

Alternative Careers and Programs to Registered Nursing

Name	Description/Length of Program/ Exams	Ave. Salary Range	Common Prerequisites	Ave. GPA	Admission Info	Programs
Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursing assistants provide basic patient care under direction of nursing staff. Perform duties such as feed, bathe, dress, groom, move patients, or change linens. May transfer or transport patients. • 8 week Certificate program • CNA State Exam to be taken after Program 	\$22,000-\$40,000 Median: \$31,000	ENGL/ ESL 50 CPR Card TB Test Physical Exam	2.0 Minimum	No Waitlist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •MiraCosta College • Southwestern College
Licensed Vocational Nurse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensed Vocational Nurses care for ill, injured, or convalescing patients or persons with disabilities in hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, private homes, group homes, and similar institutions. May work under the supervision of a registered nurse. • 2 year, Part-time Program (Part-Time depends on Program) • Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) 	\$40,000-\$65,000 Median: \$52,000	Biology Pharmacology CNA License	2.0 Minimum	Approximately 2 year waitlist (Waitlist Varies by Program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MiraCosta College •San Diego City College •Southwsetern College
Biotechnology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biotechnology is an expanding field devoted to improving human health through the research, development, testing, manufacturing, and marketing of products related to the biomedical and agricultural industries. Biotechnologists set up, operate, and maintain laboratory instruments and equipment, monitor experiments, make observations, and calculate and record results. • Certificate or Associate Degree Program • 1-2 year Program 	\$45,000-\$75,000 Median: \$60,000	None	2.0 Minimum	No Waitlist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •MiraCosta College •San Diego Mesa College •San Diego City College •San Diego Miramar College •Southwestern College

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Cardiovascular Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cardiovascular techs help doctors diagnose and treat patients with heart and blood vessel problems. Working in a medical setting doing EKGs, ultrasounds, and stress tests. 2-year program 	\$35,000-\$60,000 Median: \$48,000	Chemistry Anatomy Physiology	2.0 Minimum	Approximately 1-2 year waitlist (Waitlist Varies by Program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grossmont College Orange Coast College City College of San Francisco
Cytotechnologist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cytotechnologists examine cell samples under microscopes to look for signs of cancer and other diseases. Certificate or Bachelor's of Science Degree 4 year program USMLE Licensing Exam 	\$45,000-\$70,000 Median: \$58,000	Biology Anatomy Physiology Microbiology Chemistry Nutrition College Algebra	2.75 Minimum	No Waitlist <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acceptance is limited to students who have completed the second year and not yet started the third year, without any breaks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loma Linda University
Dental Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dental assistants help dentists as they treat patients. 10 months, Full-Time Program RDA Exam 	\$24,000-\$48,000 Median: \$34,000 Starting salary: \$15-\$25/ per hour	Dental Terminology ENGL 50 CPR Card Physical Exam	2.0 Minimum	Approximately 1 year waitlist (Waitlist Varies by Program) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must attend mandatory orientation in some programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Palomar College San Diego Mesa College Orange Coast College Cypress College Chaffey College
Dental Hygienist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dental hygienists help maintain the dental health of their patients and educate them about proper oral hygiene. 2 year, Full-Time Program 	\$47,000-\$98,000 Median: \$70,000	Anatomy Physiology Microbiology Chemistry Nutrition Communication Psychology Sociology English Composition Intermediate Algebra	2.7 Minimum	Approximately 2-3 year waitlist. (Waitlist Varies by Program) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning January 2015, waitlist will be eliminated. (Southwestern) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southwestern College Cypress College Moreno Valley College Riverside City College Cerritos College Loma Linda University

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Diagnostic Medical Sonographer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnostic medical sonographers use ultrasound equipment to capture images of patients' internal organs, tissues, and blood flow. • 2 year, Full-Time Program 	\$44,000-\$86,000 Median: \$63,000 \$29.00-\$35.00/hour	Anatomy Physiology Medical Terminology Intermediate Algebra CPR training	2.0 Minimum	Approximately 2 year waitlist. (Waitlist Varies by Program) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must attend mandatory orientation in some programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Orange Coast College •Cypress College •Santa Barbara City College •Mt. San Jacinto College (*Accreditation Pending*)
Dietitian/ Nutritionist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dietitians provide individuals, organizations, and companies with information and advice about food and nutrition. • Bachelor's Degree Required 	\$33,000-\$75,000 Median: \$52,000	Biology Anatomy Chemistry Microbiology Nutrition Statistics Psychology Sociology	3.0 Minimum	Application process No Waitlist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •University of Nevada, Las Vegas & Reno (WUE) •California State Northridge •San Diego State University •California State Fresno •California State San Bernardino •San Jose State University •UC Davis
Dietetic Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dietetic Technicians assist the Registered Dietitian in providing nutrition care services to patient in health care facilities and nutrition education for clients of community agencies, or provide food/nutrition services for schools. • Some programs require that students participate in scheduled course clinical experience concurrent with classroom courses. • 2 year, Full-Time Program 	\$35,000-\$45,000 Median: \$40,000	Medical Terminology Food Management Food Sanitation Food Safety CPR Card Blood borne pathogen training	2.0 Minimum	Waitlist Varies by Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •San Diego Mesa College •Orange Coast College •Chaffey College •Los Angeles City College •Long Beach City College

