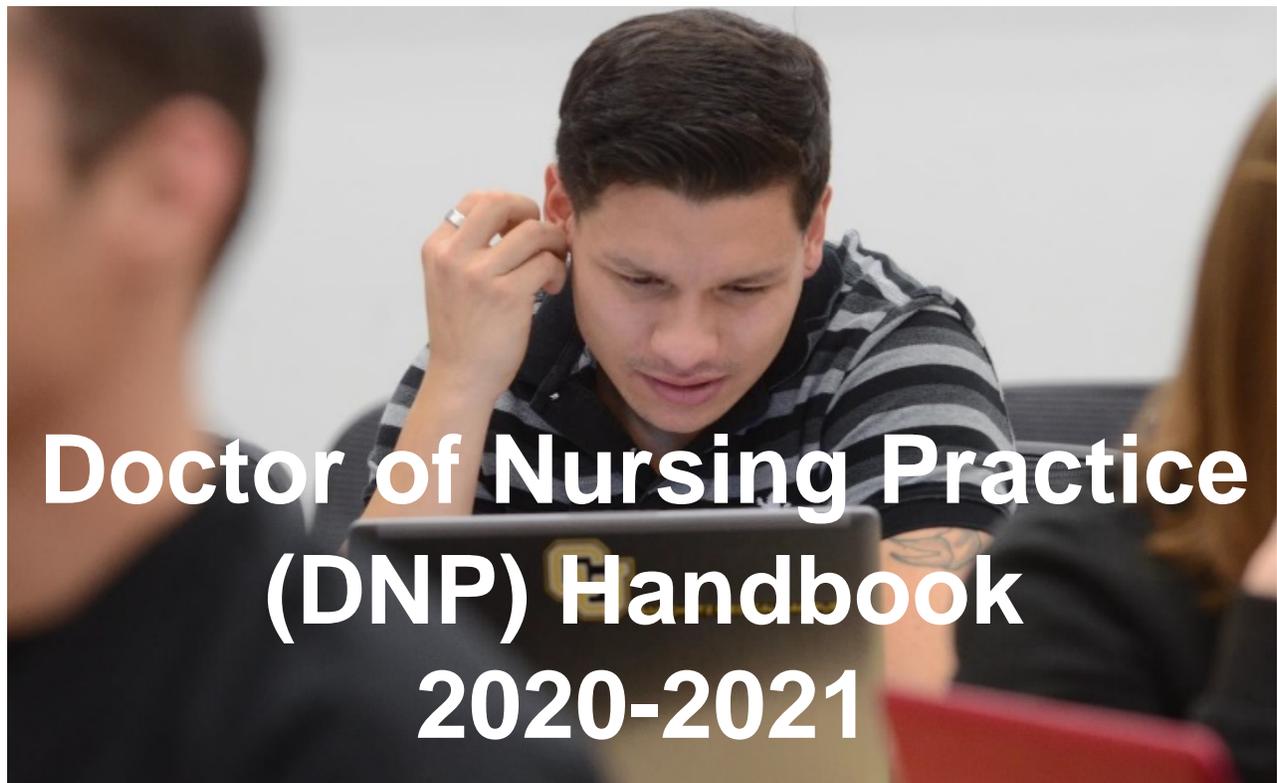# College of Nursing
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Handbook 2020-2021

BE THE NURSE EVERYONE LOOKS TO FIRST

Be the nurse that everyone looks to first.

DEAN'S WELCOME

Welcome to the next phase of your educational and professional journey! You have accomplished great things in your nursing career, and now have decided to pursue a terminal degree, the clinical doctorate. This is an exciting and challenging next step in your journey toward Nursing Leadership in Evidence-Based Practice.

The University of Colorado (CU) College of Nursing (CON) developed one of the first clinical doctoral programs in the US. Building on this legacy, the CON was also one of the first credentialed Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) programs in the nation. Our initial DNP program focused solely on Quality and Safety; however, our great and talented faculty has re-envisioned the program to broaden its scope of expertise. We now offer two DNP Pathways (BS-to-DNP and Post-Graduate DNP), and those Pathways are further divided into the following Tracks: Track 1, a DNP for APRNs; Track 2, a DNP with a Nursing Leadership and Health Systems Focus; Track 3, a DNP with a Public Health Focus; Track 4, a Dual Degree program, Master's in Public Health MPH/DNP; and Track 5, a DNP with a Veteran and Military Health Care Leadership focus. As both a student and a nursing colleague, you are joining a community of distinguished faculty and staff who are working actively to shape the present and future health care landscape in Colorado, the US, and beyond.

Together, we will continue to build on our 120-year history of innovative nursing education, practice, and research, and we will work with you to identify, synthesize, and apply evidence-based practice to promote and improve health care delivery at both the individual level and the community level.

This CON DNP Student Handbook provides information specific to the DNP program. Students should use this DNP Handbook to supplement the CON Core Student Handbook. Both of these resources provide (a) important information about CON policies and procedures and (b) recommendations to guide and support your educational/professional journey toward your doctoral degree.

It's a great time to be part of our GREAT CON!

Sincerely,

E P Vasquez

Elias Provencio-Vasquez, PhD, RN, FAAN, FAANP

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ACCREDITATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

The University of Colorado Denver is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and recognized by all major accrediting agencies.

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program, Master of Science in Nursing degree program, Doctor of Nursing Practice program, and Post-Graduate APRN certificate program at the University of Colorado College of Nursing are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

http://www.ccneaccreditation.org

and

Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education
8403 Colesville Road, Suite 1550
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(240) 485-1802
www.midwife.org/acme

The College of Nursing maintains the following memberships: American Academy of Nursing; American Association of Colleges of Nursing; National Student Nurses Association; Colorado Nurses Association; National League for Nursing; and Sigma Theta Tau International.

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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ADMINISTRATION

Bruce Benson
President, University of Colorado

Donald M. Elliman, Jr.
Chancellor, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus

COLLEGE OF NURSING ADMINISTRATION

Elias Provencio-Vasquez, PhD, RN, FAAN, FAANP
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Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Programs

Peggy Jenkins, PhD, RN
Assistant Dean of Graduate Programs, Assistant Professor

Laura Rosenthal, DNP, ACNP, FAANP
Assistant Dean of DNP Programs, Associate Professor

Jackie Jones, PhD, RN, FAAN
Assistant Dean of PhD Program, Professor

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Dear Student,

This DNP Program Handbook focuses on policies and procedures intended to assist graduate students and faculty on matters specific to academic progression in the DNP program. This Handbook should be used in conjunction with (a) the University of Colorado (CU) College of Nursing (CON) Core Student Handbook, (b) program application materials, (c) the CU Denver Anschutz Medical Campus (AMC) Course Catalog, and (d) other official documents prepared and distributed by the CON Office of Admissions and Student Services or the CON Office of Academic Programs.

Policies and procedures undergo revision periodically; all notices of changes in policy and procedure within the DNP Handbook will be distributed electronically through official UC Denver student email and posted to the CON website. The policies in effect at the time of admission govern a student's progression. Students are asked to stay up-to-date with CON and DNP program policies by visiting the Con home page and the CON student tab. Please also refer to the DNP Tool Kit .

