



**THE UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON  
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING**

**DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE  
POST MASTER'S  
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2024-2025 Academic Year**

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## **What kind of practicum hours are required?**

Practicum hours are designed to demonstrate synthesis and application of expanded knowledge acquired within the DNP curriculum. The practicum hours signify the capability of the student to meet the core competencies of the DNP degree as established by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). Consistent with *The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice* (AACN, 2006), all students will be required to complete a minimum of 1000 clinical hours post baccalaureate degree. The clinical hours are to be related to the scholarly project and /or to advance knowledge in the student's area of specialization. For example, the practicum hours can be demonstrated through a variety of methods including but not limited to

- x In-depth work/mentorship with experts from nursing, as well as other disciplines
- x Opportunities for meaningful student engagement within practice environments
- x An opportunity to build and assimilate knowledge for advanced specialty practice at a high level of complexity
- x An opportunity for further synthesis and expansion of learning
- x Experience in the context within which the final DNP project is completed
- x An opportunity to integrate and synthesize the essentials and specialty requirements necessary to demonstrate competency in an area of specialized nursing practice
- x Programmatic efforts to address a clinical practice issue
- x Data collection and analysis
- x Direct care or practice experiences outside of the job description and responsibilities of the student with goals and learning outcomes

Practicum hours are not substantiated by the students' expertise in the health care system demonstrated prior to the DNP program nor by time spent working on classroom assignments.

The clinical hours that the student completed in the MSN advanced nursing practice program can be counted toward this requirement. All University of Scranton DNP students will complete additional clinical hours to fulfill the 1000-hour total requirement. The number of clinical hours required for each student will be divided between the two DNP Scholarly Project courses (NURS 780; NURS 790). Of note, 125 hours minimum are required in each DNP Scholarly Project course to afford the student the opportunity to apply new knowledge in the clinical setting. Therefore, it is possible that some DNP students will graduate with more than 1000 total clinical hours. Any additional hours above the 125-hour minimum required in NURS 780 and NURS 790 will be dependent upon the student's prior clinical practicum experience at the master's level. DNP students who are not University of Scranton MSN graduates, will be required to present formal evidence from their master's degree program regarding the number of precepted clinical hours completed. You can request this DNP Validation of Clinical Hours form from the nursing department via email at [nursing@scranton.edu](mailto:nursing@scranton.edu) .

Each DNP student must have a mentor during the scholarly project/practicum courses (NURS 780 and NURS 790), who provides specialized knowledge, guidance, and support for the practicum and scholarly project. The mentor or DNP preceptor is selected by the student in consultation with the project team leader, based on the focus of the scholarly project and practicum objectives. The mentor must





## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

**NURSING DEPARTMENT..... 941-7673**

Dr. Mary Jane DiMattio, Chairperson ..... 941-7673

## **DEPARTMENT OF NURSING PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

### **Mission Statement**

The Mission of the Department of Nursing at The University of Scranton is to prepare nurses at the baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral levels, who are grounded in the Catholic and Jesuit tradition, and committed to excellence in practice for the 21<sup>st</sup>

## **Purpose of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing**





## **Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program Outcomes**

Upon completion of the DNP program the graduate is prepared to:

1. Incorporate science-based theories from nursing and other disciplines to develop, implement, and evaluate practice approaches that improve health care.
2. Utilize organizational and systems leadership to promote quality, cost effectiveness, and patient safety in the delivery of health care.
3. Demonstrate leadership in the application and critical evaluation of evidence-based practice to improve patient and health care outcomes.
4. Apply information systems/technology to monitor and improve patient care and health care delivery systems.
5. Consistent



## **Glossary of Terms**

Accountability - ultimate responsibility of own actions.

Adaptation - as a process, it is a patient's response to a changing internal and external environment.

as a state, it is the result of a patient's response to an altered internal and/or external environment.



Faculty

Leadership - the activities of coordination, collaboration and consultation utilized in the interactive processes to provide nursing care.

