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Approved by DNP-CISC: August 2020
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University Policies & College of Nursing Overview

Handbook Introduction
The College of Nursing Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program Handbook provides information to students and faculty to facilitate DNP student advising.

General Information
This publication is for informational purposes and is neither a contract nor an offer to contract. The College of Nursing reserves the right to change any provision or requirement at any time without notice. This material supplements the University of Arizona Graduate Catalog and the Schedule of Classes. Additional information may be found at the following web sites:

- The University of Arizona
- The University of Arizona Catalog
- The Graduate College
- The College of Nursing

The DNP Program Handbook is designed as a resource for DNP students and faculty advisors. Relevant policies and procedures of the University of Arizona, Graduate College and College of Nursing are included in this handbook. Much of the information is online; therefore, the actual web sites are listed for the official information on policies and procedures. Where information is not available online, a brief description is provided. Additional information can be obtained from the Office of Student Support and Community Engagement or from the faculty advisor within the College of Nursing. Students are responsible to know and adhere to all established policies and procedures.

Relationship to Other Documents
The DNP Program Handbook is intended to be used in conjunction with other university documents including, but not limited to, those named and linked above. Students should first consult their Program Handbook, relevant Clinical Guidelines Handbooks and then consult the appropriate Graduate College or university policies when questions arise. Many policies in the DNP Program Handbook are specific to students in the program and within the College of Nursing. All students, faculty and staff are expected to read the handbook and be familiar with college and university policies. The most current copy of the DNP Program Handbook is available on the College of Nursing’s website for public access.

In addition to this handbook, students must review the Policies & Procedures as posted to the College of Nursing’s website. These policies include (but are not limited to):

- Obligation to self-report
- Code of Ethics for Nurses
- Use of Social Media
- Clinical Policies (technical/essential qualifications, immunizations, uniforms, etc.)
- Graduation

The College of Nursing upholds all University Policies related to but not limited to the following:

- Absence and Class Participation
- Threatening Behavior
- Accessibility and Accommodations
- Code of Academic Integrity
- Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment
Systems & Resources for College of Nursing Students

Systems
There are a number of university systems that students in College of Nursing programs will utilize. Students will need to use the following systems (links provided for tutorials):

- UAccess Student
- Desire2Learn (D2L)
- Assessment Systems (Examity, Examsoft, etc.)
- GradPath (all graduate students)

Students completing clinical work as part of their program will be oriented to other systems throughout their programs. All students should review the Student Technology Needs as listed by the college’s Learning & Healthcare Technology Innovations team.

UA Student Email
Upon admission, all students are given an official University of Arizona email address (@email.arizona.edu). Email sent to this address can be checked remotely or forwarded to the student’s phone. This address must be checked daily, as it is the official source of communication between faculty, staff and students. Students are responsible for all program updates and requests sent to this address.

Offices & Departments

Office of Student Support and Community Engagement (OSSCE)
OSSCE works collaboratively to support the educational mission of the College of Nursing. OSSCE is responsible for student services including current student academic advising, recruitment, admissions, progression, academic support services, graduation, student-centered events and College of Nursing scholarships.

Students may contact OSSCE via email (entry@nursing.arizona.edu or advanced@nursing.arizona.edu) or by calling 520-626-3808. When contacting the OSSCE, students should have the Student ID number, the year admitted to current program, and (if applicable) specialty. Students are encouraged to make an appointment in person or by phone ahead of time.

Learning and HealthCare Technology Innovations (LHTI)
Learning and HealthCare Technology provides assistance to enhance the students’ learning experience. The LHTI department is responsible for technology support and the development of enabling technologies for students, faculty and staff. A wide range of supportive services are available students via the LHTI Help Page. LHTI also provides technology recommendations and requirements for students, available on the Help page.

Financial Aid & Scholarship Information
Doctoral students in the College of Nursing are eligible for financial aid and scholarships. The College of Nursing offers scholarships on a yearly basis and requires all interested students to submit an application. An email is sent to all newly admitted and current students during the spring term with relevant information. All students are encouraged to submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Many college and university scholarships rely on information provided by the FAFSA to be awarded. Additionally, students may seek to use loans or grants to cover tuition and fees expenses. The following is a list of university resources for students with financial aid questions:

Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid
http://financialaid.arizona.edu/
Doctoral students in the College of Nursing are assigned alphabetically (last name) to counselors in the Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid. Students with questions or concerns should use the contact information on OSFA’s website to reach out to the appropriate individual for questions related to financial aid.

