Doctor of Philosophy, Ph.D.

Degree Offered

- Doctor of Philosophy

Nature of the Program

The purpose of the Ph.D. program is to educate nurse scholars/scientists for roles in research, teaching, and service. The program prepares graduates who will contribute to the body of nursing knowledge, educate the next generation, and assume collaborative leadership roles in shaping health policy, improving health, and reducing disparity.

The goals of the program are to prepare graduates who will:

1. Analyze theory, scientific base, and methods to generate knowledge that informs nursing science, practice, and policy.
2. Differentiate the integrated roles and responsibilities of the nurse scholar in teaching, leadership, practice, and service.
3. Disseminate scholarly works through publication to advance the knowledge base of nursing.
4. Conduct research that adheres to scientific integrity and ethics.

Visit the School of Nursing website at https://nursing.hsc.wvu.edu/. Call the WVU school of Nursing Office of Student Services at 1-866-WVUNURS or (304) 293-1386. Write to WVU School of Nursing at PO Box 9600, Morgantown, WV 26506-9600

Admissions for 2026-2027

CRITERIA

1. Master's degree in nursing (or higher) from a nationally accredited nursing program and a regionally accredited institution. A Master's degree in a health-related discipline will be considered.
2. A minimum nursing GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
3. A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale on all graduate work attempted. (Provisional admission may be considered if the overall GPA is 2.75-2.99 depending upon space available and other qualifications).
4. An active, unrestricted RN license in at least one state at the time of application.
5. Letters of good standing (required for transfer students or those that have taken courses in another graduate program but did not complete the degree).

Competitive applicants will be invited for an on-campus interview. Applicants will not be admitted without an interview.

Notes: To be considered, applicants must meet all WVU admission requirements (https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/apply-for-2024-2025/) in addition to program specific admission criteria. Admission criteria are subject to change. Please see the School of Nursing website for the most up-to-date criteria at https://nursing.hsc.wvu.edu (https://nursing.hsc.wvu.edu/).

READMISSION

Any student who has been dismissed from the West Virginia University School of Nursing or any other nursing program may be considered for readmission if the dismissal was academic and was followed by successful completion of an additional degree. Any student who has withdrawn from the WVU School of Nursing program may be considered for readmission. See Graduate Readmission Policy.

PROVISIONAL ADMISSION

Provisional graduate admission may be offered to students when they have earned a baccalaureate, graduate, or professional degree from a regionally accredited college or university but do not meet the criteria for regular admission. Provisionally admitted graduate students may have *program-defined deficiencies* or an undergraduate or graduate scholastic record that shows promise but is below the required 3.0 overall and/or nursing GPA for admission to the nursing program. Students will be considered for provisional admission on a case-by case basis depending upon space available and other qualifications.

Application Process

The application process is on a rolling basis and will review all qualified applications based on admission criteria. Candidates for admission are evaluated on the entire admission packet. The beginning sequence of courses in the PhD in nursing program starts in either the fall (full- or part-time), spring (full- or part-time), or summer (part-time) semester. Class size and progression plans may be limited based on available faculty resources and space. Applicants should plan to submit an application and all official documents that accompany the application by July 1st for fall admission, November 1st for spring admission, and March 1st for summer admission. Applicants to the PhD in nursing program need to complete the following steps in order to be considered for admission:

1. Application for Admission to Graduate Studies (available at: https://westvirginia.force.com/wvugrad/TX_SiteLogin?startURL=%2Fwvugrad%2FTargetX_Portal__PB (https://westvirginia.force.com/wvugrad/TX_SiteLogin/?startURL=%2Fwvugrad%2FTargetX_Portal__PB))
2. Request an official transcript of records from each college or university attended.
   a. It is preferred that official transcripts be sent via an online, secure service such as eScrip-Safe (https://escrip-safe.com/signup/), National Student Clearinghouse (https://studentclearinghouse.org/), or Parchment (https://www.parchment.com/) to graduateadmissions@mail.wvu.edu.
   b. Alternatively, sealed, untampered, physical official transcripts can be sent directly to WVU Graduate Admissions, P.O. Box 6510, Morgantown, WV 26506-6510.
   c. Applicants who completed prior education outside of the U.S. must have their transcripts evaluated by World Education Services (WES) (https://www.wes.org/evaluations-and-fees/education/graduate-admissions/). Please request a “course-by-course” International Credential Advantage Package (ICAP).
3. Submit a current curriculum vitae or resume.
4. Submit a personal essay using the guidelines (https://nursing.hsc.wvu.edu/students/graduate-programs/phd/application-information/) provided on our website.

