WCU

WEST CHESTER
UNIVERSITY

Department of Nursing

Doctor of Nursing Practice Student Handbook

Academic Year 2025/2026

Welcome to West Chester University and the Department of Nursing graduate programs. We believe your time here will be both challenging and rewarding.

This handbook provides essential supplementary information to the current West Chester University Graduate catalog and other university publications. It contains valuable insights to support your success in the program. We strongly advise you to retain and refer to this handbook throughout your course of study.

Please keep in mind that the contents of this handbook are subject to change as university or department policies evolve. Your advisor is available to provide guidance, but it remains your responsibility to fulfill all requirements, comply with existing policies, and meet all deadlines. Periodically reviewing the Department and University website and seeking advice from your advisor can help prevent any unexpected delays in your graduation date or issues with your practical experiences.

We are eagerly anticipating a fruitful collaboration with you and hope you will make the most of the offerings provided by our Department and the University.

The Graduate Faculty

Table of Contents

Faculty Roster

All faculty, staff and Nursing Lab Coordinator of the Nursing Department are located in SECC Building, 155 University Ave., West Chester, PA 19383

Faculty	Room	Telephone
Nancy Barker, Ed.D, MSN, RN, CHSE Chair	326	(610) 430-6979
Daniel Bileth, DNP, RN-BC, CPN	322	(610) 436-3489
Beth Brady, MSN, RN, CNE	306	610) 436-3474
Michelle Dasilva, Ed.D., RN, FNP-BC	319	(610) 436-2258
Christina Hayes, DNP, RNC-OB, RN-BC	331	(610) 436-3488
Jean Herb, DNP, RN	310	(610) 436-2839
Michelle Kensey, DNP, RN, CNS, CNE	308	(610) 436-0548
Julie Kurkowski, PhD, MSN, RN	149	(610) 436-3471
Julie McCulloh Nair, PhD, RN, APHN-BC, CCRE	321	610) 436-2331
Carolyn Meehan, PhD, CRNP M.S. In Nursing (with Accelerated B.S.N.) Program Director	313	(610) 436-3204
Megan Mraz, PhD, MSN, RN Assistant Chair, School Nurse Certificate Program Director	317	(610) 430-4408
Jackie Owens, DNP, CRNP, FNP-BC Graduate Program Director	333	610) 436-2314
Eunice Park-Clinton, DNP, MSN, MBE, AGPCNP-BC	320	(610)436-2693
Norine (Nina) Pulliam, PhD, MSN, PHCNS-BC, RN	311	(610) 436-6918
Carol Romano, DNP, RN	314	(610) 436-6927
Cheryl Schlamb, DNP, CRNP	312	(610) 738-0544
Lauren Stoltzfus, DNP, RN, CNE	309	(610) 436-2692
John Taylor, DNP, RN-BC, CPN, CNE Pre-Licensure Program Director	323	(610) 436-6964
Kasey Trill, Ed.D., RN, CMSRN	335	(610) 436-3490
Christina Von Colln-Appling, PhD, MSN, RN	318	(610) 436-3473
Adrienne Wharry, DNP, RN, CCRN	316	(610) 436-2323
Danielle Yocom, DNP, RN, FNP-BC RN-BSN Program Director	315	(610) 738-0549
Staff	**Room**	**Telephone**
Janine News, MSN, RN, GEOR-BC Staff Lab Coordinator	148	TBD
Cindy Pistritto Administrative Assistant	324	(610) 430-4181
Stacey Pedicone Department Secretary	327	(610) 436-2219

Mission Statement & Philosophy

The mission of the West Chester University Department of Nursing is to provide the highest quality of undergraduate and graduate nursing education to students who come from diverse populations. All graduates are prepared to provide evidence-based quality nursing care and to become nursing leaders within the nursing profession. The baccalaureate program provides the art and scientific foundations of entry into nursing practice. The graduate programs provide preparation for advanced nursing practice and education roles, thereby giving students the ability to synthesize knowledge, strengthen communication, and empowerment to promote health care. The Doctor of Nursing Practice program further prepares advanced practice nurses at the highest level to fully evaluate and contribute to increasingly complex healthcare systems. These contributions are based on contemporary nursing science, organizational, political, cultural, and economic principles.

Graduates of these nursing programs will be professionals capable of assuming leadership in present and emerging healthcare roles, citizens, who contribute to society, and who are committed to life-long learning and personal development.

The Department of Nursing affirms the WCU Vision, Mission, and Values Statements and the College of Health Sciences Mission Statement. It shares the University's commitment to teaching, research, and service to individuals, families, communities, and populations. The following statement reflects the Department's philosophical beliefs.

The Department of Nursing recognizes that individuals, families, communities and populations are entitled to optimum health and quality health care. Nurses play an integral role in health promotion, disease prevention and enhancing the quality of life throughout the lifespan.

According to the ANA, "nursing is the protection, promotion and optimization of health and abilities, prevention of illness and injury, alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, communities and populations." Advanced practice nursing roles include expert clinician, educator, researcher, consultant, and leader. The nursing programs at West Chester University recognize the responsibility to provide innovative educational programs that reflect the growing needs and current trends of diverse populations.

The faculty of the Department of Nursing provides a caring and supportive environment while respecting the diversity of the student body and communities that it serves. The University community cultivates and supports faculty/student collaboration and mentoring. The students are treated as individuals with unique qualities and learning needs. Through professional actions, the faculty reflects the Department's philosophy of excellence in nursing practice, creation of evidence-based research, establishing strong interdisciplinary associations and fostering supportive relationships with colleagues, students, and the community.