**Scholarship Universe**

https://scholarshipuniverse.arizona.edu/suha

The University of Arizona maintains a comprehensive database of scholarships available to students in all programs and majors. Students may log in with their NetID to search for opportunities and complete applications. All College of Nursing scholarship applications must be submitted through Scholarship Universe.

**Disability Resource Center**

https://drc.arizona.edu/

For students with disabilities who anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of the program should meet with the appropriate course chair or program coordinator as early as possible to determine if accommodations are necessary. If formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, students will need to complete the accommodations request form online to register with the Disability Resource Center (520-621-3268). To arrange for reasonable accommodations, students are also responsible for immediately notifying the course chair(s) of each course regarding eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Early notification ensures the most effective accommodation and support. Students may also wish to take advantage of the Strategic Alternative Learning Techniques (SALT) Center for additional support services. Students may also contact OSSCE for assistance in navigating these resources, or for connection with the college’s Academic Success Coach.
Academic Program & Policies

DNP Program Overview

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program is designed to:
- Prepare nurses with the highest level of practice expertise
- Equip doctorally-prepared APRNs to serve the needs of their communities in Arizona and beyond
- Enable doctorally-prepared APRNs to be leaders and change-agents in the clinical setting by:
  - Engaging patients, other clinicians, and administrators in scholarly evaluation of current procedures and opportunities for improvement
  - Providing the APRN with the knowledge to navigate organization culture and change processes
  - Integrating evidence-based knowledge into practice to ensure quality patient outcomes

Each DNP student will demonstrate competency in the eight identified DNP essentials through coursework, clinical immersion, and scholarly integration. The College of Nursing’s Competency Statements were developed from American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) and National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF) documents. They are:
- Scientific Foundations
- Organization & Systems Leadership
- Clinical Scholarship & Evidence-Based Practice
- Information Technology
- Health Care Policy
- Interprofessional Collaboration
- Population Health
- Advanced Practice

Line of Communication

The CON is committed to the creation of an environment which promotes the student learning experience. Open and respectful dialogue between students and faculty is critical to the enrichment of the learning experience.

The CON has outlined a line of communication to resolve academic issues that may arise in the classroom and/or at the clinical site to facilitate the open communication between students and faculty. Student issues or concerns need to be addressed promptly and according to the established line of communication outlined below. Dialog with the next person in the line of communication is necessary only after the prior contact does not lead to resolution.

1. Course or Clinical Instructor
2. Course Chair (if applicable)
3. Program Director
4. Program Administrator
5. Dean of the College of Nursing

The Office of Student Support and Community Engagement (OSSCE) is available to assist the student in this process. Contact OSSCE at 520-626-3808. The Graduate College also provides resources for students related to grievances as linked on their website.

Academic Progression

RISE & On-Campus Program Requirements

RISE is the acronym for “Resident Intensive Summer Experience.” RISE is held on the University of Arizona campus in Tucson during years 1 and 2 prior to the beginning of the fall term. During RISE, students are immersed in intensive scholarly, role or clinical laboratory experiences punctuated with time for meeting with advisors and committee members. Students have opportunities to become acquainted with other students, faculty and staff, to learn to use a
variety of instructional technologies and to learn more about their program and the College of Nursing. BSN-DNP students are required to attend RISE two times. MSN-DNP students are required to at least attend the first RISE and then discuss additional attendance with their faculty advisor.

In addition to RISE attendance requirements, DNP students must participate in practice intensives at the College of Nursing in Tucson at other times during the year. Combined with RISE, all on-campus required events include:

- On-campus annually the week prior to the fall semester for RISE I and RISE II
- On-campus laboratory sessions and seminars at the beginning of the student’s first clinical course. This experience is called the Clinical Skills Intensive (CSI). CSI requires students to be on-campus in their first semester clinical course.