Learning Experience - a planned activity of the curriculum that is used by students to achieve objectives.

Manager - one responsible for t(r)-6.1 (es)-2.1 (pons)3y-6.60.002 Tw 4d(pons)-.848 0 Tdc(r)-6.3 (ec)-2.2 (4)-6.6

## **APPEAL OF A COURSE GRADE**

Students who wish to appeal a final grade in a course must make a written appeal to the instructor within five (5) business days of the date the course grade becomes available to the student from the University, explaining why the grade should be changed. If the instructor agrees that a change of grade is warranted, the student will be notified in writing and a Change of Grade form will be completed and submitted to the Dean. If the instructor finds that the grade is correct as originally submitted, the student will be notified in writing, specifically addressing the student's reason for the appeal. The instructor's response must take place within five (5) business days of the receipt of the appeal from the student. If the student is not satisfied with the written response of the instructor, the student has the right to appeal in writing to the chairperson of the Department of Nursing within five (5) business days of the instructor's response, providing a complete explanation of the appeal and supporting documentation. The chairperson will attempt to facilitate a reasonable solution at the department level and will make written recommendation to both the student and faculty member within five (5) business days of receiving the appeal. If the matter is not resolved at the department level, the student, within five (5) business days of the chairperson review, may re-



## **CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY/ HIPAA**

HIPAA stands for “Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.” Although this legislative act includes a wide subject range relating to health insurance, a focus of this legislative act is the protection, security, and privacy of patients’ medical records. The University of Scranton has a legal and ethical responsibility to safeguard the privacy of patients and to protect the confidentiality of their health and social information.

Confidentiality of patient information and patient records is of utmost priority in any healthcare setting/agency. While participating in clinical education experiences, students will have access to information that must remain confidential. Patients have the right to privacy and confidentiality of their medical information.

No patient information may be disclosed (verbally or in writing) to unauthorized persons such as friends, family, or other patients.

Any request by the patient to release medical information must be handled by the appropriate agency representative. No student will accept responsibility to release patient information.

Students will not discuss patient information in public areas of an agency or outside of the agency. These areas may include offices if discussions in the office may be overheard by other patients.

Students will not leave medical charts in unrestricted areas of the agency.

Under no condition may samples of documentation containing any identifying information, such as evaluations, discharge summaries, results of diagnostic tests or letters to physicians be removed from the premises of the healthcare facility/agency.

The student’s obligation to keep information confidential continues outside of work hours and after the clinical experience concludes.

Any activity which is in violation of this agreement will be reported to the appropriate clinical and academic supervisor.

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By signing this document, I understand and agree that I have read and will comply with all of th 0.002 Tw 0.196 0

## **DNP SCHOLARLY PROJECT GUIDELINES**

### **Overview**

Students begin the process of the project in the first course and continue with

work with the student to select a minimum of one other team member, usually a professional from outside the University with expertise in the content area of the project.

The Scholarly Project Team is responsible for guiding the student in the development of the scholarly project; critiquing the readiness of the project proposal for presentation; mentoring the student during the implementation and evaluation phases of the project and evaluating the student's performance on both the proposal and final project presentation.

### DNP Scholarly Project Proposal

The project proposal will be satisfactorily completed during NURS 780. The student is expected to collaborate with the team leader on the development of the written proposal. Contact with team members regarding expectations throughout the process is encouraged. Students should expect to complete multiple revisions of the written proposal before achieving final approval from the team leader and members. The DNP student must successfully complete the proposal to meet course requirements for NURS 780 and progress in the program.

