

We applaud your interest to begin your journey into one of the most rewarding professions in the world!

All applications are reviewed through the same process. Your application is how the Admissions Committee and faculty see all that you have to offer. Since there are no personal interviews, your application is critical to introducing the Admissions Committee to who you are as a person and the strengths you would bring to the UCLA School of Nursing. Remember, UCLA School of Nursing usually receives over 3,000 BS applications each year for 50 open slots, and 400-500 MECN applications for 70 open slots. Admission is extremely competitive.

So YOU hold the key to the strength of your application. Here are the components of the UCLA Pre-licensure application and some tips we want to give you. While no one area will assure your admission, we hope that the following tips help you present yourself to the admissions committee in the best possible way.

- **Grade Point Average**
- **Statement of Purpose**
- **Resume**
- **Letters of Recommendation**

Please note that our process takes a more “holistic” approach – we look at the “big picture” and no one item is the only thing considered.

**Disclaimer**

The pool of applicants is extremely competitive. While we do our best to provide information, our guidance is simply advice and will not guarantee admission.

**Grade Point Average (GPA)**

You will provide an official transcript as part of your School of Nursing Supplemental Application (BS Transfer Applicants & MECN Applicants ONLY). Some points are assigned to your GPA. But GPA is NOT the whole picture.

- DO NOT duplicate information about your GPA in your “statement of purpose” – reviewers can see your transcript.
- If your grades have been less than stellar, but you improved them in later courses, address what you did to improve in your “statement of purpose”
- GPA is NOT the only thing reviewers weigh – so just because you do not have a 4.0 does not mean you won’t be considered, just as a 4.0 GPA (or higher) does not guarantee admission.

## **Statement of Purpose**

The “Statement of Purpose” is your opportunity to shine and should be PERSONAL to YOU. It is your opportunity to share with reviewers important information that might not be in your GPA, Resume or Letters of Recommendation. Remember, this is the ONLY opportunity to share why YOU deserve to be one of the few students admitted. You have to set your application apart from all the hundreds of others.

Please read the instructions carefully and address all items: if you are “silent” or do not write about yourself, you give the reviewer no opportunity to consider other factors. Here are a few things that reviewers look for:

- ✓ Why you want to be a nurse – write from your heart
- ✓ Your self assessment for success (at the University and in Nursing)
- ✓ Your goals for a nursing career (we want to know if you have a goal – and we know this can often change)
- ✓ Multicultural experiences, diversity (should include examples)
- ✓ Bilingual ability (describe your level and how you achieved this)
- ✓ Examples of responding to challenges or adversity (e.g. being the first generation in your family to attend college, overcoming specific hardships, etc.)
- ✓ Accomplishments – make sure they are also in your resume
- ✓ Leadership activities and qualities

Common mistakes to avoid:

- Clichés.
- Giving lists of qualities you possess, trying to convince the reviewer you know what is associated with being an advanced practice nurse.
- Saying how smart you are.
- Making it too general (as if it could be written by anyone. Make it specific ABOUT YOU and why YOU want to be a nurse)
- Going over the page limit or disregarding instructions (e.g., single spaced, small font, etc.)
- Forgetting to review your Statement for errors in spelling, grammar, etc. (Pay attention to spellcheck and grammar check). While it is NOT allowed to have someone else write your Statement (that is considered “academic dishonesty” at the University level), have someone read it – they may see things you do not.
- Being superficial
- Devoting too much space saying how great UCLA is and how much you have always wanted to attend.

Each of the programs (BS and MECN) may have slightly different expectations. BS applicants are usually coming straight out of High School so their applicant pool includes others like them. However, applicants to the MECN program must have an undergraduate degree because they are seeking admission to a GRADUATE program

There are many resources on the internet to help guide you to put yourself in the best light. Here is a link you can review as you fashion YOUR distinctive “statement of purpose”. While written by a liberal arts professor (Vince Gotera, University of Northern Iowa), the advice is still excellent – aimed at graduate school statements, but good advice overall:

<http://www.uni.edu/~gotera/gradapp/stmtpurpose.htm>

## **Resume**

This is vital and reviewers look to your resume for your accomplishments and experiences, so make sure it is complete and reflects your leadership, employment, community service, volunteer and other creative experiences.

Be sure to list all the activities you have participated in and roles you had for events or activities. Be sure to note leadership positions and provide specific details of when, where and how long you had a leadership role. For BS applicants, include music, arts, and athletics. For MECN applicants, college activities can be included as well, but primarily you will include post degree work done prior to writing this application.

If you have listed volunteer activities, quantify how many hours you devoted to them per day or per week or per month, and note over what period of time (e.g., for 1 month, for 2 years, etc).

## **Letters of Recommendation**

Letters of Recommendation are a crucial part of your application.

Please follow the directions carefully regarding WHO should be writing a letters. That is, employers, supervisors and instructors/teachers/academic counselors are the right persons to provide Letters of Recommendation for you. The strongest Letters of Recommendation are from those who have known you over time, have seen your growth and accomplishments, and/or have been your employer/supervisor (Letters are NOT to be written by family members or friends).

### Tips:

- ✓ It may be helpful to share your Statement of Purpose with people who are writing Letters of Recommendation as well as talk with them about your goals.
- ✓ Make sure the person can be honest about their evaluation of you.
- ✓ DO NOT ask family members, "family friends" or co-workers; while they may be positive, the instructions require "employers, supervisors and instructors/teachers/academic counselors"
- ✓ If you claim you have health related experience, reviewers will look for ONE letter from a person who supervised you during this activity.
- ✓ At least ONE letter is required from someone in an instructor/faculty/academic counselor category. This applies to BS and MECN applicants.

## **One last note...**

While we wish we could admit every qualified candidate, as you are probably aware, admissions to Nursing programs are HIGHLY COMPETITIVE. Each applicant pool is different and everything starts fresh each year.

For BS Applicants: While your heart may be set to get a BS from UCLA, if you are NOT admitted, you can earn a nursing degree elsewhere and apply to UCLA for a graduate degree. Or, you can earn an undergraduate degree in another field and apply to our MECN program.

For MECN Applicants: If you are not admitted or are placed on the wait list for the MECN program, or you decide to apply again, please update and pay close attention to your resubmission application.

Work to enhance your chances of admission by: gaining experiences, refining your statement, and making your application stronger.

Wishing you success!