The DNP curriculum, course schedules, and course offerings are subject to change. Courses are offered pending required minimum course enrollment numbers. If curricular changes are made, courses in the current curriculum will be offered for a specified period; students who decelerate or otherwise change their program plans may be asked to substitute an existing course for a required course being discontinued or with insufficient enrollment. All changes to a student's Plan of Study will be discussed and approved by the Graduate Student Advisor. Please direct questions or recommendations for changes to the Assistant Dean of DNP Programs.

This Handbook does not constitute an expressed or implied contract with the CON. The CON reserves the right at any time to change, delete, or supplement any of the provisions in this Handbook. Furthermore, the provisions in this document are designed to serve as guidelines rather than rules, and exceptions may be made on the basis of extenuating circumstances.

Again, welcome to the DNP Program at the CU CON! We are happy you chose us for your nursing education. We wish to support you in any way we can, and we look forward to your success!

The Student Affairs Committee (SAC)

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I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

CON DNP programs are designed for nurses interested in a practice-focused doctorate. DNP graduates will be prepared as clinical leaders who will design models of health care delivery, evaluate clinical outcomes, identify/manage population-level health care needs, and use technology/information to transform health care systems.

A. CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

In 2006, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) published the *Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice*, which outlines the eight curricular competencies required by all DNP programs, including CON DNP programs. Every graduate of the DNP programs is called upon to integrate these foundational competencies into clinical practice and incorporate the competencies throughout the program. The eight curricular competencies are as follows:

- Scientific underpinnings for practice.
- Organizational and systems leadership for quality improvement and systems thinking.
- Clinical scholarship and analytical methods for evidence-based practice.
- Information systems/technology and patient care technology for the improvement and transformation of health care.
- Health care policy for advocacy in health care.
- Interprofessional collaboration for improving patient and population health outcomes.
- Clinical prevention and population health for improving the nation's health.
- Advanced nursing practice.

B. DNP PROGRAM OUTCOMES

To instill these nationally established DNP competencies, the CON faculty have developed a series of DNP Program Outcomes, which enrolled students are expected to meet prior to graduation. All DNP course work is designed to facilitate achievement of the DNP Program Outcomes.

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DNP Program Outcomes Alignment Table - DNP Essentials

University of Colorado College of Nursing

Program Outcome	1	2	3	4	5	6
DNP Essential						
I.				✔	✔	
II.	✔	✔			✔	
III.			✔	✔	✔	
IV.	✔		✔		✔	
V.	✔	✔				✔
VI.	✔			✔	✔	
VII.		✔		✔	✔	
VIII.	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice	
I.	Scientific Underpinnings for Practice
II.	Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Improvement and Systems Thinking
III.	Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-Base Practice
IV.	Information Systems/Technology and Patient Care Technology for the Improvement and Transformation of Health Care
V.	Health Care Policy for Advocacy in Health Care
VI.	Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes
VII.	Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving the Nation's Health
VIII.	Advanced Nursing Practice
DNP Program Outcomes	
Upon graduation from the DNP Program, students will be able to:	
1.	Lead interdisciplinary teams to improve the quality and safety of health care delivery strategies.
2.	Formulate scientifically based, ethical, caring, and culturally sensitive health care delivery strategies that meet current and future health care delivery system needs.
3.	Integrate patient care technologies to evaluate complex health care questions in specific practice settings, populations, or systems.
4.	Integrate theoretical frameworks to guide the development and evaluation of health care delivery strategies.
5.	Implement evidence and evaluate outcomes for the improvement of health in specific practice settings, populations, or systems throughout Colorado and beyond.
6.	Act as a health care policy advocate in Colorado and beyond.

Approved by General Faculty 3/2017

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C. ADDITIONAL POLICIES ACROSS THE DNP PROGRAM

1. ADHERENCE TO CORE STUDENT HANDBOOK

All CON students are expected to comply will all policies outlined in the [Core Student Handbook](#).

2. MANDATORY PROGRAM/COURSE MEETINGS

The DNP Program is a hybrid online program combining online courses/coursework and periodic, required on-site meetings. The dates of these in-person meetings are scheduled and announced to students well in advance to facilitate travel planning. Students who believe that they have circumstances that should excuse them from these mandatory meetings must communicate with the Assistant Dean of DNP Programs and the course faculty member at least two (2) months in advance of the scheduled, announced, on-site meeting date. Potentially extenuating circumstances include personal acute health concerns or the death of an immediate family member.
Significant scheduling conflicts or other personal circumstances may be considered on a case-by-case basis; however, due to the importance of these mandatory on-site meetings, inability to attend these sessions may also result in course failure or the recommendation that the student withdraw from the course. Please see the Core Student Handbook for more information about the academic and/or financial consequences of course withdrawal.

Some DNP Program courses include synchronous online sessions that students may be required to attend (see course syllabi). While faculty members will try to identify the most broadly convenient time to hold these synchronous sessions, they may not be able to accommodate all student requests. Furthermore, because this is a hybrid online program, individual students may be located in different time zones, which also complicates scheduling of the synchronous class/discussion sessions. Students may face academic consequences, including course failure, if they are unable to attend synchronous sessions. These potential consequences will be explicitly stated in course syllabi.

3. ACADEMIC CREDENTIAL DOCUMENTATION

While enrolled and matriculating in an CU CON graduate program, the student may not use the "candidacy" title, e.g., DNP(c), in online/physical signatures or any other academic or professional communication.

II. ADMISSION AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

A. DNP PROGRAM OPTIONS

The CON offers two DNP pathways: (1) a BS-to-DNP pathway and (2) a Post-Graduate DNP pathway. In addition, each pathway has five separate tracks: (i) Post-Graduate DNP for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN); (ii) Post-Graduate DNP with a Health System Leadership Focus; (iii) Post-Graduate DNP with a Public/Community Health Focus; (iv) Dual Degree, Master of Public Health (MPH)/DNP; and (v) Veteran and Military Health (VMHC). The information below provides you with information about each of these different pathways and tracks. Each DNP student admitted to the program will have a gap analysis completed to determine how many doctoral practicum hours are necessary to build upon previous clinical hours completed in the student's MS program. All DNP students are required to meet the nationally-required 1,000 hours upon program completion to be eligible for graduation.

1. DNP PATHWAYS (BS-TO-DNP AND POST-GRADUATE DNP)

a. Admission Requirements

In addition to the admission requirements listed in the Core Student Handbook, students pursuing either of the DNP Pathways must meet the admission requirements of the specific DNP track they choose (see below).

b. Course Requirements

Students on either the BS-to-DNP Pathway or the Post-Graduate DNP Pathway must complete a required suite of courses (Table 1). In addition, each of the unique DNP Tracks has its own required courses (see below).

c. Degree Requirements

Students on the BS-to-DNP Pathway or the Post-Graduate DNP Pathway will be conferred the DNP degree when they meet the unique degree requirements of the specific DNP track they choose (see below).