The 2008 AACN *Essentials* document (*The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education),* the 2011 Essentials document (The Essentials of *Master's Education),* and the 2006 AACN *Essentials* document (*The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice*) provided a foundation for the curriculum content of all programs. Based on this foundation, and with the structure provided in the updated 2021 *Essentials for Education, the faculty*-designed programs facilitate the students' abilities to creatively respond to a continuously changing health system. Innovative educational experiences are cooperatively planned to meet the needs of both the students and clients empowering them in the nursing-client partnership. The interpretation, development and implementation of ethical evidence-based research are stressed throughout the educational process.

Ethical decision making, accountability, critical thinking, and effective communication skills are emphasized. This is achieved by the application of nursing theory and empirical evidence to professional practice. All programs promote lifelong learning and leadership and prepare the student for advanced professional degrees or post-doctoral studies.

DNP Program Goals

The **DOCTOR of NURSING PRACTICE (DNP)** is a practice-oriented program of study that provides the terminal academic preparation for advanced nursing practice. Graduates of this program will be qualified to assume leadership roles in a variety of settings: management of quality initiatives, executives in healthcare organizations, directors of clinical programs, and faculty positions responsible for clinical program delivery and clinical teaching. The program is offered in a distance-education format, except for the first one-credit course which has an one day on-campus residency experience.

At the end of the DNP program, the graduate will be able to:

1. utilize collaborative leadership skills on inter- and intra-professional teams to foster effective communication, enrich patient outcomes, and foster change in healthcare delivery systems;

2. integrate evidence-based strategies to ensure safety and quality health care for patients, populations, and communities;

3. evaluate information systems, considering ethical and regulatory issues to improve patient care and healthcare systems;

4. assess policies, trends, and forces influencing healthcare policy to design, implement, and evaluate the effect on future patient outcomes;

5. analyze the scope of healthcare economics and key information sources as they affect health care for patients and populations; and

6. conduct a comprehensive systematic assessment of health and illness parameters incorporating diverse and culturally sensitive approaches.

Admissions

<div align="center">**Admission Requirements**</div>

Admission Policy

Applicants should submit the following materials to the Graduate School:

- Applicants must have an earned master's degree in nursing in an advanced nursing specialty from a nationally accredited program. The definition of advanced practice nursing is a direct care specialization (e.g., nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, nurse anesthetist, nurse midwife) or indirect care specialization (e.g., nursing administration, nursing informatics).
- Advanced Practice Nurses must be certified by a nationally recognized certifying agency (e.g., ANCC or AANP).
- Transcripts representing all previously completed coursework.
- A GPA of at least 3.0 (on a 4-point scale) in a master's program is required and course work, including *a graduate-level research course and an undergraduate or graduate-level statistics course*.
- Two reference letters that address the applicant's academic ability and professional competence.
- Applicants with complete admission packets will complete a telephone or in-person interview with the Program Coordinator for admission to the program at the discretion of the Graduate Coordinator.

Please refer to the Graduate School page for more information on our program and how to apply.

Practice Hour Policy
The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program requires 500 hours of documented clinical practice before admission. Students admitted to the program lacking the mandatory 500 practice hours must take NSG 698 during their first year in the program. DNP students are also required to complete an additional 500 hours of clinical practice during the DNP program.

Tuition and Additional Costs
The tuition/fees are the same as those of other master's degree programs at WCU. A cost calculator is provided at this link to determine your graduate tuition and fees for either in-state or out-of-state tuition.
https://www.wcupa.edu/_information/AFA/Fiscal/Bursar/forms/costCalculator/

Financial Aid, Scholarships, and Graduate Assistantships
The Graduate School website (https://www.wcupa.edu/_admissions/SCH_DGR/financialSupportAwards.aspx) has financial aid, scholarships, and graduate assistantships information.

Scholarships
Numerous scholarships are available and will be announced annually.

Curriculum

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Curriculum

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DNP Plan of Study

Students may begin the DNP program in any fall semester. The structure of the program is a cohort model for most students. Post-MSN-DNP students may complete the program in approximately three years or more, but no longer than six years.

DNP 3-year Course Plan (2023, 2024, 2026 cohorts)

Course Year One Fall	Title	Credits
NSG 701	Transition to Doctoral Study	1
NSG 702	Leadership for Advanced Nursing Practice	3
NSG 703	Healthcare Policy and Advocacy	3
Credits		**7**
Spring		
NSG 706	Nursing Ethics in Clinical Practice & Leadership	3
NSG 709	Nursing Informatics	3
Credits		**6**
Year Two Fall		
NSG 707	Healthcare Economics for the Advanced Practitioner	3
NSG 704	Analytic Methods of Evidence Based Practice in Healthcare I	3
Credits		**6**
Spring		
NSG 705	Analytic Methods of Evidence Based Practice II	3
NSG 708	Program Evaluation	3
Credits		**6**
Year Three Fall		
NSG 810	Application of Evidence-Based Practice	4
Credits		**4**
Spring		
NSG 811	DNP Project Seminar I	3
NSG 812	DNP Project Seminar II	3
Credits		**6**
Total Credits		**35**