The scholarly project proposal should be written in APA format, double-spaced, using size 11 font (Times New Roman or Arial) and 1" margins. The length of the proposal will vary, but usually is 20-30 pages excluding reference pages. The paper should be written in the third person and the methodology section in the future tense. The title page must include the name of the scholarly project, the student's name, and University of Scranton Department of Nursing. The organization and content of the proposal will vary according to the project and recommendations of the team leader and committee member(s). The following components of the proposal are expected:

#### **I. Introduction**

- Introduction to problem "Why this project and why now"
- Statement of the clinical problem
- Purpose/specific aim(s) and/or objectives
- Background (what led to the problem) of problem of interest
- Significance (why is it important) of problem
- Impact of project on system or population

#### **II. Review of the Literature / Conceptual and/or Theoretical Framework**

- Synthesis of body of evidence related to problem (appraisal of literature, other sources of data) including overall strengths, weaknesses, gaps, limitation or

of





Project design or Intervention  
Resources utilized

**IV. Project Results / Findings**

Analysis  
Results of intervention  
Tables, charts, bar graphs, etc., included as appropriate

**V. Discussion**

Explanation of the findings  
Evaluation of the applicability of the theoretical or conceptual framework

## **DRESS CODE FOR CLINICAL**

DNP students are expected to wear business casual attire in the clinical setting with a clean white lab coat. A University approved name badge or pin should be worn in the clinical area.

Students are expected to be neat, clean, and well groomed. Hair should be appropriate in style and color for professional practice. Jewelry should be kept to a minimum, i.e. wedding band, watch and small pierced earrings. Nails must be neat, trimmed and of appropriate length to allow for patient assessment and care.

Exceptions may be made by the Director of the Graduate Program when the clinical site policy differs from the above.

## **EXPOSURE TO BLOOD AND/OR BODY FLUIDS IN THE CLINICAL SETTING**

The purpose of this





nursing program. These requirements will be communicated as needed. Clinical agency requirements may supersede the University's requirements.

It is the responsibility of the student to initiate this process no later than May 1 to ensure documentation can be evaluated, and a determination can be made.

OSSS will determine whether sufficient documentation has been received to grant the accommodation. If the accommodation is granted, the student must provide the accommodation paperwork to the department of nursing (paper form, electronic form), including appropriate medical documentation from the healthcare provider that is providing care for the student.

If the student does not receive a medical exemption, the Department of Nursing will attempt to secure an alternate clinical site for the student. If the Department is unable to secure an alternate clinical site for the student, the student will not be able to progress in the program. This process must be done each year that the student is enrolled in the program. Exemptions are granted for each academic year separately.

Being granted a medical exemption for an immunization from the University of Scranton does not guarantee that clinical agencies will accept/honor the exemption. Clinical agency requirements supersede the University's requirements.

## **LICENSURE**

All DNP students enrolled in clinical courses must upload a copy of their Pennsylvania professional nurse license to their CastleBranch account prior to starting the clinical rotation. Students completing their clinical rotation in another state need to meet with the Director regarding appropriate professional nurse licensure. If the professional nurse license expires during the student's enrollment, the student must upload the renewed license. If the professional nurse license is revoked or suspended, the student must notify the program director. The student may be dismissed from the program. In addition, the post master's student must submit evidence of graduate preparation or certification in an advanced nursing practice specialty.

**The University of Scranton  
Department of Nursing**

**STUDENT PREGNANCY/HEALTH RELEASE FORM**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, release the University of Scranton from any liability related to health consequences to myself or the fetus as a result of my clinical experiences.

I have presented written consent from my physician/midwife regarding my participation in the nursing program. (attach consent from physician/midwife)

I have presented written confidential confirmation of my pregnancy to the Department of Nursing. (attach confirmation from physician/midwife)

I understand that the clinical faculty will not knowingly assign me to a situation that poses a recognized potential threat to the welfare of myself or the fetus. I understand that it is my

## **PROFESSIONAL NURSING BEHAVIORS POLICY**

DNP nursing students are expected to consistently demonstrate the professional nursing behaviors listed below. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the doctoral nursing program.

