

College of Health and Human Sciences

School of Nursing

Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)

BS to DNP and MS to DNP

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Introduction

NIU nursing faculty began consideration of a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree when guidelines were first published by the American Association of Colleges in Nursing (AACN) in 2006. A task force was formed to develop a program plan and a proposal was submitted and approved by the Illinois Board of Higher Education in August 2015. The decision to move forward with the DNP was determined a priority by the College of Health and Human Sciences and School of Nursing in Fall 2016. The DNP program is accessible to those who already have a master's degree in nursing and to those who have a bachelor's in nursing. The first DNP cohort started in Fall 2017 with the first DNP Project beginning Fall 2019. The MS and DNP curriculum provide a seamless transition with 24 of the 30 courses for the BS to DNP already developed and running. The last 6 courses are on a roll-out schedule to be completed before student enrollment. Advancing the DNP degree will help ensure that NIU programs remain competitive and continue to attract well-qualified applicants. In addition, the DNP program at NIU will continue to be positioned to serve the region by developing key health care providers and leaders in ensuring safety and quality client healthcare outcomes.

Purpose

The DNP will prepare graduates in advanced nursing roles to lead and foster innovative, evidence-based practice initiatives that impact quality improvements and health outcomes in healthcare systems. Nurses prepared for practice in an advanced nursing role will build on their clinical expertise to assume leadership roles that promote the aforementioned innovations.

Program Goals

1. Prepare experts for specialized advanced nursing practice at the doctoral level.
2. Develop nurse leaders with advanced competencies to appraise and translate evidence into innovative practice.

Student Outcomes (SLOs)

Degree recipients will be able to:

1. Integrate nursing science with ethical, biophysical, psychosocial, analytical, organizational, and informational sciences to create advanced nursing practices and new approaches to care delivery.
2. Formulate healthcare system practice initiatives that improve health outcomes and ensure patient safety through integration of systems analysis, collaboration, and leadership.
3. Create best practices based on appraisal, translation, and evaluation of evidence.
4. Appraise healthcare information systems and patient care technology to improve patient outcomes and safety.

5. Design ethically justified and culturally sensitive healthcare policies for diverse populations through advocacy, engagement, and collaboration.
6. Integrate consultative, collaborative and leadership skills as a member of intra- and inter-professional teams to improve health outcomes.
7. Maximize clinical prevention and population health practices to improve the health outcomes of individuals, aggregates and populations
8. Improve client health outcomes by integrating advanced level knowledge and clinical judgment, systems thinking, and accountability in an advanced nursing role

Assessment Methods

Assessment Method	Explanation					
	Description	Student-Level Achievement ^a	Program-Level Target ^b	When Data Will be Collected	Person Responsible	SLOs
Philosophy of Advanced Nursing Practice Paper	Successful completion of student learning outcomes for the NURS 601 Transition to Graduate Level Nursing Course related to a major assignment, which is writing a philosophy of advanced nursing practice paper.	Students will receive an overall score of 85% or better on the Professional Philosophy Paper.	100% of BS to DNP students enrolled in this course will achieve a score of 85% or higher on their Professional Philosophy Paper	At the end of fall and spring semester	Course Instructor and Director of Nursing Graduate Studies	1
Problem Statement and Innovation Paper	The purpose of the assignment in NURS 701 is to identify a healthcare problem or issue that can be resolved through nursing leadership and then develop an innovative plan for the resolution of the issue or problem identified.	Students will receive an overall score of 85% or better on the Problem Statement and Innovation Paper.	100% of BS to DNP and MS to DNP students enrolled in this course will achieve a score of 85% or higher on their Problem Statement and Innovation Paper.	At the end of fall and spring semester	Course Instructor and Director of Nursing Graduate Studies	2, 3, 5
Retention and graduation	Retention, graduation and time to degree completion rates for the BS to DNP and MS to DNP students.	Students will graduate within 10 years of enrollment to the DNP program.	Target level of performance: 70% of students will graduate within 10 years of enrollment to the DNP program	Annually	Director of Graduate Nursing Studies	3