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Electrocardiograph Technician (EKG Program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrocardiograph Technicians assess the heart by looking at its electrical activity. With additional training, these Technicians can conduct stress testing and Holter monitoring. • 2 semester program 	\$40,000-\$60,000 Median: \$50,000	High School Diploma or GED CPR Card Physical Exam	2.0 Minimum	Waitlist Varies by Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and orientation required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Grossmont College
EMT (Emergency Medical Technician)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Emergency Medical Technician works to render emergency medical care using proper techniques of care and transportation. • 17-18 week Certificate Program and include some evenings and Saturdays. • National Registry certification for Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) Exam • National Registry and State Certification (NRSC) Exam. • EMT training differs from Paramedic training and covers less extensive pre-hospital emergency care. 	\$20,000-\$30,000 Median: \$25,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 years of age • Completion of Emergency Medical Responder and Healthcare Provider courses • CPR Card • College level reading 	2.0 Minimum	No Waitlist <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First come, first serve basis in some programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Palomar College
EMT/Paramedic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paramedics provide immediate medical care in emergency situations, and transport patients to hospitals. • NREMT & NRSC Exam • Some programs offer Mobile Intensive Care Paramedic (MICP) training. • EMT programs differ from EMT/Paramedic programs 	\$25,000-\$60,000 Median: \$40,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 years of age • One year FULL TIME EMT-1 (basic) work experience in the PRE-HOSPITAL setting • Anatomy • Physiology •Intermediate Algebra • Medical Terminology • CPR Card • Current EMT- 1 Card 	2.0 Minimum	No Waitlist <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First come, first serve basis in some programs • In good mental/physical condition • Two letters of recommendation from EMS or medical personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Palomar College •Saddleback College •San Diego Miramar College •Southwestern College

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Health Care Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health care administrators work behind the scenes at hospitals and other medical facilities, making sure they run smoothly. A bachelor's degree is acceptable for many entry-level positions. A master's degree is needed for most positions. 	\$50,000-\$140,000 Median: \$82,000	Accounting Communication Biology College Algebra Psychology Sociology	2.5 Minimum	Application process Requirements vary per program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cypress College CSU Northridge CSU Fresno CSU San Bernardino CSU Dominguez Hills CSU San Marcos (Sociology- Health and Mental Health Option) SDSU (Health Communication)
Kinesiology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options in Health Science, Applied Exercise Science, Pre-Physical Therapy, Physical Education, and Fitness Specialist. Bachelor's Degree Program 	\$58,000-\$64,000 Median: \$61,000	Kinesiology Biology Anatomy Physiology Chemistry Psychology CPR training College level Math (depends on option chosen)	2.5 Minimum	Application process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This program is an impacted program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSU San Marcos San Diego State University
Massage Therapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massage therapists reduce clients' pain and stress by using their hands to manipulate clients' muscles and other soft tissues. 2 year Technical Training 	\$17,000-\$69,000 Median: \$35,000	None	2.0 Minimum	No Waitlist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MiraCosta College Fullerton College
Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/Coder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical coders read medical documentation (i.e. patient charts) then assign the proper code to the completed service or procedure, relying upon their knowledge and classification manuals. Once the proper coding is completed, medical coders key the code into the computer system. 2-3 Semester Program 	\$20,000-\$40,000 Median: \$30,000	None	2.0 Minimum	No waitlist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southwestern College Cypress College East Los Angeles College