DNP 3-Year Course Plan 2025 Cohort

Course	Title	Credits
Year One Fall		
NSG 701	Transition to Doctoral Study	1
NSG 704	Analytic Methods of Evidence Based Practice in Healthcare I	3
NSG 707	Healthcare Economics for the Advanced Practitioner	3
Credits		**7**
Spring		
NSG 705	Analytic Methods of Evidence Based Practice II Nursing	3
NSG 708	Program Evaluation	3
Credits		**6**
Year Two Fall		
NSG 702	Leadership for Advanced Nursing Practice	3
NSG 703	Healthcare Policy and Advocacy	3
Credits		**6**
Spring		
NSG 706	Ethics in Clinical Practice & Leadership	3
NSG 709	Nursing Informatics	3
Credits		**6**
Year Three Fall		
NSG 810	Application of Evidence-Based Practice	4
Credits		**4**
Spring		
NSG 811	DNP Project Seminar I	3
NSG 812	DNP Project Seminar II	3
Credits		**6**
Total Credits		**35**

DNP 5-Year Course Plan (2023,2024, 2026 cohorts)

Course Year One Fall	Title	Credits
NSG 701	Transition to Doctoral Study	1
NSG 702	Leadership for Advanced Nursing Practice	3
Credits		**4**
Spring		
NSG 709	Nursing Informatics	3
Credits		**3**
Year Two Fall		
NSG 703	Healthcare Policy and Advocacy	3
Credits		**3**
Spring		
NSG 706	Nursing Ethics in Clinical Practice & Leadership	3
Credits		**3**
Year Three Fall		
NSG 704	Analytic Methods of Evidence Based Practice in Healthcare I	3
Credits		**3**
Spring		
NSG 705	Analytic Methods of Evidence Based Practice II	3
Credits		**3**
Year Four Fall		
NSG 707	Healthcare Economics for the Advanced Practitioner	3
Credits		**3**
Spring		
NSG 708	Program Evaluation	3
Credits		**3**
Year Five Fall		
NSG 810	Application of Evidence-Based Practice	4
Credits		**4**
Spring		
NSG 811	DNP Project Seminar I	3
NSG 812	DNP Project Seminar II	3
Credits		**6**
Total Credits		**35**

DNP 5-Year Course Plan (2025 Cohort)

Course	Title	Credits
Year One Fall		
NSG 701	Transition to Doctoral Study	1
NSG 704	Analytic Methods of Evidence Based Practice in Healthcare I	3
Credits		**4**
Spring		
NSG 705	Analytic Methods of Evidence Based Practice II	3
Credits		**3**
Year Two Fall		
NSG 702	Leadership for Advanced Nursing Practice	3
Credits		**3**
Spring		
NSG 706	Nursing Ethics in Clinical Practice & Leadership	3
Credits		**3**
Year Three Fall		
NSG 707	Healthcare Economics for the Advanced Practitioner	3
Credits		**3**
Spring		
NSG 708	Program Evaluation	3
Credits		**3**
Year Four Fall		
NSG 703	Healthcare Policy and Advocacy	3
Credits		**3**
Spring		
NSG 709	Nursing Informatics	3
Credits		**3**
Year Five Fall		
NSG 810	Application of Evidence-Based Practice	4
Credits		**4**
Spring		
NSG 811	DNP Project Seminar I	3
NSG 812	DNP Project Seminar II	3
Credits		**6**
Total Credits		**35**

DNP Course Descriptions

NSG 698 DNP Practicum Transition Course (3 credits)
This course is designed for pre-DNP students who did not complete 500 practice hours in their master's degree and need to complete practice hours prior to their DNP program. The student will complete 250 practice hours under the supervision of a preceptor during this 3-credit course. This is a 250 clinical hour practicum course.

NSG 701 Transition to Doctoral Study (1 credit)
This course is designed for those either in clinical practice or in areas that support those in practice environments including administration, informatics, organizational leadership/management, and policy. This course exposes the student to the leadership roles expected of DNP practitioners. The importance of evidence-based practice, clinical inquiry, scholarship, and ethics within nursing and related disciplines will be explored. The importance of interprofessional collaboration to promote quality improvement and safe, patient outcomes will be investigated. This initial course provides an overview of the DNP program and the university resources available to students. An introductory dialogue about the DNP Quality Improvement Project will be presented.

NSG 702 Leadership for Advanced Nursing Practice (3 credits)
Students examine the role of the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) nurse as it related to leadership. Theoretical leadership concepts and models are reviewed in relation to personal and professional values. Emphasis is on working with multiple disciplines and on leading multiple and diverse constituencies. Topics include innovation, communication, conflict resolution, resource management, change leadership, strategic planning and healthcare transformation.

NSG 703 Healthcare Policy and Advocacy (3 credits)
Students explore the roles and accountability of healthcare providers in responding to the health and social needs of the public and shaping health policy. The course introduces students to the concepts and tools of health policy development and the skills necessary to be an effective health policy analyst and advocate.

NSG 704 Analytical Methods for Evidence-Based Practice in Healthcare I (3 credits)
This course will help the learner to examine a defined clinical practice question, apply foundational tools for searching and appraising related evidence, and subsequently design an Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Implementation Project.

NSG 705 Analytical Methods of Evidence-Based Practice in Healthcare II (3) Credits
This course will help the learner synthesize the literature and evaluate and analyze data. Emphasis will be placed on applying relevant findings to practice, improving quality in practice and subsequently designing and Evidence-Based Practice Implementation Project.
Prerequisite: Successful completion of NSG 704.

