

## What is my path?

There are many different paths a student can take in their pursuit of a degree in Nursing. Nursing is a highly competitive field with rigorous application standards. Not every degree program suits the needs of every student. As such, it is important for students to carefully research programs of interest and pursue those that best meet their needs, strengths, and interests.

First, a few questions to answer if Nursing is the career you wish to pursue:

- Are you willing to go wherever you need for accredited Registered Nursing (RN) training in an accredited nursing program if you are not admitted to your first-choice program?
  - If yes, your parallel plan might include one of several alternate paths to the RN position.
  - If no, then it might be wise to consider other career/major options that IU has to offer.
  
- Would give up the nursing profession if you had a difficult time being admitted to an Indiana University program?
  - If no, your parallel plan might consist of one of several alternate paths to the RN position.
  - If yes, then it might be wise to consider other career/major options at IU. Nursing school and the profession itself require an extreme amount of dedication and commitment.
  
- What steps have you taken to research and explore the field of Nursing?
  - Talking to or shadowing a nurse can be helpful to better understand the field of Nursing, including highlights and lowlights in their experience. This can be a good first step in deciding whether Nursing is the best fit for you.
  - Attending a student organization meeting can connect you to students who may also be interested in nursing or another health profession.
  - Utilize reputable online resources for exploration, such as [Johnson & Johnson](#).
  - When you have determined you want to continue pursuing Nursing and would like to learn more about the academic program and pre-requisites for admission, the best resource is your University Division academic advisor.
  
- Have you assessed your aptitudes, your academic abilities, and your willingness to do whatever it takes to become competitive for admission to a nursing program?
  - Some examples:
    - Some students have a difficult time earning the A- average required to be a competitive application to the Indiana University Nursing program even through sincere effort, adequate time spent studying, and obtaining extra help.
    - Others, upon honest reflection, realize they have not been spending the recommended 30 hours a week studying to be a competitive applicant.

## **Nursing Options Overview**

**Associate of Science or Arts in Nursing:** (Two-year program offered at community colleges, such as Ivy Tech) Once the program is complete students may apply for licensure by examination in one state and sit for the national licensure examination (NCLEX).

**RN- BSN programs:** (Offered at Indiana University) This is for the nurse with a 2-year Associate Degree who wants to complete their BSN. Most of the RN- BSN programs are online. Students may be enrolled part-time or full-time and can complete the BSN in 12-24 months. IU offers both a traditional RN-BSN or the TSAP RN-BSN options. TSAP requires the student to complete the BSN in four semesters (full-time).

**Traditional BSN programs:** (Offered at Indiana University with 1 year of pre-requisites) Apply between January 15- March 15. Indiana University will admit 120 students for the Fall semester and typically receives 250+ applications.

**Other BSN programs:** Nursing is offered through all 9 IU campuses. Admission criteria and nursing curriculum may vary at some other campuses. Prerequisites may vary as well. If a student is interested in applying at another IU campus, it is recommended they meet with a nursing advisor at the campus to which they wish to apply. Contacting an advisor is essential.

**Accelerated Second Degree Programs at Indianapolis and Fort Wayne:** This program is for students who earn a bachelor's degree in any major and have completed the nursing program application requirements. Admission is based on the GPA of the courses on the application. Once admitted to the nursing program, students earn a second degree – a Bachelor of Science in Nursing through 4 semesters of year-round enrollment. If a student is interested in applying at another IU campus, it is recommended they meet with a nursing advisor at the campus to which they wish to apply. Contacting an advisor is essential.

**Other Accelerated Second Degree BSN Programs:** Admission criteria will vary widely. Students must research carefully what is required and contact the advisor for the program to be sure they understand the admission criteria and to verify their coursework will transfer.

**Non-Nursing Bachelor's degree to master's degree in Nursing:** This is a generalist option. Students must meet pre-requisite general education requirements to apply. Students are not eligible to take their national licensure exam or apply for a license until they finish their master's degree. They can practice as general practice nurses or nurse educators after completing most programs. Students need to be very thorough in their investigation of these programs regarding when they can become licensed and what options they have. These do not prepare a student to become a nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, or nurse anesthesia practitioner.

## **Advanced Practice Nursing:**

**Nurse Practitioner:** Licensed independent practitioner who diagnose and treat patients. Requires clinical experience with the population they want to treat. Currently, at most universities, this is a master's degree program.