Assessment Method	Explanation					
	Description	Student-Level Achievement ^a	Program-Level Target ^b	When Data Will be Collected	Person Responsible	SLOs
Employer and Advisory Board Survey	Employers and advisory board members participate in a 10-item survey consisting of 8 likert type response items and two open ended items. Specifically, respondents are asked, to rate graduate student performance on a four point scale from 1=strongly agree to 4= strongly disagree, related to whether the students have achieved the student learning outcomes for the graduate program.	Employers will agree or strongly agree that students have met program objectives.	85% of clinical agencies will strongly agree or agree that NIU graduates have achieved program outcomes.	Annually	Director of Operations and Director of Nursing Graduate Studies	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
Student Survey	Students graduating from the program will be asked how well they think they have met the student learning outcomes.	Students will agree or strongly agree they have achieved the program outcomes.	85% of students will agree or strongly agree that students have achieved program outcomes at time of graduation.	Annually	Director of Nursing Graduate Studies	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
DNP Program Evaluation	The DNP Program Evaluation form will be used at the end of the program to evaluate student's achievement of SLOs. During the oral presentation of the DNP project, students will be required to list an explanation of how they met each of the SLOs.	Students will receive an average score of 2.5 or higher on the DNP Program Evaluation Rubric.	85% of students will receive a score of 2.5 or higher on the DNP Program Evaluation Rubric	At the end of fall and spring semester	DNP Project Team	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
<p><i>Note.</i> ^a Student-level target is the score or performance an individual student must demonstrate to say the student met the student learning outcome. ^b Program-level target is the percent of all students that must demonstrate they meet the student learning outcome.</p>						

Assessment Methods by Outcomes Matrix

Assessment Method	Program Student Learning Outcome							Improve client health outcomes by integrating advanced knowledge and clinical judgement, systems thinking, and accountability in an advanced nursing role
	Integrate nursing science with ethical, biophysical, psychosocial, analytical, organizational, and informational sciences to create advanced nursing practices and new approaches to care delivery.	Formulate healthcare system practice initiatives that improve health outcomes and ensure patient safety through integration of systems analysis, collaboration, and leadership.	Create best practices based on appraisal, translation, and evaluation of evidence.	Appraise healthcare information systems and patient care technology to improve patient outcomes and safety.	Design ethically justified and culturally sensitive healthcare policies for diverse populations through advocacy, engagement, and collaboration.	Integrate consultative, collaborative and leadership skills as a member of intra- and inter-professional teams to improve health outcomes.	Maximize clinical prevention and population health practices to improve the health outcomes of individuals, aggregates and populations	
Philosophy of Advanced Nursing Practice Paper	F, D							
Problem Statement and Innovation Paper		F, D	F, D		F, D			F, D
Retention, graduation and time to degree completion rates			S, I					
Employer and Advisory Board Survey	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I
Student Survey	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I

Assessment Method	Program Student Learning Outcome							Improve client health outcomes by integrating advanced knowledge and clinical judgement, systems thinking, and accountability in an advanced nursing role
	Integrate nursing science with ethical, biophysical, psychosocial, analytical, organizational, and informational sciences to create advanced nursing practices and new approaches to care delivery.	Formulate healthcare system practice initiatives that improve health outcomes and ensure patient safety through integration of systems analysis, collaboration, and leadership.	Create best practices based on appraisal, translation, and evaluation of evidence.	Appraise healthcare information systems and patient care technology to improve patient outcomes and safety.	Design ethically justified and culturally sensitive healthcare policies for diverse populations through advocacy, engagement, and collaboration.	Integrate consultative, collaborative and leadership skills as a member of intra- and inter-professional teams to improve health outcomes.	Maximize clinical prevention and population health practices to improve the health outcomes of individuals, aggregates and populations	
DNP Program Evaluation	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I
<p><i>Note.</i> F=formative assessment, S=summative assessment, D=direct assessment, and I=indirect assessment. See the paragraph above for an explanation of each type of assessment.</p>								