NSG 706 Nursing Ethics in Clinical Practice and Leadership (3 credits)
Students examine ethical principles and legal precedents affecting clinical practice and healthcare policy. Strategies to assist in the resolution of current ethical issues within a student's particular practice or research area are developed through the application of select theories and concepts. Ethical issues are addressed through a case-based approach.

NSG 707 Healthcare Economics for the Advanced Practitioner (3 credits)
Students describe the scope of healthcare economics and key information sources as they affect the advanced practitioner. Highlights of the characteristics of healthcare financing and the quality of health economics financing are explored.

NSG 708 Program Evaluation (3 credits)
Students review evaluation methods best suited for professionals in practice and leadership roles. Standards of evaluation, planning designs, and approaches are examined. Students examine methodologies for classifying interventions and outcomes and for the evaluation the quality of healthcare delivered to individual clients and aggregate populations. Issues related to the implementation of outcomes and quality management programs are explored.

NSG 709 Nursing Informatics (3 credits)
This course will focus on information systems technology, its application in healthcare settings, and the value of technology and nursing informatics. Current and emerging technologies are introduced, as well as the role of the DNP/ Nurse Scientist in healthcare information systems, patient care technology, usage of data for quality improvement, ethical, legal, and policy issues, the value of health information, and leading the advancement of informatics practice and research.

NSG 810 (4 credits)
This course will provide the learner with the opportunity to conceptualize the concepts of scholarship, leadership and advocacy into their advanced nursing practice. The learner will identify the focus of their DNP project. This project should be appropriate with the domain of scholarship of the learner. This course will culminate with recognition of a need and problem statement, a needs assessment and development of goals and objectives.

NSG 811 (3 credits)
Students in this course synthesize and integrate newly acquired knowledge and skills and begin the implementation of their DNP project. Prior to data collection or intervention DNP students complete the protection of human subjects/Institutional Review Board (IRB) process. Students continue to prepare and refine the DNP Project paper for submission, measure project outcomes and evaluate the sustainability of their DNP Project. Students must present their work in a scholarly manner to colleagues and faculty.

NSG 812 (3 credits)
This course will provide the learner with guidance and support in project implementation, evaluation and analysis. Students will prepare the DNP Project paper for submission, measure outcomes, ensure sustainability of the project and disseminate results. Students must present their work in a scholarly manner to colleagues and faculty. The completed DNP Project, presentation and paper are required for completion of this course and graduation.

DNP Practice Hours
Practicum hours are directly related to the student's unique area of inquiry and support the DNP Project and the student's identified clinical practice goals and course objectives. The practicum hours are mutually agreed upon among the student, course faculty, and cooperating agencies. Throughout the course sequence students, students will complete practice hours that encompass the *AACN 2021 Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education and competencies*. Students will maintain the hours within the eLog system and approval will be completed by faculty at the beginning of NSG 810 and at end of NSG 812.
Students must complete 500 practice during the DNP program.

DNP Practice Hour Policy

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program requires 500 hours of documented clinical practice before admission. Students admitted to the program lacking the mandatory 500 practice hours must take NSG 698 during their first year in the program. DNP students are also required to complete an additional 500 hours of clinical practice during the DNP program.

The DNP practice hours may include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Practice experiences
- ❖ Conference attendance (pre-approved)
- ❖ Site visits
- ❖ Consultation with a national expert
- ❖ Planning meetings with the organization where the project will be implemented
- ❖ Leading the change team
- ❖ Creating/leading support groups
- ❖ Presentations

eLogs

Students orient to the use of eLogs, which is a cloud base tracking system. This system allows students to track practice hours that link back to the achievement of competencies. Within eLogs, students create a portfolio of hours, descriptions, and evaluations of practicum activities.

The DNP Project Overview

All Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) students are expected to complete a DNP Project. This project is a faculty-guided scholarly process to address a theoretically and clinically relevant problem. The DNP Project Team should consist of the DNP student, a doctoral-prepared WCU faculty member and a project practice mentor who may be from outside the University. In some instances, additional experts/mentors/partners/facilitators can be formal or informal collaborators and may provide intermittent or limited support throughout the project stages as needed (AACN White Paper August 2015).

The DNP Project provides evidence of the student's practice inquiry knowledge and skills and their ability to apply research, clinical practice and leadership principles through problem identification, proposal development, implementation, and evaluation of a problem related to clinical practice, the health care delivery system, or a health care policy issue.

Much of what goes into DNP Project selection reflects the professional and personal interests of the student. In the courses prior to NSG 810, faculty guide students about possible topics and questions related to clinical practice, the health care delivery system, or a health care policy issue. The information obtained in the previous courses provide the DNP students with the opportunity to review and discuss the topics and ideas. As with any major undertaking, success includes a series of realistic and achievable goals and expectations. Students are expected to begin NSG 810 with a well-defined DNP Project, working closely with the WCU DNP Project faculty member.

Types of DNP Projects:

Projects may include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Practice Change Initiative represented by a pilot project, demonstration project, program evaluation, quality improvement project, research utilization project, or an evaluation of a new practice model.

- Development of evidence based innovative products to foster patient engagement in health- related activities.
- Substantive involvement in a large-scale clinical practice project.
- Feasibility studies.

The DNP Project Team

- **Project Faculty Member:** A WCU faculty member will be assigned as the project faculty member. The Member must hold an earned doctorate. The student and faculty member are expected to work closely throughout all stages of the doctoral project. The student and WCU team member will discuss their communication expectations and needs, as well as identification of a potential external project mentor.

