

PRACTICE DOCTORATE PROGRAM

LENGTH OF PROGRAM

The program is 36 months of full-time enrollment. MTSA defines full-time status as enrollment for 8 or more credit hours in a semester. One credit hour is equivalent to 15 classroom/lab hours. Of these 36 months, 18 days are allotted for selected legal holidays, 6 for emergency days, and scheduled vacation weeks each school year based on the student's progression through the calendar in relation to their rotation schedule.

Graduation exercises occur only once in the program. Students completing all aspects of the academic and clinical program are required to march in a graduation ceremony concurring with their completion of the program. Students who have not achieved the benchmark score on the SEE exam will be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony but will not receive a diploma until the set benchmark score is achieved.

RN TO NURSE ANESTHETIST TRANSITION

While all students accepted at MTSA have had acute care nursing experience, this experience has been obtained in various hospital settings. Traditionally in these settings, hospitals schedule nurses on shifts with each nurse reporting to the oncoming nurses at the end of their shift, and then being able to leave at a predictable time. Because surgery schedules vary in number and length of cases on a daily basis, most anesthesia scheduling is not handled as in other nursing environments. Typically, a CRNA, much like an anesthesiologist (MDA), accepts a job, not a shift. It is expected that the anesthetist (CRNA or MDA) will work until the job is done, or until the surgery schedule is such that the "late" or "call" team can cover the cases.

As an anesthetist, if cases finish by 10:00am, unless you are designated as the "late" or "call" person, your duty for the day may be completed. Opportunities may arise for learning experiences that are not associated with a surgical case. By leaving early, the student may miss out on such experiences. However, if more cases last later in the night than the "late" or "call" person(s) can handle, other anesthesia providers are expected to stay until the work is done. Additionally, you may be required to stay over after your call shift. Employers are cognizant of the actual number of anesthesia providers needed to complete the tasks in a reasonable number of hours.

When students are at selected affiliates, they will be engaging with physician anesthesia residents who have never had the scheduling of hours nurses have. Their expected hours will still be longer than MTSA students. Students should be aware of the residents' longer hours and be patient with them as they learn to understand student nurse anesthetists' hours. At some affiliates, student nurse anesthetists from MTSA may work with student nurse anesthetists from other nurse anesthesia programs. Other nurse anesthesia programs may have different expectations of clinical hours for their students; however, MTSA students are expected to abide by MTSA's clinical pattern as described below under Academic and Clinical Summary.

Currently, the COA requirement is that the hours be "reasonable." COA published the following definition in 2015, revised 2021 to help clarify what constitutes a reasonable number of hours: A reasonable number of hours to promote effective student learning should not exceed 64 hours per week. This time commitment includes the sum of hours spent in class and all clinical hours averaged over four weeks. Students must have a ten-hour rest period between scheduled clinical duty periods (i.e. assigned continuous clinical hours) At no time may a student provide direct patient care for a period longer than 16 continuous hours.

As it is MTSA's aim to prepare students both in academic and clinical knowledge and experience to become a CRNA, MTSA also chooses to orient the student to the time commitment and expectations of the CRNA. These time commitments will be different from typical nursing hours. Historically, clinical medical education has been offered in exchange for service. This is true with students at MTSA as they matriculate through the program. The COA supervision requirements allow 2 SRNAs to 1 CRNA or 2 SRNAs to 1 anesthesiologist. Students should realize that while they are not specifically used as staff, their services extend the abilities of the professional anesthesia staff to offer anesthesia services in many facilities.