Table 1. Upper-level DNP courses to be completed by DNP students in the APRN, DNP/MPH, and PHN tracks (i.e., on either the BS-to-DNP Pathway or the Post-Graduate DNP Pathway)

Course #	Course Title	Credit Hours	Doctoral Practicum Credits*
DNP Core Courses			
NURS 6303	Epidemiology	3	
NURS 6107	Research and Quality Improvement Methods: Principles of Evidence	3	
NURS 6108	Inferential Statistics	3	
NURS 6800	Innovative Leadership	3	
DNP Project Course Series (designed to be taken in sequence)			
NURS 8020	DNP Project Planning Course	1	45
NURS 8030	DNP Project I	4	180
NURS 8035	DNP Seminar I	1	
NURS 8040	DNP Project II	3	135
NURS 8045	DNP Seminar II	1	
NURS 8050	DNP Project III	4	180
	Total credits	26 credits	12 credits (540 hours)
Potential Additional Courses			
NURS 8000**	Doctoral Practicum Hours (variable credit hours)		

* Each doctoral practicum credit is equivalent to 45 face-to-face contact hours
** This doctoral practicum course is for students needing additional clinical hours to meet the nationally required 1000 doctoral practicum hours at program completion following a DNP gap analysis

> **Please note: all DNP students must have doctoral-level nursing theory, evidence-based practice, and informatics courses to meet the DNP Essentials and the CU DNP program outcomes. Prospective students may request to transfer in course work that meets this requirement; all transfer requests will be assessed by the college faculty to determine the rigor and applicability of prior course work.**

2. DNP TRACKS

a. Track 1: Post-Graduate DNP for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN)

- **Admission Requirements**

In addition to the admission requirements listed in the Core Student Handbook, program admission requirements for the CON Post-Graduate DNP Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) Track are as follows:

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- A nursing degree (BS) and a Master degree from an institution that is regionally accredited and nationally accredited by CCNE or ACEN.
- Advanced practice area certification.
- Minimum undergraduate and graduate GPA of 3.0.
- Fulfillment of all admission requirements to become verified in the NursingCAS™ system.

- **Degree Requirements**

Awarding of the Post-Graduate DNP APRN degree is based on completion of the required 26 credit hours of upper level DNP course work (Table 1). Fulfillment of DNP requirements can be expected to take approximately one and a half (1.5) years for accelerated students, two-and-a-half (2.5) years for full-time students, and up to seven (7) years for part-time students. All degree requirements must be completed within seven (7) years of matriculation (i.e., a CU requirement). Approval of up to 12 transfer credit hours is based upon the relevancy/equivalency of the applicant's prior course work and is assessed at the time of admission.

The course work required for degree completion includes 26 credits of course work, documentation of doctoral-level informatics and theory coursework, and the development and implementation of a DNP project. The curriculum includes foundational core courses such as a doctoral-level informatics, evidence-based practice and nursing theory courses for a total of a minimum of 30 credits of doctoral-level coursework that allow students to achieve the DNP Competencies and the DNP Program Outcomes.

b. Track 2: Post-Graduate DNP with a Health System Leadership Focus

- **Admission Requirements**

In addition to the admission requirements listed in the [Core Student Handbook](#), program admission requirements for the CON Post-Graduate DNP with a Health System Leadership Focus are as follows:

- o A nursing degree (BS) and a Master of Science (MS) or Arts (MA) degree from an institution that is regionally accredited and nationally accredited by CCNE or ACEN. In the case of, iLEAD, Informatics, or Veterans and Military Health Care, students may have a BS or ADD nursing degree from a nationally (nursing) and regionally accredited program. Applicants with a MS or MA degree in another health care-related field will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If admitted, these students must have fulfilled the following course prerequisites (or show proof on transcript of equivalent course work) prior to enrollment in the DNP Health System Leadership Program: NURS 6009 (Theory Foundations for Advanced Nursing), NURS 6070 (Policy and Politics of Health), NURS 6109 (Evidence-Based Practice: Evaluating Evidence), and NURS 6286 (Foundations of Health Care Informatics). Review of course syllabi may be requested.
- o Completion of NURS 6108 (Inferential Statistics) or equivalent course. Review of course syllabi may be requested.
- o Minimum undergraduate and graduate GPA of 3.0.
- o Fulfillment of all admission requirements to become verified in the NursingCAS™ system.

- **Degree Requirements**

Awarding of the Post-Graduate DNP with a Health System Leadership Focus degree is based on completion of the required 31 credit hours of course work (Table 2). Fulfillment of DNP requirements can be expected to take approximately one (1) year for accelerated students, two-and-a-half (2.5) years for full-time students, and seven (7) years for part-time students. All degree requirements must be completed within seven (7) years of matriculation (i.e., a CU requirement). Approval of up to 12 transfer credit hours is based upon the relevancy/equivalency of the applicant's prior course work.

Degree completion requires 31 credits of course work (including the development/implementation of a DNP Project). Students must provide evidence of doctoral-level Theory and Informatics course work, which are necessary to meet the DNP Essentials and the DNP Program Outcomes. Additionally, a previous evidence-based practice or comparable course is required to assure students are well-prepared to complete higher-level doctoral education.

Table 2. Upper-level DNP courses to be completed by students on the DNP Health System Leadership Track

Course #	Course Title	Credit Hours	Doctoral Practicum Credits*
DNP Core Courses			
NURS 6603	Health System Management	3	
NURS 6107	Research and Quality Improvement Methods: Principles of Evidence	3	
NURS 6796	Executive Leadership	3	
NURS 6800	Leadership, Financial Management, and Innovation	3	
NURS 7632	Quantitative Methods I	3	
DNP Project Course Series (designed to be taken in sequence)			
NURS 8020	DNP Project Planning Course	1	45
NURS 8030	DNP Project I	4	180
NURS 8035	DNP Seminar I	1	
NURS 8040	DNP Project II	3	135
NURS 8045	DNP Seminar II	1	
NURS 8050	DNP Project III	4	180
	Total credits	31	12 credits (540 hours)
Potential Additional Courses			
NURS 8000**	Doctoral Practicum Hours (variable credit hours)		

* Each doctoral practicum credit is equivalent to 45 face-to-face contact hours
** This doctoral practicum course is for students needing additional clinical hours to meet the nationally required 1000 doctoral practicum hours at program completion following a DNP gap analysis

c. Track 3: Post-Graduate DNP with a Public Health Nursing Focus

- **Admission Requirements**

In addition to the admission requirements listed in the Core Student Handbook, program admission requirements for the CON Post-Graduate DNP with a Public Health Nursing Focus are as follows:

  o A nursing degree (BS) and one of the following Master degrees from a regionally accredited institution: Master of Public Health (MPH), Master of Science in Community Health, or Master of Science in Public Health Nursing. All degrees must be conferred by institutions nationally accredited by CCNE or ACEN.
  o Minimum undergraduate and graduate GPA of 3.0.
  o Fulfillment of all admission requirements to become verified in the NursingCAS™ system.

- **Degree Requirements**

Awarding of the Post-Graduate DNP with a Public Health Nursing Focus degree is based on completion of the required 26 credit hours of course work (Table 3). Fulfillment of DNP requirements can be expected to take approximately one (1) year for accelerated students, three (3) years for full-time students, and seven (7) years for part-time students. All degree requirements must be completed within seven (7) years of matriculation (i.e., a CU requirement). Approval of up to 12 transfer credit hours is based upon the relevancy/equivalency of the applicant's prior course work.

