

1. Be specific about which course you wish to be exempted from.

General comments about your academic strength and an appeal to be exempted from all courses will not be granted.

2. Review the syllabus of the course for which you are requesting exception.

Look closely at the **Course Outcomes**, and address your statement specifically to *how you have demonstrated those outcomes in your work or other courses*. Remember that we are trying to ensure that you have a working knowledge of concepts you will need in your later coursework; please take the time to ask yourself whether you understand what the course outcomes are before you make your request.

3. Be as clear and concise as possible.

If you want to show us that you don't need to take Abnormal Psychology, for instance, focus on what specific evidence you can produce that shows you can meet the course outcomes. We do not need to know about people you know who live with mental illness, your relative who works as a psychologist, or your commitment to serving those with mental health needs. We need to know whether you know your way around the DSM-V, whether you understand the relative efficacy of various interpersonal and pharmacological therapies, etc.

4. Use specific examples.

Include only your work and learning; your passion for your work or your desire to become a Nurse are admirable, and will help you persist in the program, but they do not demonstrate your knowledge. We cannot consider these factors when evaluating your request.

5. Feel free to use bullet points or lists in place of lengthy narrative.

Your goal should be clear, relevant examples including time frames:

- Attended five 3-hour trainings focused on
- Program Assistant (2 years) in a research laboratory where I ran and interpreted statistical analyses including regression and ANOVA
- Worked as a tutor for Microbiology class at the University of ____ for 6 semesters within the last 5 years

6. If you have examples of work that supports your claims, include it as an appendix.

If you have completed written independent work within the required time frame that validates your claim of expertise, please provide samples. "I know how to do analyses" is much more convincing with a sample analysis that you have run and interpreted.

Overall:

Be judicious in the reasoning you share for your request. We understand that given a choice to take a class or not take it, most people would prefer not to take the class. This can lead people to try to justify exemptions based on rather thin premises. It is possible that by doing so, you may convince the reviewer that you know very little about the subject and most definitely need to take the class. Examples might include:

- I do not need to take Developmental Psychology because I have children/know older people.
- I do not need to take Abnormal Psychology because in my unrelated-to-psychology job, I had customers who had mental health issues.
- I do not need to take Statistics because I calculate percentages as part of my job.

Just as being sick may give you motivation to become a nurse but does not replace nursing coursework, being in the vicinity of processes related to these courses does not by itself make a convincing argument that you do not need to take the courses. We need to see **evidence** that you have demonstrated the course outcomes.