

Doctor of Nursing Practice Program FAQ

What is the DNP degree?

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) is a terminal professional practice degree. The DNP program prepares nurses to assume leadership roles in clinical practice, administration, and clinical research. The DNP emphasizes advanced clinical practice, implementation of best practices, and evaluation of practice and care delivery models.

Do you offer a doctoral degree in nursing practice at the University of Nevada?

Currently, the University of Nevada, Las Vegas School of Nursing offers DNP programs with a focus on either Nurse Executive or Advanced Practice Family Nurse Practitioner.

Is the program offered online?

Yes, all courses are offered online. However, students are required to come to campus one time before the first semester for two days for orientation and one day each for two different semesters related to the DNP Project. The first time is to defend the DNP Project Proposal, and the second time is to defend the completed DNP Project. For students in the BSN – DNP Family Nurse Practitioner track, they will also come to campus during the semester in which they have clinical courses for skills and assessment testing.

I'm already a nurse practitioner, why start a doctoral program now?

Many nurse practitioner programs already require more than 60 credits and three years of study for completion. Despite this amount of education, there is a need for additional training and education to assume many leadership roles. In response, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) recommended the development of the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree "for the highest level of nursing practice beyond the initial preparation in the discipline." Nursing as a profession competes with other health sciences specialties, including pharmacy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and audiology. These specialties have already moved to the professional or practice doctorate, and this is what the DNP provides for the nursing profession.

How many credits do I need to take to complete my degree program?

The BSN - DNP program is 60 credits for the Nurse Executive track, and 68 credits to complete the Advanced Practice Family Nurse Practitioner track.

For those who already have their MSN, the MSN - DNP is 32 credits for the Nurse Executive track, and 31 credits for nurses who are already master's degree prepared nurse practitioners.

How long is the program?

The BSN – DNP can be completed in three years (8 semesters) full time or 4-5 years (10 – 14 semesters depending on the track chosen) part time (both full and part time include summer semesters). The MSN – DNP can be completed in 2 years or 5 semesters (including one summer semester).

How often do you admit students into your program?

Students are admitted into the program annually and begin classes in the fall semester.

Do I need to take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) to apply for admissions into the DNP program?

No, the GRE is not required for admission to the DNP program.

What are the requirements for admissions into your DNP program?

For the BSN to DNP program tracks, you must have a baccalaureate degree in nursing from a nationally accredited (CCNE, ACEN, or CNEA) nursing program and a cumulative GPA of 3.2 (on a 4.0 scale). You must have practiced as a baccalaureate prepared registered nurse for a minimum of one year prior to beginning classes. You must also hold an unrestricted and unencumbered license to practice as a registered nurse.

For the MSN to DNP Program tracks, you must hold a master's degree in nursing (MSN or MN) and a baccalaureate degree in nursing from nationally accredited (CCNE, ACEN, or CNEA) nursing programs. Exceptions to a master's degree in nursing will be made on a case-by-case basis and only for those students who hold a baccalaureate degree in nursing with a master's degree in another health-related field (i.e. MHA, MPH, MBA, etc.). You must also hold an unrestricted and unencumbered license to practice as a registered nurse. You must have a minimum grade point average of 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale) in your master's degree program. For the Advanced Practice track, you must be licensed as a RN and as an advanced practice registered nurse, and hold national certification in advanced practice, e.g., NP, CRNA, Nurse Midwife, or Clinical Specialist. For the Nurse Executive track, you must hold certification or be eligible for certification in a specialty, e.g. Nurse Executive, Advanced Forensic Nurse, etc.

Some additional admission requirements for both the BSN – DNP and MSN – DNP programs are listed on our website.

How do I apply for admission to the program?

You may contact Dr. Jennifer Kawi, Doctoral Program Director, or Jill Racicot, Special Project Coordinator at the UNLV School of Nursing for information to assist you in your choice. Online applications may be found at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas [Graduate College](#).

Are scholarships or financial aid available to students?

Students are encouraged to apply for [financial aid](#) by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid or FAFSA (<https://fafsa.ed.gov/>).

How long do I have to complete the program?

Students in the BSN – DNP program must complete all coursework and the DNP Project within eight years.

Students in the MSN – DNP program must complete all coursework and the DNP Project within six years.

Does the DNP require a dissertation?

No. The DNP is an applied practice degree; therefore, it is required that you complete a final DNP Project that applies to your advanced practice or nurse executive role. You will begin work on the DNP Project early in your program once you have begun your doctoral coursework (the specific semester depends on whether you are in the BSN – DNP or MSN – DNP Program and whether you are following a full time or part time plan of study). The DNP Project will culminate with a final DNP Project defense at the end of the last semester of the program. For additional information on the DNP Project contact Dr. Jennifer Kawi, Doctoral Program Director.

What is the tuition cost?

Please see the cashier's tuition calculator for the current costs of program.

<http://www.unlv.edu/admissions/college-costs#tuition>