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Degree completion requires 26 credits of course work, including the development and implementation of a DNP project. The curriculum includes core coursework (e.g., doctoral-level informatics, evidence-based practice, and nursing theory courses) for a total of a minimum of 30 credits of doctoral-level course work that allow students to achieve the DNP Competencies and the DNP Program Outcomes.

Table 3. Upper-level DNP courses to be completed by students on the DNP Public Health Nursing Track

Course #	Course Title	Credit Hours	Doctoral Practicum Credits*
DNP Core Courses			
NURS 6633	Advanced Public Health Nursing*	3	
NURS 6782	APHN Practicum 2*	2	90
NURS 6108/ BIOS 6601	Inferential Statistics and Quality Improvement: Applying the Evidence OR Applied Biostatistics	3	
NURS 6303	Epidemiology	3	
NURS 6107	Former course title: Research and Quality Improvement Methods: Principles of Evidence	3	
NURS 6286	Foundations of Health Care Informatics	3	
NURS 6800	Innovations in Leadership	3	
NURS 8020	DNP Project Prep Course	1	45
NURS 8030	DNP Project I	4	180
NURS 8035	DNP Seminar I	1	
NURS 8040	DNP Project II	3	135
NURS 8045	DNP Seminar II	1	
NURS 8050	DNP Project III	4	180
	Total credits	34	14 credits (630 hours)

* APHN didactic course and practicum is exempt if clinical time was recorded from previous MS degree in PHN, or APHN-BC credential is provided.

d. Track 4: Dual Degree, Master of Public Health MPH/DNP

- **Admission Requirements**

In addition to the admission requirements listed in the Core Student Handbook, program admission requirements for the CON Dual Degree, Master of Public Health MPH/DNP are as follows:

  - o A nursing degree (BS) from a regionally accredited institution.
  - o Minimum undergraduate and graduate GPA of 3.0.
  - o Fulfillment of all admission requirements to become verified in the NursingCAS™ system and acceptance into the Colorado School of Public Health.

- **Degree Requirements**

Awarding of the MPH/DNP program degrees will be based on completion of the required 63-65 credit hours of DNP and MPH course work (Table 4). Fulfillment of DNP/MPH requirements can be expected to take approximately four (4) years with full-time study and up to seven (7) years with part-

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time study. All requirements for the Dual Degree, DNP/MPH Program must be completed within seven (7) years of matriculation, a requirement of the university. Approval of up to 12 credit hours of transfer credit will be based upon the relevancy and equivalency of the applicant's prior work. The CSPH requires at least 32 credits to be taken as MPH-degree granting coursework. Custom MPH concentrations can be substituted for the public health concentration courses listed below (with approval by the dual degree advisor in the CSPH.)

Approved by General Faculty 10/2018

Table 4. Upper-level DNP and MPH courses to be completed by students on the Dual Degree, MPH/DNP Track

Course #	Course Title	Credit Hours	Doctoral Practicum Credits*
Required DNP Courses			
NURS 6633	Advanced Public Health Nursing	3	
NURS 6752	APHN Practicum I	3	135
NURS 6782	APHN Practicum II (if needed)	2	90
NURS 6109	Evidence-Based Practice: Evaluating Evidence	3	
NURS 6286	Foundations of Health Care Informatics	3	
NURS 6800	Innovations in Leadership	3	
Required MPH Courses			
PUBH 6600	Foundations in Public Health	2	
BIOS 6601	Applied Biostats I	3	
EPID 6630	Epidemiology	3	~13
EHOH 6614	Intro to Environmental Health	3	~31
CBHS 6610	Social & Behavioral Factors in Health	3	~45
HSMP 6601	Health Systems, Management, & Policy	3	~40
Public Health Concentration			
CBHS 6612	Methods in Research and Evaluation	3	~40
EHOH 6622	Public Health Emergency Preparedness	3	~16
EPID 6640	Investigation of Disease Outbreaks	2	~25
HSMP 6634	Intro to Management, Budgeting, & PubH Admin	3	~73
	(MPH electives)	4	
Required DNP Project			
NURS 8020	DNP Project Prep Course	1	45
NURS 8030	DNP Project I	4	180
NURS 8035	DNP Seminar I	1	
NURS 8040	DNP Project II	3	135
NURS 8045	DNP Seminar II	1	
NURS 8050	DNP Project III	4	180
	Total credits	**63-65**	**~1048 (~23 credits)**

Note: DNP students are required to graduate with at least 1000 clinical hours recorded in their specialty. Approximately 765 hrs are embedded within CON clinical courses. Additional clinical activities are gleaned from MPH required courses and elective courses, determined and approved in conjunction with the CON specialty option director.

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e. Track 5: Post-Graduate DNP with a focus in Veteran and Military Health Care Leadership (VMHCL)

- **Admission Requirements**

In addition to the admission requirements listed in the Core Student Handbook, program admission requirements for the DNP, Veteran and Military Health Track are as follows:

- o A nursing degree (BS) and a MS or MA degree from a regionally accredited institution.
- o Minimum undergraduate and graduate GPA of 3.0.
- o Fulfillment of all admission requirements to become verified in the NursingCAS™ system.

- **Degree Requirements**

Awarding of the Post-Graduate DNP with a Veteran and Military Health Care Leadership VMHCL focus degree is based on completion of the required 41 credit hours of course work (Table 5). Fulfillment of DNP requirements can be expected to take approximately one (1) year for accelerated students, two-and-a-half (2.5) years for full-time students, and seven (7) years for part-time students. All degree requirements must be completed within seven (7) years of matriculation (i.e., a CU requirement). Approval of up to 12 transfer credit hours is based upon the relevancy/equivalency of the applicant's prior course work. Students must provide evidence of doctoral-level Theory and Informatics course work, which are necessary to meet the DNP Essentials and the DNP Program Outcomes. Additionally, a previous evidence-based practice or comparable course is required to assure students are well-prepared to complete higher-level doctoral education.
Approved by General Faculty 10/2018

Table 5. Upper-level DNP courses to be completed by students on the DNP Veteran and Military Health Care Leadership Track

Course #	Course Title	Credit Hours	Doctoral Practicum Credits*
DNP Core and VMHCL Specialty Core Courses			
NURS 6023	Veteran and Military Health Care Systems	3	
NURS 6018	Home from the Battlefront: Psychological Health Care for Veterans and Service Members	3	
NURS 6019	Wounds of War: Military and Veteran Disability Evaluation	3	
NURS 6024	Caring for Veterans: Aging, Chronicity, & End-of-Life Care	3	
NURS 6017	On the Home Front: Supporting Veteran & Military Families	3	
NURS 6015	Women and War	3	
NURS 6603	Health System Management	3	
NURS 6796	Executive Leadership	3	
NURS 6800	Leadership, Financial Management, and Innovation	3	
DNP Project Course Series (designed to be taken in sequence)			
NURS 8020	DNP Project Planning Course	1	45
NURS 8030	DNP Project I	4	180
NURS 8035	DNP Seminar I	1	
NURS 8040	DNP Project II	3	135
NURS 8045	DNP Seminar II	1	
NURS 8050	DNP Project III	4	180