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Medical/Clinical Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Medical Assistant Program is designed to educate the student for immediate employment providing assistance to the physician in caring for patients in the medical office or clinic. 1-Full year program Typing test may be required-- National Certified Medical Assistant examination 	\$22,000-\$40,000 Median: \$31,000	Anatomy Physiology Medical Terminology CPR Card HIPAA Training	2.0 Minimum	Application Process Orientation may be required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Palomar College Southwestern College Saddleback College Orange Coast College Long Beach City College
Medical Laboratory Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Medical Laboratory Technician performs routine clinical laboratory testing procedures to provide scientific information needed in diagnosis, prognosis and treatment of disease. CA certified Phlebotomy Technician I or II Certification 	\$48,000-\$55,000 Median: \$52,000	Anatomy Physiology Microbiology Chemistry Communication Intermediate Algebra English Composition CPR Card	2.0 Minimum	No Waitlist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> San Diego Miramar Southwestern College El Camino College Mt. San Antonio College
Neurodiagnostic Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neurodiagnostic Technologists diagnose patients with neurological disorders such as epilepsy, stroke, coma, multiple sclerosis, and many others. Technicians measure and record electrical activity in patients' brains and nervous systems. 	\$30,000-\$70,000 Median: \$50,000	Medical Terminology Anatomy Physiology Intermediate Algebra English Composition	2.0 Minimum	Waitlist Varies by Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orange Coast College GateWay Community College-Phoenix, AZ
Nuclear Medicine Technologist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nuclear medicine technologists perform imaging tests using radioactive materials in order to help doctors diagnose diseases. Bachelor's Degree 	\$80,000-\$110,000 Median: \$95,000	Biology Anatomy Physiology Microbiology Chemistry Physics Statistics Computer Science English Critical Thinking Arts/ Humanities Social Science	Cumulative GPA of 2.75-4.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Until further notice, the Nuclear Medicine Program will admit students only in alternate years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Nevada, Las Vegas (WUE)

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Occupational Therapy Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occupational Therapist Assistants work under the direct supervision of a Occupational Therapist to provide all levels of patient treatment to people who are limited by physical injury or illness, mental health problems, developmental or learning disabilities, or the aging process. OTAs assist OTs in assessing patient needs, determining therapeutic goals, planning and implementing treatment activities, communicating with patients and health care providers and documenting patient progress. 2 year, Full-Time Program 	\$45,500-\$55,500 Median: \$50,500 \$22-30 an hour for an entry level position	Intermediate Algebra English Composition Anatomy Physiology Communication	2.0 Minimum	Approximately 1-2 year waitlist. (Waitlist Varies by Program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grossmont College Santa Ana College
Occupational Therapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occupational Therapists work with clients who have physical, mental, and developmental problems to help them re-learn or develop skills. OTs may help injured clients learn to walk again, or show them new ways to cook or clean. OTs develop treatment plans to help clients function at work, school, or home. Master's Degree GRE Exam. The test must have been taken within the last five 5 years. 	\$76,000-\$100,000 Median: \$87,000	BA/BS Degree Biology Anatomy Physiology Chemistry Physics Psychology Sociology Human Development	3.0 Minimum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection is based on recommendation letters, GPA, work/volunteer experience in an occupational therapy department, and interview. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St. Augustine University Loma Linda University
Orthopedic Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orthopedic Technologists apply, adjust, and remove casts, splints, and braces. They also set up, adjust, and maintain traction configurations, assist with the care of acutely injured patients, and assist the physician in the reduction and/or manipulation of orthopedic injuries. Orthopedic Technologists are employed in hospitals, clinics, and private practice offices. 1 year Program 	\$30,000-\$45,000 Median: \$38,000	Anatomy Physiology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is recommended that students have experience working as a medical assistant or have completed the Clinical Assistant program requirements as this program builds upon those skills and knowledge base. 	2.0 Minimum	Waitlist Varies by Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grossmont College West Valley College