- **Project Practice (External) Mentor:** In consultation with your project faculty member, the student will identify a potential project practice mentor. It is preferred that the mentor holds an earned doctorate. This mentor will have clinical expertise or a research collaborative relationship that may either facilitate the student's access to the project site, population, or data, or supplement the clinical expertise of project faculty member. The mentor also typically agrees to serve as the student's practicum mentor. The student must obtain completion of the DNP Project External Mentor form and submit a curriculum vitae (CV) for the project practice mentor during NSG 810. The form is now an electronic form. Students will complete the form, and the mentor will receive an email with a link to provide their information and consent to serve as a faculty mentor. Last, the mentor must send the student a copy of their CV. *Students should not contact, ask, or speak with potential project practice mentors until after they meet with their project faculty member, and receive approval of the potential mentor.*

DNP Project Timeline

NSG 810, 811 and 812 are the DNP project courses where the DNP student is actively preparing, conducting and evaluating their DBP project. Each course has specific benchmarks that are required for progression to the next course and graduation.

NSG 810

Refine the practice inquiry DNP Project question and purpose: Once the student and Project Faculty Member agree on the type of project and a clinical question/purpose, the student will begin to write the Project proposal, consistent with the defined.

Write and revise: The student will review the draft proposal with the Project Faculty Member and revise as recommended, allowing ample time between revisions. Once approved by the Project Faculty Member, the student will distribute the proposal to the external team mentor for review.

IRB submission: The student prepares and submits the proposal to the WCU Institutional Review Board (IRB) and other appropriate IRBs (*as necessary*). The WCU IRB application must be reviewed and approved by the Project Faculty Member prior to submission. Any requests by the IRB to revise the application will be handled by the student; however, the revised document should be approved by the Project Faculty Member prior to resubmission to the IRB. *The student is not permitted to start official work implementing the project until the project receives IRB approval from all required organizational IRBs. IRB submission and approval is a requirement of NSG 810.*

Identify DNP Project team and complete and submit external mentor form.

NSG 811

Implement the Project. During this time, the student will remain in close contact with their Project Team members. This course may also include initial evaluation of the project and analysis of data.

<u>**NSG 812**</u>
Analysis and synthesis of results should occur in the beginning of this session with final writing and revision to follow. Chapters 4 and 5 will be completed during this course including tables, figures, and appendices.

The student will submit the final paper to the Project Faculty Member for review and approval (via D2L), based on a mutually agreed upon schedule. As with the project proposal, ample time should be allocated for revisions with attention to deadlines from [the Graduate School](). Once approved, the student will distribute the proposal to the Project Practice Mentor for review.

The student will complete the signature page and forward this to the Project Faculty Member and then to the Project Practice Mentor for final signatures. The student will return this form to the Graduate Program Coordinator, who will forward this to The Graduate School.

Prepare a final oral report: Once the Project Faculty Member and Practice Mentor approve of the final project report, the student shall arrange a mutually agreed upon date and time for presentation and dissemination. The student will give a summary including significance or implications for future research, clinical practice, health policy or education.

University submission: The final project will be submitted to the Graduate School and the Digital Commons

The DNP Project Manuscript

The length of the DNP Project may vary depending on the project/option selected. Students may find that they need to rework sections several times to achieve clarity, brevity, and completeness. All work is to adhere to the most recent edition of APA style.

Of note, all graduate level nursing students are required to purchase and own the current edition of APA writing manual throughout the duration of their academic careers at WCU

DNP Project Manuscript Outline

Preliminary Pages including title page, acknowledgements, dedication, copyright, abstract, table of contents, etc. as per The Graduate School and Department Guidelines

Chapter 1: Introduction & Background
 Background
 Significance: Impact of the problem on patients, families, community, SDOH
 Clinical Question
 Goals of Project
 Summary of Chapter
Chapter 2: Literature Review
 Introduction
 Terms, Concepts & Definitions
 Gaps in Literature
 Summary of Chapter
Chapter 3: Methodology
 Introduction
 Design
 Change Frameworks/Models: examples, Lewin, Rogers or Donabedian
 Setting
 Population/Sample: Include SDOH
 Instrument
 Data Collection & Analysis
 Protection of Human Subjects/IRB

Resources, Personnel, & Technology: DNP Project Team, interprofessional communication
Timeline: Gannt Chart
Summary of Chapter

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction
Project Management: PDSA cycles, Team Leadership (self-assessment of
and biases, resolving conflict, and interprofessional communication), Stakeholder
Engagement, Self-Care Strategies, Interprofessional Communication, Attention to
Statistical Results
Conclusion

Chapter 5: Discussion

Review of the problem
Impact on Patients, Staff, and Community: include SDOH
Limitations of the Project/Lessons Learned
Interprofessional Communication: Evaluation of team, leadership evaluation
Implications for Nursing Practice, Education, and Research (policy, practice, partnerships, inclusivity)
Plan for Dissemination and Sustainability
Conclusion

WCU Graduate School Requirements
The Graduate School has requirements for the DNP Project.

Deadlines:
December: Complete Intent to Submit electronic form.
April 30 at 5pm EST: Doctoral Projects signed off by committee due for online submission (see Submission section). Doctoral candidates who meet this deadline will be permitted to walk in the May commencement ceremony.

Forms and Template:
Intent to Submit Form: This form must be completed to register your project with The Graduate School. DNP students will complete this form in NSG 810.

