



DOUGLAS COLLEGE

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## Bachelor of Science in Psychiatric Nursing Program

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# What/Who is a Registered Psychiatric Nurse (RPN)?

## History of Psychiatric Nursing Education

- 2900 RPNS in BC and > 6000 RPNs in Canada (RN 40,000 in BC and >300,000 Canada)
- Registered Psychiatric Nurses in BC are governed by the Health Professions Act (1996)
- Distinct independent health care profession regulated by a Regulatory College (BCCNM)
- Educated in the 4 western provinces
- 3 programs in BC
- Douglas College has offered Psychiatric Nursing Education for 30+ years
- RPNs' practice involves working with individuals, groups, families, & communities that are experiencing mental health and substance use issues

# What Does a Registered Psychiatric Nurse (RPN) DO?

- RPNs specialize in psychiatric/mental health care & substance use.
- RPNs provide holistic mental & physical health nursing care while addressing the complex relationships between mental, emotional, and physical health, as well as the influence of social, culture and spiritual factors.
- RPNs have specialized, in-depth knowledge & practice related to mental health and substance use conditions.
- RPNs use advanced mental health assessments (e.g. mental status exams and risk assessments), communication skills & therapeutic relationships to provide quality psychiatric nursing care.

# What Does a Registered Psychiatric Nurse (RPN) DO?

- RPNs assess client/patient needs & develop and evaluate treatment plans in collaboration with other health care team members; provide counselling (advanced skill).
- RPNs study pharmacology, psychomotor skills, and sciences such as anatomy & physiology, pathophysiology and microbiology, to provide evidence-informed care.
- RPNs do not currently practice on pediatric, maternity or advanced medical/surgical clinical settings.

# Is This Program Right for Me?

There are some personal characteristics that indicate this might be a good career choice for you:

- you are really interested in helping and working with people (you might be that person that people naturally come to talk to about their problems)
- you are:
  - Empathic and caring
  - Tolerant and respectful of others' differences
  - Can work well as a part of a team
- Good writing and language skills (for documenting patient concerns, communication with the HCT, and most importantly your patients)
- Computer proficiency
- Commitment to lifelong learning to keep up to date with best practices
- Physical, mental, and emotional healthy

Psychiatric Nurses are regulated by the BC College of Nurses and Midwives (BCCNM) and are required to meet a minimal level of requisite skills and abilities.

I recommend you check it out the BCCNM website.

[https://www.bccnm.ca/Documents/competencies\\_requisite\\_skills/RPN\\_requisite\\_skills\\_abilities.pdf](https://www.bccnm.ca/Documents/competencies_requisite_skills/RPN_requisite_skills_abilities.pdf)

# Employment Opportunities

- RPNs are regarded as the employee of choice by most mental health employers.
- RPNs experience excellent employment rates.
- New psychiatric nursing graduates are often offered full time employment upon graduation
- Mobility opportunities & challenges
  - RPNs work in western Canadian provinces only
  - RPNs practice in many Commonwealth countries around the world (not U.S.)
- Wages: RPN starting wage is \$40.21 per hour (2024)
- Bachelor of Psychiatric Nursing (BSPN) can earn a Master's degree in fields such as psychiatric nursing, leadership, counselling, or education

# Broad Range of Career Opportunities

- Psychiatric units in general hospitals
- Tertiary mental health units
- Hospital emergency rooms
- Outpatient Programs
- Child & youth programs
- Older Adults/gerontology
- Substance misuse & Addictions programs
- Corrections services
- Forensic psychiatric hospital and outpatient services
- Non-Profits offering Mental Health Services
- Eating disorder programs
- Palliative care
- Community mental health Teams
- Assertive Case Management Teams
- Developmental Disabilities
- Community outreach programs
- Crisis intervention
- Group homes & Clubhouses
- Primary care clinics
- Long term & Extended care facilities
- Rehabilitation centers
- Education
- Private practice (more education necessary)