- ™ Ethical behavior according to the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses.
- ™ Maintenance of a safe environment for the patient in the clinical setting.
- ™ Punctuality for lecture, classroom, and clinical laboratories.
- ™ Consistent preparation for lecture, classroom, and clinical laboratories.
- ™ Completion of assignments within allotted

**PROFESSIONAL NURSING BEHAVIORS EVALUATION FORM**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty: \_\_\_\_\_ Course/Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester/Year: Fall \_\_\_\_\_ Spring \_\_\_\_\_ Summer \_\_\_\_\_

Nursing Behaviors	Areas of Concern
Ethical behavior according to the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses.	
Maintenance of a safe environment for the patient in the clinical setting	
Punctuality for lecture, classroom and clinical laboratories	
Consistent preparation for lecture, classroom and clinical laboratories	
Completion of assignments within allotted parameters	
Positive relationships with peers, faculty, patients, and staff	
Compliance with the clinical dress code	
Acceptance and incorporation of faculty feedback	
Adherence to policies and standards established in The University of Scranton's student handbooks.	
Respect for peers, faculty, patients, and staff	

Comments:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Faculty Signature \_\_\_\_\_





## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Social media is defined as mechanisms for communication designed to be disseminated through social interaction, created using easily accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Social media is commonly thought of as a group of Internet-based applications that allow for the creation and exchange of user generated content. Examples include but are not limited to LinkedIn, Wikipedia, Flickr, blogs, podcasts, RSS feeds, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and MySpace. In addition to the following guidelines, students are expected to adhere to the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics and the National

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**VERIFICATION OF RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK**

I have read and understand the contents of The Doctor of Nursing Practice Student Handbook, Department of Nursing, The University of Scranton.

Student name printed

Student Signature

Date

Please return this form to the Dept. of Nursing, Administrative Assistant of the Graduate Program, McGurkin Hall.

## **APPENDIX**

**Appendix A: Rubric for Grading DNP Scholarly Project Proposal**

<b>PERFORMANCE AREA</b>	<b><u>SATISFACTORY</u> MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b><u>UNSATISFACTORY</u> FAILS TO MEET EXPECTATIONS</b>
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## Appendix B: Rubric for Grading DNP Scholarly Project Manuscript

<b>PERFORMANCE AREA</b>	<b><u>SATISFACTORY</u> MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b><u>UNSATISFACTORY</u> FAILS TO MEET EXPECTATIONS</b>
<b>Overall Manuscript</b>	Clear, organized manuscript. Follows directions/guidelines.	Manuscript lacks good organization. Fails to follow directions/guidelines.
<b>Introduction</b>	Problem statement clearly identified, including background and significance.	Poorly articulated problem statement, background, and/or significance.
<b>Review of Literature/ Conceptual and/or Theoretical Framework</b>	Clear presentation of synthesis of body of evidence related to problem, including overall strengths, weaknesses, gaps, and limitations. Well-articulated application of a theoretical or conceptual framework for project.	Literature review fails to support project or is poorly presented. Theoretical or conceptual framework absent or poorly articulated.
<b>Methodology/ Project Design/ Intervention</b>	Project design/intervention, data collection tools, and plan for data analysis are well-stated and appropriate for the project.	Lack of clarity or inappropriate presentation of project design/intervention, data collection tools, and/or plan for data analysis.
<b>Project Results/ Findings</b>	Scientifically accurate discussion of data analysis and results.	Data analysis lacks evidence of sound scientific reasoning.
<b>Discussion</b>	Clear detailed explanation of the findings related to the framework. Well-articulated evaluation of the project. Strengths and limitations identified. Impact of results on practice well-defined.	Discussion and/or evaluation is superficial or lacks strong evidence of relationship with the framework and practice. Strengths and limitations absent or minimally addressed.
<b>APA Format</b>	Paper and citations adhere to APA format with only minor or random errors. Appropriate and sufficient references.	Lack of adherence to APA format or with multiple errors. Few or no citations.





**Appendix D: Rubric for Grading Poster Presentation of DNP Scholarly Project**

<b>PERFORMANCE AREA</b>	<b><u>SATISFACTORY</u> MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b><u>UNSATISFACTORY</u> FAILS TO MEET EXPECTATIONS</b>
<b>Overall Presentation</b>	Clear, organized poster. Flows between topic areas.	

Project Team Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

