NURSING PRACTICE, DOCTOR OF (D.N.P.) WITH A CONCENTRATION IN NURSING INFORMATICS

The D.N.P. program is strongly positioned to prepare students to improve the quality of health care delivery and patient outcomes. Graduates of the D.N.P. program at VCU will be prepared to improve health care delivery by critically appraising scientific evidence to inform practice, sharing clinical expertise in collaborative and dynamic environments, leading interprofessional teams, providing systems leadership for sustainable best practices in clinical settings and influencing health policy. Building on the university's mission to improve human health, VCU D.N.P. graduates will translate evidence that leads to sustainable practice change for improved patient quality and safety outcomes.

The 60-credit hour B.S. to D.N.P. pathway offers a concentration in nursing informatics. The focus of the program is quality and safety in advanced practice nursing with the use of technology in the development of information systems for health care organizations. The curriculum prepares graduates in health care database design, the use of models and frameworks that support informatics practice and organizational theories, systems thinking, human factors engineering principles and information science theories. The purpose of the nursing informatics concentration is to prepare nurses for leadership and management roles in health care settings. The required courses focus on skills to apply human factors and human-computer interaction theories and frameworks to design, implement and evaluate technology systems that support the work of the health care team, contribute to patient engagement, improve the patient experience and improve patient outcomes. The concentration courses will develop skills to apply human factors and human-computer interaction theories and frameworks to design, implement and evaluate technology systems that meet user needs. Course work culminates in the successful completion of a D.N.P. project focusing on a quality or patient safety issue in the student's specific patient population or area of focus.

Program goals

The goals of the VCU School of Nursing Doctor of Nursing Practice program are to prepare nurses for the highest level of professional nursing practice in advanced practice roles and specialties, and to lead the delivery of quality health care to diverse populations.

Student learning outcomes

The graduate will:

1. Synthesize knowledge and theories from nursing and related sciences to improve health outcomes for individuals, population and systems.

2. Integrate prevention and population health concepts into models of care.

3. Demonstrate leadership to foster interprofessional collaboration that advances health care practices and influences health policies.

4. Integrate evidence and organizational science into practice to enhance outcomes.

5. Enhance patient care and safety using quality processes and improvement science.

6. Incorporate current and emerging health care technologies and informatics into practice.

7. Demonstrate core competencies in their advanced practice concentration.

VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the **Graduate School website** and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students.

Degree candidacy requirements

A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master's or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student's graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student's faculty regarding the student's academic achievements and the student's readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on degree candidacy requirements.

Graduation requirements

As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on graduation requirements.

Other information

VCU School of Nursing student handbooks are located in Canvas.

Visit the School of Nursing website for program-specific application instructions (http://nursing.vcu.edu/admission/application-instructions/dnp/).

Admission requirements

Degree:	Semester(s) of entry:	Deadline dates:	Test requirements:
D.N.P.	Fall	Rolling admissions	

 Note: No admissions test is required for this program.

To be considered for admission to the School of Nursing, applicants must:

1.   Meet the **general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School**.

2.   Submit all official college transcripts from each college attended, including concurrent college enrollment transcripts.

3.   Be eligible for readmission or be in good standing at the last college or university attended.

4.   Be a baccalaureate (or higher) graduate of an accredited (ACEN, CCNE or CNEA) nursing program.

5.   Have a current unrestricted R.N. license or authorization to practice as an R.N. in the U.S..

6.   Write a personal statement.

7.   Submit a resume/CV.

Provide additional information with the application according to the English language proficiency guidelines for applicants who are international or non-native English speakers without a degree from a U.S. high school, college or university (Additional information can be found on the 'Required materials' tab of the **VCU International Admissions website**.)

Note: Requests for exceptions to the above criteria will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

In accordance with VCU's Graduate School policy, a maximum of 50 percent of the didactic hours required for a graduate degree or any graduate certificate program may be transferred from another institution and, if not applied previously toward another degree, may be applied toward a degree. Prerequisite course work that does not count toward the VCU degree may not be transferred.

Degree requirements

The Doctor of Nursing Practice with a concentration in nursing Informatics is a 60-credit-hour degree program that requires completion of a D.N.P. project but no thesis. The focus of the program is quality and safety in advanced practice nursing with the use of technology in the development of information systems for health care organizations. The curriculum prepares graduates in health care database design, the use of models and frameworks that support informatics practice, and organizational theories, systems thinking, human factors engineering principles and information science theories. The purpose of the nursing informatics concentration is to prepare nurses for leadership and management roles in health care settings. The required courses focus on skills to apply human factors and human-computer interaction

theories and frameworks to design, implement, and evaluate technology systems that support the work of the health care team, contribute to patient engagement, improve the patient experience and improve patient outcomes. The concentration courses will develop skills to apply human factors and human-computer interaction theories and frameworks to design, implement, and evaluate technology systems that meet user needs. Course work culminates in the successful completion of a D.N.P. project focusing on a quality or patient safety issue in the student's specific patient population or area of focus.

