

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

**Committee Name:** Academic Programs Committee, University Council

**Date:** January 29, 2026

**Presented by:** Paul Jones, Chair, Academic Programs Committee

**Subject: PhD in Nursing Admission Qualification Changes**

## **MOTION**

It is recommended by the Academic Programs Committee that Council approve the Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing Admission Qualification change, effective for the 2027-2028 admission cycle.

## **CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND**

The College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies is recommending approval of admission requirement changes for the PhD in Nursing program. The proposed changes aim to clarify two existing admission qualifications and provide transparency about admission processes:

- 1) how the admission average is calculated;
- 2) the credit unit and course level requirements for prerequisite courses.

The admission requirement changes are expected to be implemented for the 2027-28 University Catalogue.

## **CONSULTATION**

The Graduate Programs Committee reviewed the proposal at their meeting on November 17, 2025, and approved the proposal.

The College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies submitted a proposal to the Academic Programs Committee (APC) on January 7, 2026. APC had the opportunity to review the proposal discuss the proposal with the proponents and voted in favour of the changes. University Council has the authority to approve changes to admission qualifications. Senate confirmation of the decision is required before the changes can take effect.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. **PhD in Nursing Admission Qualification Changes**

# Changes to Graduate Program Admission Requirements

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## Executive Summary

**To:** Academic Programs Committee of Council

**From:** **Graduate Programs Committee, CGPS**

**Date:** November 24, 2025

**Re:** Admission Requirements Changes, PhD in Nursing

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The College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies is recommending approval of admission requirement changes for the PhD in Nursing program. The proposed changes aim to clarify two existing admission qualifications and provide transparency about admission processes: 1) how the admission average is calculated; 2) the credit unit and course level requirements for prerequisite courses. The admission requirement changes are expected to be implemented for the 2027-28 University Catalogue.

The Graduate Programs Committee reviewed the proposal at their meeting on November 17, 2025, and approved the proposal with the following motion:

**MOTION:** "To approve the admission requirement changes to clarify requirements for the PhD in Nursing" **Ferrari/EI-Aneed – CARRIED unanimously**

Attached please find the proposal for the Admission Requirements Changes for the PhD in Nursing

If you have any questions, please contact the Academic Affairs Specialist at [gradprograms.academicaffairs@usask.ca](mailto:gradprograms.academicaffairs@usask.ca).

# Changes to Graduate Program Admission Requirements

## SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Program: PhD in Nursing	
Academic Unit (unit offering the program): College of Nursing/CGPS	Proposed date for implementation: 2027-28 University Catalogue
Contact person name Jill Brown	Email Jill.brown@usask.ca

Admission requirements are made up of several factors including admission qualifications and selection criteria which are governed under the [Policy on Admission to Degree Programs](#).

Please select the area in which you are proposing to change/create:

**Admission Qualifications**

These are the credentials that an applicant must present in order to establish eligibility for admission. They include but are not restricted to objective qualifications such as post-secondary standing, minimum averages, English proficiency, and minimum scores on standardized tests. Qualifications may vary for some admission categories. Admission Qualifications become part of your “Admission Requirements” for applicants.

**Admission category**

Admission categories are approved at a university wide level and are a way to differentiate and compare applicants with similar qualifications (i.e. Regular Admission, Special Admission, Indigenous Specific Seats, Provisional Admission, etc.).

Note: If the admission category requires applicants to adhere to a different set of admission qualifications this would then require Senate approval.

**Enrolment Management**

Changes to the capacity of seats available for new admits if different from the college/school strategic enrolment plan.

## RATIONALE

### **Describe the change being made to the admission requirements and the rationale for the admission change:**

The College of Nursing is proposing two very minor changes that further clarify the current admission process. These revisions do not change how we have been processing admissions to the PhD program. Rather, they are meant to clarify each requirement for applicants.

1. Changing the statement on how the admission average is calculated from “a cumulative weighted average of at least a 80% (U of S grade system equivalent) in the last two years of study (i.e. coursework required in master’s program)” to “a cumulative weighted average of at least a 80% (U of S grade system equivalent) in all completed master’s coursework”.

