

The personal touch

The personal attention of a small school with the advantages of an education at a big university are two of the assets Joette Lehberger appreciates about Aspen University.

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Joette Lehberger is a graduate student of Aspen University working on her Master of Science in Nursing (MSN).

Nurses with an MSN need an intricate knowledge of the healthcare field and to be able to use their expertise to treat patients in a variety of medical situations. Joette gives us insight into her online studies at Aspen University.

What in particular appealed to you about Aspen's MSN program (Master of Science in Nursing)?

The Dean of Nursing has been very active and involved with the students. I loved the format of study and research. The program is user-friendly for nurses who are actively practicing and the curriculum is very applicable to the needs of today's nurses.

What are the courses you are taking and how do you like them?

I have completed all course work for the MSN program and am currently ready to begin my capstone project. I can't say enough about the organization, content and overall relevance of the course work. I particularly enjoyed the courses that dealt with leadership.

Do you find there to be variety in the courses offered?

The variety of the courses provided a continued interest for me as a student and fostered an environment of encouragement and learning.

Are you planning a career in nursing education or nursing management and administration?

My career path has led me to nursing education. While a student at Aspen, I was offered a promotion to be the associate campus director of the college I worked with. My Aspen studies and eventual degree made me more marketable as a professional and was a consideration in my promotion.

How easy is to fit your education into your home/work life?

The format and design of the courses made it much easier to fit my education into a busy personal and professional life. I had the ability to read and study the materials and complete the assignments at my pace while continuing my lifestyle.

Why does Aspen stand out among other universities?

The customer service is impeccable – from the dean, professors, registrar and even the office staff. They actually answer their messages and are willing to provide the

student with timely assistance. It is the feel of a small-time campus with a quality university education.

When researching schools, the curriculum was very important to me. I didn't want to take courses that were not going to assist me in becoming a better professional. I wanted course work that would stretch me as a professional and add to my educational and leadership qualities.

How does the program differ from people you know in other nursing programs?

Aspen offers greater customer service and more personalized professor interactions. The difference in cost between Aspen and other nursing post-grad degrees is very attractive.

Describe what it is like to study online.

Studying online creates infinite possibilities for the student. It's a 24/7 atmosphere – you can always access the classroom. Being able to study at my pace and in my own time allows me to keep building my professional portfolio and gives me the opportunity to stay current in my field of practice.

Describe a virtual classroom.

The virtual classroom is interactive and the platform makes it very easy for students to navigate the site. The postings and discussions give you a classroom feel when you're communicating with other students and your professor

What would you say the main benefits of online learning are?

Flexibility and input from other students from all over the globe.

What advice would you give to potential online students?

Be an active participant in the classroom. Share your thoughts and ideas in the forums and postings. I recommend online learning without reservation.

Describe your typical course experience.

After you sign up for a course, you get a complete and concise syllabus that provides you with all the information and details that you need to succeed in that class. The student completes assignments, then sends them to the professor through the classroom [interface]. You get feedback from your professor on the assignment in a timely manner and that helps you get further knowledge and understanding. The forums and discussion assignments are a very valuable part of the course instruction for me.

What type of relationships have you formed with the professors and other students?

It's been a great experience to interact with other students in my professional field. Our discussions are thought-provoking and have given me the ability to see things from a different perspective. My professors are dedicated to the success of their students and give me really helpful input and guidance.

About Aspen University's Master of Science in Nursing

Aspen University's Master of Science in Nursing program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE, <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Accreditation/>). Officially recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education as a national accreditation agency, the CCNE is an autonomous accrediting agency contributing to the improvement of the public's health. CCNE ensures the quality and integrity of baccalaureate and graduate education programs preparing effective nurses.