

Otterbein University – OhioHealth Grant Medical Center

Nurse Anesthesia Program – BSN to DNP

Applicant Preparation Guide for Non-Clinical Attributes

We are excited that you have taken an interest in our program. The application process can be overwhelming and intimidating. We prepared this document to assist you in your quest to become a nurse anesthetist. This is a guide and is not all inclusive. The intention is to get you “on the right track” preparing for an interview process. Please let us know if you have any questions about what is contained in this document.

We suggest you try to maximize your time with friends and family before the start of a program. We suggest saving money and work on reducing your cost of living. Two of the most common stressors in a nurse anesthesia program are relationships with family and friends and finances. If you work on both areas now, it will help ease your transition into the program.

Persons hiring CRNAs are looking more at the non-clinical related attributes (“soft skills”) of potential employees. Most employers assume that coming from our program that you are competent in your ability to deliver anesthesia safely. Our goal is to help prepare you for the current and future job markets.

Non-Clinical Preparation

The **five** pillars of success for our program are:

- **The “R” Factor**
- **Emotional Intelligence**
- **Managing Criticism**
- **GRIT**
- **Discipline**

The “R” Factor

As a student in a program, you will experience stressful events (“E”). It is how you react/respond (the “R” factor) that will most likely determine the outcome (“O”) of your day. The equation, “E + R = O”, is a tool we use to help guide and improve the performance of our

students. You don't control the events in the operating room but you can earn better outcomes by providing discipline to your response/reaction.

Additional information focusing on the "R Factor" can be gained by viewing the following website:

<https://www.focus3.com/> - Focus 3 is the company that developed and instructs on the "R" Factor.

Emotional Intelligence

A common area students struggle with in a nurse anesthesia program is emotional intelligence. A majority of the issues we deal with regarding students in the program is not related to clinical performance. Most issues surround interpersonal conflicts arising from a lack of understanding emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is defined as:

1. **Perceiving Emotions:** The first step in understanding emotions is to perceive them accurately. In many cases, this might involve understanding nonverbal signals such as body language and facial expressions.
2. **Reasoning With Emotions:** The next step involves using emotions to promote thinking and cognitive activity. Emotions help prioritize what we pay attention and react to; we respond emotionally to things that garner our attention.
3. **Understanding Emotions:** The emotions that we perceive can carry a wide variety of meanings. If someone is expressing angry emotions, the observer must interpret the cause of their anger and what it might mean. For example, if your boss is acting angry, it might mean that he is dissatisfied with your work; or it could be because he got a speeding ticket on his way to work that morning or that he's been fighting with his wife.
4. **Managing Emotions:** The ability to manage emotions effectively is a crucial part of emotional intelligence. Regulating emotions, responding appropriately and responding to the emotions of others are all important aspect of emotional management.

Taken from:

<http://psychology.about.com/od/personalitydevelopment/a/emotionalintell.htm>

Most students who struggle during the program have issues with **Perceiving Emotions** and **Reasoning with Emotions**. Students who excel in the program eventually do well with all four phases. Please read about emotional intelligence to reflect how understanding it might have a positive impact for you during the program.

Managing Criticism

Another area students struggle with during the nurse anesthesia program is receiving criticism about their clinical, academic and personal performance. Most criticism is not personal but meant to be a method for improving your clinical performance and personal growth.

We suggest that you read the following book (focus on Chapters 1 and 2):

“The Truth Doesn’t Have to Hurt: How to use criticism to strengthen relationships, improve performance, and promote change” by Deb Bright (2015)

GRIT

We are looking for applicants who exhibit GRIT and persevere through adversity. Over the course of the program, there will be events and situations that you will need to adapt and overcome in order to be successful.

A good resource to help you explore and understand the concept of GRIT is:

“GRIT: The Power of Passion and Perseverance” by Angela Duckworth (2016)

Discipline

Students are always motivated to start a program. But motivation can easily go away when tasks and expectations become difficult. During a program, there are always things that a student must do when they do not necessarily want to do it. Discipline is the skill that must be practiced and mastered to ensure success during difficult times.

Below are a few good resources related to discipline:

<https://www.inc.com/john-rampton/which-is-better-discipline-or-motivation.html>

<https://medium.com/@flabstofitness/why-motivation-is-crap-discipline-is-your-only-chance-at-success-3ecd00b8b090>

Writing Preparation

Effective writing and formatting is a must for the student completing a doctoral program. Below are a few suggestions for you to develop this critical skill.

