

# Post-MSN to DNP Pathway

## *Distance Accessible*

The DNP is a practice-focused terminal degree to prepare graduates to practice at the highest level in specialty practice or to assume leadership positions in healthcare. Graduates of the DNP focuses on providing 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 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, 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 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.

### DNP Admissions Requirements

- A master's degree in an area of advanced nursing practice (nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, nursing administration, or nurse anesthetist) from a regionally accredited institution, equivalent to that in the UAB School of Nursing. *Students must hold an advanced practice certification or be eligible to sit for advanced certification and pass their specific certification exam prior to completing 12 credit hours of coursework. Until advanced certification is achieved, students will be considered as a conditional admit.*
- A graduate grade point average of at least 3.0 overall (based on a 4.0 scale) or in the last 60 hours of earned credit.
- Applicants should submit an official transcript from every college or university they have ever attended (even if for only one semester). Transcripts may be mailed or emailed electronically by the issuing institution to the UAB School of Nursing. Transcripts may be emailed to [sontranscripts@uab.edu](mailto:sontranscripts@uab.edu) or mailed to UAB School of Nursing; DNP Applications; NB 2M019K, 1720 2nd Avenue South, Birmingham, AL 35294-1210.
- Three favorable completed Evaluation Forms from persons who have knowledge of the applicant's potential for success for graduate nursing studies and advanced-practice nursing.
- Current professional certification as an advanced practice nurse where applicable.
- Evidence of an unencumbered license as a (1) registered nurse, and (2) advanced nursing practice or eligibility in the state in which they plan to practice plus (3) CPR certification; **all documents must be notarized if applicant is not a licensed nurse in Alabama.**
- Personal goal statement that is congruent with the DNP goals (300 words or less)
- Resume or curriculum vitae.
- A personal interview by phone or in person with a School of Nursing faculty member or designee may be requested to verify application data.

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Is the DNP course work online?** This is a distance accessible DNP. 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 on campus for the DNP orientation, and between the first and second year for a two to three day intensive experience. Students may be required to come to campus to work with their advisor on their Scholarly 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 is Alabama and in states with an established agreement.

**Can I apply as a Clinical Nurse Leader?** An applicant with a master's of science degree as a Clinical Nurse Leader can complete 10 semester credit hours of bridge course work designed to reinforce quality, safety, financial, and systems focused content along with the DNP course work.

**Do I have to come to campus for Orientation?** Attendance at an on campus orientation is required for the DNP. Our orientation process consists of a three-day introduction to the DNP education, writing workshop, scholarly project process, course requirements, and the UAB SON's expectations of DNP student performance. During orientation, students will spend a significant amount of time familiarizing themselves with numerous computer programs that support course work, including software to facilitate statistical analysis, citations, scholarly writing, presentations, and data management. Time is also provided for students to meet with program advisors and to interview with faculty that may be well suited to Chair their Projects.

**Can I be a part-time student?** Yes, but you should plan to take six credits a term (approximately 2 courses per semester) as a part-time student in order to progress and keep your knowledge base current throughout the coursework. Staying current is essential to success in completion of the Project, as this will require 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 Scholarly 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 due to military requirements, please contact the Program Director.

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

**Can I enter the DNP any time during the year?** No, summer (May) and fall (August) terms are the only semesters a student can begin the sequence of coursework.

**Can I enroll in non-degree coursework before I am admitted to the DNP?** No, due to the nature of the DNP, non-degree courses taken prior to entering the DNP are not allowed. An exception to this policy is made for students who require additional coursework to complete the requirements for admission. (Example: students who need more coursework to become eligible for certification as an advanced practice nurse).

**Can I take courses elsewhere?** Prior approval is required, and you should have the courses evaluated by the DNP Program Coordinator at UAB before enrollment in classes at other institutions to ensure the courses will be considered equivalent coursework for the DNP requirements. To do so, you must obtain the course syllabus and catalog description and send both to the DNP Program Coordinator for consideration. This can be a lengthy process therefore you are encouraged to seek approval from the DNP Program Coordinator at least 8 weeks prior to enrollment at another institution.