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	Total credits	41	12 credits (540 hours)
Potential Additional Courses			
NURS 8000**	Doctoral Practicum Hours (variable credit hours)		As needed to achieve 1000 hours

* Each doctoral practicum credit is equivalent to 45 face-to-face contact hours

** This doctoral practicum course is for students needing additional clinical hours to meet the nationally required 1000 doctoral practicum hours at program completion following a DNP gap analysis

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B. DOCTORAL PRACTICUM HOURS FOR ALL DNP PROGRAMS

DNP students are required to have completed a minimum of 1,000 clinical contact hours upon program completion. The required DNP doctoral practicum hours give students the opportunity to demonstrate synthesis/application of the doctoral course content in meeting the *DNP Essentials* and DNP Program Outcomes while also completing the DNP Project. The required 1,000 practicum hours will usually be a combination of clinical hours completed during the student's Master program and doctoral practicum hours. Prospective students will provide evidence of the number of clinical hours completed in their Master degree during the application process. For each admitted student, a gap analysis will be completed to determine if any additional course work is required; the gap analysis will also determine whether additional doctoral practicum hours will be required beyond the 540 included in the DNP Project Course Series. Students who require additional doctoral practicum hours to reach the nationally mandated total of 1,000 will be guided by a Faculty Project Advisor in how to do so. All clinical hours during the DNP Program are documented in an electronic student logging system (i.e., InPlace™). Students will be responsible to purchase this web-based system prior to starting their DNP course work.

DNP Project Hours (updated 12/2018)

Students will earn 500+ hours designing, implementing, and evaluating an approved project in the DNP program and meeting the DNP Essentials. These hours must be documented. It is the students' responsibility to document them each semester for faculty to review.

Activities that may be logged:
- Agency meetings to determine project and organizational priorities
- Interviewing potential mentors or other stakeholders for project
- Reviewing dashboards/ agency goals and initiatives
- Interdisciplinary team meetings
- Meetings with mentor or stakeholders
- Conferences or workshops applicable to your project that will increase your knowledge to lead your team – upon approval by course faculty
- Design and implementing PDSA cycles or interventions
- Data collection
- Data analysis (including run or control charts)
- Meeting with IT specialists for EMR improvement
- Consulting with CU CNRS staff for advice on data analysis
- Meetings with faculty advisor
- Presentations to team or stakeholders, mentor
- Needs assessment data collection
- Logic model, Precede/Proceed Model, Fishbone diagram, RCA that are worked on in the clinical agency with the mentor and/or team.
- Building portfolio
- Completing CITI, IHI modules
- Professional leadership – serve on board, internship peer reviewer
- Book group/journal club – start one

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Practicum or project hours **focus c**an include:
- Processes of care
- Safety and quality
- Organizational leadership
- Professional leadership
- Health policy
- Healthcare economics
- Ethical issues
- Population health

Hours that should not be counted or documented:
- Working on graded course assignments (reading modules, completing course assignments, participating in course discussions,)
- Direct patient care
- Your paid job or position

C. DNP CORE COURSE SERIES

1. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR DNP CORE COURSES

The DNP core course series are designed to provide content and assignments for students as they explore course-relevant information that is specific to the development, implementation, and evaluation of their DNP project. Students are strongly advised to consider the focus of each course and related assignments with regard to their focused area. Key course assignments should be placed in the student DNP portfolio to focus and facilitate student's collective synthesis of course content as they prepare to enter the DNP Project course series.

2. DNP CORE COURSES

a. NURS 6107 (Research and Leadership: Principles of Evidence), 3 Credits

Principles of Evidence is a foundational class for advanced practice nurses as well as future nurse scientists. An understanding of research evidence is foundational to the development of an Evidence-Based DNP Project. Assessing the methodological quality of research evidence helps us to understand the quality and level of evidence that exists so that DNP projects are truly based upon extant valid and high-level evidence.

This course focuses on methods of knowledge generation applicable to advanced practice nursing. Quantitative and qualitative methods are presented in the context of evidence-based practice. Students will evaluate evidence from multiple sources, including research knowledge, clinical expertise, and patient preference. Course-level learning outcomes are as follows:

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- Evaluate all components of published empirical studies to make informed practice decisions.
- Critique the selection and application of qualitative and quantitative methods used in published studies.
- Critique and apply the rapid-cycle change process to enact programmatic improvements.
- Evaluate ethics as an integral component of evidence-based practice and research.
- Evaluate strength of evidence to make informed decisions in practice.
- Integrate and apply complex data from multiple sources (electronic health records, research studies, epidemiological data, patient-centered measures, biomarkers, etc.) in assessing, planning for, and evaluating the health of specific populations
- Interpret the meaning of basic statistics relevant to advanced practice.
- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of data sources to assess patient outcomes.
- Assess cultural relevance and patient-centeredness of research findings.
- Integrate research evidence with other sources of evidence including clinical expertise and patient preference, with attention to the strengths and limitations of each.

b. NURS 6108 (Inferential Statistics and QI: Applying the Evidence), 3 Credits

This intermediate doctoral-level course covers descriptive statistics, correlation, prediction and regression, hypothesis testing, and analytic methods for quality DNP projects. It also includes critical information regarding database management, which is necessary for keeping and maintaining data to assess the impact of your DNP project. Students will learn how to assess statistics for understanding research conducted by others and to plan and conduct your own DNP project analyses.

In addition to the statistical tests described above, we will cover independent and dependent variables, levels of measurement, visual displays of data, normal and skewed distributions, quality improvements and control charts, measures of central tendency, correlation, regression, probability and confidence intervals, statistical power, independent and dependent t-tests, Fisher's exact tests, analysis of variance, types of error, non-parametric tests, and odds ratios. Course-level learning outcomes are as follows:

- Interpret the meaning of basic statistics relevant to advanced practice.
- Evaluate the analysis and conclusions of published studies to make informed decisions for practice.
- Critique the selection and application of statistical techniques used in published studies.
- Apply scientific methods in the design of research and/or quality improvement projects in the clinical setting.
- Analyze data using a justifiable analytic technique based on underlying assumptions and design issues.
- Interpret the analysis and results in terms of statistical and clinical significance and the possibility of conclusion error.
- Determine the generalizability of research findings to particular practice situations.
- Manage and interpret quality improvement data about the results of research-based interventions in a particular clinical setting.

- Translate research or quality improvement findings to a consumer-oriented format for distribution.

c. NURS 6800 (Leadership, Financial Management, and Innovation), 3 Credits

In this course, students explore personal values and beliefs and apply theory in informing/developing their leadership styles. This is critical as students should consider their leadership style as they develop an interdisciplinary team to implement small tests of change during their DNP project. The course leverages systems and leadership theories, providing a lexicon for students to use in developing leadership competencies – a key outcome of the DNP program. Students learn to read/manage organizational complexity as they appreciate the alignment of a proposed DNP project with the Mission and Vision of an organization. In the online course, introduction to multiple systems/leadership theories will provide knowledge to incorporate into a personal leadership philosophy for practice.