- https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html
- <https://www.coursera.org/learn/sciwrite>

Clinical Preparation

Become a scientist! You should know what and how all parameters in the ICU are measured!

Preparation for the interview should focus on the following areas:

- Ventilator modes and interventions
 - i.e. volume control vs. pressure control, PEEP, PS, etc.
- Arterial blood gas interpretation and interventions

- Acids, bases and how they interact
- Lab values/interventions to correct abnormal values
- Oxygen delivery from the air to the tissues
- Hemodynamics and shock states
 - Identify the various shock states/interventions to correct
 - Purpose of the heart, valves
 - Fluid movement, pressure gradients, flow through a closed system
 - IABP, Ecmo, etc.
- EKG interpretation and interventions
- Electrolytes
 - Inside and outside of the cell
 - Concentration gradients related neuron and cardiac action potentials
- Autonomic nervous system
 - Physiology and pharmacology
- Pharmacology
 - The MOA/Dosing/Indications/etc. for all ICU drugs

Below are resources for your clinical preparation:

There are two textbooks from the NBCRNA (the company that provides the board exam) bibliography that you can use to prepare for the application/interview process. Older versions that cheaper may be used as the focus below is on pharmacology and physiology and not anesthesia techniques.

Nagelhout, J.J., & Plaus, K.L. Nurse Anesthesia, (6th ed.) Philadelphia: Saunders (Elsevier Health Sciences). 2018.

- Chap. 5 – General Principles, Pharmacodynamics and Drug Receptor Concepts
- Chap. 6 – Pharmacokinetics
- Chap. 13 – Autonomic and Cardiac Pharmacology
- Chap. 14 - Chemistry & Physics in Anesthesia
- Chaps. 16, 17 – Clinical Monitoring of the CV and Respiratory systems
- Chap. 20 – Fluid, Electrolyte and Blood Component Therapy
- Chaps 23, 26 and 28 – the physiology sections only of these chapters (CV, Resp. and Neuro)

Stoelting, R.K., Hiller, S.C. Pharmacology and Physiology in Anesthesia Practice (5th ed.). Philadelphia: Lippincott, Williams, & Wilkins; 2014.

- Chap.2 - Basic Principles of Pharmacology
- Chaps. 1, 11, 14, 15, 24, 25 – Various Physiology Chapters

The following websites may be beneficial in your preparation:

- Khan Academy - www.khanacademy.org
 - Physics
 - Fluids
 - Forces & Newton's Laws of Motion
 - Work & Energy
 - Chemistry
 - Chemical bonds
 - Gases
 - Acids and Bases
 - Health & Medicine
 - Focus on the circulatory, respiratory and nervous systems
- www.cvphysiology.com
- www.cvpharmacology.com

Other Books of Interest:

- [Cardiovascular Physiology Concepts by Dr. Richard Klabunde](#)
- [West's Respiratory Physiology: The Essentials by Dr. John West](#)
- [The ICU Book by Dr. Paul Marino](#)
- [Essentials of Mechanical Ventilation by Dr. Dean Hess](#)
- [Fast Facts for Critical Care \(free eBook\) by Kathy White, RN](#)

YouTube Resources:

- [Critical Care & General Medical Education by Dr. Eric Strong](#)
- [Fundamental Nursing Concepts by Gail Lupica, RN](#)
- [Critical Care EBP & Literature Review by Dr. Eddie Joe](#)
- [The Art & Science of Medical Education by Dr. Armando Hasudungan](#)
- [Animated Medical & Health Educational Platform by Osmosis](#)

Social Media Public Figures:

- [Dr. Rishi Kumar, Cardiothoracic Anesthesiologist and Intensivist](#)
 - [Facebook Link](#)
 - [Instagram Link](#)
- [Nicole Kupchik, Clinical Nurse Specialist and Educator, CCRN Review Course Speaker](#)
 - [Facebook Link](#)
 - [Instagram Link](#)
 - [YouTube Link](#)
- [Dr. Eddie Joe, Intensivist, Critical Care Education](#)
 - [Instagram Link](#)
 - [YouTube Link](#)

We hope that you gained valuable information from this guide. As you can see, preparation to be a student in a nurse anesthesia program is not just about clinical skills and knowledge. During the interview process, we only have a short period of time to assess your clinical abilities and “soft skills”. It is up to you to practice communicating and presenting yourself to us during your time in the interview process.