**Clinical Nurse Specialist:** Clinical nurse specialists are registered nurses who typically hold a master's degree at minimum, along with national certification denoting advanced knowledge and clinical skills specific to a particular patient population or specialized area of nursing. While working directly with patients, they implement treatment plans to resolve or mitigate medical or psychiatric issues. At most universities, this is a master's degree program.

**Certified Registered Nurse Anesthesia Practitioner:** A Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) as a member of the procedure team that provides patient-centered monitored anesthesia care with members of the multidisciplinary team is to enhance patient safety. This program would either be a master's degree or a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree.

**Nursing Leadership in Health Systems:** The nursing leadership in health systems' track prepares you for mid-level and senior nursing leadership. Courses offer a wide range of administrative knowledge from leadership and decision making to economics and organizational theory. This is a master's degree Program.

**Nursing Educator:** Nurse Educators are prepared to teach in schools of nursing or to serve as a nurse educator in a variety of healthcare contexts or settings. This is a master's degree program.

**Doctorate of Nursing Practice:** DNP curricula build on current master's programs by providing education in evidence based practice, quality improvement, leadership, policy advocacy, informatics, and systems thinking among other key areas. The DNP is designed for nurses seeking a terminal degree in nursing practice and offers an alternative to research-focused doctoral programs. DNP-prepared nurses will be well-equipped to fully implement the science developed by nurse research prepared in PhD, DNS, and other research-focused nursing doctorates.

**PhD in Nursing (Research Focused):** A PhD program in nursing will prepare you for a career as a nurse scientist conducting cutting-edge research in nursing education, health systems, or clinical science to enhance the care of individuals and families across the lifespan.

## **Applying to a Second Degree (Accelerated) BSN Program:**

A student not accepted into Indiana University's Nursing Program might consider applying to an accelerated BSN program to continue their nursing journey. These programs provide a pathway to nursing as a desired occupation while allowing the degree to be finished in a shorter time. The opportunities for career advancement in a second degree program are the same as those who complete the initial program. There are some considerations to be noted about completing an Accelerated BSN program.

- Many of these degree programs compress three years of nursing coursework into a 14-24 month period. These programs are specifically designed for individuals who have earned their bachelor's degree in a different field but wish to obtain their BSN without spending an additional three years doing so.
- These are very intensive programs—so much so that it is nearly impossible to maintain a full-time job while completing it.
- There is no preference, in most cases, for what first bachelor's degree was earned.
- Admission may be competitive but varies across programs. Some are interested in a GPA from the initial degree, but others are more interested in the prerequisite GPA.
- To qualify for these programs, individuals should have a degree with a competitive GPA and have completed all prerequisite courses for the second-degree program. There may be other requirements such as a personal statement and letters of recommendation.
- When planning for fall registration as a sophomore, it is recommended that students enroll in courses for their alternate plan as well as additional nursing course prerequisites for admission to an accelerated BSN program.
  - Some majors will better accommodate nursing prerequisites than others—speak with your academic advisor to best navigate this.
  - Research programs carefully—admission requirements, levels of competitiveness, and costs vary greatly.
  - Under this plan, if you are not admitted to a standard BSN or ASN program after your sophomore year, you would already have begun to lay the foundation for a second-degree BSN. In theory, one degree could be finished while casting a net for a wide variety of other options for obtaining an ASN or BSN.

### **Schools in Indiana that host Second Degree BSN programs**

**Indiana University School of Nursing (Fort Wayne)-**

<https://nursing.iu.edu/fort-wayne/admissions/bsn/accelerated.html>

**Indiana University School of Nursing (Indianapolis)-**

<https://nursing.iu.edu/indianapolis/admissions/bsn/accelerated.html>

**Indiana University School of Nursing (Columbus)-** <https://www.iupuc.edu/health-sciences/accelerated-bsn.html>

**Indiana University School of Nursing (Northwest- Gary)-** <https://northwest.iu.edu/nursing/degrees/ba-bs-to-bsn.html>

**Purdue University School of Nursing-** <https://hhs.purdue.edu/undergraduate-students/majors/nursing-16-month-second-degree-bachelor-of-science/>

**Purdue University Northwest School of Nursing-** [https://www.pnw.edu/academics-research/?utm\\_medium=301&utm\\_campaign=redirects&utm\\_source=https://academics.pnw.edu/nursing/accelerated-second-degree-baccalaureate-option](https://www.pnw.edu/academics-research/?utm_medium=301&utm_campaign=redirects&utm_source=https://academics.pnw.edu/nursing/accelerated-second-degree-baccalaureate-option)

