

REGISTERED NURSE FIRST ASSISTANT (RNFA) SUBSPECIALTY COURSES

Distance Accessible

What is a Registered Nurse First Assistant?

A Registered Nurse First Assistant (RNFA) is prepared to practice in a variety of acute or critical care settings. The RNFA, in collaboration with the surgeon, provides continuous and comprehensive patient care throughout the perioperative period. The RNFA works closely with patients, families, surgeons, and other members of the health care team to achieve high quality goals for patients. The goals of the RNFA are to stabilize patients, minimize complications and promote safety, provide physical care, and provide competent assistance to the surgeon throughout the patient's perioperative stay. To achieve these goals, the RNFA provides direct patient care management; admits and discharges patients from surgical areas; performs pre- and post-operative assessments; analyzes clinical data; assist in orders and or performance of necessary diagnostic tests or procedures; develops, implements, and evaluates the therapeutic regimen; provides pre-and post-operative teaching; minimizes fragmentation by coordinating care; manages transitions of patients to other units and serves as patient advocate.

Who employs RNFAs?

RNFAs may be employed by hospitals to work in perioperative services. They may also be employed by surgeons to help manage the care of surgical patients, assist the surgeon during the operative phase, help patients with the transition to out-patient settings, and manage patients in clinic settings. RNFAs may be employed in surgical or specialty centers such as cardiovascular, orthopedics, plastics, ENT, and wound care.

Can I specialize further?

There is an Adult Gerontology Acute Care specialty track leading to a Masters of Science in Nursing which allows for national certification as a Nurse Practitioner following graduation. See the Fact Sheet for Nurse Practitioner Adult Gerontology Acute Care for further information on that specialty track.

What kind of experience do I need?

A Baccalaureate in Nursing and 2 years of Operating Room experience and CNOR-eligible, or a Master's in Nursing Science. If you have 2 years of Operating room experience, you take 3 credit hours of NFA 620 Surgical Techniques. BCLS certification is required prior to starting course work, and ACLS certification is recommended.

What are the admission criteria?

Requirements for admission to the RNFA post-baccalaureate track vary depending on the applicant's previous preparation:

Admission requirements:

1. Baccalaureate in Nursing and 2 years of Operating Room Experience; CNOR-eligible; **OR**
 2. Master's in Nursing
 3. Both BSN or MSN applicants must meet the admission requirements of the School of Nursing.
 4. Possess an unencumbered nursing license to practice nursing in the state where you plan to conduct your clinical practicum
 5. BCLS certification is required prior to starting course work.
- An undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale either cumulatively or on the last 60 semester credit hours
 - (3) Letters of professional reference attesting to the applicant's potential for graduate study
 - Standardized test score (MAT, GRE, GMAT)* A minimum score of 410 on the MAT; or a minimum score of 480 on the GMAT; or a combined score of 297 on the verbal and quantitative sections of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE)*

* GRE/GMAT/MAT Waiver Process: http://www.uab.edu/nursing/images/stories/infostudents/GRE_MAT_waiver.pdf

Approval for the GRE/GMAT/MAT Waiver does not imply or guarantee admission to the MSN program. When all of your transcripts are evaluated, if you do not meet the requirements, you will be notified that you need to take the GRE/GMAT/MAT. Candidates not approved for the GRE/GMAT/MAT waiver will be required to take the GRE/GMAT/MAT before final action on their application for master's study. The School of Nursing at UAB must receive the official score by the posted materials deadline. Applicants for the GRE/GMAT/MAT waiver must meet the same requirements for admission to the MSN program as all other applicants.

*****The following individuals are not eligible for the GRE waiver process:**

- International applicants
- Non-Native English speaking applicants
- Dual degree seeking program applicants MSN/MPH

For International Students:

- All foreign transcripts evaluated by the Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc www.ece.org OR the World Education Services www.wes.org, sent from the evaluators directly to the School of Nursing
- A degree equivalent to a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited educational institution in the United States
- A score of 500 or higher on the Test of English as a Foreign Language, TOEFL
- Standardized test score. A minimum combined score of 297 on the verbal and quantitative sections of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).
- Possess an unencumbered nursing license to practice nursing in the state where you plan to conduct your clinical practicum

When will I receive confirmation that I have been accepted into the program?

You will be notified of your acceptance or denial within 30 days after the application submission deadline.

What are the classroom and clinical requirements?

Total credit hours: 9 Hours; Didactic Hours: 6 Clinical Hours: 3 hours minimum;; Total Hours of direct Patient Care: 180 contact hours.

Descriptive narrative: Didactic content specific to the secondary specialization of RNFA is provided in 2 courses. A one to two-day on-campus "hands on" surgical intensive is part of the NFA 620 Surgical Techniques course. Clinical practicum hours are accomplished in the perioperative environment in NFA 622 with a surgeon mentor or a RNFA.

How many semesters are required for full-time study? Is part-time study offered?

Full-time study, as defined by the University is 9 hours and is not available in this post-baccalaureate subspecialty course option.

What certification examination is available if I complete the program?

The Association for Perioperative Room Nurses and the Competency and Credentialing Institute requires 2000 hours to be eligible for the Registered Nurse First Assistant certification. The RNFA practicum in this post-baccalaureate option counts toward fulfillment of these hours. The UAB School of Nursing is approved by the Association for Perioperative Room Nurses and the Competency and Credentialing Institute to offer the RNFA program.

How do I become eligible to practice as an RNFA in my state of residence?

Individual states have different requirements. You will need to contact your state's board of nursing to learn about specific requirements.

What is a typical program of study for the RNFA post-baccalaureate option?

Fall	NFA 620 Surgical Techniques.....	3 credit hours
Spring	NFA 621 Advanced Perioperative Nursing I.....	3 credit hours
Summer	NFA 622 Advanced Perioperative Nursing I Practicum.....	3 credit hours
	Total	9 credit hours

Where can I get more information?

Internet website: <http://www.uab.edu/nursing>

General information about the application process

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Information about Dual Adult/Registered Nurse First Assist Nurse Practitioner

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