Curriculum requirements

Course	Title	Hours
Core courses		
NURS 733	DNP Knowledge Synthesis and Competency Assessment	1
NURS 744	Foundations in Knowledge and Scholarship for Advanced Nursing Practice	3
NURS 745	Holistic and Ethical Leadership for Advanced Nursing Practice Roles	3
NURS 749	Epidemiology and Population Health	3
NURS 757	Health information Technology and Informatics for Advanced Nursing Practice	3
NURS 758	Health Policy and Health Economics for Nurse Leaders	3
NURS 762	Scientific Foundations for System-Based Care and Interprofessional Partnerships	3
NURS 764	Scientific Foundations for Healthcare Safety and Improvement	3
NURS 793	Planned Change Management for DNP Projects	3
NURS 794	DNP Project I: Project Planning and Implementation	3
NURS 795	DNP Project II: Project Implementation and Evaluation	3
Indirect care core courses		
NURS 694	Integrating Advanced Physical, Physiologic, and Pharmacologic Health Sciences into Advanced Nursing Specialty Practice	3
NURS 715	Advanced Nursing Specialty Practice Competency Assessment I	1
NURS 716	Advanced Nursing Specialty Practice Competency Assessment II	1
NURS 746	Strategic Leadership and Management	3
NURS 748	Advanced Specialty Practice Practicum	3
Concentration courses		
NURS 686	Nursing Informatics Theories, Frameworks, and Models	3
NURS 687	System Design, Implementation, Evaluation, and Sustainability	3
NURS 690	Healthcare Database Systems	3
NURS 739	Human Factors, Human-Computer Interactions, and Consumer Informatics	3
Elective chosen with adviros approval		3

Elective chosen with advisor approval	3
Total Hours	**60**

The minimum number of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 60.

Practice hours/residency requirement

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing requires a minimum of 500 practice hours focused on advanced level nursing practice to support advanced competency development. The 500-practice hour requirement includes direct and/or indirect practice experiences. The 500 practice hours are the minimum number of hours a student will need to complete to demonstrate the advanced-level competencies delineated in the essentials. This practice hour requirement applies to all students in any advanced-level program.

In the nursing informatics D.N.P. program these hours are structured into the curriculum via the three credit hours of advanced specialty practice practicum course and the six credit hours of D.N.P. residency courses. These practicum/residency hours focus on building skills to lead transformative change in health care rather than direct patient care skills. The practicum course focuses on building skills needed to design, implement, and evaluate information technologies in practice settings. Each practicum experience will vary based on individualized objectives established by students in collaboration with course faculty and preceptors. The NI Practicum course is graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

The practice/residency hours are devoted to completion of a D.N.P. project under the mentorship and supervision of course faculty and an organizational sponsor. The practicum/residency experience will vary based on the nature of the D.N.P. project. Each D.N.P. project will have individual project objectives and deliverables. Final evaluation of all residency requirements is the responsibility of the course faculty. Residency courses are graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. The school has identified criteria that will trigger an advisor's decision to travel to the site for direct observation, such as project sponsor concerns regarding student performance or unsatisfactory communications with student or a project sponsor that cannot be resolved by telephone or video conference. The completed assignments from each residency course culminates in a professional portfolio that demonstrates achievement of all residency course objectives by the completion of the six required residency credits.

Project requirements

The D.N.P. program culminates in the successful completion of a scholarly work called the D.N.P. project. In collaboration with faculty and their project team, students design, implement and evaluate a quality/safety project that is focused on a system change in a practice setting. The final product is a scholarly manuscript describing the project that is suitable for publication in a professional journal. The project teams consist of a doctorally prepared faculty sponsor, an organizational sponsor with site-specific system expertise and project oversight authority, key organizational stakeholders, and additional content experts as needed. Dissemination of the D.N.P. project findings occur during the final semester as part of the course work.

Students who complete the requirements for this concentration will receive a Doctor of Nursing Practice.

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Program website: nursing.vcu.edu/programs/dnp (http://www.nursing.vcu.edu/programs/dnp/)