**University of Indianapolis School of Nursing-** <https://uindy.edu/nursing/bsn/accelerated>

**Ball State University School of Nursing-** [https://www.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/nursing/academics/bachelors-degrees/bachelors#accordion\\_secondbaccalaureate](https://www.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/nursing/academics/bachelors-degrees/bachelors#accordion_secondbaccalaureate)

**Indiana Wesleyan School of Nursing-** <https://www.indwes.edu/academics/school-of-nursing/transition-to-nursing>

**Indiana State University-** <https://www.indstate.edu/academics/undergraduate/majors/nursing-accelerated-second-degree>

**Valparaiso University-** <https://www.valpo.edu/college-of-nursing-and-health-professions/academics/nursing-program/bsn/accelerated-plan/>

**Marian University-** <https://www.marian.edu/school-of-nursing/programs/bachelors-of-science-in-nursing/second-degree/accelerated-on-campus>

## Seeking an Alternative Starting Point

If you are not accepted into the Indiana University Nursing program, you may wonder if other programs in Indiana are an option for you to consider in your journey forward. This is a reminder that admission to this program is competitive and there are often twice as many applicants, or more, as there are spots available in the program. If you still have an interest in pursuing nursing and have successfully completed prerequisites for admission, there are additional considerations as you explore an alternative path to nursing training.

- Consider the amount of time and cost to degree completion (ASN versus BSN at another campus versus accelerated BSN)

If transferring to another university is considered, have your courses evaluated for transfer equivalency. Some universities or programs may not accept your courses as equivalent to theirs. **Ivy Tech Community College**- Offers varying nursing programs to begin you on your track towards nursing. You may begin classes there, then transfer to a different institution later to further your certifications and degrees. Meeting with an Ivy Tech advisor is essential to understand what courses might transfer to different institutions equivalently.

<https://www.ivytech.edu/programs/all-academic-programs/school-of-nursing/nursing/>

**Indiana University (Fort Wayne)**- <https://nursing.iu.edu/fort-wayne/index.html>

**Indiana University (Indianapolis)**- <https://nursing.iu.edu/indianapolis/index.html>

**Indiana University (Columbus)**- <https://www.iuk.edu/nursing/index.html>

**Indiana University (Richmond)**- <https://www.iue.edu/nursing/index.html>

**Indiana University (Gary)**- <https://northwest.iu.edu/nursing/index.html>

**Indiana University (Kokomo)**- <https://www.iuk.edu/nursing/index.html>

**Indiana University (South Bend)**- <https://healthscience.iusb.edu/nursing/index.html>

**Indiana University (New Albany)**- <https://southeast.iu.edu/nursing/>

**Purdue University**- <https://hhs.purdue.edu/nur/>

**Hanover College**- In a 1-2-1 program, students will complete classes at both Ivy Tech and Hanover College, graduating with a BSN in nursing as well as an associate's degree from Ivy Tech in 4 years.

<https://www.hanover.edu/academics/programs/nursing/>

**Indiana Wesleyan University**- <https://www.indwes.edu/academics/school-of-nursing/>

**University of Indianapolis**- <https://uindy.edu/nursing/>

**University of Southern Indiana**- <https://www.usi.edu/health/nursing>

**Ball State University-** <https://www.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/nursing>

**Bethel University-** <https://www.bethel.edu/undergrad/academics/nursing/majors-minors/nursing>

**Goshen College-** <https://www.goshen.edu/academics/nursing/>

**Indiana State University-** <https://www.indstate.edu/health/department/son>

**Huntington University-** <https://www.huntington.edu/nursing>

**Marian University-** <https://www.marian.edu/academics/marian's-adult-programs/academics/nursing>

**Saint Mary-of-the-Woods-** <https://www.smwc.edu/departments/nursing/bsn/>

**University of Evansville-** <https://www.evansville.edu/majors/nursing/index.cfm>

**University of Saint Francis-** <https://majors.sf.edu/nursing-bsn/>

**University of Southern Indiana-** <https://www.usi.edu/health/nursing>

**Valparaiso University-** <https://www.valpo.edu/college-of-nursing-and-health-professions/>

**Vincennes University-** Vincennes offers varying nursing programs to begin you on your track towards nursing. You may begin classes there that transfer to a different institution later to further your certifications and degrees. Meeting with a Vincennes advisor is essential to understand what courses might transfer to different institutions equivalently.

