAW SCHOOL/JURIS DOCTOR (J.D.)

Average Age: 23-27 years.

Average Cost: Average tuition for a three-year J.D. (Juris Doctor) program at a public institution can range from \$20,000 to \$45,000 per year. Private law schools often have higher tuition rates, averaging between \$40,000 and \$60,000 per year.

Typical Outcomes:

- Legal Practice
- Judicial Roles
- Public Service
- In-House Counsel
- Legal Academia

Application Requirements: Bachelor's Degree, LSAT (Law School Admission Test), Transcripts, Letters of Recommendation, Personal Statement, Resume/CV, Application Fee.

TYPES OF PROGRAMS (CONT.)

MASTER'S IN EDUCATION/TEACHING

Average Age: Range from early 20s to early 40s. Full-time graduate education programs may draw students earlier in their careers compared with part time programs.

Average Cost: Average tuition for a two-year master's degree in education can range from around \$10,000 to \$50,000 or more per year. In-state tuition at public institutions will typically fall closer to the lower half of that range, while private institutions will fall closer to the maximum of this range.

Typical Outcomes:

- Classroom Teacher
- Curriculum Specialist/Instructional Coordinator
- Educational Administrator
- Education Researcher
- Education Consultant

Application Requirements: Bachelor's Degree, Transcripts, Letters of Recommendation, Personal Statement, Resume/CV, Application Fee.

Licensure: To work in a public elementary, middle, or high school after completing a master's degree in teaching/education, you will need to obtain an initial teacher license. Graduate education program staff will advise students through this process since licensure requirements are specific to each state.

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[HOLYCROSS.JOINHANDSHAKE.COM](https://www.holycross.edu/careers/joinhandshake)

MASTER'S IN COUNSELING (MENTAL HEALTH AND SCHOOL COUNSELING)

Average Age: Early 20s to early 30s.

Average Cost: Average tuition for a two-year master's degree in school counseling or mental health counseling can range from around \$10,000 to \$50,000 or more per year. In-state tuition at public institutions will typically fall closer to the lower half of that range, while private institutions will fall closer to the maximum of this range.

Typical Outcomes:

Mental Health Counseling:

- Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
- Clinical Mental Health Counselor
- Substance Abuse Counselor
- Crisis Intervention Counselor
- College Counselor
- School Counselor
- Vocational Counselor

Application Requirements: Bachelor's Degree, Transcripts, Letters of Recommendation, Personal Statement, Resume/CV, Application Fee.

Licensure:

Mental Health Counseling: To practice as a mental health counselor, the specific license required can vary depending on the country and state/province within the country where one intends to practice. The most common license for mental health counselors is the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) or a similar title, which can vary by state. For example, in Massachusetts, the title is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC). Graduate education program staff will advise students through this process since licensure requirements are specific to each state.

School Counseling: To work in a public elementary, middle, or high school after completing a master's degree in school counseling, you will need to obtain an initial school counselor license. Graduate education program staff will advise students through this process since licensure requirements are specific to each state.

PhD PROGRAMS

Average Age: Overall, while the average age can vary, it is common for Ph.D. candidates to be in their late 20s or early 30s when they begin their doctoral studies.

Average Cost: United States Ph.D. programs at public universities typically have lower tuition fees for in-state residents compared to out-of-state or international students. On average, the tuition for Ph.D. programs in the US can range from around \$20,000 to \$50,000 per year or more.

Ph.D. programs may offer financial support to students in the form of stipends, tuition waivers, or assistantship opportunities, which can help offset or cover the cost of tuition. These funding opportunities vary between institutions and may be based on merit, research projects, or teaching responsibilities.

A typical Ph.D. program in the United States usually takes around 5–6 years to complete. However, the duration can vary depending on several factors, including the field of study, the specific requirements of the program, the research topic, and the availability of funding.

Typical Outcomes:

- Research and Academic Careers
 - Faculty, Dean, Vice President and Research Roles at Universities
 - Industry and Corporate Careers
 - Common industries include: technology, pharmaceuticals, engineering, and finance
 - Research and development (R&D) departments
 - Consulting

- Government and Public Sector, typically with a focus on policy development, data analysis, program evaluation, and/or research initiatives
 - Government agencies
 - Research organizations
 - Non-profit organizations.
- Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- Professional and Specialized Roles

Application Requirements: Some Ph.D. programs may accept students with a bachelor's degree directly into their program, while others may require a master's degree or equivalent, Academic Transcripts, Letters of Recommendation, Statement of Purpose, Curriculum Vitae (CV) or Resume, Research Proposal (sometimes required), Standardized Test Scores: GRE (Graduate Record Examination) or subject-specific tests, Writing Samples or Publications (sometimes required).