Faculty Advisor Role and Assignment
The role of the faculty advisor is to mentor and guide the student throughout the program of study. The advisor will guide the student to determine the plan for completing the degree requirements, facilitate accessing resources of the University and the College of Nursing, and assist the student in understanding relevant policies and procedures. The faculty advisor may or may not be the chairperson of the student’s DNP Project committee. Prior to RISE I, students will be assigned a faculty advisor based on specialty.

Switching Faculty Advisors
Students may change faculty advisors as their professional interests change. In order to change advisors, the student must complete the Change of Advisor Form. The form is available in on the college’s Student Resources page. Approval from the student’s current and new advisor is required. Routing instructions are included on the form.

Grading and Program Progression
The DNP Program course grading policy ensures that students upon graduation from the DNP program are safe, competent advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), and prepared to become licensed healthcare providers. The grading policy aligns with the national DNP program accreditation standards of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs (COA) and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) standards that address patient and public safety.

A high level of performance is expected of students enrolled in the DNP program. To remain enrolled in the DNP degree program, a student must be making satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree and as per the criteria defined below. Students should review the college’s Grading Policy Statement as well.

The College of Nursing enforces the University and Graduate College policies on Graduate Academic Standing, Progress and Probation with the following additions:

1) A student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or better to be considered in good standing & to be awarded the DNP degree.

2) Students achieving less than a 3.0 GPA will be placed on Academic Probation. Per Graduate College policy, a. Graduate students have two (2) consecutive semesters to raise the GPA above 3.0, if the student fails to remediate during those two semesters the College of Nursing will recommend to the Graduate College that the student be disqualified and dismissed from their degree program. Summer semester is included since the DNP is a year-round program.
   i. If a student is placed on probation: The student must meet with their faculty advisor to devise a written action plan for remediation
   ii. The plan will be submitted using the PASS form to the Director of the DNP Program and OSSCE who forwards it to the Graduate College.

3) Graduate students in the College of Nursing are expected to earn grades of A (4.0) or B (3.0). Grades below a B (3.0) are viewed as unsatisfactory academic performance and no course with a grade lower than a B may be included on the student’s official plan of study in GradPath. Students must repeat all courses where a C, D, or E
is earned. A student may attempt the same course no more than twice. If the student does not earn an A, or B the second time, the student shall be recommended to the Graduate College for dismissal from the program.

4) If student earns a C, D, or E in any clinical course, then the student may not progress until they have repeated the course with a grade of A or B. This may result in an extension of time to degree.

5) If the student earns a C, D, or E in a didactic non-clinical course, then the student must repeat the course with an A or B prior to graduation. Students who receive a grade below B in their core DNP courses, must repeat the course with a satisfactory grade prior to completing the DNP project.

6) Grades for 922 courses, involving work that continues for longer than one term, will be awarded using the S (superior), P (pass), or F (failure) on the basis of the work completed during the semester of enrollment. If the course is passed, the units of credit may be applied toward the degree. Grades (S, P, or F) awarded for NURS 922 units do not factor into the GPA. 6 units of NURS 922 with grades of S or P are required to earn the DNP degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinical Courses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Specialties</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 501- Advanced Physiology &amp; Pathophysiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 572- Advanced Pharmacotherapeutics for Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 609a- Health Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FNP &amp; PNP</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 609c- Pediatric Health Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 542- Pediatric Pharmacotherapeutics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FNP Only</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 620a- Introduction to Primary Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 620b- Advanced Primary Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PNP Only</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 642a- Care of the Well Child and Adolescent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 642b - Diagnosis and Management of Acute&amp; Chronic Conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGACNP Only</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 574- Pharmacology in Acute Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 682- Cardiac Rhythm analysis &amp; Interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 684- Adult-Gerontology Traumatic Injury and Emergent Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 615- Adult- Gerontology: diagnosis &amp; Management of Chronic &amp; Acute Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 616- Adult- Gerontology Diagnosis &amp; Management of Chronic &amp; Acute Illness II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PMHNP Only</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 573- Psychopharmacology</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS 542- Pediatric pharmacology</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS 629a – Advanced Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 629bAdvanced PMHNP II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 629c- Advanced PMHNP III: Focus on children and adolescents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FNP, AGACNP and PMHNP</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 683 Advanced Practice Nursing Issues in the Care of Older Adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGACNP, PNP, and FNP</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 680- Women’s Health in Advanced Practice Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGACNP, PNP, FNP, and PMHNP</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 693a- Clinical Residency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nurse Anesthesia</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 501- Human Gross Anatomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 670- Bioscience for Nurse Anesthesia practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 671a- Foundations of Nurse Anesthesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 671b- Foundations of Nurse Anesthesia II</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
A student may be recommended for dismissal from the College of Nursing for unsafe practice and/or unethical conduct in the program without having been previously warned.

