

Doctor of Nursing Practice

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) is the terminal academic preparation for clinical nursing practice. The DNP builds on the competencies of the master's degree, and adds highly advanced skill base in informatics and technology, evidence-based practice, continuous quality improvement, and organizational systems and leadership while providing an efficient vehicle for completing doctoral education. The University of Texas at El Paso School of Nursing DNP prepares graduates to

1. Use information technology and evidence-based methodologies to analyze data for application in health care delivery, program development, practice guidelines development and problem-solving.
2. Integrate knowledge and from the sciences: ethics; and political, economic and social issues in responding to challenges in health care.
3. Assume a leadership role in the interdisciplinary environment to foster innovation in health care, effective communication, and enhanced patient outcomes.
4. Develop innovative approaches to improve health status and access to care for populations with in a community of focus.
5. Demonstrate excellence as an APRN, providing evidence-based care for diverse populations, modeling full accountability for professional advancement and lifelong learning.

Admission Standards

The DNP program builds upon the specialty certification of advanced practice nurses (APNs), such as nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, certified registered nurse anesthetists, and certified nurse-midwives. Thus, application is at the post-master's level. The DNP council, as the SON admissions committee, considers the following prior to recommending an applicant for admission.

1. Intellectual capacity, based on overall collegiate GPA; goal statement; standardized test scores (TOEFL); academic awards/honors; scholarly accomplishments; and personal interview
2. Written and oral communication skills and ability to articulate personal goals
3. Community service, such as extracurricular activities, membership and leadership in organizations, volunteer and humanitarian services
4. Awareness and direct knowledge of cultural elements as they may impact on healthcare
5. Potential for service to the State of Texas, such as faculty members currently teaching in a Texas nursing program or APNs committed to serving marginalized and underserved populations along the U.S.-Mexico border
6. Motivation; success in overcoming adverse economic or educational conditions; employment history; participation in activities requiring time management skills; veteran status; and letters of reference

Admission Requirements

1. Eligibility for admission to UTEP Graduate School (including completion of the TOEFL with a score of 550 or higher and all requirements for the Commission on Foreign Graduate Nursing Schools (CFGNS) for international students)
2. Completion of a master's degree in nursing from a program accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) or the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) or its equivalent in the case of foreign-prepared APNs
3. GPA of 3.0 or higher from master's degree course work
4. Current unencumbered registered nurse license
5. Approval by the Board of Nursing, or its equivalent, to practice as an advanced practice nurse in the state or country in which clinical practice will occur
6. Current national or board certification by a nationally recognized credentialing organization as an advanced practice nurse
7. Letter of intent (LOI) to apply identifying experience with underserved populations including community service, awareness and direct knowledge of cultural elements that impact healthcare along the U.S.-Mexico border, and current teaching in a Texas nursing program
8. Current resume or curriculum vita
9. A personal goal statement congruent with program goals
10. Three letters of references attesting to the applicant's academic ability and potential, including one from a professional colleague
11. Completion of personal interview

Transfer Students

The DNP council will consider each transfer student's application individually.

Probationary Status

A student whose GPA falls below 3.0 is at risk of dismissal from the program. In this case, the advisor reviews the student's academic record and makes a recommendation to the DNP council to retain the student on probationary status or to dismiss. The DNP council votes on the recommendation.

Special Consideration

The SON strongly encourages APNs who teach or plan to teach nursing or who reside/work or plan to reside/work in rural or medically underserved areas to apply for admission.

Application Due Date

Applications to the program are due late spring for admission in the fall.

Clinical Clearance Requirements for DNP Program

DNP students must meet all administrative and clinical clearance requirements expected of MSN students. These requirements are located under the MSN student section of the catalog Note: Failure to comply with these requirements will result in registration holds or being dropped from courses.

Degree Requirements

The DNP program is a 2-year (including summer), 45-semester credit hour doctoral program. Requirements for earning the DNP degree include:

1. Completion of an approved program of study including 540 clinical hours, the majority of which (360), are completed in the last semester of the program as part of the DNP practicum
2. Initiation, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of an evidence-based DNP project
3. Development of a DNP Portfolio that demonstrates competency in evidence-based practice, clinical scholarship, and leadership skills including systems knowledge, information technology, policy expertise, and collaboration

Foundation Courses

The foundation core consists of five courses (14 credit hours) that provide the groundwork for clinical practice at the doctoral level. Topics include theoretical and scientific underpinnings of doctoral-level nursing practice, organizational and systems leadership, information systems/ technology and advocacy in healthcare for quality improvement and transformation of health policy as needed for evolving clinical practice.