<https://www.vinu.edu/web/guest/major/nursing-associate-of-science-a-s-transfer>

## Researching and Applying to Programs Simultaneously:

It is recommended that students applying to the Indiana University nursing program consider applying simultaneously to our Fort Wayne and Indianapolis campuses. If it is an option and an interest to potentially relocate, applying to more than one school expands opportunities for admission. The prerequisites for these three campuses – Bloomington, Fort Wayne, and Indianapolis – align more closely and we share an application process. Consider the following as a part of your continued research efforts:

- It is imperative to discuss your interests with an academic advisor at Indiana University. You may experience challenges regarding pre-requisite coursework and transfer credits at another institution. Your advisor will be able to guide you through addressing these challenges.
- Students who talk with representatives of prospective programs will better understand what is expected to be a “competitive” applicant to their program.
- If considering re-application to a program, a student should meet with their University Division advisor well in advance of their re-application to take measures to become a stronger applicant.
- Avoid non-accredited Nursing programs and recognize that not all accreditations are equal. Avoid private, for-profit institutions. Note that accreditation can be defined differently by different institutions—speak with the school to find out what is covered. Many may be “degree mills” that don’t offer the accreditation you will need to advance your career as a nurse.
- Be wary of nursing programs that require students to arrange their own clinical hours.
- Inquire about GPA requirements, both cumulative and prerequisite, as well as what GPA is required to be a competitive applicant. Learn whether transfer students are at a disadvantage compared to applicants from a given school.
- The same qualifications that make a program a “good program” apply across all programs. Ensure curriculum is sufficient. Explore the supports and faculty connection options that are available. Research and consider NCLEX pass rates and clinical placement rates. Don’t sacrifice components of a program that feel critically important.
- Consider cost and financial aid of any program being considered.
- Those who earn their ASN may still be able to earn their BSN later by taking courses through a “BSN-Mobility Program” (also referred to as ASN-to-BSN, RN-to-BSN, or BSN Completion Program). An ASN-to-BSN would offer the remaining courses from the ASN curriculum. Mobility programs usually consist of a year or two of courses, sometimes online, that can be taken while working as a nurse. Admission to such programs may be less competitive.
  - Note that not all ASN programs will be compatible with this. Check with programs in advance to see whether or not they will accept credits from the ASN program you are considering.



## Exploring Healthcare Related Career Options:

If the student is interested in medicine or healthcare but considering moving away from a Nursing program, some of the following degree programs might be of interest to students considering making the shift. Programs are available at Indiana University that are a direct correlation of degree name to occupation. Information on these programs may be found through HPPLC or SPH. IUB webpages and HPPLC provide information about programs, suggestions for success, and requirements for each area.

**Physician's Assistant (PA)**- A Physician Assistant is a healthcare professional who works under the supervision of a licensed physician. PAs are trained to provide a wide range of healthcare services, including conducting physical exams, diagnosing illnesses, ordering and interpreting diagnostic tests, assisting in surgeries, prescribing medications, and providing patient education. They often work in collaboration with physicians and other healthcare professionals to deliver comprehensive care to patients across various medical specialties.

<https://guidebook.hpplc.indiana.edu/physician-assistant/index.html>

**Physical Therapy**- Physical therapy is a healthcare profession that focuses on restoring and improving physical function and mobility. Physical therapists (PTs) evaluate and treat individuals with musculoskeletal, neurological, and cardiopulmonary conditions, as well as those recovering from injuries or surgeries. They use various techniques such as exercises, manual therapy, electrical stimulation, and ultrasound to reduce pain, improve range of motion, increase strength, and enhance overall physical performance. PTs also provide education and preventive strategies to help patients maintain long-term health and wellness.

<https://guidebook.hpplc.indiana.edu/physical-therapy/index.html>

**Occupational Therapy**- Occupational therapy is a healthcare profession that helps individuals of all ages improve their ability to perform everyday activities. Occupational therapists (OTs) work with people who have physical, developmental, emotional, or cognitive challenges that may affect their ability to engage in various daily tasks. OTs assess individuals' abilities, engage interventions, and provide therapeutic activities to enhance skills. They also collaborate with clients to adapt environments and surroundings, and recommend assistive devices to promote independence and participation in day to day life.

