

NURSING, DNP

Banner Code: HH-DNP-NURS

Academic Advising

Website: chhs.gmu.edu/students/coordinators.cfm#nurs

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program is approved by the Virginia State Board of Nursing and accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. The nurse practitioner concentrations have been approved by the state boards of nursing and medicine in Virginia.

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) is the terminal practice degree in the profession. The objective of the program is to prepare graduates for the highest level of nursing practice. Emphasis will be placed on evaluating and applying the evidence that supports practice, understanding and creating practice delivery systems based on patient outcomes, and assuming leadership roles in practice settings. In the curriculum, five concentrations are available. The concentrations are configured into two foci as recommended by the American Academy of Colleges of Nursing *Essentials of Doctor of Nursing Practice* (the guidance document for DNP programs). The two foci are:

1. care of individuals with three concentrations, Family Nurse Practitioner, Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner, and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner; and
2. care of aggregates with Advanced Clinical Nursing and Administration in Nursing concentrations.

The degree will draw on expertise from throughout CHHS in such areas as health economics, health policy, and epidemiology. Graduates of the program will be able to assume many roles in the health care system, including direct patient care, clinical nursing faculty, practice management, and policy development.

Admissions & Policies

Admissions Requirements

Applicants must meet the admission standards and application requirements specified in Graduate Admissions and must apply using the online Application for Graduate Admission (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid>). Applicants for the BSN to DNP curriculum must be graduates of accredited baccalaureate (BSN) programs in nursing. Applicants for the MSN to DNP curriculum must have a master's degree in nursing. All applicants must submit a copy of their current state-based/US license and show evidence of at least one year of experience as an RN prior to admission. For application deadlines and detailed application requirements, refer to the CHHS Admissions website (<http://chhs.gmu.edu/admissions/graduate/deadlines.cfm>).

Policies

Transfers Between Programs or Concentrations

Students may not transfer between programs or concentrations. If a student wishes to be considered for another nursing program or concentration, a completed application to that program or concentration must be submitted using the online Application for Graduate Admission (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid>). Applicants will be considered

for admission with all other applicants for that program or concentration, with no guarantee of acceptance. If accepted, please be aware that more than half of the credits earned for the new degree must be taken after acceptance to the new nursing program or concentration.

Transfer of Credit

Students may transfer a maximum of 9 credits into the DNP program from graduate courses taken at other institutions or taken at Mason in non-degree status, including courses offered through the college's Academic Outreach program. Transfer credit is governed by university transfer of graduate credit policy and the university requirements for doctoral degrees, and transfer credit must be approved by the program director and the dean. Students who enroll initially through non-degree studies or the Academic Outreach program should seek course advising through the department and should submit their application to the DNP program as soon as possible after beginning in their study in non-degree status.

Reduction of Credit

Students who come into the MSN to DNP program will complete 72 credits, including up to 30 hours of relevant graduate credit awarded for past master's-level courses.

Time Requirements

The projected length of the program for full-time BSN to DNP students is four calendar years, which could stretch to eight academic years for part-time students. Full-time MSN to DNP students can complete the program in two academic years, while part-time students may require three academic years. BSN to DNP students will have a maximum of eight years and MSN to DNP students will have a maximum of six years to complete the program.

Academic Termination

Academic termination is governed by university policy described in AP.6.6.2 Academic Termination. Additionally, a failing grade of F in a practicum course may result in termination from the program. Any graduate course in which a student earns a C grade or below must be repeated.

Grading

Throughout the semester, students are assessed on how well they have met curricular outcomes. Consistent with the university, the DNP in Nursing program does not provide a D grade. Final grades for all DNP in Nursing courses are submitted to the university as letter grades.

Grade	Quality Points	Graduate Courses
A	4.00	Passing
B	3.00	Passing
C	2.00	Failing
F	0.00	Failing

A graduate course in which a grade of C or below is earned must be repeated to earn a grade of B or better, and a course may be repeated only once. Graduate students (both master's and doctoral) may repeat no more than two courses in their total program of study.

Curriculum

The BSN to DNP curriculum is comprised of 72 credits. Students who enter the MSN to DNP program will also complete 72 credits, including up to 30 hours of relevant graduate credit awarded for past master's-level courses.

