

DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree will prepare nurses for advanced roles as implementation scientists skilled in the translation of evidence into clinical practice, measurement of patient outcomes, and transformation of health care systems to ensure quality and safety.

The DNP program provides education in order for the graduate to analyze, evaluate, and advance quality, safety, effectiveness, and efficiency of patient care and systems of care. This comprehensive knowledge base for advanced nursing practice allows the graduate to influence health care outcomes for individuals and populations. This may include providing direct care or management of care. Other opportunities for graduates of the DNP program include working in administration, executive leadership, health policy, informatics, and population health.

This program is approved for delivery via asynchronous distance education technology. Students will be required to come to campus to present their DNP projects prior to graduation.

Program Requirements

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- Student's Advisory Committee (p. 1)
- Degree Plan (p. 1)
- Transfer of Credit (p. 1)
- Final Examination (p. 2)

Student's Advisory Committee

After receiving admission to the DNP program, the student will consult with the DNP Program Director concerning appointment of a chair for the DNP Project. The chair, in consultation with the student, will select the remainder of the advisory committee. The committee will consist of no fewer than three members of the graduate faculty representative of the student's field of study and practice expertise. The Project Chair must be a full time faculty member within the School of Nursing with an appropriate role on the graduate faculty. A second member of the advisory committee may also be from the School of Nursing with expertise in the practice area of the student or with expertise in program design and conduct. At least one or more of the members must have an appointment to a department other than the student's major department.

If the chair of the advisory committee voluntarily leaves the University and the student is near completion of the degree and wishes the chair to continue to serve in this role, the student is responsible for securing a current member of the School of Nursing Graduate Faculty, to serve as committee co-chair. The Dean of the School of Nursing may request in writing to the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School that a faculty member who is on an approved leave of absence or has voluntarily separated from the university, be allowed to continue to serve in the role of chair of a student's advisory committee without a co-chair for up to one year. Extensions beyond the one-year period can be granted with additional approval of the Dean.

The committee members' signatures on the degree plan indicate their willingness to accept the responsibility for guiding and directing the entire academic program of the student and for initiating all academic actions concerning the student. Although individual committee members may be replaced by petition for valid reasons, a committee cannot

resign *en masse*. The chair of the committee has immediate supervisory oversight of the student's practice project and has the responsibility for calling all meetings of the committee. The duties of the committee include responsibility for the proposed degree plan, the development of a project preproposal, monitoring completion of the DNP project, and the final defense of the project. In addition, the committee, as a group and as individual members, is responsible for counseling the student on academic matters, and, in the case of academic deficiency, initiating recommendations to the Graduate and Professional School.

Degree Plan

The student's advisory committee will evaluate the student's previous education and degree objectives. The committee, in consultation with the student, will develop a proposed degree plan which will constitute the basic academic requirements for the degree. The degree plan must be filed with the Graduate and Professional School following the deadline imposed by the student's college. The degree plan should be submitted through the online Document Processing Submission System located on the website <http://ogsdps.tamu.edu> (<http://ogsdps.tamu.edu/>).

A minimum of 38 hours is required on the degree plan for the Doctor of Nursing Practice. The need for elective and residency hours will be determined through development of an individual student-learning plan at time of enrollment. Completion of prescribed elective courses will be determined as part of the individualized student learning plan at time of enrollment and is based on the number of clinical practice hours required for the student to meet the 1,000 hour minimum.

Additional coursework may be added by petition to the approved degree plan by the student's advisory committee if such additional coursework is deemed necessary to correct deficiencies in the student's academic preparation. No changes can be made to the degree plan once the student's Request for Final Examination or Request for Final Examination Exemption is approved by the Graduate and Professional School.

No credit may be obtained by correspondence study, by extension or for any course of fewer than three weeks duration.

To receive a graduate degree from Texas A&M University, students must earn one-third or more of the credits through the institution's own direct instruction.

Transfer of Credit

Courses for which transfer credits are sought must have been completed with a grade of B or greater and must be approved by the student's advisory committee and the Graduate and Professional School. These courses must not have been used previously for another degree. Except for officially approved cooperative doctoral programs, credit for thesis or dissertation research or the equivalent is not transferable. Credit for "internship" coursework in any form is not transferable. Courses taken in residence at an accredited U.S. institution or approved international institution with a final grade of B or greater will be considered for transfer credit if, at the time the courses were completed, the courses would be accepted for credit toward a similar degree for a student in degree-seeking status at the host institution. Credit for coursework taken by extension is not transferable. Coursework in which no formal grades are given or in which grades other than letter grades (A or B) are earned (for example, CR, P, S, U, H, etc.) is not accepted for transfer credit. Credit for coursework submitted for transfer from any college or university must be shown in semester credit hours, or equated to semester credit hours.

Courses used toward a degree at another institution may not be applied for graduate credit. If the course to be transferred was taken prior to the

conferral of a degree at the transfer institution, a letter from the Registrar at that institution stating that the course was not applied for credit toward the degree must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School.

Grades for courses completed at other institutions are not included in computing the GPA. An official transcript from the university at which transfer courses are taken must be sent directly to the Office of Admissions.