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Grounded in reflective, systems oriented, caring, complexity worldviews, students will learn economic concepts and create a business plan for an innovative DNP project or program for the patient population of interest. Course-level learning outcomes are as follows:

- Discover leadership theories relevant to health care and systems leadership.
- Reflect on self-leadership as the foundation of influencing others.
- Explore large scale influencers that impact financial decision-making in health care systems.
- Evaluate outcomes of care through a systems-thinking lens.
- Synthesize knowledge of economics to contribute to the financial health for organizations.

How the DNP Core Curriculum Helps You to Complete your DNP Project Series

PROJECT SERIES COURSES	Credit Hours and Practicum Requirements	Course Content/Assignments	Course Purpose	CORE COURSE ASSIGNMENT PREPARATION
NURS 8020- Project Preparation Course	1 credit (45 practicum hours)	-Obtain Faculty Advisor -Obtain Clinical Site and Clinical Mentor -Formulate PICO related to clinical problem of significance -Create Evidence table surrounding your PICO -COMIRB and IHI modules -Complete AIM of project	Set up students for a successful project. Ensuring adequate problem, key stakeholder buy-in, evidence behind interventions. Ethical considerations and preparation for IRB review.	**6107:** You learned how to create an evidence table and intervention table. You will thought about your area of interest for your project. *You will need this to create your evidence table for your project. **6109:** You completed a synthesis of a body of evidence. *You will use this synthesis to make clinical decisions on how you are going to shape your project. **6303:** You looked at population health and prevention, as well as environmental health, incidence and prevalence. *You are focusing on a population in your project, not a specific patient.

				* You will need all these pieces for the background and significance of your project. **6800:** You learned to ground yourself in your values to help shape your decision making. You reflected on your leadership and developed a personal leadership theory. *You will need this throughout your whole project!
NURS 8030- Project Practicum I	4 credits (180 practicum hours)	-QI and PE methods for change specific to site (RCA, Driver, Logic Models) -Project timeline -Identify Specific Measures -Complete project proposal submission and approval -Begin project after approval	Obtaining baseline information, using QI and PE methods appropriately to assess problems and interventions. Ensuring final project proposal appropriate and not deemed as research.	**6108:** You started to learn about QI methodology here. *This will link to the QI methodology in your project and how to apply it. **6109:** QI methods reinforced here. *Use QI as a means to move evidence into practice. **6303:** Program Evaluation and Community partnerships were addressed here. *You can apply this methodology to your project.
NURS 8035- Project Seminar I	1 credit (Didactic course)	-Project Proposal Specifics	Assisting with key components of the proposal form and submission process.	
NURS 8040- Project Practicum II	3 credits (135 practicum hours)	-Discussion of nursing and change theories -Data collection and planning -Run charts and control charts	Continue to run project and reflect on processes as well as focus on data collection during project	**6108:** You started to learn about QI methodology and statistical analysis here. *This will link to the QI methodology in

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NURS 8045-Project Seminar II	1 credit (Didactic course)	-Deep dive into small cycles of change	Deconstruction and Exploration of one change cycle and what that entails	your project and how to apply it. *You will also think about how you are going to apply statistical analysis information in your final project course. **6109:** QI methods reinforced here. *Use QI as a means to move evidence into practice. **6303:** Program Evaluation and Community partnerships were addressed here. *You can apply this methodology to your project.
NURS 8050-Project Practicum III	4 credits (180 practicum hours)	-Reflection on leadership -Data collection and completion -Analysis and Discussion of data -Scholarly paper completion -Final project presentation	Completion of project with deep reflection on the personal and professional growth as well as the lessons learned. The culmination of all courses together.	**6108:** Statistical methods were learned here. *You will apply these skills during the final analysis of your project. **6800:** As stated above, you grounded yourself in your values to help shape your decision making. You reflected on your leadership and developed a personal leadership theory. In addition, you developed a business plan. *You will apply your financial skills in this last project course when you look at the potential

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				costs of your project. *You will now reflect on how you used this throughout your whole project!

6107: Research and Quality Improvement Methods: Principles of Evidence
6108: Inferential Statistics and Quality Improvement: Applying the Evidence
6109: Evidence Based Practice: Evaluating the Evidence
6303: Epidemiology
6800: Innovative Leadership and Finance Management

D. DNP PROJECT/PROJECT COURSE SERIES

1. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR DNP PROJECT COURSES

The DNP Project represents the culmination of the DNP core course work and DNP Project Course Series. The DNP program has been designed such that each course builds on the one that precedes it (i.e., requirements in one course prepare students for the requirements of the next course, and all of the courses function together in helping students develop/refine and assess their DNP Project). Therefore, students are required to complete the DNP Project Course Series in sequence (i.e., NURS 8020, NURS 8030, NURS 8035, NURS 8040, NURS 8045, and NURS 8050). Due to the stepwise nature and time-sensitivity of DNP project development and implementation, students who find they cannot continue the series without interruption (i.e., have extenuating circumstances precluding registration in a course in the series) may be asked upon remediation/alleviation of the extenuating circumstance to restart the Series from the beginning (i.e., NURS 8020). Students who fail a course in the Series will be required to meet with the Assistant Dean of DNP Programs to develop an Individual Progression Plan (IPP). If the student is determined (in collaboration with faculty partners) to need more work on DNP fundamentals, the IPP may include taking/retaking a DNP core course, which will then require the student to both (a) restart the DNP course series and (b) retake the failed course/achieve a passing grade.

The DNP Project is often completed in the student's place of practice. However, if a student does not have an appropriate practice setting for Project completion, the student's faculty advisor, Assistant Dean of DNP Programs, and/or DNP faculty members will assist the student in identifying a site for Project completion. This happens in NURS 8020 (DNP Project Planning).

While project conduct may occur in a student's place of employment, the doctoral practicum hours are not to be completed during work hours. The doctoral practicum hours required to implement, collect data, and analyze project results must occur above and beyond regular hours of employment.

The identification of a Project completion site and site preceptor is critical to successful development, implementation, and dissemination of Project findings. Therefore, students are expected early on in the DNP program (i.e., during the DNP core courses) to start (a) establishing a strong working relationship

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with a particular Faculty Project Advisor (a working partnership which will be made official during NURS 8020) and (b) identifying/locking in a project completion site. If a Project completion site has not been

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identified by the completion of NURS 8020, the student may need to halt progression in the Project Course Series.

The DNP Project Course Series includes mandatory meetings. Students unable to attend the mandatory, in-person intensives will need to withdraw from the course or be subject to the academic consequences outlined in the course syllabus. The student who must withdraw will be encouraged restart the DNP Project Course Series the next time NURS 8020 is offered. However, this opportunity is not guaranteed and is offered only on a space-available basis.

At a minimum, all DNP Projects should:

- Focus on a change, which impacts a healthcare outcome(s) either through direct or indirect care. Have a system (micro, meso-, or macro level) or population/aggregate focus.
- Demonstrate implementation in the appropriate arena or area of practice.
- Include a plan for sustainability (e.g. Financial, systems or political realities, not only theoretical abstraction).
- Include an evaluation of processes and/or outcomes (formative or summative).
- Be designed so that processes and/or outcomes will be evaluated to guide practice and policy.
- Demonstrate Clinical significance.
- Provide a foundation for future practice.