A minimum of 1000 practice hours is required in the DNP program. The 1,000 hours of precepted/mentored clinical practice are distributed among introductory (500- to 700-numbered courses) and upper-level (800- to 900-numbered courses) graduate courses. Students receive one hour of credit for 45 hours of precepted/mentored clinical practice that is part of the course work. BSN to DNP students will include the 1,000 hours in their course work. MSN to DNP students can transfer in up to 800 hours (depending on the number of hours they accrued during their master's program). The number of clinical hours a student is awarded on admission is based on transcripts and course descriptions. Faculty will review clinical credits earned as part of the master's degree to determine the number of clinical hours awarded. Variable hours in the clinical practicums (NURS 921 and NURS 922) will assure a minimum total of 1,000 clinical hours prior to DNP graduation.

Students will pursue one of two emphases:

1. Advanced nursing care of individuals
2. Advanced nursing care of aggregates

Students will integrate knowledge from core and concentration courses into development and implementation of their practice inquiry project.

The curriculum will allow students with diverse nursing academic and clinical backgrounds the flexibility to enter a program of study tailored to their future professional goals. The final project will be an evidence-based translational research project (practice inquiry project). This project is designed for students to address a real-life professional issue with potential for actual implementation to improve practice and outcomes. The goal of the DNP program is to maximize the strength and credentials of each student through faculty advisement. Students will be assigned to a faculty advisor whose interest and expertise will support the development of an individual practice inquiry project at the culmination of course work. All students are required to have an active Mason e-mail account.

Requirements

Degree Requirements

Total credits: 72

BSN to DNP Curriculum

Core courses and advanced practice core courses and competency courses must be completed in the first two years of full-time study or four years of part-time study. These foundational courses prepare the student to develop and implement the practice inquiry project (DNP Project) in the final two semesters of study.

Level I Core Courses

NURS 665	Theoretical and Ethical Foundations Related to Nursing	3
NURS 688	Organization of Nursing and Health Care Delivery Systems	3
NURS 757	Nursing Research and Biostatistics I	3

NURS 758	Nursing Research and Biostatistics II	3
Total Credits		12

Level II Core Essentials Courses

NURS 643	Community-Oriented Primary Care	3
NURS 715	Nursing Informatics Inquiry	3
NURS 808	Translating Nursing and Health Care Research into Evidence-Based Policy	3
NURS 870	Nursing and Health Care Administration I	3
NURS 883	Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing and Healthcare	4
Total Credits		16

Advanced Practice Competency Courses

Complete requirements of one concentration.

Concentrations in Advanced Nursing Care of Aggregates Concentration in Advanced Clinical Nursing (NUAC)

NURS 714	Health Assessment in Clinical Practice	2
NURS 724	Health Assessment Practicum	1
Six credits of		6
NURS 740	Clinical Nurse Specialist Internship	
NURS 761	Pharmacotherapeutics	3
NURS 769	Physiology and Pathophysiology in Advanced Practice	3
NURS 773	Clinical Applications of Theory in Advanced Clinical Nursing	3
NURS 775	Advanced Specialty Practice I	3
NURS 776	Development of Advanced Practice Nursing Role	3
NURS 778	Advanced Specialty Practice II	3
Four credits of		4
NURS 921	Clinical Practicum I	
Five credits of		5
NURS 922	Clinical Practicum II	
Total Credits		36

Concentration in Nursing Administration (NUAD)

NURS 654	Nursing Administration Financial Management	3
NURS 763	Administrative Theory in Nursing	3
NURS 765	Practicum in Nursing Administration I	3
NURS 766	Administrative Strategies in Nursing	3
NURS 768	Practicum in Nursing Administration II	3
NURS 871	Nursing and Health Care Administration II	2
NURS 874	Internship in Health Care Administration/Policy/Education	4
Electives toward career goal ¹		5
Five credits of		5
NURS 921	Clinical Practicum I ¹	
Five credits of		5
NURS 922	Clinical Practicum II (Students are required to earn 5 credits)	
Total Credits		36

¹ All electives must be approved by advisor prior to the start of the course.

Concentrations in Advanced Nursing Care of Individuals

Concentration in Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner (AGNP)

NURS 714	Health Assessment in Clinical Practice	2
NURS 724	Health Assessment Practicum	1
NURS 761	Pharmacotherapeutics	3
NURS 769	Physiology and Pathophysiology in Advanced Practice	3
NURS 713	Decision Making and Pharmacologic Management in Practice	3
NURS 787	Adult Gerontology Primary Care I	2
NURS 786	Adult Gerontology Primary Care Practicum I	2
NURS 789	Adult Gerontology Primary Care II	3
NURS 788	Adult Gerontology Primary Care Practicum II	4
NURS 791	Adult Gerontology Primary Care III	4
NURS 790	Adult Gerontology Primary Care Practicum III	4
Three credits of		3
NURS 921	Clinical Practicum I	
Two credits of		2
NURS 922	Clinical Practicum II	
Total Credits		36