Unsatisfactory Grade Notification Procedure

Midterm Notification

Midterm notification is a two-step process:

- OSSCE will send an email at midterm (fall, spring & summer) to all students as a reminder to check their course progression. Students will be directed to check the D2L gradebooks for each course with special attention to any missing grades/assignments. The reminder email will encourage students to connect directly with the course chair for support or clarification of any items. Additionally, students will be provided with a link to the program handbook to review the progression policies.
- OSSCE will send an email at midterm (fall, spring & summer) to all faculty as a reminder to ensure that all completed assignments and grades are posted to the D2L gradebook. The gradebook should allow the student to see their current grade, and what changes (if any) should be made to improve before the end of the term. Faculty are encouraged to complete a Student Progression Report (SPR) for any student achieving less than an 80% at midterm so they may have the opportunity to improve and pass the course. Course chairs may also choose to refer students prior to midterm to OSSCE, the Writing Coach and/or the Academic Success course via an SPR for support.

End of Term Notification

The College of Nursing provides notification each semester to students who have earned grades of “C” in non-clinical course(s) and at or below a “B” grade in NURS-609a or in a clinical course(s). Notification is provided by an email to the student’s University of Arizona account. Students who earn grade “E” in core (non-clinical) and students who earn grade “C, D, or E” in a clinical course(s) will be provided with a recommendation for dismissal notice via email to the student’s University of Arizona account.

Grade Appeal

All graduate students at the university may appeal a grade. According to university policy, the basis for filing a grade appeal in any course is limited to fundamental fairness in treatment of the student by the instructor, as specified by the syllabus supplied to students at the beginning of the course. When considering a grade appeal, a student should meet with an OSSCE team member to review the required steps and timelines. All grade appeals should follow the line of communication provided in this handbook.

Withdrawal Grades

Withdrawal (dropping a course or from the university) processes are controlled by the university. Complete policies are available in the current university catalog. Requests for complete withdrawal from the University are initiated through the Registrar’s Office. Students leaving the University without a statement of formal withdrawal will be awarded a failing grade in each course.

Students should review the current term’s Registration Dates & Deadlines Calendar when considering a withdrawal. Summer courses are often dynamically dated, with non-standard start and end dates – please see the Registrar’s calendars for Dates and Deadlines for Classes with Non-Standard Start Dates to verify the appropriate term deadlines.

Grades of Incomplete

The grade of "I" for "Incomplete" may be awarded only at the end of the semester when all but a minor portion of the
Course work has been satisfactorily completed. DNP students should discuss with the instructor whether or not their circumstances allow them to receive an Incomplete grade. This should be done at least two weeks before the end of the semester. Instructors should work with the student to document what course work must be completed by the student for the “I” grade to be removed and replaced with a grade. Documentation should include:

- Which assignments or examinations should be completed and when
- How this work will be graded
- How the student's course grade will be calculated
- Date all incomplete requirements must be met

The instructor may use the University’s [Report of Incomplete Grade](#) form to document the agreement. Both the instructor and student sign this agreement and forward the agreement to the Office of Student Affairs.

DNP students have a maximum of one calendar year to remove an Incomplete, however the time frame to complete any unfinished work is at the discretion of the faculty. Most incompletes should be resolved before the end of the next semester in order for the student to satisfactorily progress. An Incomplete not removed within one year is replaced by a failing grade of "E" and counted as an "E" in determining the student’s grade-point average. If the coursework cannot be completed within one year, the student may petition to extend the Incomplete. This petition must be submitted before the grade converts to an “E”. A Leave of Absence does not extend the one calendar year time frame for Incomplete replacement.