Style and Formatting Information: This presentation discusses formatting requirements for the DNP project.
Formatting PowerPoint Presentation

Preliminary Page Template: The template is provided via this link.
Thesis & Doctoral Project Preliminary Pages Template

DNP Project Approval Page: This page is completed after completion of the DNP Project. The student must acquire signatures from their external mentor and faculty mentor. Last, they submit the signed approval page to the Graduate Coordinator who will sign and send the Approval page to the Graduate School for the Graduate Dean's signature. Instructions for completion and a copy of the approval page are provided in this handbook.

DNP Project Submission: All students are required to submit their manuscript to WCU's repository, Digital Commons. The submission guidelines provide instructions on the submission process.

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Doctor of Nursing Practice
College of Health Science

Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Project
Approval Page Instructions and Template

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Students should electronically submit a template of their blank signature page at least <u>5 business days prior to their DNP Presentation date</u> to their faculty chair. The chair will ensure that the document is correct.

1. **THE TOP SECTION** of the approval page should include the following, **single-spaced**:
   • West Chester University
   • College of Health Science & Department of Nursing
2. **THE SECOND SECTION** of the approval page should include the following, **double-spaced**:
   • We hereby approve the doctoral project of
   • Student's name: this should be consistent with the name on all pages in the document.
   • Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Nursing Practice

3. **THE THIRD SECTION**, the committee member approval section, must include:
   • Lines for committee members to write the DNP Presentation **date on the left**
   • Lines for committee members to **sign their names on the right**
   • Below the committee member signature lines each committee member should have:

Faculty Chair name:
   o Name, comma, and his/her degree abbreviations (without any internal spaces, i.e. Ph.D. not Ph. D.)
   o Specific university position within the department. Verify the correct positions by asking the committee members.

Professional External Mentor name:
   o The professional mentor and her/his institution or employer name must be included below his/her specific job title and his/her title and degree abbreviations. Please also note that the professional mentor must appear after the advisor and on the approval page.

Department of Nursing Graduate Coordinator name:
   o The signature of the Department of Nursing's Graduate Coordinator is required with his/her degree abbreviations.

4. **THE FOURTH SECTION** should include (flush left):
   • ACCEPTED
   • A line for the Graduate Dean to sign her/his name on the left and a line for the date on the right.

Other Important Information
There must be sufficient space for each member of the committee and the Graduate Dean to date and sign. Spacing in the top and bottom sections of the approval page should not be altered.

Approval pages can never have scanned, faxed, copied, or electronic signatures on the original, or they will not be accepted. They must contain only original, hand-written signatures and dates.

Approval pages should be clean copies with no stray lines, marks, or running headers on them.

The Graduate Dean (or designee) will request the signed approval page at the time the student submits to Digital Commons if it has not already been sent or delivered to the Graduate School, 102 W. Rosedale Ave., McKelvie Hall or via thesisdoc@wcupa.edu. The Graduate Dean (or designee) will sign and date the approval page after the formatting and compliance review is complete, at which time the project is considered accepted.

West Chester University
College of Health Science

We hereby approve the DNP project of

Insert Student Name

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Nursing Practice

_____   _____
                                    Insert Name, Insert degree abbrev.
                                    Insert University Position
                                    Faculty Advisor

_____   _____
                                    Insert Name, Insert degree abbrev., Insert job title
                                    Insert Employer/Institution
                                    Professional External Mentor

_____   _____
                                    Jacquelyn Owens, DNP, CRNP, FNP-BC
                                    Graduate Coordinator

ACCEPTED

_____   _____
Lisa Calvano, Ph.D.
Dean of the Graduate School

Advising

The Department of Nursing encourages the active participation of the faculty advisor in academic guidance and counseling. The graduate coordinator assigns student advisees to each faculty member who is available for advisement during posted office hours and by appointment. Office hours may change from semester to semester due to variations in class and clinical assignments.

Each semester, students consult with their advisors to plan their course selection for the next semester. Before registration, schedules are available online and in the Graduate Studies Office. Students discuss course selections with the faculty advisor during office hours or at times posted by faculty members specifically for pre-scheduling. Students are encouraged to seek out and confer with their advisors at other times during the school year.

DNP Advising Sheet

Course Number	Title	Credits	Semester/Year taken
NSG 701	Transition to Doctoral Study	1	
NSG 702	Leadership for Advanced Nursing Practice	3	
NSG 703	Healthcare Policy and Advocacy	3	
NSG 704	Analytic Methods of Evidence Based Practice in Healthcare I	3	
NSG 705	Analytic Methods of Evidence Based Practice II	3	
NSG 706	Nursing Ethics in Clinical Practice and Leadership	3	
NSG 707	Healthcare Economics for the Advanced Practitioner	3	
NSG 708	Program Evaluation	3	
NSG 709	Nursing Informatics	3	
NSG 810	Application of Evidence-Based Practice	4	
NSG 811	DNP Project Seminar I	3	
NSG 812	DNP Project Seminar II	3	
Credits		**6**	
Total Credits		**35**	

Graduate School Policies

Please note: *Policies change regularly, so be sure to download the latest Graduate Student Handbook and check the WCU Graduate Handbook. Each course syllabus will be specific to the course requirements.*

Enrollment Policy
Students have a maximum of six years for degree completion. During that time, students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment during the fall and spring semesters. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment may affect degree completion due to course availability. Before a semester of non-enrollment, students are encouraged to contact their graduate coordinator, The Graduate School, Financial Aid Office (if applicable), and Center for International Programs (if applicable) to discuss implications of non-enrollment. A maximum of two semesters of non-enrollment is permitted before a student must enroll or request a leave of absence. Students who fail to re-enroll or request a leave of absence are subject to readmission.

