

# The differences between the baccalaureate and associate degree in nursing assignm...



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Running Head: THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE BACCALAUREATE AND ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN NURSING The Differences Between The Baccalaureate and Associate Degree In Nursing NUR 320: Informatics Stillman College March 4, 2009 The Differences Between the Baccalaureates and Associate Degree in Nursing A BSN represent a Baccalaureate of Science in Nursing, while an ADN is an Associate's Degree in Nursing. With either degree the person obtain his or her Registered Nurse (RN) license but there are some differences between the two.

The main difference is the length of time and the amount of credits required to complete the program. " An ADN typically takes two years to complete while a BSN will take four years to complete; which includes the time spent taking the prerequisites to enter the program. There are also accelerated BSN programs (18-21 months) for students who have already obtained a previous baccalaureate degree" (Marrow, 2008, p. 1). Both programs would include the following in their core curriculum: Adult health, Maternal and Newborn nursing, and pediatrics.

Psychiatric nursing, community health nursing, and gerontological nursing are sometimes included as well. BSN programs would typically offer more courses in nursing theory, including nursing research, and nursing informatics, which is a field of study that examines how nurses use technology. The BSN is said to offer a creative curriculum to prepare students for careers as professional nurses who understand society's current and future health needs. " BSN programs prepare graduates more effectively to make critical patient care decisions and to question doctors when orders appear inappropriate.

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The education provided in a BSN program is more focused on critical thinking, exposing students to more people and cultures, and enhancing the skills required for nursing management. They also offer more opportunities to improve skills in patient assessment and provide a greater examination of disease pathophysiology” (Marrow, 2008, p. 1). The curriculum reflects the current trends in health care, focusing on wellness/illness concepts and the delivery of care in both hospital and community-based settings. The BSN curriculum consists of two components: 53-55 credit hours of general education course work organized in “ clusters” and 70-72 credit hours of nursing courses that stress critical thinking, communication, and collaboration skills. The curriculum also provides a foundation for graduate study and leadership positions, as graduates will possess a broad knowledge of the humanities, biological and social sciences, and nursing” (Marrow, 2008, p. 2). A BSN degree is required for acceptance into a master’s degree in nursing program or other advanced degree programs.

Advancement opportunities in other areas are perceived to favor the BSN graduate. The BSN nurse is perceived to be the manager of care. The ADN program is a two-year curriculum (70 semester hours) that provides courses in liberal arts, sciences and nursing. The Associate Degree Nursing Program is said to provide practical nurses the opportunity to achieve an associate degree in nursing and take the NCLEX-RN Exam. “ Advantages of attending an ADN school include shorter term needed to achieve one’s goal of becoming a RN, more ‘ hands-on’ clinical training, more flexibility in scheduling, and affordable tuition costs” (Marrow, 2008, p. 2).

The ADN nurse is perceived to be more skillful upon graduation from nursing school. “ Approximately 56% of all nurses graduate from a generic ADN program. ADN programs usually cost less and take less time to complete” (Morrow, 2008, p. 1). Despite the fact that BSN programs are viewed to be on a more advanced level, it is said that nurses coming out of ADN programs are more knowledgeable and have better hands on experience than nurses who graduate from a BSN program. Reference Morrow, J. (2008, October 9). Nursing Degrees – BSN Or ADN. Retrieved February 21, 2009, from <http://ezinearticles.com/?Nursing-Degrees—BSN-Or-ADN>.