If there is a possibility that the student's cumulative grade-point average will fall below 3.00 through the conversion of Incomplete grades to failing grades, the DNP degree will not be awarded.

**Petitions**

A student, who believes with good academic reason, that they deserve redress or exception to the University of Arizona Graduate College rules, regulations, or policies can formally petition for an exception. A petition form must be submitted to the Graduate College Graduate Student Academic Services Office explaining all relevant facts. The petition form must be accompanied by supporting documents and a letter of support from the student’s Faculty Advisor, Director of Graduate Studies, or Department Head. Petition forms are available via [GradPath](#).

**Leave of Absence**

Students may request a Leave of Absence (LOA) from the College of Nursing and the Graduate College. Requests may be considered for the following types of leaves:

- **Academic Leaves:** Academic LOA (i.e., leaves to take course work at another university, for research, field work, internships, professional development, etc.) are handled on a case-by-case basis by the College of Nursing and the Graduate College.

- **Medical Leaves:** With appropriate documentation from their medical provider, graduate students in degree programs may be granted a Medical Leave of Absence by the Dean of the Graduate College. Under extraordinary circumstances, a LOA may be granted retroactively for up to one year. Students will be readmitted without reapplying to the College of Nursing and the Graduate College. Only when the LOA is approved prior to the beginning of the semester for which the LOA is being sought will students be exempted from fees for that semester. Only academic services or facilities available to the general public can be used during the LOA.

- **Personal Leaves:** Graduate students in degree programs may be granted a LOA for a maximum of one year throughout the course of their degree program by the Dean of the Graduate College. A LOA may be granted retroactively for up to one year. A LOA is granted on a case-by-case basis for compelling reasons including birth or adoption of a child, personal or family reasons, medical reasons, military duty, or financial hardship. Students will be readmitted without reapplying to the College of Nursing and the Graduate College at the expiration of the LOA. Only when the LOA is approved prior to the beginning of the semester for which the LOA is being sought will students be exempted from fees for that semester. Only academic services or facilities available to the general public can be used during the LOA.
LOAs may affect the status of a PhD student’s financial aid. Students are responsible for determining the requirements of their funding agency and/or academic unit prior to applying for a LOA.

Failure to obtain a Leave of Absence or remain in continuous enrollment will result in penalties, as described in the Graduate College’s Continuous Enrollment policy requirements.

The process for requesting a LOA from the College of Nursing is as follows:

- The student should first discuss their intent with their faculty advisor and propose an updated Plan of Study to complete their coursework.
- If the faculty advisor supports the request, the student should submit the request to the Graduate College. The online submission form is in GradPath under Petitions.
- Denial or Approval of the request will be sent to the student’s UA email & OSSCE.

Continuous Enrollment Policy / Minimum Enrollment
All students must complete a Plan of Study as developed with the faculty advisor. If the student wishes to change the Plan of Study in a way that will impact the timeline to complete their coursework, the student must consult with the faculty advisor and identify a new timeline for completion.

DNP students must maintain Continuous Enrollment as defined by the Graduate College’s policy. The policy requires that the student must register for a minimum of 3 graduate units each fall and spring term until the completion of all course requirements, comprehensive examinations (for students admitted prior to summer 2015) and the completion of 6 units of DNP Project. When the above requirements are met, doctoral students not on financial assistance and/or needing to maintain appropriate visa status must register for a minimum of 1 unit each semester until final copies of the DNP project are submitted to the Graduate College.

While DNP students are not required to maintain Full-Time Graduate Student Status, student financial aid may require full-time status. DNP Students receiving funding such as assistantships, fellowships, loans, grants, scholarships or traineeships may be required by their funding source to register for more than 1 unit to meet full-time status requirements, and should check with their program advisor regarding such requirements to ensure that they remain qualified for funding.

DNP students who have completed all coursework, comprehensive exams (students admitted prior to summer 2015) and completed 6 units of NURS 922 may apply for Advanced Status with the university. Advanced Status allows the DNP student to be considered a full-time enrollee at 1 unit. Interested students must review the policy in the catalog and complete the required form.