**Can I work full-time and complete the DNP?** The School of Nursing does not have a policy that prohibits students from full-time work, unless the student is a UAB employee. However, during the interview process, the faculty will determine what plans you have made to balance the various aspects of your life in order to be successful in the completion of the DNP. We have found that some individuals working full-time with major family responsibilities are unable to complete the coursework and withdraw early in the DNP. However, there are examples of dedicated, motivated individuals who work full time and attend school who are successful, although it can be quite stressful. 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 will probably be the best option for most employed students.

**How much time should I be prepared to spend on the scholarly project?** For most students, the Post-Master's DNP curriculum will be a minimum of 40 credits, which includes the development of a practice or leadership focused project. This DNP Project is designed to synthesize scholarship in advanced nursing practice aligned with a practice immersion experience. All courses are offered in a distance accessible format and students develop the DNP Project under the direction of faculty and onsite mentors.

**Does this DNP prepare graduates to teach?** The required DNP course credits prepare you for advanced nursing practice or leadership positions. The SON recognizes that some students in the DNP may have had a teaching career and others may not desire to prepare for the faculty role. Therefore, courses that specifically support the instructor role are not required in the basic DNP program of studies. However, coursework is available to students to prepare for the faculty role should they desire teaching as a career goal. Teaching courses 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 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.

**What is a typical program of study like?**

<u>Coursework</u>		<u>Program of Study</u>			
		Summer	Fall	Fall (CNL Bridge)	
NUR 700	Clinical Data Management and Analysis ..... 3	<u>Summer Year I</u>	<u>Fall Year I</u>	<u>Fall Year I</u>	
NUR 701	Writing for Publication ..... 3	NUR 737	NUR 737	NUR 737	
NUR 729	Evidence Based Practice Design and Translation ... 3	NUR 740	NUR 740	NUR 740	
NUR 731	Philosophical, Theoretical, and Conceptual Foundations for Advanced Practice Nursing ..... 3	<u>Fall Year I</u>	<u>Spring Year I</u>	<u>Spring Year I</u>	
		NUR 731	NUR 731	NUR 731	
		NUR 745	NUR 745	NUR 745	
NUR 743	Evidence-Based Practice Strategies ..... 3	<u>Spring Year I</u>	<u>Summer Year I</u>	NHS A 616	
NUR 735	Population Health in Advanced Practice Nursing ..... 3	NUR 733	NUR 733	NHS A 617L	
NUR 733	Informatics for Advanced Practice Nursing ..... 3	NUR 735	NUR 735	<u>Summer Year I</u>	
NUR 737	Interdisciplinary Leadership and Role Development for Practice Excellence ..... 3	<u>Summer Year II</u>	<u>Fall Year II</u>	NUR 733	
		NUR 700	NUR 700	NUR 735	
		NUR 729	NUR 729	NHS A 631	
NUR 740	Health Policy & Politics: Implications in Health Care 3	<u>Fall Year II</u>	<u>Spring Year II</u>	<u>Fall Year II</u>	
NUR 742	Program Evaluation Methods ..... 3	NUR 742	NUR 742	NUR 700	
NUR 745	Foundation of Scholarly Writing ..... 3	NUR 743	NUR 743	NUR 729	
NUR 738	Scholarly Seminar ..... 3	<u>Spring Year II</u>	<u>Summer Year II</u>	<u>Spring Year II</u>	
NUR 739	Scholarly Project ..... 2	NUR 738	NUR 738	NUR 742	
NUR 739	Scholarly Project ..... 2	NUR 739	NUR 739	NUR 743	
NUR 739	Scholarly Project ..... 3	<u>Summer Year III</u>	<u>Fall Year III</u>	<u>Summer Year II</u>	
		NUR 739	NUR 739	NUR 738	
		<u>Fall Year III</u>	<u>Spring Year III</u>	NUR 739	
		NUR 701	NUR 701	<u>Fall Year III</u>	
		NUR 739	NUR 739	NUR 739	
				<u>Spring Year III</u>	
				NUR 701	
				NUR 739	
NHSA 616	Nursing Financial Management .....3			<u>Spring Year III</u>	
NHSA 617L	Nursing Financial Management Practicum .....3			NUR 701	
NHSA 631	Advanced Quality and Patient Safety .....4			NUR 739	
	Total .....43 credits				

\* CNL Bridge students will take an additional 10 credit hours of coursework, resulting in a total of 50 credits.

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

For additional information,  
Visit our website at: <http://www.uab.edu/nursing/home/> or contact:

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