Leave of Absence (LOA)
Students wishing to be excused from the enrollment policy due to extenuating circumstances must file a formal request for a Leave of Absence. Forms are available on the Graduate School webpage.
A Leave of Absence is not guaranteed, and students must request the LOA before the start of the semester in which the leave is requested.

NG Grades at the Graduate Level
NG grades will be given when a student fails to complete course requirements, and the professor grants a time extension by the end of the semester. Students must meet course requirements as stipulated by the professor as and not later than the end of the 14th week of the subsequent semester, or the NG grade will convert to an F at the end of the   semester.

Unless a professor indicates a deadline when assigning an NG, graduate students have until the 14th week after completing course requirements. Please note that this means NG grade changes are due to the Registrar's office at the conclusion of the 15th week.

IP Grades at the Graduate Level
IP grades indicate work in progress and will be used only for protected courses (theses, practicums, internships, recitals, and research reports). Students must complete course requirements as stipulated by the professor as and not later than the end of the 14th week of the second subsequent semester, or the IP grade will convert to an F. An IP grade may not be replaced with an NG.

If an NG or IP transitions to an F, a dismissal will be issued to the student. Please refer to the current policy on F grades.

Graduate academic policies can be found online in the Graduate Catalog.

Academic Integrity
Any situation involving a violation of academic integrity is of major concern to the University. Faculty members preserve and transmit the values of the academic community through example in their own academic pursuits and through the learning environment that they create for their students. They are expected to instill in their students a respect for integrity and an understanding of the importance of honesty within their chosen profession. Faculty must also take measures to discourage student academic dishonesty.

Commitment to maintaining and encouraging high standards of academic integrity is demonstrated in many ways. One way is through the establishment of policies and procedures governing violation of the standards of academic integrity. The following policies, procedures, and definitions are intended to help faculty meet these responsibilities.

First, the instructor has both the right and responsibility to demand academic honesty if a student is to remain in good standing in the course and is to be evaluated fairly by the instructor. A grade certifies both knowledge and a standard of academic integrity. It is essential that the instructor retain the right to set the minimum academic penalty for academic dishonesty in a course, subject to the appeal rights of a student.

Second, cheating is not just a matter between an instructor and student in a specific course. While it is the right and duty of the instructor to set minimum penalties for dishonesty in a particular course, the University is responsible for the minimum standards of academic integrity and achievement on which degrees are based. It is the University that permits students to remain members of the academic community and finally certifies that students have attained sufficient academic credit and exhibited acceptable standards of conduct to entitle them to a degree.

Third, students accused of academic dishonesty have the right to have their case heard in a fair and impartial manner, with all the safeguards available within the bounds of due process.

Graduate Grading Scale

Grade	Quality Points	Percentage Equivalents	Interpretation
A	4.00	93-100	Superior Graduate Attainment
A-	3.67	90-92	
B+	3.33	87-89	Satisfactory Graduate Attainment
B	3.00	83-86	
B-	2.67	80-82	
C+	2.33	77-79	Attainment Below Graduate Expectations
C	2.00	73-76	
C-	1.67	70-72	
F	0	< 70%	Failure

The grade assigned to the student must reflect the percentage equivalent of the plus, minus, and straight grades earned in a course.

West Chester University does not recognize a grade of D for graduate study. Therefore, any grade below a C- in a graduate course is considered a failure and carries zero quality points.

- IP (In Progress) is given to indicate work in progress and will be used only for protected courses (theses, practicums, internships, recitals, and research reports); see "Removing 'In Progress' Designation."

- NG (No Grade) is given when a student fails to complete course requirements by the end of a semester and a time extension is granted by the instructor; see "Removing 'No Grade' Designation."

- W (Withdrawal) is given when a student withdraws from a course between the end of the first and the end of the ninth class week of the semester or the equivalent in summer sessions.

- Y (Administrative Withdrawal) is given under appeal when there are nonacademic mitigating circumstances, and there is documentation that the student never, in fact, attended class.

- M (Military Withdrawal) In accordance with PA House Bill No. 1460: A grade of "M" will be given for military students and spouses who have to withdraw due to military obligation. PA National Guard and other reserve components called to active duty (for reasons other than for training) and their spouses will receive a grade of M when unable to complete classes due to activation for military obligations. Students are required to notify the Registrar's Office to receive a non-punitive M grade and will be required to provide appropriate documentation.

- Z Grade A grade received when a student stops attending a course and fails to officially withdraw from it. The grade is counted the same way that an F would count toward the cumulative average and Academic Standing.

Grade Change Policy
Course grades are awarded by the professor of record and reported to the university registrar. These grades, other than NG or IP, are considered final, but may be changed at the discretion of the faculty member within 9 weeks from the start of the subsequent Fall or Spring semester. Any change submitted after that date requires approval of the Provost or their designee. Appropriate justifications for changing a final course grade include, but are *not limited* to:

1. Computational error

2. Completion of course work missed during the semester

3. Other

Grade Appeals
The Grade Appeals Policy applies only to questions of student evaluation. Since appeals involve questions of judgment, the Grade Appeals Board will not recommend that a grade be revised in the student's favor unless there is clear evidence that the final grade awarded for the class was based on prejudiced or capricious judgment or was inconsistent with official University policy. Please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy for cases where the grade appeal involves a grade given for academic dishonesty. Grades are awarded by the faculty member of record and can only be changed by said faculty member, unless the Provost directs otherwise following the procedure outlined on the Graduate School website and catalog.

