Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program
BSN to DNP Pathway

Distance Accessible

The DNP is an advanced practice-focused terminal degree that prepares graduates to assume leadership roles in specialty practice or healthcare systems. Graduates of the DNP program will focus on the delivery of care to populations and communities with an emphasis on improving quality and access to underserved, diverse populations. The three components of the DNP are advanced clinical specialty practice, leadership, and practice inquiry. Graduates will employ abilities and skills in these areas to advocate for reasonable, rational, and data-driven health regulations, standards, and evidence-based practices; sustain collaborative and strategic relationships, and promote innovative, effective health care programs; and form partnerships with diverse groups to address health disparities. In addition, graduates will be prepared to assume clinical faculty positions to address the critical nursing faculty shortage. Graduates of the DNP program will be able to:

Outcomes

- Synthesize scientific evidence for the development of clinical interventions for practice.
- Evaluate policy, healthcare delivery, and organizational systems for current and future health care needs.
- Translate scientific, theoretical, and ethical principles into healthcare for individuals, families, and populations.
- Incorporate knowledge of current and emerging health technologies to improve healthcare delivery and organizational systems.
- Advocate for social justice, equity, and ethical policies in healthcare.
- Demonstrate intra and inter-professional collaboration to address health disparities and to improve the quality of healthcare across diverse populations and cultures.
- Assume complex leadership roles to advance clinical practice and healthcare delivery at the organizational and systems level and to improve health outcomes of individuals and populations.

BSN to DNP Admissions Requirements

- A BSN from a regionally accredited institution, equivalent to the one offered by UAB School of Nursing
- Possess an unencumbered nursing license to practice nursing in the state where you plan to conduct your clinical practicum
- An undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.2 on a 4.0 scale either cumulatively or on the last 60 semester credit hours. A 3.5 or higher GPA is recommended.
- (3) Letters of professional reference attesting to the applicant’s potential for graduate study
- Some specialty tracks may require specific clinical practice experience prior to enrollment in a specialty courses.

For International Students:

- Prospective international students are asked to first contact International Recruitment and Student Services at isss@uab.edu, (205), 934-3328, FAX 934-8664 to determine eligibility in order to submit an application into any academic program listed below.
- All foreign transcripts evaluated by the Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc www.ece.org OR the World Education Services www.wes.org, sent from the evaluators directly to the School of Nursing
- A degree equivalent to a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited educational institution in the United States
- A score of 500 or higher on the Test of English as a Foreign Language, TOEFL
- Standardized test score. A minimum combined score of 1000 on the verbal and quantitative sections of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).
- Possess an unencumbered nursing license to practice nursing in the state where you plan to conduct your clinical practicum

Frequently Asked Questions

What kind of nursing experience do I need prior to entering the program?

Except for specific specialty tracks, there are no requirements for clinical experience prior to admission. However, the faculty believes students should have at least one year of professional nursing experience prior to enrolling in specialty courses.

Is the program online? This is a distance accessible DNP program. All core courses are offered in an online format; however, electives taken outside the School of Nursing may not be available in an online format. Students will be required to come to campus six times during the program. Students will be required to attend: a four-day orientation to the DNP program and two three-day DNP intensives held in summer semester; in addition, students in a nurse practitioner specialty tracks must also attend three specialty-focused intensives. Students may be required to come to campus to work with their advisor on their DNP Project. Applicants to any of our distance-accessible programs should become familiar with the regulations governing distance accessible programs in their state.
Prospective students residing in states other than Alabama should contact their state’s Board of Nursing and Department of Education for specific rules and regulations pertaining to completion of clinical learning experiences in that state when enrolled in a distance accessible program. The ability to conduct course work is only guaranteed for student residing in Alabama and in states with an established agreement.