# RPN Roles

- Direct care nurse
- Managers, Team leaders, Supervisors
- Clinical nurse educator
- Clinical nurse specialists
- Case managers
- Educators (university/college)
- Researchers
- Independent Private Practice or Consultants (Advanced Practice)





# Academic Foundations for Potential Psychiatric Nursing Applicants (AFPN)

- **First step is to apply online:**
  - Academic Foundations for Potential Psychiatric Nursing (AFPN) Applicants
  - **Minimum requirements for admission into AFPN:**
    - English 12 with minimum grade of B
    - Biology 11 or 12 with minimum grade of B
    - Foundations of Math 11 or 12 with a minimum grade of B
  - First qualified, first admitted until seat capacity reached
  - 30 UT credits AFPN courses:
    - English, Human Anatomy & Physiology, Microbiology, Pathophysiology, Psychology, Statistics, Open Elective courses
  - **C+ required** in each course
  - Completion of 30 UT courses is **academic admission requirement** for BSPN Program
  - Separate application required for BSPN program after completion of AFPN

# Douglas College

## Bachelor of Science in Psychiatric Nursing (BSPN) Program



### After completion of the ACPN courses:

**Note: Priority preference will be given for admissions into the BSPN Program to students in the ACPN Program**

- **Apply** to the Bachelor of Science in Psychiatric Nursing Program
- Non-Academic Admission Requirements: Potential Interview, Health Assessment, Immunization Record, Criminal Record Check, Tuition Deposit (\$350)
- Two intakes per year (Fall & Winter)
- Application dates: October (for following Fall) and Feb (for following Winter)
- *First qualified, first admitted* until seat capacity reached (40 seats each intake)
- No waiting lists (applicants need to reapply for each intake)
- Designated Seats into AF and BSPN Program (Indigenous , High School and Douglas College Health Care Support Worker graduates)
- BSPN program: 90.5 credits (Years 2, 3, 4)
- **Minimum C+** grade in each BSPN course
- Online BSPN Degree Completion Pathway (for Diploma prepared practicing RPNs)

**NOTE:** there is currently no bridge to access DC BSN program from BSPN program

# BSPN PROGRAM DESIGN



Academic Foundations Required Courses- Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<b>ENGL 1130 (3) Academic Writing</b>  <b>BIOL 1103 (3) Human Anatomy and Physiology I</b>  <b>BIOL 1203 (3) Human Anatomy and Physiology II</b>  <b>PSYC 1100 (3) An Introduction to Psychology I</b>  <b>PSYC 1200 (3) An Introduction to Psychology II</b>  <b>MATH 1160 (3) Introduction to Statistics Or</b> <b>PSYC 2300 (3) Data Analysis in Psychology Or</b> <b>BUSN 2429 (3) Business Statistics</b>	<b>Semester One</b>  PNUR 2101 (4.5) Psychiatric Nursing Concepts I PNUR 2121 (1.5) Therapeutic Relations I PNUR 2130 (1.5) Clinical Procedures I PNUR 2175 (3) Psychiatric Nursing Research PNUR 2170 (1.5) Trauma Informed Practices 1 PNUR 2171 (3) Family Health Promotions PHIL 3125 (3) Ethics for Psychiatric Nursing	<b>Semester Three</b>  PNUR 3301 (4.5) Psychiatric Nursing Concepts III (Episodic) PNUR 3321 (1.5) Therapeutic Relations III PNUR 3330 (1.5) Clinical Procedures III PNUR 3361 (5) Psychiatric Nursing Clinical Practice II (Episodic Health Challenges I) PNUR 3350 (3) Psychiatric Nursing Pharmacology	<b>Semester Five</b>  PNUR 4572 (3) Psychiatric Nursing Community Concepts PNUR 4573 (3) Psychiatric Nursing of Children and Adolescents PNUR 4521 (1.5) Therapeutic Relations V PNUR 4562 (5) Psychiatric Nursing Clinical Practice IV (Complex Health Challenges) PNUR 4501 (3) Nursing Leadership and Management
	Total 18 Credits	Total 15.5 credits	Total 15.5 Credits
<b>BIOL 2401 (3) Introduction to Microbiology</b>  <b>BIOL 2200 (3) Pathophysiology</b>  <b>ENGL Elective (3)</b>  <b>One Open UT Elective (3)</b>	<b>Semester Two</b>  PNUR 2201 (3) Psychiatric Nursing Concepts II PNUR 2221 (1.5) Therapeutic Relations II PNUR 2230 (1.5) Clinical Procedures II PNUR 2261 (5) Psychiatric Nursing Clinical Practice I PNUR 2285 (3) Psychiatric Nursing in Addictions and Mental Health	<b>Semester Four</b>  PNUR 3401 (4.5) Psychiatric Nursing Concepts IV (Episodic) PNUR 3421 (1.5) Therapeutic Relations IV PNUR 3430 (1.5) Clinical Procedures IV PNUR 3441 (1.5) Group Theory and Process PNUR 3462 (5) Psychiatric Nursing Clinical Practice III (Episodic Health Challenges II/ Older Adult) PNUR 3403 (3) Psychiatric Nursing and the Older Adult	<b>Semester Six</b>  PNUR 4670 (1.5) Trauma Informed Practices II PNUR 4661 (9) Psychiatric Nursing Clinical Practice V
	Total 14 Credits	Total 17 Credits	Total 10.5 Credits
<b>Total 30 Credits</b>			