WHERE TO GO TO FOR SUPPORT

Graduate School Advisor for your desired discipline: Each Academic Department at the College has a dedicated graduate advisor for students pursuing advanced degrees in their field. You can typically find this information on the department's page or by connecting with your academic advisor.

Office of Distinguished Fellowships and Graduate Studies: Anthony Cashman, PhD is the Director of Distinguished Fellowships and Graduate Studies at Holy Cross, you can see him at his office in Smith Hall 333 or at (508)793-2353 and acashman@holycross.edu.

NURSING

Types of Degree Programs to Pursue in Nursing:

- Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN): Typically a two-year program offered by community colleges, focusing on essential nursing skills and knowledge.
- Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN): A four-year program offered by colleges and universities, providing a broader education in nursing, including leadership and research skills.
- Direct Entry Nursing Program: Offers students with a bachelor's degree in another field the opportunity to leverage that education and experience and enter as a graduate student in nursing. Programs range from 18 months to 3 years in length.
- Master of Science in Nursing (MSN): An advanced degree for registered nurses (RNs) seeking specialized roles such as nurse practitioner, nurse educator, or nurse administrator.
- Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP): A terminal practice-focused degree for advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) or nurse executives, emphasizing leadership and evidence-based practice.
- Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing (Ph.D.): A research-focused doctoral program for nurses interested in academic, research, or policy roles.

Average Age: The average age of applicants varies depending on the program and individual circumstances. Traditional BSN programs often see applicants 18 -21, while ADN programs may have a mix of younger students and individuals transitioning from other careers. Graduate programs such as MSN or DNP tend to have older applicants who already have a college degree and/or possess nursing experience.

Average Cost: The costs of nursing programs vary widely depending on factors like the type of program, location, and whether it is public or private. Tuition costs for ADN programs at community colleges are generally more affordable compared to BSN programs at universities. On average, the annual tuition for a BSN program in the United States can range from \$10,000 to \$40,000. Graduate programs like MSN or DNP can be more expensive, with costs ranging from \$20,000 to \$60,000 per year.

Typical Outcomes:

- Registered Nurse (RN): Provides direct patient care in various healthcare settings.
- Nurse Practitioner (NP): Specializes in a specific area and can diagnose, treat, and prescribe medication.
- Nurse Educator: Teaches and trains aspiring nurses in academic or clinical settings.
- Nurse Administrator: Manages healthcare facilities, departments, or units.
- Nurse Researcher: Conducts research to improve healthcare outcomes and nursing practices.
- Nurse Midwife: Provides reproductive and primary care to women, including prenatal and postpartum care.
- Nurse Anesthetist: Administers anesthesia to patients during surgical procedures.
- Nurse Informaticist: Integrates nursing science, computer science, and information science to manage healthcare data and systems.

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DROP IN HOURS

MONDAY-FRIDAY 1:00PM - 4:00PM
HOGAN 203

NURSING (CONT.)

Application Requirements:

The specific application requirements can vary between programs and institutions. However, common requirements for nursing programs often include:

- High school diploma or equivalent for undergraduate programs.
- Completed application form and fee.
- Official transcripts from previous schools/colleges attended.
- Letters of recommendation (usually from teachers, employers, or healthcare professionals).
- Personal statement or essay expressing interest in nursing and career goals.
- Resume or curriculum vitae highlighting relevant experience.
- Minimum GPA requirement varies by program, typically 3.0 or higher.
- Admission exams such as the GRE are common and occasional situational judgment tests like CASPer or PREview are necessary, for masters level and higher programs.
- RN licensure for graduate programs in some cases.
- Interviews may be required for certain programs.
- Required courses vary but typically course work in the sciences with labs, chemistry, microbiology, anatomy & physiology II, nutrition, human development or developmental psychology, statistics, occasionally pathophysiology.

Application Timeline and Process: Apply early, deadlines range from summer one academic year before for early admission to winter and spring deadlines for regular admissions and rolling admissions through the summer just before classes would start.

Where to go for support:

- Health Professions Advising, the Pre-NP club, and their advisor Leslie Holland RD, MSN, FNP-BC, lholland@holycross.edu
- Nursing CAS is a common app form that does not cover all programs but can help in your process, <https://nursingcas.org/>

CONTINUED EDUCATION FOR CAREERS IN HEALTH CARE

Students interested in learning more about further education for careers in health care should contact the [Health Professions Advising program](#) for academic advising and preparation for graduate studies.

The office provides advising and support for students seeking to pursue careers in a range of health professions programs including medical, dental, veterinary or optometry school as well as physical assistant, nurse practitioner, podiatry, physical therapy, optometry, doctor of pharmacy, public health, and others.

For more information on Health Professions Advising and to schedule an appointment please visit: <https://www.holycross.edu/academics/programs/health-professions-advising>