**Do I have to come to campus for Orientation?** Attendance at an on campus orientation is required. The four-day orientation consists of an introduction to the BSN to DNP program, a professional writing workshop, specialty track clinical placement planning, and the UAB SON's expectations of BSN to DNP student performance. During orientation, students will spend a significant amount of time familiarizing themselves with numerous computer programs that support course work, including SPSS, End-Note, Excel, PowerPoint, and ACCESS. Time is also provided for students to meet with program advisors and to interview with faculty that may be well suited to Chair their DNP Projects.

**Can I be a part-time student?** Yes, but you should plan to take a minimum of six credits a term (approximately 2-3 courses per semester) as a part-time student in order to progress and keep your knowledge base current throughout the clinical learning experiences and the scholarly practice project. The DNP project requires use of numerous skills and the knowledge gained in previous course work, such as the ability to design studies, develop and organize research databases, and run statistical analyses. Completion of the DNP Project may require additional semesters, depending on the nature of the project. If you are required to maintain a higher course credit load due to funding or military requirements, please contact the Program Director.

**How long does it take to complete the program?** The full-time program is designed to be completed in nine semesters. The part-time program is designed to be completed in 12 semesters. Please contact the Program Director if funding or military requirements require a modified program of study.

**Can I enter the program any time during the year?** No. Students are admitted to the BSN to DNP program of study in the fall term only.

**Can I enroll in non-degree coursework before I am admitted to the DNP program?** No. Due to the nature of the program, courses taken prior to entering the program are not allowed. An exception to this policy is made for students who require additional coursework to complete the requirements for admission.

**Can I take courses elsewhere?** Students must obtain prior approval to complete any DNP coursework elsewhere. All such courses must be first evaluated by the Assistant Dean for Graduate Clinical Programs to determine their equivalency to the required DNP courses. To have such courses evaluated, you must submit the course syllabus and catalog description to the Assistant Dean for review; the course review may take up to 8 weeks to complete.

**Can I work full-time and complete the program?** Because of the demands of the program, we recommended that students employed full-time consider part-time enrollment. Students must be certain to allow adequate time for doctoral study. It is unlikely that full-time employees can successfully balance full-time doctoral level coursework, therefore part-time studies is the best option.

**How much time should I be prepared to spend on the DNP project?** The BSN to DNP curriculum requires completion of a program of study that is a minimum of 78 credits, which includes credit hours focused on the development, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of a scholarly practice or leadership focused project. A minimum of 1,000 clinical hours must be completed in the DNP program, a portion of which will be dedicated to the completion of the DNP project. Students develop the DNP Project under the direction of program faculty and onsite mentors.

**Does this DNP program prepare graduates to teach?** The DNP is a clinical practice-focused doctorate and the DNP curriculum prepares students for advanced nursing practice and health system leadership positions. However, students who intend to assume faculty positions in schools of nursing in the future are encouraged to also complete graduate level nurse educator courses that are offered by the School of Nursing and which may be added to the basic DNP program of study.

**Are there funds to support doctoral students?** A listing of School of Nursing scholarships can be found on the School of Nursing web site. Information regarding the application process for these funding opportunities can be obtained from the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs at the School of Nursing by calling (205) 934-5483. There are numerous sources of funding, all of which are competitively awarded. Students can apply for funding after they have been admitted to the School of Nursing.

**Will I be able to take a national certification examination when I complete the program of study?** Once you successfully complete all the required coursework in an advanced practice clinical specialty track, you will be eligible to apply to take the appropriate national certification examination.

**How do I become eligible to practice as a nurse practitioner in my state of residence?** Nurse Practitioners are licensed by the state(s) in which they practice and are subject to the rules and regulations of that state’s practice act. You will need to contact your state’s board of nursing to learn their particular requirements.

**How do I apply?** Applications are completed through the UAB School of Nursing application services: [http://www.uab.edu/nursing/home/apply-now](http://www.uab.edu/nursing/home/apply-now)

For additional information, visit our website at: [http://www.uab.edu/nursing/home/](http://www.uab.edu/nursing/home/) or contact:

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