Major Code: 8652

Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
Core Requirements		
NSG 727	Contemporary Nursing Science	3
NSG 728	Nursing Science Theory/Philosophy	4
NSG 732	Seminar in Nursing Scholarship	3
NSG 735	Principles: Nursing Education	3
NSG 736	Advanced Health Policy and Ethics	3
NSG 737	Leadership	3
Cognate/Electives		**6**
Select two 3 credit courses. At least one of the two courses must be taken outside the School of Nursing		
Research		
NSG 724	Health Research Statistics 1	3
NSG 725	Health Research Statistics 2	3
NSG 729	Quantitative Methods	3
NSG 731	Qualitative Research Methods	3
NSG 733	Research Grant Development	3
NSG 734	Use of Data	3
NSG 781	Research Mentorship	1
NSG 783	Dissertation Seminar	2
NSG 797	Research	8
NSG 785	Qualifying Examination	1
Residency Requirement [1]		
Total Hours		55

1

Meet the residency requirement of the university prior to taking the qualifying examination.

Suggested Plan of Study

Students are required to be on campus for the six-week Summer sessions, once in the Fall for two days, and once in the Spring for two days. During residency, students are provided with an opportunity to participate with nurse researchers and peers in the ongoing development of a scholarly community.

First Year					
Fall	**Hours**	**Spring**	**Hours**	**Summer**	**Hours**
NSG 724		3 NSG 725		3 NSG 728	4
NSG 727		3 NSG 729		3 NSG 732	3
		6		6	7

Second Year						
Fall	**Hours**	**Spring**	**Hours**	**Summer**	**Hours**	
NSG 731		3 NSG 737		3 NSG 736		3
NSG 735		3 NSG 734		3 NSG 733		3
		6		6		6
Third Year						
Fall	**Hours**	**Spring**	**Hours**	**Summer**	**Hours**	
NSG 785		1 NSG 781		1 NSG 797		2
Cognate		3 NSG 783		2		
		Cognate		3		
		4		6		2
Fourth Year						
Fall	**Hours**	**Spring**	**Hours**	**Summer**	**Hours**	
NSG 797		2 NSG 797		2 NSG 797		2
		2		2		2

Total credit hours: 55

Major Learning Outcomes

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

The PhD in Nursing at WVU is a blended program composed of on-campus classroom and distance learning components. For part-time students it will require three years of coursework, delivered online during fall and spring semesters with both synchronous and asynchronous components. Students are not required to come to campus for fall and spring semesters for regular nursing course work. Summer courses for the first two summers will include limited time on campus. Once a student successfully passes the written and oral components of the qualifying examination, they must complete the research and dissertation phase, culminating in a written and oral dissertation defense. The purpose of the PhD program is to educate nurse scholar-scientists for roles in research, teaching, and service. The program prepares graduates who will contribute to the body of nursing knowledge; educate the next generation; and assume collaborative leadership roles in shaping health policy, improving health, and reducing disparity. The goals of the program are to:

- Analyze theory, scientific base, and methods to generate knowledge that informs nursing science, practice, and policy.
- Differentiate the integrated roles and responsibilities of the nurse scholar in teaching, leadership, practice, and service.
- Disseminate scholarly works through publications to advance the knowledge base of nursing.
- Conduct research that adheres to scientific integrity and ethics.

Academic Progression Standards

To progress in the PhD program, a student must:

1. Take nursing courses in the sequence stated in the WVU School of Nursing PhD Progression Plan. All prerequisites from preceding semesters must be completed prior to registration for new courses *unless* a student has obtained permission from the PhD Program Director and the course instructor. **Note:** Students must be continuously enrolled in order to maintain active status. See the Leave of Absence and Withdrawal Policies in the PhD Student Handbook.