Master’s courses are designed to reflect graduate level rigor, specialization and academic maturity. Evaluating performance in these courses ensures the applicant is assessed on work that aligns with the expectations in the doctoral program. Success in master’s coursework demonstrates the applicant’s ability to handle complex ideas and materials, develop and conduct research and engage in critical thinking. In master’s programs students’ exposure to the research processes and the appraisal of literature and evidence support the development of synthesis skills at a much higher level than in undergraduate programs. In addition, master’s coursework and graduate grades align with future expectations and performance in doctoral programs than is the case in undergraduate grades. Applicants who may have had weaker undergraduate performance but did well in their master’s program are given fair consideration.

2. Changing the statement on required courses for admission from “have completed at least one course in each of statistics, research methods, and nursing theory” to “have completed at least one 3 credit unit graduate level course in each of statistics, research methods, and nursing theory”. This change will provide clarity to applicants about the level of prerequisite coursework (graduate vs. undergraduate) required for application to the program.

The proposed changes will not impact the selection criteria for the program or program enrollment.

## CATALOGUE ENTRY

### Nursing

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) - Non-Direct Entry

### Admission Requirements

- Current registration as a nurse or psychiatric nurse.
- Proof of English proficiency may be required for applicants to graduate programs. Proof of English proficiency may be demonstrated through:
  - A minimum of three consecutive years of full-time study or completion of a graduate degree at a recognized post-secondary institution, where the exclusive language of instruction and examination of the program and/or institution is English; or
  - Provision of evidence of English language proficiency, using one of the approved tests listed in the English Language Proficiency Policy. Acceptable test scores are as follows:
    - TOEFL: a combined minimum total score of 94, with a minimum of 24 out of 30 in the writing component, and a minimum of 22 out of 30 in the reading, listening, and speaking components.
    - IELTS: an overall score of 7.0 with no score below 6.5 in each area
- Master's degree, or equivalent, from a recognized university in a relevant academic discipline
- Previous research experience, through completion of a thesis or other research experience
- a cumulative weighted average of at least a 80% (U of S grade system equivalent) in **all completed master's coursework** ~~the last two years of study (i.e. coursework required in Master's program)~~
- have completed at least one **3 credit unit graduate level** course in each of statistics, research methods, and nursing theory

For more information on language proficiency requirements, see the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies [Academic Policies](#).

## CONSULTATIONS

Checklist of consultations to be completed before a submission can be reviewed by the Academic Programs Committee of Council:

Required Consultation/Office	Required Documentation for Submission
<b>1. Graduate Programs Admission Consultation</b> All Graduate Programs are to go through the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. <b>Contact:</b> Chelsea Smith: <a href="mailto:gradprograms.academicaffairs@usask.ca">gradprograms.academicaffairs@usask.ca</a>	Completed
<b>2. Provost (Financial Implications)</b> Strategic Finance Office Review (Tuition and Fees) Contact: Kyla Shea	Not required - Confirmed with SFO Nov 20, 2025
<b>3. Consultation with Registrar</b> Contact: Seanine Warrington	Consultation with the Registrar Form and CWR Cover Sheet (completed by the Registrar's Office) - Completed
<b>4. Internal USask Consultations</b>	n/a
<b>4. Consultation with Space Planning</b> (Teaching Space and Administrative Space) <b>Contact:</b> <a href="mailto:space.management@usask.ca">space.management@usask.ca</a>	n/a
Approvals	
College Faculty Council Approval or equivalent	Include the motion carried at the Approval Meeting. The Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Committee recommends that Faculty Council approve the revised PhD catalogue.
Graduate Programs Committee	See executive summary
Governance Approval	

**Note:** The Academic Programs Committee is responsible for evaluating academic implications of admission requirements. Approval at APC, Council and Senate (where applicable) does not imply approval of required resources (faculty complement, additional space requirements, etc.). Academic units are responsible for implementing these changes within the resources available including any incremental tuition generated.

## Consultation with the Registrar (CWR) – Proposal Highlights

**Title of Proposal:** Ph.D. in Nursing – Admission Requirement Revisions

**General Description:** The proposal details a minor change to the admission average calculation and clarifies course requirements for admission to the program. Specifically, the proposed changes involve calculating the admission average using all courses completed toward the Master's degree and stipulating that the required courses in statistics, research methods, and nursing theory be 3 credit unit courses at the graduate level.

**Degree College:** College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

**College Approval:** Graduate Programs Committee approval, November 17, 2025

**Effective Term:** 2027-28 Admission Intake period

### Course implications

- No course deletions or changes are involved in this proposal.

### Registration and classes

- N/A

### Convocation

- N/A

### Financial and Budget

- Deputy Provost has advised the Registrar to proceed with the proposal.

### Admission and Student Mobility

- See above.