Concentration in Family Nurse Practitioner (FNUP)

NURS 714	Health Assessment in Clinical Practice	2
NURS 724	Health Assessment Practicum	1
NURS 761	Pharmacotherapeutics	3
NURS 769	Physiology and Pathophysiology in Advanced Practice	3
NURS 713	Decision Making and Pharmacologic Management in Practice	3
NURS 738	Family Primary Care I	2
NURS 742	Family Primary Care Practicum I	2
NURS 739	Family Primary Care II	4
NURS 744	Family Primary Care Practicum II	4
NURS 741	Family Primary Care III	3
NURS 749	Family Primary Care Practicum III	4
Three credits of		3
NURS 921	Clinical Practicum I	
Two credits of		2
NURS 922	Clinical Practicum II	
Total Credits		36

Concentration in Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHN)

NURS 714	Health Assessment in Clinical Practice	2
NURS 724	Health Assessment Practicum	1
NURS 761	Pharmacotherapeutics	3
NURS 769	Physiology and Pathophysiology in Advanced Practice	3
NURS 632	Pathogenesis of Mental Disorders	3

NURS 633	Individual Psychotherapy	3
NURS 634	Group, Family and Couple Psychotherapy	1
NURS 743	Clinical Psychopharmacology	3
NURS 782	Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Practicum I	4
NURS 783	Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Seminar I	2
NURS 784	Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Practicum II	5
NURS 785	Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Seminar II	2
Two credits of		2
NURS 921	Clinical Practicum I	
Two credits of		2
NURS 922	Clinical Practicum II	
Total Credits		36

Practice Inquiry Project Courses

The final step in completion of the degree is the implementation of a practice inquiry project (DNP project). The proposal for this project must be prepared with ample time for submission to the Human Subjects Review Board at George Mason University. The student will identify one School of Nursing faculty member to serve as an advisor for the project. Consistent with the *AACN DNP Essentials*, the guidance document for DNP programs, the practice inquiry project must demonstrate the core competencies of finance, policy, technology, and health care delivery systems, as well as utilization of evidence to enhance practice outcomes.

NURS 980	Practice Inquiry I	4
NURS 981	Practice Inquiry II	4
Total Credits		8

MSN to DNP Curriculum

Students in the MSN to DNP program will complete 72 credits. Up to 30 hours of relevant graduate credit may be awarded for past master's-level courses, and students will complete the remaining minimum of 42 additional credits following the curriculum below.

In the MSN-DNP, the core essentials build on previous master's education and must be completed in the first year of full-time study or two years of part-time study. They prepare the student to develop and implement the practice inquiry project in the final two semesters of study. The core essentials for post-master's DNP students will be individualized based on the content from the student's master's degree academic program.

Students must complete 1,000 precepted/mentored clinical hours including those obtained during previous master's education (individually awarded based on evaluation of master's clinical hours up to 800 hours). Students also must take additional electives to meet the total requirement of 72 credits required to complete the program.

Students may add one of the following concentrations to their DNP application: Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner, Family Nurse Practitioner, Family Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, Nursing Administration, or Advanced Clinical Nursing.

Level II Core Essentials Courses

NURS 654	Nursing Administration Financial Management	3
NURS 715	Nursing Informatics Inquiry	3
NURS 758	Nursing Research and Biostatistics II	3

NURS 808	Translating Nursing and Health Care Research into Evidence-Based Policy	3
NURS 870	Nursing and Health Care Administration I	3
NURS 883	Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing and Healthcare	4
Total Credits		19

Advanced Practice Competency Courses

NURS 921	Clinical Practicum I	1-10
NURS 922	Clinical Practicum II	1-10
Total Credits		2-20

Practice Inquiry Project Courses

The final step in completion of the degree is the implementation of a practice inquiry project (DNP project). The proposal for this project must be prepared with ample time for submission to the Human Subjects Review Board at George Mason University. The student will identify one School of Nursing faculty member to serve as an advisor for the project. Consistent with the *AACN DNP Essentials*, the guidance document for DNP programs, the practice inquiry project must demonstrate the core competencies of finance, policy, technology, and health care delivery systems, as well as utilization of evidence to enhance practice outcomes.

NURS 980	Practice Inquiry I	4
NURS 981	Practice Inquiry II	4
Total Credits		8

Electives

If needed, elective courses should be taken to complete the required 42 program credits. All electives must be approved by the advisor prior to the start of the course.