Doctor of Nursing Practice Online Program

Program Description

The West Virginia University School of Nursing offers a post-master’s program of study leading to the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree. Graduates of the DNP program advance the application of nursing knowledge through the translation and implementation of evidence for practice to improve health outcomes for diverse populations. This expert level practice builds on the past advanced practice education, experience, and certification.

This post-graduate program can be completed in as few as 33 credit hours. Additional clinical and capstone credits may be required to meet program objectives. The student plan of study for the DNP degree requires 1000 post baccalaureate hours of clinical immersion, which can include previous precepted Master’s level clinical courses, with a minimum of 300 immersion hours to be earned at the DNP level.

The program includes a Final Project. According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), doctoral education is distinguished by the completion of a specific project that demonstrates synthesis of the student's work and lays the groundwork for future clinical scholarly work directed at improving health or organizational outcomes in the area of focus. The curriculum primarily involves mastery of an advanced specialty within nursing practice and methods of practice improvement and change. The DNP Final Project is used to demonstrate mastery of the DNP curriculum content. Guided by faculty, and with assistance of an expert in the area of interest, the DNP Final project demonstrates the student's ability to identify a practice or system related problem through clinical immersion, to synthesize and critically appraise the evidence related to addressing that practice problem, to negotiate within the system to implement evidence based change within an organization, implement that change, and systematically measure the results of the practice or system related change initiative. The DNP Final Project documents outcomes of the student's educational experiences, and summarizes the student's growth in knowledge and expertise. The DNP Final Project experience serves as a foundation for leadership in future scholarly practice with the clinical setting.

The DNP prepared nurse is prepared to participate in healthcare in numerous roles including:

- clinical nurse specialist
- nurse practitioner
- nurse entrepreneur
- nurse administrator
- health care advocate

Advanced certification is a requirement for the DNP degree. Postgraduate applicants must have advanced certification. The immersion experience is intended to broaden clinical experience through the assessment of system level changes and the evaluation of such changes.

The programs are offered by faculty located at the University main campus in Morgantown and at the Charleston Division. Courses are offered via web-based modalities. Enrollment in nursing courses is based upon readiness, availability of space and an adequate cohort of students. The DNP final project proposal and defense take place on either campus depending on the preference of the committee chair.

Graduate students are strongly recommended to limit their credit load if they are also involved in full-time work. It is University Policy that students employed in full-time work should enroll for no more than six hours of master’s level course work in any one term.

Admissions Criteria

1. Satisfy WVU requirements for admission to graduate study
2. Have a master’s degree with a major in nursing from a nationally accredited college or university. A master's degree in a health-related discipline will be considered on an individual basis.
3. Have a cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale on the MSN degree
4. Have a current, unrestricted RN license in at least one state
5. Hold advanced practice nursing certification from a recognized national accreditation body in a specialized area of healthcare.
6. Meet program pre-requisites including transcripted courses equivalent to WVU courses in:
   a. Advanced Pathophysiology
   b. Advanced Pharmacotherapeutics
   c. Advanced Health Assessment
   d. Research Process

Note: Admission criteria are subject to change. Please see the School of Nursing website for the most up-to-date criteria at http://nursing.hsc.wvu.edu.
Application Process

The application process should be completed by February 1. The beginning sequence of courses in the DNP program starts in the summer semester only. Applicants to the DNP program need to complete the following steps in order to be considered for admission:

1. Complete two application forms as indicated below and return to the appropriate offices by the deadline.

   1. Application for Admission to Graduate Studies (available at: https://app.applyyourself.com/AYApplicantLogin/fl_ApplicantConnectLogin.asp?id=wvugrad)
   2. Supplemental Application for admission to DNP in the School of Nursing and DNP application checklist (available on the School of Nursing website at: http://www.nursing.hsc.wvu.edu/) submitted electronically
   3. Request an official transcript of records from each college or university attended. Transcripts should be sent directly to WVU Office of Admissions, P.O. Box 6099, Morgantown, WV 26506-6099.
   4. Three letters of reference should address the applicant’s expertise in the advanced practice of nursing and likelihood for success in doctoral work. One letter should be from a former professor of the applicant.
   5. Submit a current curriculum vitae.
   6. Submit a professional writing sample using the instructions provided on our website.