<https://guidebook.hpplc.indiana.edu/occupational-therapy/index.html>

**Medicine**- Medicine is the branch of healthcare concerned with the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases and injuries. Medical doctors (MDs) or physicians are trained healthcare professionals who diagnose illnesses, prescribe medications, perform medical procedures, and provide comprehensive medical care to patients. They engage extensive education and training, including medical school and residency programs to gain expertise in various specialties.

<https://guidebook.hpplc.indiana.edu/medicine/index.html>

**Optometry**- Optometry is a healthcare profession that specializes in eye care and vision health. They perform eye exams, prescribe corrective lenses, diagnose and manage eye diseases and conditions, and provide vision therapy. They often work in private optometry practices, clinics, or optical retail settings.

<https://guidebook.hpplc.indiana.edu/optometry/index.html>

**Pharmacy-** Pharmacy is a profession focused on the preparation, dispensing, and appropriate use of medications. They play a crucial role in ensuring the safe and effective use of medications by reviewing prescriptions, providing medication counseling, monitoring for drug interactions, and advising healthcare providers and patients on appropriate drug therapies. Pharmacists may also be involved in pharmaceutical research, drug development, and medication management in healthcare systems.

<https://guidebook.hpplc.indiana.edu/pharmacy/index.html>

**Community Health-** Community health focuses on improving the health and well-being of populations within specific communities or geographical areas. Professionals in community health may include public health practitioners, health educators, community health workers, or researchers. They work to identify and address health needs, promote health education and disease prevention, develop health policies, and collaborate with community stakeholders to implement interventions that improve the overall health of individuals and communities.

<https://publichealth.indiana.edu/undergraduate/degrees-majors/bsph-community-health.html>

**Dietetics-** Dietetics is the science and art of applying nutrition knowledge to promote health and manage diseases. Registered Dietitians (RDs) or Nutritionists are trained professionals who specialize in assessing, diagnosing, and providing dietary advice and interventions to individuals or groups. They work in various settings such as hospitals, clinics, community organizations, or private practices to develop personalized nutrition plans, educate individuals on healthy eating habits, manage medical conditions through diet, and promote overall wellness.

<https://publichealth.indiana.edu/undergraduate/degrees-majors/dietetics.html>

**Epidemiology-** Epidemiology is the branch of public health that focuses on studying patterns, causes, and effects of diseases and other health-related issues within populations. Epidemiologists collect and analyze data to identify disease trends, risk factors, and potential interventions to prevent or control diseases. They investigate disease outbreaks, conduct research studies, design and implement public health programs, and collaborate with other healthcare professionals to inform policy decisions and promote population health.

<https://publichealth.indiana.edu/undergraduate/degrees-majors/bsph-epidemiology.html>

**Exercise Science-** Exercise science is an interdisciplinary field that studies the effects of physical activity and exercise on the human body. Exercise scientists or kinesiologists analyze how exercise influences physiological, biomechanical, and psychological aspects of human performance and health. They may conduct research studies, design exercise programs, assess fitness levels, and provide exercise recommendations for individuals or specific populations. Exercise science professionals often work in fitness centers, sports organizations, rehabilitation clinics, or research institutions.

<https://publichealth.indiana.edu/undergraduate/degrees-majors/exercise-science.html>

**Fitness and Wellness-** Fitness and wellness professionals focus on promoting and maintaining overall health, physical fitness, and well-being. They may include personal trainers, fitness instructors, wellness coaches, or health educators. These professionals assess individuals' fitness levels, develop exercise

plans, provide guidance on nutrition and healthy lifestyle choices, conduct fitness classes or training sessions, and motivate individuals to achieve their health and wellness goals. They may work in fitness centers, corporate wellness programs, community organizations, or independently.

<https://publichealth.indiana.edu/undergraduate/degrees-majors/bsph-fitness-wellness.html>

**Human Development and Family Studies-** Human Development and Family Studies is a field that examines human development, relationships, and family dynamics across the lifespan. Human Development and Family Studies professionals study how individuals grow, change, and interact within various social contexts, such as families, schools, and communities. They may work in research, education, counseling, or social service settings, supporting individuals and families through programs and interventions that enhance well-being, address challenges, and promote positive development.

<https://publichealth.indiana.edu/undergraduate/degrees-majors/human-development.html>

**Nutrition Science-** Nutrition science is the study of how nutrients and food components impact human health and well-being. Nutrition scientists explore the role of nutrients in growth, metabolism, disease prevention, and overall health promotion. They conduct research, analyze dietary patterns, study the effects of specific nutrients on the body, and contribute to the development of dietary guidelines. Nutrition scientists may work in research institutions, universities, healthcare organizations, or public health agencies to advance knowledge in nutrition and inform evidence-based practices.