Code	Title	Hours
NURS 6310	Scholarly Foundations for DNP	3
NURS 6200	Project Planning and Dev	2
NURS 6330	Org & Systems Leadership	3
NURS 6319	Appli Stats Health Providers	3
NURS 6320	Health Info Systems/Tech	3
NURS 6338	Adv. Health Policy & Bioethics	3

Doctoral Practice Core

The doctoral practice core consists of four courses (12 credits) that enable the DNP graduate to analyze the role of genomics/genetics along with epidemiological, biostatistical, occupational, and environmental data in the development, implementation, and evaluation of clinical prevention (health promotion and risk reduction/illness prevention for individuals and families) and population health programs.

Code	Title	Hours
NURS 6370	Epidemiology Border Population	3
NURS 6340	Adv. Seminar Clinical Genetics	3
NURS 6380	Advanced Diagnostics	3
NURS 6360	Translating Research to Pract	3

DNP Clinical Core

The clinical core includes one course (4 hours) that prepare the DNP graduate to generate evidence through practice that will guide improvement and outcomes of care in the management of chronic illnesses commonly seen in U.S.-Mexico border populations. Students initiate the capstone project at this time.

Code	Title	Hours
NURS 6470	Chronic Illness & the Border (90 hours of practicum experience)	4

DNP Project and Practicum

The DNP courses are a total of 4 credits, and the final project practicum is one 8-hour practicum. This experience allows the DNP student to demonstrate integration of theoretical and clinical knowledge of health needs of border populations.

Code	Title	Hours
NURS 6190	DNP Project I	1
NURS 6191	DNP Project II	1
NURS 6292	DNP Project III	2
NURS 6893	DNP Project Practicum	8

DNP Project

Learning culminates with the completion of an evidence-based synthesis project. The student must initiate the project with project chairperson approval by the fourth semester of the program. Students complete the DNP project during the DNP practicum experience. With input and guidance from the chairperson, students disseminate results through scholarly poster and/or podium presentations. The completed project and all scholarly deliverables become part of the portfolio.

Project Portfolio

Starting with their first doctoral-level course and culminating in the completion of the evidence-based DNP project, students prepare and refine the portfolio throughout their educational preparation. The portfolio demonstrates mastery of DNP competencies in all domains (See DNP Essentials in Appendix A). During the last semester of study, a student’s project chairperson will review the quality of the portfolio for scholarship and evidence of mastery of competencies.

The portfolio is designed to:

- Document and measure qualitative and quantitative characteristics of practicum encounters and other learning experiences throughout practicum
- Evaluate competency in all domains of doctoral-level practice
- Demonstrate leadership in evidence-based practice and the ability to generate evidence through practice that will guide improvements in practice and outcomes of care in the management of chronic illnesses commonly seen in U.S.-Mexico border populations.
- Demonstrate scholarship through dissemination of clinical scholarship

Degree Plan

Required Credits: 45

Code	Title	Hours
Doctor of Nursing Practice (All courses require a grade of C or better)		
Required Courses:		
NURS 6190	DNP Project I	1
NURS 6191	DNP Project II	1
NURS 6200	Project Planning and Dev	2
NURS 6292	DNP Project III	2
NURS 6310	Scholarly Foundations for DNP	3
NURS 6319	Appli Stats Health Providers	3
NURS 6320	Health Info Systems/Tech	3
NURS 6330	Org & Systems Leadership	3
NURS 6338	Adv. Health Policy & Bioethics	3
NURS 6340	Adv. Seminar Clinical Genetics	3
NURS 6360	Translating Research to Pract	3
NURS 6370	Epidemiology Border Population	3
NURS 6380	Advanced Diagnostics	3
NURS 6470	Chronic Illness & the Border	4
NURS 6893	DNP Project Practicum	8
1 Consult with the program advisor for course options.		
Total Hours		45