Students working with faculty and using University resources during the summer term only on DNP Projects must register for a minimum of 1 unit and obtain approval from the faculty who will be advising the student. The student and advisor should discuss the number of units required for registration, relative to the activity. Students must be registered for a minimum of 1 unit if they are defending the DNP Project during a summer session.

Successful completion of the DNP program requires substantial time commitment across the entire year, including summer. Time commitment includes time spent on homework, assigned readings, online discussion participation, clinical rotations, and in personal study. The College of Nursing uses the University of Arizona’s policies on the Definition of a Unit of Credit when determining assigned credits relative to course content.

Non-Enrollment & Readmission to the College of Nursing DNP Program
Students who have been granted an approved Leave of Absence, and who return within the approved time period, do not have to apply for readmission.
Students who were previously enrolled in the DNP program who have not been officially enrolled for one regular semester or more must re-apply for admission. Readmission requires approval by the DNP Committee and the DNP Program Director or DNP Program Administrator. Only students considered in good academic standing according to university policy will be reviewed for readmission. The student must also reapply for admission to the Graduate College.

Students who do not enroll before the 5th week of courses for each fall and spring term may be withdrawn from the University’s systems because of non-enrollment. OSSCE will attempt to contact any student not on an approved Leave of Absence who does not enroll for the next term via email during the first 5 weeks of the term via email.

Students who do not respond to email contact will be sent a formal letter to their address of record in UAccess. If no response is received, the student may be dismissed from the program.

DNP Program Requirements

Plan of Study

All DNP students need to complete and submit a doctoral Plan of Study to the Graduate College by the end of the second semester of coursework. The Plan of Study includes any applicable transfer work from other institutions, intended University of Arizona Coursework and expected graduation term. The full summary of the Plan of Study is available from the Graduate College.

The Plan of Study is completed using GradPath, and requires the approval of the student’s specialty coordinator and the Division Chair before being routed to the Graduate College.

The Program Guide is a resource for students located on the college’s website – prior versions are available in the Student Resources area. Referencing the Program Guide should ensure approval by the Graduate College.

Time to Degree

No course on the Plan of Study may be more than 10 years prior to the student’s expected graduation term. All degree requirements must be completed within 5 years of the most recent course on the Plan of Study.

Switching or Adding Additional Specialties

DNP students may decide, after consultation with the appropriate specialty coordinators and the faculty advisor, to switch clinical specialties after admission. All specialty changes should occur during the second semester of study to provide maximum flexibility for students to find clinical placements in the new specialty. If the change occurs after the second semester, then clinical courses may be delayed while clinical sites are located. Students who wish to switch or add a specialty must follow the procedure as outlined below:

1) The student must obtain the approval of the faculty advisor, the specialty coordinator from the current specialty and the new specialty that the student wants to enroll.
2) After obtaining confirmation, the student will complete the Petition to Switch or Add Specialty form. (Advanced@nursing.arizona.edu). The student will receive email confirmation when the change has been evaluated by the specialty coordinators & DNP Program Director.

Transfer of Graduate Courses from Other Institutions

DNP students may transfer credits from previous graduate programs for use toward the DNP degree. Students entering the DNP program with previous graduate credits/units may be eligible to transfer up to 9 credits/units. Transferred graduate course credits/units can be used to substitute for CON-required core course(s).

After being admitted to the DNP Program students can submit an Evaluation of Transfer Credit Form via GradPath to the Graduate College who will verify that the course(s) submitted for transfer are eligible, per University & College policy.
DNP students can use the DNP Program Course Transfer & Substitution Form located on the [DNP Forms & Worksheets webpage](#) to request approved transfer credits/units be substituted for CON-required core course(s).

**Transfer Decision Appeals**

There is not an opportunity to appeal transfer or substitution decisions. All decisions are final. If a student is not approved for 9 units of transfer coursework, he/she may submit additional courses for evaluation by following the above procedure.

**DNP Portfolio**

DNP students must maintain and complete a portfolio. The DNP Portfolio link can be found through [UA D2L](#). Completion of the portfolio is required for program graduation. Students should submit a [Help Ticket to LHTI](#) for assistance with accessing/using the Portfolio if needed.