Academic Standing
Students must maintain a 3.00 cumulative average to remain in good standing.

Academic Probation/Dismissal
Graduate students whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.00 will be placed on academic probation. Graduate students must raise their GPA to 3.00 by the end of the next semester (or full summer term) in which they register. An additional probationary semester may be granted at the discretion of the graduate dean. If a student fails to meet the conditions of academic probation, they will be dismissed. Graduate students earning a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or lower will be dismissed from their graduate program without a probationary period. Graduate students admitted provisionally who fail to meet the provisions of admission are subject to dismissal.

A graduate student earning an F grade in any course will be dismissed. Departments/programs reserve the right to establish an official policy in which students are not dismissed for an F grade. An F earned at West Chester University may not be made up at another institution of higher learning for the same course.

Students dismissed from the university may apply for re-admission. Courses taken prior to the dismissal may be applied to a subsequent program with departmental consent. The original program reserves the right to refuse to re-admit the student.

Grades earned during summer sessions count the same as grades earned during the academic year. All grades recorded determine the student's academic standing, even if a student changes degree programs. Students dropped from a graduate program due to unsatisfactory work will not be permitted to take courses for credit towards a graduate degree in that department beyond the semester in which they are dropped.

Individual programs may have higher GPA minimums or additional requirements. To be eligible to receive a graduate certificate or degree, graduate students must complete all requisite courses and credits with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00.

Application for Graduation
Each candidate for a graduate degree must apply to graduate via RamPortal. An automatic fee will be added to their account. The following are deadline dates for applying to graduate:

- May graduation - February 1
- August graduation - June 1
- December graduation - October 1

<center>**Campus Resources**</center>

The Graduate School
The Graduate School is in McKelvie Hall on Rosedale Avenue. Students can access information in the new student section. The telephone number is 610-436-2943, and the hours are Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Graduate School Services and Resources webpage offers graduate students links to various campus resources.

Graduate Student Association (GSA)
The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is a student governing body for graduate students that promotes the well-being of graduate students through education, professional and social events at West Chester University and advocates for their needs.

Francis Harvey Green Library   -
The FHG Library offers the graduate student an excellent environment for study and research. Among the many services are references, computerized online literature searching, *and free* interlibrary loan for graduate students, and photoduplication. Use of the library is enhanced by:
WCU's online card catalog - a computerized network of indexes and abstracts on CD-ROM
Internet periodical indexes (Search Bank, etc.)
The library has day, evening, and weekend hours of operation. The circulation desk telephone number is 610-436-2946. **A current ID must be presented to check out material and to access indexes from home online.**

Information Services and Technology
WCU has an abundance of technical support. Visit the resources for new students on the web to learn about all the available options. Also, if you come on campus, along with the library, there is the Academic Computing Center (ACC) that is in Anderson Hall, North Campus on Church Street. Hours of operation for the ACC are found at Service Now.

Student ID Cards
To borrow books from the library, or to enter any buildings on campus, graduate students must have a WCU ID (identification) card. An ID card can be purchased for a fee at the SSI Office, located in the Sykes Union Building.

<div align="center">**Student Activities**</div>

Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing
The Honor Society of the Department of Nursing, West Chester University, was established in the spring of 1985. The purposes of this society are to recognize superior achievement, recognize the development of leadership qualities, fosters high professional standards, encourage creative work, and strengthen the commitment to the ideals and purposes of the profession. The first induction for the society was held on March 24, 1985. On April 17, 1994, the Honor Society was chartered as Xi Delta Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing in a ceremony conducted by Elizabeth Carnegie, DPA, RN, FAAN, member of the Board of Directors of Sigma Theta Tau.

Each fall, Xi Delta Chapter hosts an induction ceremony to honor new members. Membership is open to undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the nursing program who have demonstrated superior scholastic achievement and potential for community leadership and community nurse leaders.
Undergraduate candidates must have achieved a grade average of at least 3.25 and be in the top one-third of their class; graduate students are eligible if they have reached a grade-point average significantly higher than the minimum requirement for graduation. This should be at least a 3.5 on a 4.0 scale. Community leaders must have a minimum of a baccalaureate degree and have demonstrated significant achievement in nursing education, practice, research, or publication.

Mary Kline Lecture Series and Professional Day
The Department of Nursing has established an annual campus-wide lecture series to honor Mary L. Kline, a distinguished member of the nursing faculty who retired in 1983 after fourteen years of dedicated teaching and service to the University. These lectures are held annually in the fall semester.

WCU Nursing & Xi Delta Research & Evidence-Based Practice Conference
This conference is held in the spring for students and alumni to share their current research and evidence-based practice projects.

Student Representation on Department and Campus-Wide Committees
Students are invited to serve as student representatives on department committees, such as the Student Affairs, Faculty Affairs, and Curriculum committees. Campus-wide service is possible by serving as a   student representative on several committees on campus, such as CAPC, Space Allocation, Library, Sykes Union Advisory Committee, etc. Interested students may get information from a faculty member or the Graduate Student Association.

Graduate Research Day
Research Day is the only WCU-wide event that provides a venue for faculty and students to present, discuss, and demonstrate research and scholarship in all disciplines. It also serves as a valuable forum for researchers to practice their presentations for upcoming regional and national conferences.