# BSPN Program Clinical Practice Courses



Semester Focus	Clinical Practice Focus
Semester 1 <b>Focus: Health &amp; Wellness</b>	
Semester 2 <b>Focus: Ongoing Health Challenges</b>	7 weeks tertiary mental health setting & 7 weeks medical unit
Semester 3 <b>Focus: Episodic Health Challenges</b>	7 weeks acute psychiatric setting & 7 weeks acute medical/surgical unit
Semester 4 <b>Focus: Episodic Health Challenges</b>	7 weeks complex older adult setting & 7 weeks acute medical/surgical unit
Semester 5 <b>Focus: Complex Health Challenges</b>	7 weeks acute psychiatric setting & 7 weeks community mental health setting
Semester 6 <b>Focus: Preceptorship/Integration</b>	11 weeks full time practice with RPN/RN preceptor across a variety of settings



## Accessibility Services at Douglas College

Accessibility Services: If you are anticipating that you may need additional help or accommodation with your learning you should contact our Accessibility Services office.

Accessibility Services works with students to remove barriers related to learning disabilities, ADHD, mental health issues, sensory impairments, or if you had an Individualized academic plan in high school it may be helpful to contact them to see if there are any accommodations or strategies that might be helpful while at Douglas college . I will add their contact information in the chat.

# Some considerations when choosing RPN



- There is currently no bridge program currently between the BSN and BSPN programs at Douglas College.
- Psychiatric Nursing is a different career path from regular nursing (BSN).
- If you want to go back to do your BSN, you will have to start the program from the beginning. Your psychiatric nursing courses will not count towards any of your BSN degree, except for your AF courses.
- RPNs are currently limited to working in the 4 Western provinces (BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Yukon) & limited international opportunities, but there are some in Commonwealth countries. None in USA.
- RPNs do not practice in pediatric (medical) & maternity settings.





# Contact Information



## Questions about Transfer Credit?

Contact Academic Advising for drop-in, telephone, email or chat advice at:

<http://www.douglas.bc.ca>

## Questions about Academic Foundations for Potential Psychiatric Nursing Student?

[afcoord@douglascollege.ca](mailto:afcoord@douglascollege.ca)

## Other General Questions

Contact our Program Support & Services Specialist at:

[barlowf@douglascollege.ca](mailto:barlowf@douglascollege.ca)

Or 604 777 6406

Contact our Psychiatric Nursing Student Coordinator at:

[melletts@douglascollege.ca](mailto:melletts@douglascollege.ca)

604-777-6435

## Questions about the RPN Profession?

<http://www.bccnm.ca>