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Pharmacy Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pharmacy technicians work under the supervision of pharmacists to prepare and fill medical prescriptions for patients. Certificate or Associate Degree Program 1-2 year Program 	\$35,000-\$45,000 Median: \$40,000	Basic Math Basic English CPR Card	2.0 Minimum	Waitlist Varies by Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imperial Valley College Santa Ana College Cerritos College San Bernardino Valley West Los Angeles
Physical Therapy Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical therapy assistants work under the direction of physical therapists to reduce patients' pain and help them regain movement. PTA's administer treatments such as massages, hot or cold packs, and electrical stimulation. 2 Year, Full-Time Program 	\$40,000-\$70,000 Median: \$55,000	Biology Anatomy Physiology	2.0 Minimum	Lottery system for admission – SD Mesa (Waitlist Varies by Program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> San Diego Mesa College Cerritos College
Physical Therapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical therapists assess and treat patients who have problems with movement due to illness, injury, or physical disabilities. Physical therapist design treatment plans to help patients achieve as much movement as possible. Doctorate (Ph.D) Program 	\$60,000-\$106,000 Median: \$74,000	Chemistry Physics Biology Anatomy Physiology	3.0 Minimum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection is based on recommendation letters, GPA, work/volunteer experience in physical therapy settings, and interview. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St. Augustine University
Physician Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physician Assistants provide health care services in a variety of settings with the direction and supervision of a doctor of medicine or osteopathy. Physician Assistants are formally trained to examine patients, diagnose injuries and illnesses, and provide treatment. They play an integral mid-level role in triaging patients at emergency point of entry. 	\$60,000-\$80,000 Median: \$70,000	Anatomy Physiology Microbiology Chemistry Physics Psychology Sociology English Composition Intermediate Algebra	2.7 Minimum	Waitlist Varies by Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A minimum of 2,000 hours of paid "hands-on" patient care experience in the disciplines of medicine, nursing or allied health is required. Volunteer experience will not fulfill the patient care experience requirement and will not be considered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Riverside City College Moreno Valley College

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Polysomnographic (PSG) Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Polysomnographic Technologists diagnose treat of disorders of sleep and daytime alertness such as narcolepsy, sleep apnea, insomnias and many others. 2 Year, Full-Time Program 	\$40,000-\$50,000 Median: \$45,000	Anatomy Physiology Intermediate Algebra English Composition CPR Card	2.0 Minimum	Waitlist varies by Program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Occupations course required in order to apply to the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orange Coast College
Psychiatric Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Psychiatric Technician help people who are emotionally and/or developmentally disabled. They are employed by private and state hospitals and many community facilities. Psychiatric Technicians will also find a variety of jobs available in the fields of correction and human services. These include day care centers, substance abuse programs, special education and many other areas promoting mental health. Certificate or Associate Degree Program 1-2 year Program 	\$42,000-\$52,000 Median: \$47,000	Biology Psychology English Composition Intermediate Algebra CPR Card	2.0 Minimum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24 are selected for admission each fall and spring semester. The number of applicants usually exceeds available seats. Selection is based on completion of required pre-requisites, GPA, and date of application. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cypress College Mt. San Antonio College San Bernardino College
Radiologist Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Radiologic Technologist prepares demonstrations of human anatomy on an x-ray film or fluoroscopic screen for diagnostic use by a radiologist or other medical specialist. Graduates of the program are eligible for examination by the American Registry of Radiologist Technologists. 2 Year, Full-Time Program 	\$65,000-\$80,000 Median: \$72,000	Anatomy Medical Terminology Physiology Physics Intermediate Algebra English Composition Computer Information Systems CPR Card	2.0 Minimum	Lottery System (Mesa College) Waitlist Varies by Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> San Diego Mesa College Orange Coast College Long Beach City College Cypress College Mt. San Antonio College

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Respiratory Therapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respiratory therapists help doctors diagnose and treat patients with breathing problems caused by lung diseases or medical emergencies. 2 Year, Full-Time Program CRT Exam 	\$39,000-\$72,000 Median: \$53,000 \$23-\$32/ hour entry level wage	Chemistry Anatomy Physiology	2.0 Minimum	Waitlist Varies by Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grossmont College Orange Coast College
Surgical Technologist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surgical Technologists assist surgeons before, during, and after operations. The surgical technologist works under the supervision of a surgeon to ensure that the operating room environment is safe, the equipment functions properly, and the operative procedure is conducted under conditions that maximize patient safety. Certificate or Associate Degree Program 1-2 Year Program 	\$35,000-\$50,000 Median: \$42,000	Biology Medical Terminology Pharmacology	2.0 Minimum	Approximately 2-3 year waitlist (Waitlist varies by Program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MiraCosta College Southwestern College
Speech, Language, Pathology Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speech-Language Pathology Assistants work under the guidelines of the Speech Pathologist in testing and therapeutic application modalities. They provide direct treatment following specific plans and document patient/client progress. They conduct screenings for speech, hearing, and language disorders. Assistants work with children and adults in the clinical, educational, and medical settings. 2 Year, Full-Time Program 	\$30,000-\$45,000 Median: \$38,000 \$19-\$27/ hour entry level wage	Anatomy Physiology Human Development English Composition Intermediate Algebra CPR Card	2.0 Minimum	Waitlist Varies by Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orange Coast College Santa Ana College Cerritos College

- Common prerequisites and admission information depend on the school of choice.
- To search for ANY Community College Career Program, go to the California Chancellor's Office website at : www.cccco.edu.

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