Final Examination

The Doctor of Nursing Practice has no final exam or dissertation requirement.

Final Project

The DNP degree culminates in an integrated, practice-focused project led by a faculty mentor based upon availability and research/practice interest and aided by consultation from internal or external content experts. Following AACN (2015) guidelines, the focus of the DNP project is practice change through translation of evidence and quality improvement. The project may target nursing interventions that influence health care outcomes for individuals or populations. This project may address direct care, care management, administration of health care systems or development and implementation of health care policy.

Additional Requirements

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- Residence (p. 2)
- Continuous Registration (p. 2)
- Practicum (p. 2)
- 99-Hour Cap on Doctoral Degrees (p. 2)
- Application for Degree (p. 3)

Residence

This Doctor of Nursing Practice program is delivered solely through distance education modalities and does not have any residence requirement.

Continuous Registration

A student in the Doctor of Nursing Practice program who has completed all coursework on his/her degree plan other than DNP Scholarly Project/Practicum IV is required to be in continuous registration until all requirements for the degree have been completed. See Continuous Registration Requirements (<http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#registrationandacademicstatustext>).

Practicum

The DNP degree requires a minimum of 1,000 hours of practice post-baccalaureate (BSN). Practice hours from a master's nursing program can apply towards the 1,000-hour, post-baccalaureate practice requirement (AACN, 2015). DNP students holding a Master's degree in nursing and national certification as an advanced practice registered nurse (nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, certified nurse midwife, certified registered nurse anesthetist) can apply up to 500 hours towards the 1,000-hour, DNP practice requirement. Students will complete remaining hours through the DNP Scholarly Project.

The student will submit verification of up to 500 practice hours from their Master's program in NursingCAS during the application process. All

practice hour requests require review and approval by the Director of the DNP Program.

Students with fewer than 500 practice hours will complete necessary hours through completion of prescribed electives. These electives will be determined in a program-planning meeting between the student and the DNP program director

DNP Project Overview

Practicum I (minimum 120 practicum hours)

Activities: Identify clinical problem, project title, external expert reviews, project aims, outcome measures & anticipated project impact.

Deliverables: DNP Project Proposal; IRB/CITI training

Practicum II (minimum 120 practicum hours)

Activities: Project timeline; Proposed budget; IRB application

Deliverables: IRB application submitted; project budget and timeline

Practicum III (minimum 120 practicum hours)

Activities: Data collection timeline and plan; dissemination plan

Deliverables: IRB approval; data collection; timeline and dissemination plan

Practicum IV (minimum 120 practicum hours)

Activities: Data analysis; Finalize DNP project paper; DNP project presentation

Deliverables: Data analysis; DNP project paper; project presentation; submission of manuscript, abstract for podium/poster presentation.

99-Hour Cap on Doctoral Degrees

In Texas, public colleges and universities are funded by the state according to the number of students enrolled. In accordance with legislation passed by the Texas Legislature, the number of hours for which state universities may receive subvention funding at the doctoral rate for any individual is limited to 99 hours. Texas A&M and other universities will not receive subvention for hours in excess of the limit.

Institutions of higher education are allowed to charge the equivalent of non-resident tuition to a resident doctoral student who has enrolled in 100 or more semester credit hours of doctoral coursework.

Doctoral students at Texas A&M have seven years to complete their degree before being charged out-of-state tuition. A doctoral student who, after seven years of study, has accumulated 100 or more doctoral hours will be charged tuition at a rate equivalent to out-of-state tuition. Please note that the tuition increases will apply to Texas residents as well as students from other states and countries who are currently charged tuition at the resident rate. This includes those doctoral students who hold GAT, GANT, and GAR appointments or recipients of competitive fellowships who receive more than \$1,000 per semester. Doctoral students who have not accumulated 100 hours after seven years of study are eligible to pay in-state tuition if otherwise eligible.

Doctoral students who exceed the credit limit will receive notification from the Graduate and Professional School during the semester in which they are enrolled and exceeding the limit in their current degree program. The notification will explain that the State of Texas does not provide funding for any additional hours in which a student is enrolled in excess

of 99 hours. Texas A&M University will recover the lost funds by requiring students in excess of 99 hours to pay tuition at the non-funded, non-resident rate. This non-funded, non-resident tuition rate status will be updated for the following semester and in all subsequent semesters until receipt of a doctoral degree. Please see the Tuition Calculator (<https://tuition.tamu.edu/>) at the non-resident rate for an example of potential charges.

The following majors are exempt from the 99-Hour Cap on Doctoral Degrees and have a limit of 130 doctoral hours:

- Biochemistry
- Biomedical Sciences
- Clinical Psychology
- Counseling Psychology
- Epidemiology and Environmental Health
- Genetics and Genomics
- Health Services Research
- Medical Sciences
- Microbiology
- Neurosciences (School of Medicine)
- Nutrition
- Oral and Craniofacial Biomedical Sciences
- Pharmaceutical Sciences
- Public Health Sciences
- School Psychology
- Toxicology

Application for Degree

For information on applying for your degree, please visit the Graduation (<http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#registrationandacademicstatustext>) section.