AACN (August 2015) White Paper, *Current Issues and Clarification Recommendations*

2. DNP PROJECT SERIES

Course Semester 1: NURS 8020 – 1 Practicum Credit/45 Hours
This is a 1 credit preparatory course where a problem or question is identified within the clinical system or agency. Students develop the goal of their project (to rectify the issue through quality improvement (QI) methods or answer a question through program evaluation (PE)) and synthesize the evidence for their interventions. During this course, a clinical mentor from the participating agency is identified. A team is formulated, and an affiliation agreement is completed between the College of Nursing and theproject site. Course-level learning outcomes are as follows:

- Match with and develop a relationship with a CON Faculty ProjectAdvisor.
- Determine a Project completion site and assure affiliation agreement with the agency or community partner where the project will occur.
- Develop a relationship with agency collaborators/preceptors to find a health system fit for the student's Project.
- Complete required trainings and modules (e.g., COMIRB, human subjects/ethics, IHI, program evaluation methods) to lay a methodological groundwork to build on in the subsequent courses in the Project Course Series.
- Develop and refine (with project advisor) Project aims, evaluation questions, and PICOT and/or SMART statements for framing the Project proposal.
- Build an evidence table of literature to support the significance of the proposed Project.

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Secure project site

Students are required to secure a site, or context, in which to implement their DNP Project during the DNP Project Prep course, NURS 8020 course. If, for example, the student is in the post baccalaureate to DNP track, and in training to become a CNS or Practitioner, consideration of issues related to the population of focus may be considered, such as family, pediatrics, informatics, women's health, etc. If the student does not have access to a site or context for the DNP Project, the DNP Program Director will be invaluable to help connect the student to potential ideas, and areas of needs for DNP projects. For DNP students who will be conducting the project in their place of employment, a letter of compliance with the institution's Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act regulation are required. Other institutional review board requirements may be needed e.g. ORRQIRP (Organizational Research Risk and Quality Improvement Review Panel) at CHCO, or other institutions IRB's. It is the students' responsibility to know what their organization requires and to submit to the CON documents showing that those requirements have been met.

Course Pair Semester 2 (NURS 8030/8035):
NURS 8030- 4 Practicum Credits/180 Hours

This is a 4 credit course where the student completes a background assessment of the agency and intervention through quality improvement measures such as root cause analysis (RCA), SWOT tools, and Driver Diagrams. The student then creates specific project measures. These measures include outcome measures, process measures, and balancing measures. Baseline data is collected. The official project proposal is presented and approved as non-human subjects research (ie. QI or PE) at the University of Colorado, College of Nursing. The proposal is created on a standard template provided to the student. Course-level learning outcomes are as follows:

- Discuss the role of the doctorally prepared nurse in clinical practice.
- Apply a conceptual model(s) to frame an innovative Project (i.e., quality improvement, program evaluation, health systems leadership).
- Appraise available evidence to determine intervention effectiveness.
- Implement ethical, caring, and culturally sensitive strategies when developing evidence-based doctoral Projects.
- Incorporate constructive feedback into Project development.

NURS 8035- 1 Credit Didactic

In this advanced course (taken concurrently with NURS 8030), students will focus on developing a DNP Project protocol proposal (the methods for Project implementation), which will be reviewed for ethical and regulatory oversight. A guiding framework will be used to plan organizational change in a specific practice setting or system. In this course, students will work with their DNP Faculty Advisor to complete the protocol proposal. The protocol will be submitted to the DNP Project Review Board, a COMIRB proxy. Course-level learning outcomes are as follows:

- Develop DNP Project methods that are congruent with ethics and regulatory oversight.
- Adopt/implement a guiding Project framework that attends to practice, population, or system readiness for change in a specified health care area.

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- Plan organizational change in a specific practice setting or system.

Presenting the Proposal
Once the written Project Proposal is reviewed and complete, the student arranges to do a Formal DNP Project Presentation Justification to the DNP Project Team. The date and time of the presentation will be prior to week 8 of NURS 8030/8035 and sign up dates will be made know in the course so faculty may be present to hear the presentation. The presentation should be approximately 1 hour and should summarize the project. The student should utilize the University of Colorado College of Nursing Power Point template for formatting the presentation slides. The DNP Project Team is responsible for the DNP Project Human Subjects Review form completion. The review will determine that the project is "not human subjects research." Students cannot begin any part of the project implementation until (1) all Human Subjects Review approvals are obtained and (2) the DNP Project Faculty Advisor gives permission. This should be completed prior to week 8 of NURS 8030/8035.

Course Pair Semester 3 (NURS 8040/8045):
NURS 8040- 3 Practicum Credits/135 Hours
This is a 3 credit course where students implement their quality interventions or program evaluations through small cycles of change (if using QI methods, this would consist of PDSA cycles). Students continue to meet with the team, the clinical mentor, and the agency to fully carry out the project. Execution of the project includes processes identified and approved in the proposal. Data collection for all identified measures is ongoing. Course-level learning outcomes are as follows:

- Examine theoretical concepts to improve the safety, quality, or effectiveness of health care delivery or patient outcomes.
- Develop strategies to advocate for the role of the doctorally prepared nurse in clinical practice.
- Evaluate various methods of disseminating the results of the clinically focused doctoral project.

NURS 8045 (DNP Seminar II), 1 credit

The didactic course will be taken concurrently with NURS 8040. Students will develop, implement, and assess the outcomes of small tests of change for their DNP project. Attention will be paid to integrating evaluation strategies into the students' specific practice setting or system. Online synchronous meetings will occur throughout the course. Course-level learning outcomes are as follows:

· Develop strategies to systematically evaluate small tests of change to meet DNP Project- specific aims.

· Integrate evaluation strategies into specific practice settings or systems.

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Course Semester 4: NURS 8050- 4 Practicum Credits/180 Hours
This is a 4 credit course where students complete the implementation of the DNP Project. Here, students conclude their data collection and proceed to data analysis and evaluation. The majority of projects will use quality improvement methods, such as run charts and control charts to assess change over time. Some projects may also use small statistical tests such as a paired t-test or Wilcoxon signed rank test. Students disseminate their work through a formal presentation at the College of Nursing, as well as a poster presentation and completion of a scholarly paper. Course-level learning outcomes are as follows:

- Disseminate findings of an innovative quality improvement (QI), program evaluation (PE), or clinically focused DNP Project.
- Evaluate the impact of the Project on the health policy development, specific practice settings, populations, or systems throughout Colorado and beyond.
- Advocate for the role of the doctorally prepared nurse in clinical settings.

