



DNP: Nursing

The DNP: Nursing (MSN to DNP) program at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC) School of Nursing is a program of doctoral study for the nurse desiring specialty education in advanced levels of nursing practice. The DNP emerged from recommendations from the Institute of Medicine and leaders in health care. Embracing those recommendations, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) advanced the concept of the DNP and recommended that by 2015 all new applicants for advanced practice certification should have a DNP degree. The purpose of the Doctor of Nursing Practice program is to provide a rigorous education to prepare advanced practice nurses who translate science to improve population health through expert leadership. The program was designed using the Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice specified by the AACN.

The DNP program curriculum for most post master's students will be a minimum of 36 semester credits. As a component of the DNP program, the student will develop and implement an evidence-based innovative translational project that could solve a significant health-care problem. MSN to DNP option curriculum for most students consists of a minimum of 33 semester credit hours. A minimum of 1,000 hours of practice post-baccalaureate is required for program completion and graduation. Post masters students are permitted to apply a maximum of 500 of post baccalaureate clinical hours to the 1,000 minimum mandate as verified on the APN Hours Verification Form submitted at the time of application. Practice experiences are designed to help students achieve specific learning objectives related to the *DNP Essentials (2006)* and specialty competencies. Practice experiences are planned to provide systematic opportunities for feedback and reflection.

The School of Nursing DNP practice experiences include in-depth work with experts from nursing, as well as other disciplines, and provide opportunities for substantial student engagement within a practice situation. Because of the intense practice focus of the DNP program, practice experiences are devised to assist students in building and assimilating knowledge for an advanced specialty practice at a high level of complexity. The practice experience also provides the setting within which the translation of evidence project is completed.

With the student's faculty advisor/mentor, he/she will develop and present a scholarly translational project. Students will also complete additional clinical requirements to meet the mandated minimum of 1,000 Post-baccalaureate hours of specialty training that is one of the distinctions of a DNP graduate

DNP: Nursing: Nursing Administration

The DNP: Nursing: Nursing Administration (BSN or higher to DNP) curriculum is designed to accommodate students who have completed their BSN, or have a Master's Degree in another field. Course work can be completed on a full time or part time basis. Students entering with a BSN are required to take a minimum of 57 credits to achieve the DNP. Students entering the program with a Master's degree in another field will be evaluated individually and given appropriate credit for courses completed at the Master's level.

The UTC School of Nursing DNP: Nursing Administration-Systems (DNP: NAS) concentration will prepare students as systems leaders who design models of health care delivery, evaluate clinical outcomes, identify and manage health care needs of populations and use technology and information to transform health care systems. The NAS option is constructed specifically for current and future nurse administrators/executives who will be prepared for supervisory oversight of a group of essential services or functions. The BSN-DNP NAS option is for students preparing for organizational leadership or administrative roles and will include increased depth in organizational and systems' leadership; the curriculum is grounded in the *Essentials for DNP* (2006), The ANA (2009) *Nursing Administration: Scope and Standards of Practice* and the AONE (2010) *Core Competencies for Nursing Executives*. The DNP: NAS has an extended, part-time option for working nurses who have family and other obligations.

The DNP: NAS program curriculum consists of a minimum of 68 semester credits. As a component of the program, the student will complete courses specific to nursing administration, including organizational and management theory, resource management, marketing, informatics, change, quality and patient safety and leadership. The program will also include an appropriate advanced nursing administration practicum experience prior to the courses that precede the residency and the final translational project courses. Ethical decision-making is threaded throughout the curriculum. All DNP students will develop, implement, and evaluate an evidence-based Translational Project designed to resolve a significant health care problem. All DNP students will complete residency courses and obtain a minimum of 1000 hours of clinical practice post BSN, a distinction of a DNP graduate (AACN, 2006).

The DNP curriculum focuses on developing the knowledge and skills to effectively lead in complex clinical environments. Core courses provide a foundation in informatics, evidence based practice and research, finance, organizational theory, resource management, nursing theory, and nursing research. This knowledge is then expanded upon through courses in leadership in complex system, epidemiology, health policy, and clinical systems analysis and design. To achieve the 1,000 clinical hours required for the DNP, students will complete a clinical

healthcare practicum followed by a clinical residency during which the student completes a Translational Project under the guidance of a DNP committee.

The DNP: Nursing Administration Systems allows students interested to continue on and complete the Masters of Business Administration (MBA). If students remain continuously enrolled following the required program of study, they can count up to 15 hours of the DNP: Nursing Administration Systems business courses toward the MBA.DNP: Nursing Administration Systems.

Curriculum

Course Descriptions are located in the [UTC Course Catalog](#).

Professional Expectations

All School of Nursing students are expected to exhibit a professional demeanor at all times in the clinical setting including:

- Professional dress with UTC School of Nursing identification badge
- Respectful demeanor to all people encountered in the clinical setting including preceptors, faculty, staff, patients, families, colleagues and other healthcare professionals
- Express appreciation to preceptors for their dedication, mentoring, and teaching at the end of the clinical experience

Uniform Policy

Students are to comply with the policies and procedures of any agency with which the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga School of Nursing has an agreement. During the clinical experiences, DNP students MUST wear appropriate, professional-looking attire (e.g., no jeans). Wearing a lab coat over street clothes is highly recommended to both protect your clothing and promote a more professional appearance. In addition, students are to wear the official UTC School of Nursing picture identification badge whenever present in the clinical agencies.

Translational Project

All UTC School of Nursing DNP options consist of a plan of study that includes an evidence-based practice project that is a translation of evidence into practice. The project is a faculty-guided scholarly practice experience that provides evidence of student critical thinking, ability to translate research into practice, and ability to transform practice through problem identification, proposal development, implementation, and evaluation of a clinical problem.

Nurses prepared at the DNP level provide leadership for evidence-based practice and model translating evidence-based research in practice. The Translational Project experience is an in-depth, integrative and interprofessional experience that

results in a practice-related written project that exemplifies how evidence can be used to change or improve practice or outcomes for patients, families, populations, and/or health care systems. Thus, a translational project is a scholarly process to address a clinical/practice relevant problem in nursing and healthcare. Successful completion of the project requires competence in knowledge development activities, such as undertakings aimed at improving the reliability of healthcare practice and outcomes, abilities of appraising and applying research into clinical practice, and abilities associated with transforming practice through problem identification, project development, implementation, and evaluation of a needed clinical change. Coursework within the DNP program supports the various Translational Project components.

The DNP Translational Project is developed, implemented, and evaluated during the program of study and will have a data analysis component with a relevant clinical application grounded in evidence-based practice. The completed final project will be presented to the faculty following specified guidelines conforming to the final products (written paper, presentation and publishable paper). The expectation is that the DNP project will be ready for dissemination and/or publication. At a minimum, the project will be submitted to the UTC Institutional Library Repository. The actual publication of the work is not a requirement for the degree. The submission of the publishable paper may occur after the completion of the project, with the additional help from committee members, who may then be co-authors.

Students will be assigned a project Chair who will also serve as an advisor to the student for successful project completion. The Chair must hold Graduate Faculty status as approved by the Graduate School Dean in collaboration with the School of Nursing. The committee members must also hold Graduate Faculty status as stipulated by the Graduate School. Students maintain a portfolio throughout their program of study that showcases the process of learning and a sample of the actual knowledge acquired (Casey & Egan, 2010).