For more information, visit the website at http://nursing.hsc.wvu.edu, write to West Virginia University School of Nursing, P.O. Box 9600, Morgantown, WV 26506-9600; or call (304) 293-1386.

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Doctor of Nursing Practice Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSG 702</td>
<td>Population Health Promotion</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSG 704</td>
<td>Health Care Leadership</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSG 707</td>
<td>Evidence Based Practice Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSG 708</td>
<td>Role Seminar for Advanced Practice</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSG 709</td>
<td>Health Care Informatics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSG 710</td>
<td>Health Care Issues, Policy, and Ethics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSG 745</td>
<td>Clinical Immersion</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSG 760</td>
<td>DNP Project Proposal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSG 763</td>
<td>DNP Project</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Hours</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
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</tbody>
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* A minimum of 5 credits of Clinical Immersion is required prior to graduation. A total of 1000 hours post baccalaureate supervised clinical practice is required prior to graduation and therefore students may be required to take additional credits to meet this total.

Coursework for NSG 745 and NSG 763 are often spread out over multiple semesters and additional credits in these courses may be required based on each student's individual progression plan.

Suggested Plan of Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
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<td>NSG 709</td>
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<td>NSG 708</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSG 702</td>
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<td>NSG 704</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSG 707</td>
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<td>NSG 710</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSG 760</td>
<td>3</td>
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Progression and Performance Standards

In order to progress in the Doctor of Nursing Practice curriculum, a student must meet the following performance standards:

1. A student who falls below the 3.0 GPA on nine or more credit hours has one semester to bring up the GPA to the 3.0 requirement.
2. Only one nursing course may be repeated, and only one time.
3. A student may earn only one C grade in a nursing course. A second C in a nursing course will result in dismissal from the program. A grade of D or F in any course results in dismissal from the program.
4. All required courses must be taken for letter grades (A, B, C).

Major Learning Goals

DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE ONLINE PROGRAM

• Use disciplined reasoning, science-based theories, and concepts from sciences and humanities to:
  1. Determine the nature and significance of health and health care delivery phenomena.
  2. Describe actions and advance strategies to improve healthcare delivery, to diverse populations.
  3. Develop, deliver, and evaluate theory-based health care.
  4. Analyze nursing history to expand thinking and provide a sense of professional heritage and identity.

• Demonstrate organizational and systems leadership that:
  1. Emphasizes clinical practice.
  2. Continually improves health outcomes.
  3. Ensures patient safety.

• Use analytical methods, evidence, and nursing science to:
  1. Critically appraise existing literature to identify and evaluate best practices and practice guidelines.
  2. Facilitate the evaluation of systems of care in order to improve patient outcomes.
  3. Serve as a practice specialist/consultant in collaborative knowledge generating research.
  4. Disseminate results through translational scholarship.

• Demonstrate proficiency and provide leadership for the integration of information systems/technology to:
  1. Support, monitor, and improve patient care, healthcare systems, clinical decision-making, nurse-sensitive outcomes, and academic settings.
  2. Support quality improvement and patient safety.

• Assume a leadership role in advocacy and health care policy development.

• Establish, participate, and lead interprofessional collaborations for improving patient, population, and systems outcomes.

• Develop, implement, and evaluate practice and healthcare delivery models for the purpose of quality improvement and improved patient outcomes considering
  1. Safety and quality.
  2. Epidemiological, bio-statistical, environmental, and other appropriate scientific data.
  3. Culturally appropriate care.
  4. Values based professional practice and behaviors.
5. Economies of care, business principles and health policy related to individual, aggregate, and population health.

- Ensure accountability for advanced practice based on refined assessment skills, advanced communication skills, biophysical, genetic, genomic, psychosocial, sociopolitical, economic, ethical, and cultural principles.
- Practice and provide services for populations within the area of advanced nursing specialization.