The DNP Project findings must be disseminated in the academic setting and beyond. To meet the College of Nursing requirements, all DNP projects will be disseminated via (1) a final paper, (2) a presentation to the DNP Project Team, and (3) a Power Point that will be shared at the College of Nursing. The DNP student is strongly encouraged to move the final DNP Project paper into a manuscript that is suitable for publication. The final paper will be uploaded into the College of Nursing electronic repository. The DNP student is required to give a formal presentation of the DNP Project and its findings prior to graduation. The presentation is open to the public and must be scheduled and completed during the final semester.

  a. **Other Potential DNP Courses**

- **NURS 8000 (Variable Credit Course)**. Students who need doctoral practicum hours beyond the 540 provided in DNP Project Courses, will take this course with the needed number of credits. A DNP faculty advisor will work with students to fit the variable course credits for the doctoral practicum work into your academic program plan and develop a focus (inclusive of the various experiences) for this doctoral clinical practicum. 1,000 total clinical hours are required for DNP degree.

3. RELEVANT DNP PROJECT INFORMATION

a. Definitions

For the purposes of strengthening DNP student understanding, definitions have been provided herein with regard to "human subject research" as this can be confusing to DNP students who are conducting DNP projects that are based on research evidence but <u>are not research</u>. Research is defined as an activity that meets the definition of "research" and involves "human subjects" as defined either by the Common Rule or by FDA regulations. To assure to the Colorado Multiple Institutional Review Board (COMIRB) which approves and oversees research of all CU students and faculty a clear understanding of research is necessary; and all DNP project proposals are assessed to assure that they are <u>not</u> research.

Please note: If a DNP project is being conducted at a site not included in the COMIRB then an IRB application may be needed. This is the prerogative of the DNP project site. Developing and gaining approval to implement a DNP project may take several months and so students are strongly advised to inquire about this and begin work on the application early on. This requirement must be satisfied to implement a DNP project. If this delays project implementation, a student may need to restart the DNP project course series and experience consequential academic progression delays.

- <u>Research</u>. A systematic investigation, including development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities that meet this definition may be funded or unfunded; or may be conducted as a component of another program not usually considered research. For example, demonstration and service programs may include evaluation components, and may constitute research activities under this definition.

     For the purposes of this policy, a "systematic investigation" is an activity that involves a prospective study plan which incorporates data collection, both quantitative and qualitative, and data analysis to answer a study question.

     Investigations designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge are those designed to draw general conclusions (i.e., knowledge gained from a study may be applied to populations outside of the specific study population), inform policy, or generalize findings.

     Research as defined by FDA regulations means any experiment that involves a test article and one or more human subjects, and that either must meet the requirements for prior submission to the Food and Drug Administration under section 505(i) or 520(g) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, or need not meet the requirements for prior submission to the Food and Drug Administration under these sections of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, but the results of which are intended to be later submitted to, or held for inspection by, the Food and Drug Administration as part of an application for a research or marketing permit. The

terms research, clinical research, clinical study, study, and clinical investigation are synonymous for purposes of FDA regulations. [21 CFR 50.3(c), 21 CFR 56.102(c)]

- o Experiments that must meet the requirements for prior submission to the Food and Drug Administration under section 505(i) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act means any use of a drug other than the use of an approved drug in the course of medical practice. [21 CFR 3 12.3(b)]
- o Experiments that must meet the requirements for prior submission to the Food and Drug Administration under section 520(g) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act means any activity that evaluates the safety or effectiveness of a device. [21 CFR 812.2(a)]
- o Any activity in which results are being submitted to or held for inspection by FDA as part of an application for a research or marketing permit is considered to be FDA-regulated research. [21 CFR 50.3(c), 21 CFR 56.102(c)].

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- *Quality Improvement/Quality Assurance*. Quality improvement activities are generally pursued in order to evaluate existing local practices with a goal of documenting and correcting deficiencies. <u>If the goal of a project is to determine success/effectiveness or failure of a given program or process and the information gained from that evaluation is used to improve the program, this is not considered research involving human subjects,</u> even when information is collected in a systematic way, because the results of this type of activity are not considered applicable to populations other than those under evaluation (generalizability). Publication or presentation is allowed but results must not be described as or inferred to be generalizable to a broader population, i.e., they may not be described as research results.

  If, however, quality improvement activities involving human subjects are used to test novel services or programs for effectiveness and are presented in a more global fashion or applied to a broader population they should be considered research involving human subjects.

  For example: efforts to assess current clinic practices within a hospital (i.e., local) and to modify those practices to improve effectiveness would not meet the federal definition of research even though the evaluations collected data in a systematic manner. Presentation within the local environment (i.e., to the hospital staff) and publication of the results would be acceptable, so long as results are described as quality improvement and application of the findings is clearly limited to the location where they were found. If, however, results are presented outside of the local environment at a national meeting or published in a journal using language that <u>seeks to generalize results beyond the locality</u> of the project or that describes the study as research, the study would be considered human subject research and need review by the relevant IRB. Another example of research subject to IRB review would be efforts to assess current clinical practices of a number of local, unrelated entities and the aggregation of all these efforts to support a change in clinical practice beyond the local. As to each local organization, the assessment might constitute quality improvement, but when the results are aggregated to support a more generalizable recommendation, OHRP has determined that the aggregation of separate quality improvement activities constitutes research.

- *Program Evaluation*. Program evaluation is the inquiry into past, present, and potential programs to understand or clarify their needs, working processes, or impact. <u>When the purpose of the evaluation is to provide feedback to the program and/or funder to improve that program, the activity is not human subject research and does not need IRB review and/or approval</u>. Presentation of findings to the program and its funders and publication of the results would be acceptable, so long as results are described as program evaluation efforts and are clearly limited to the program to which they apply and are not described as research. Program evaluation is considered human subjects research when the intent is to contribute to generalizable knowledge. If results are presented or published using language that seeks to generalize results beyond the program studied, the study would be considered human subject research and would need review by the relevant IRB.

Examples of evaluations that would be considered research and need human subjects review include: 1) dissemination of evaluations connected to outcomes to affect the development or implementation of other programs similar in nature; and 2) evaluation undertaken to test a new, modified, or previously untested intervention, service, or program to determine whether it is effective *and can be used elsewhere.*

Even when DNP Project activities constitute quality improvement or program evaluation, it is expected that the gathering of data from human subjects through direct or indirect interaction will done with the highest level of regard for the protection of human subjects and in accord with ethical standards.

E. APPLICATION FOR DNP DEGREE CONFERRAL

1. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Graduation from the CON DNP program requires the following:

- Completion of all course work with a required minimum GPA and course grades as outlined in the CON Core Student Handbook.
- Completion of a minimum of 1,000 doctoral practicum hours.
- Successful completion and presentation of the culminating DNP Project and DNP Portfolio.

2. DIPLOMA APPLICATION

The candidate must complete a Diploma Application according to deadlines specified and announced (i.e., each semester [Fall, Spring, Summer] has its own unique deadline) by the CU Anschutz Medical Campus Office of the Registrar. Students who miss their appropriate deadline must wait until the next semester to graduate. Awarding of diplomas and hooding ceremonies occur at the CON Convocation ceremonies in December and May of each year.

3. DEGREE APPLICATION

The Degree Application is the CON mechanism for tracking student progress in the DNP program. It must be completed by the deadline specified each semester by the Office of Academic Programs. To access the Degree Application, please request a copy from the Graduate Program Office well in advance of the submission due date. If the Degree Application is not completed and submitted by the specified deadline, the student may not graduate and/or receive his/her degree in the expected timeframe.