<https://publichealth.indiana.edu/undergraduate/degrees-majors/nutrition.html>

**Youth Development-** Youth development focuses on supporting the healthy development and well-being of young people. Professionals in youth development may include educators, social workers, counselors, or program coordinators who work with children and adolescents. They create and implement programs, activities, and interventions that foster positive youth development, promote resilience, provide guidance, and support young people in reaching their full potential. Youth development professionals often work in schools, community organizations, non-profits, or government agencies.

<https://publichealth.indiana.edu/undergraduate/degrees-majors/youth-development.html>

## **Re-application to the Indiana University Nursing Program:**

1. A student might be interested in reapplying to the Indiana University Nursing Program to increase their chances of being admitted. It is acceptable for a student to apply again. Meeting with your University Division advisor is essential to understanding this path. There will be time, cost, and other things to consider. Evaluate your application: Start by carefully reviewing your previous application to identify any potential weaknesses or areas for improvement. Consider factors such as your academic strengths and potential for retaking prerequisite courses. Speak with your University Division advisor about the courses which may offer re-application the greatest advantage.
2. Reflect on your experiences: Think about how these experiences have shaped your interest in nursing, your understanding of the profession, and your dedication to patient care.
3. Gain additional healthcare experience: Engage in activities that allow you to gain further experience in the healthcare field. This could involve volunteering at a hospital, working as a nursing assistant or medical technician, or participating in relevant research or community service projects. This will help you gain an understanding of your personal interest and commitment to this profession. However, experiences themselves do not contribute to the nursing application.
4. Attend information sessions hosted by the IU School of Nursing: Take advantage of any opportunities to attend information sessions or connect with program representatives from the Indiana University Bloomington Nursing Program. This will help you gain a deeper understanding of their expectations, admission requirements, and any updates or changes to the application process. These are hosted over multiple sessions in the fall semester, typically before priority registration occurs.
5. Submit a polished application: Pay close attention to the application instructions and ensure that you submit a polished, error-free application. Consider seeking guidance: If you feel unsure about reapplying, it can be beneficial to seek guidance from academic advisors or mentors who can provide insights and advice. They may offer valuable suggestions on how to strengthen your application based on their experience and knowledge of the program.

## A Note on Parallel Planning

When considering steps to take in considering alternative next steps, students may want to engage in parallel planning. Parallel planning refers to the practice of exploring and pursuing multiple career paths or options simultaneously. It involves conducting research, gaining experience, and making preparations for different career paths to keep your options open. The most common example of parallel planning is to enroll in courses for an alternate major while taking nursing prerequisites to reapply to the IUB Nursing Program or taking nursing prerequisites to apply to a second-degree program.

Here's how parallel planning can be applied to career planning:

**Exploring multiple career next steps:** Begin by identifying several degree options that align with your goals, as well as your VIPS (Values, Interests, Personality, and Strengths). Conduct research and gather information about various programs. Speak with an advisor or career coach about your next steps.

**Continue to gain diverse experiences:** Parallel planning encourages you to gain practical experience and exposure in multiple areas. This can be achieved through internships, part-time jobs, volunteering, or taking relevant courses. By diversifying your experiences, you'll gain a broader perspective and develop transferable skills that can be valuable across different paths.

**Networking:** Networking plays a crucial role in parallel planning. Connect with professionals from various fields and industries to expand your network. Attend career fairs, industry events, or join professional organizations relevant to the different options you're considering. Networking can provide valuable insights, mentorship, and potential opportunities in multiple areas.

**Skill development and refinement:** Identify the key skills required for the different career paths and programs you're interested in. Focus on developing and improving areas that will make you competitive in your desired field.

**Setting goals and priorities:** As you explore multiple next options, it's important to set goals and prioritize your efforts. Consider your long-term aspirations, personal preferences, and financial considerations.

**Reflection and adjustment:** Regularly reflect on your experiences, preferences, and the information you gather during your parallel planning process. This self-reflection will help you evaluate which options are most appealing and feasible for you. Be open to adjusting your plans and shifting your focus based on new information or changing circumstances.

Parallel planning in career planning allows you to keep your options open and make more informed decisions about your future. It enables you to explore multiple paths simultaneously, gain diverse experiences, and build a foundation for a flexible and decision-making process.