**Transferring Between Doctoral Programs within the College of Nursing**

Students wishing to transfer from one doctoral program to another (PhD to DNP or DNP to PhD) must be in good academic standing in their current doctoral program. Students should first meet with their faculty advisor to discuss the transfer, and then the following documentation must be provided to the appropriate program committee for review:

1) The student provides a letter requesting the change that contains:
   a) Requested option
   b) Rationale for changing options:
   c) What the student plans to do after obtaining their doctoral degree
   d) Anticipated area of research or DNP Project
   e) Question to be answered by research or DNP Project

2) The student’s advisor provides a letter of support.

3) An identified potential mentor in the “receiving” option provides a second letter of support, indicating their willingness to mentor the student.

4) Requests for transfer must be submitted no later than one month prior to the end of the semester.

5) The PhD or DNP committee will review the request at their next scheduled meeting and notify the student and advisor of their decision. The student should then notify the Office of Student Support and Community Engagement of the change and schedule a meeting with their advisory committee to discuss any changes in the Plan of Study.

After committee approval, the student will work with OSSCE to follow the Graduate College process for switching programs.

**Dual Degrees (DNP, PhD) Option**

The College of Nursing offers a unique opportunity for a student to concurrently pursue the DNP & PhD degrees. Students interested in this option must review the [Dual Degrees Policy](#), found on the Student Resources page of the website. Students must also meet with their faculty advisor to discuss their interest in seeking dual degrees.

**University of Arizona BSN Honors Students Direct Admission to Doctoral Programs (PhD and/or DNP)**

BSN students graduating with nursing as an Honors College graduate from the University of Arizona (satisfying all Honors College graduation requirements) are guaranteed admission to the University of Arizona’s College of Nursing doctoral programs (PhD, DNP, or Dual) under the following conditions:

- Earn a BSN with Honors (satisfying all College of Nursing and Honors College graduation requirements)
- Must complete all NURS coursework with a minimum GPA of 3.0
- Must meet all admission requirements of the DNP or PhD program. DNP applicants must also meet all established post-admission enrollment requirements (e.g. AZ Department of Public Safety Fingerprint Clearance, unencumbered RN license, immunizations)
- Must meet all University of Arizona Graduate College admission requirements
• Submit a complete College of Nursing PhD or DNP Application by the published application deadline date for the term of enrollment in the doctoral program within two years following BSN graduation (two-year time frame starts at the date of degree conferral and is measured by the date of application)

DNP Benchmarks

Committees
DNP students will establish a committee to complete the DNP Project. Additional requirements for DNP Committees are outlined in the DNP Project Tool Kit.

Special Members
Special members are either non-University of Arizona professionals or current University of Arizona employees who do not hold an active tenure-track faculty position whose knowledge, skills or experience may complement the other members of the student’s comprehensive exam or dissertation committee. Special members must be educated at a doctoral level and have applicable skills and knowledge to apply to the student’s work. Special members may be faculty at other institutions, employed by other government entities or the private sector. The special member is expected to participate in the final defense of the dissertation.

The process for seeking Special Member approval is as follows:

• Student will obtain a copy of the individual’s current Curriculum Vitae (CV) to review with the chair
• The chair reviews the special member’s CV with the PhD Program Director.
• If the PhD Program Director approves of the special member request, the Program Director will forward the individual’s CV and approval to OSSCE (advanced@nursing.arizona.edu).
• OSSCE will submit the CV and Special Member Request to the Graduate College for final approval.

If approved, the Graduate College will send an email to OSSCE with the decision and notification that the special member will be made available for use on relevant GradPath forms.

DNP Project Committee Appointment
All DNP students must complete the DNP Project Committee Appointment Form. This form reports the student’s planned DNP Project Committee, DNP Project title (subject to change) and the expected graduation term (may be updated as necessary).

At a minimum submission of the Committee Appointment Form is expected at least six months before the Final DNP Project Presentation. The Committee Appointment Form must be submitted in GradPath prior to the Defense of the DNP Project Proposal.

DNP Project
DNP students must complete the DNP Project to graduate from the program. The DNP Project is completed in two phases: Proposal and Final Presentation (Defense). A complete toolkit guide to the DNP Project is available on the DNP Project section of the Student Resources page, and should be referenced frequently.