2. Courses are only applicable for graduation credit if they have been taken within the last eight years.

3. The following guidelines apply to grades in the PhD program:

    - Grade Point Average (GPA)requirements:
        - Degree seeking graduate students are required to maintain a 3.0 program GPA. A student who falls below a 3.0 in program courses after nine or more credit hours are completed in the program will be placed on academic notice.
            - Full-time degree-seeking graduate students will have only one semester to bring up the GPA to the 3.0 requirement. Failure to raise the program GPA to 3.0 by the next enrolled semester will result in program dismissal.
            - Part-time graduate students will have two semester to bring up the GPA to the 3.0 requirement. Failure to raise the program GPA to 3.0 by the next enrolled semester will result in program dismissal
    - Grades of C. Students may carry forward one C grade in any course. However, a second C will result in dismissal from the program.
    - Grades of F. Students with a grade of F in any course will be dismissed from the program.

- Withdrawals. Students can only carry forward two course withdrawals (resulting in a "W" on the academic transcript). The withdrawals cannot occur in the same course more than one time.
- Incomplete Grades. The PhD program follows the West Virginia University Policy for grads of Incomplete (I).

4. Successfully complete the QE prior to beginning the dissertation. The QE may be repeated once as outlined in the QE section of the student handbook. All elements of the QE, both written and oral, must be successfully completed no later than the first semester of the fifth year. If the student passes the 5 year limit and has not successfully completed the QE, they will be removed from the PhD program and their status changed to non-degree at the university level. The examination is intended to determine whether the student has the academic competence to undertake independent research in the discipline and to ensure that the student possesses a thorough grasp of the fields outlined in the plan of study.

5. Within the first semester, complete an individualized plan to meet the university residency requirements for doctoral education. Doctoral education involves many learning experiences that take place outside the formal classroom setting. These involve observing and participating in activities conducted by the graduate faculty, using departmental and University libraries, attending lectures presented by visiting scholars, informally debating other students, and similar activities. To ensure that graduate students experience this kind of informal learning, doctoral programs at WVU generally require at least two semesters in residence on campus. However, an individual student or graduate committee may propose an alternative plan by which the student can gain equivalent educational experience. This plan must be submitted in writing, approved by the college or school dean or designee, and placed in the student's program file.http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/advisingcoursesdegrees/degree_regulations/#requirementstext. See the PhD Student Handbook for specific residency requirements.

6. Meet with his or her advisor at least once a year to review and submit documentation of progression. Following spring advisement, student will complete an online mentor evaluation survey. Complete and submit an individualized development plan for program success to the advisor within one year of entering the program.

7. Generate a syllabus each time they are enrolled in an independent study course (NSG 795) and/or a research course (NSG 797). Working with the chair or instructor, the student will identify methods of achievement of the course learning outcomes. Before the course is released for enrollment, the syllabus must be signed by both the student and chair and a copy provided to the PhD Program Director.

GRADUATE READMISSION POLICY

Any student who has been dismissed from the West Virginia University School of Nursing or any other nursing program may be considered for readmission if the dismissal was academic and was followed by successful completion of an additional degree. Any student who has withdrawn from the WVU School of Nursing program may be considered for readmission. Students may apply for readmission in accordance with the following guidelines and criteria but must follow the standard admission procedures. Students must meet all original admission requirements.

- Students previously enrolled in a WVU nursing program must complete all exit procedures and forms during the semester of withdrawal to be eligible for readmission.
- Readmission to a WVU graduate nursing program will be considered one time only.
- Students unable to complete the program within 7 years of the original admission date (all graduate programs) and within 5 years of entry into candidacy (PhD program) will be required to restart the program if readmitted.
- Readmission is not guaranteed and is dependent upon space available, applicant qualifications, and academic discretion.
- Students may be required to repeat courses, revise the original progression plan, and/or validate clinical skills/knowledge obtained from previous courses.

GRADING SCALE

The grading scale for nursing as posted in each course syllabus is:

A = 93-100, B = 85-92, C = 77-84, F = 76 and below.