Human Subjects & IRB Compliance
All students must obtain approval for the proposed study through the University of Arizona Human Subjects Protection Program. There are no exceptions to this policy. The proposed study must be reviewed and approved by the College of Nursing Departmental Review Committee before submission to the University of Arizona Human Subjects Protection Program. Students may not submit for review until the proposal is approved by the student’s faculty committee. Information regarding the Human Subjects process can be found via the Office of Nursing Research’s website. Students may not commence any study-related activities (recruit, enroll, etc.) until approval is received. External approval may be required and must be accomplished in addition to standard university policies.
Completion of DNP Project

After the proposal presentation, the student continues to work on the project. The student must be registered for NURS 922 units during this process. The student should continue working on the DNP Project during the summer and fall term.

The student should use the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.) when completing the proposal. Students are required to use the formatting templates introduced in the DNP Project Proposal Course. Other resources include those provided by the Graduate College.

All DNP Projects will be evaluated at completion using the published rubrics. Any deficiencies in the DNP Project noted in the pre-presentation evaluation must be addressed and reviewed by the chair and student. All deficiencies must be addressed before the post-presentation evaluation is completed.

DNP Project Enrollment Policies

DNP students must enroll for a total of 6 units of DNP Project (NURS 922) over the course of their program. If 6 units have been taken and the DNP Project is not yet completed, students must register for additional units of NURS 922 each semester, as determined by the student and the advisor, until the DNP Project is complete.

Students engaged in the DNP Project should review the Continuous Enrollment Policies of the Graduate College and the University of Arizona. Students receiving funding such as assistantships, fellowships, loans, grants, scholarships or traineeships may be required by their funding source to register for more than 1 unit to meet full-time status requirements, and should check with their funding source regarding such requirements to ensure that they remain qualified for funding.

Final Oral Defense (DNP Project Presentation)

Each student is required to present the DNP Project in an open forum upon completion. The official term of “Final Oral Defense” consists of a presentation of the DNP Project, questions and a closed session for the student and committee. The closed session follows the presentation and allows the committee to discuss the DNP Project with the student, and to identify any required revisions prior to submission. The committee chair (or one other member of the student’s committee), at minimum, must be in attendance if the student is present in the College of Nursing for this milestone. If all members of the committee are remote, the chair is responsible for identifying another member of the faculty who will attend the presentation in person and host the traditional post-presentation toast for the student in the College of Nursing courtyard. More information is available in the DNP Project Tool Kit.

Steps to Final Defense Completion

The student should coordinate a time and date for the presentation with their committee as all members must be present at the final DNP Project defense. Students must adhere to the “Intent to Defend” deadlines provided by the Office of Student Support and Community Engagement each term. Additionally, students may not defend after the date established by OSSCE. This date is set by OSSCE to ensure that students are also able to adhere to the Graduate College’s deadline for final submission.

There are two important resources for students as they schedule this milestone: the Doctoral Final Defense Checklist & the DNP Project Tool Kit. The checklist is a 1-page printable resource.

All students have revisions to make after the final presentation. Students should allow a few weeks between presentation and final submission deadlines when scheduling a date to allow for revisions and formatting.

Post-Presentation Celebration

Students who present in-person at the College of Nursing are celebrated with a sparkling water toast after successfully passing this milestone. OSSCE provides sparkling water for the student, committee, and any special guests the student has invited (friends, family, etc.). Weather permitting, OSSCE coordinates taking pictures of the student & committee in
the college courtyard. The student also has the opportunity to ring the college’s memorial bell.

**College of Nursing & Graduate College Submission Requirements**

Upon submission of the DNP Project Committee Form, the student will receive the Checklist for [Finishing Your Doctoral Requirements](#) from the Graduate College via email. All steps in the checklist must be completed by the posted deadlines in order for the Graduate College to confer the degree. Students should contact OSSCE or the Graduate College for questions about this process. A comprehensive list of [degree requirements](#) from the Graduate College is also available.

All students should download the [Doctoral Final Defense Checklist](#) from the college’s website to ensure timely compliance with all graduation requirements. Questions may be sent to any of the contacts listed on this checklist.