

# NURSING PRACTICE, DNP

The School of Nursing Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program prepares nurses for roles as advanced practice nurses (clinical nurse specialists or nurse practitioners) and leaders in the field. The DNP program features a combination of formal coursework, clinical practice, practica experiences, and scholarly inquiry.

Students in the DNP program choose from the following named options (tracks):

- Adult/Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-adult-gerontology-acute-care-nurse-practitioner-dnp/>) (Hybrid course delivery)
- Adult/Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-adult-gerontology-clinical-nurse-specialist-dnp/>) (Hybrid course delivery)
- Adult/Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-adult-gerontology-primary-care-nurse-practitioner-dnp/>) (Hybrid course delivery)
- Pediatric Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-pediatric-primary-care-nurse-practitioner-dnp/>) (Hybrid course delivery)
- Population Health Nursing (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-population-health-nursing-dnp/>) (Online course delivery)
- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-psychiatric-mental-health-nurse-practitioner-dnp/>) (Hybrid course delivery)
- Systems Leadership and Innovation (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-systems-leadership-innovation-dnp/>) (Online course delivery)

The program is available for nurses with a baccalaureate degree in nursing (post-BS option) and nurses with a master's degree in Nursing or relevant area (post-MS option). Students who have a master's degree in Nursing and are licensed as an advanced practice nurse, must select a named option (listed above) and choose a tailored course plan in one of the following areas:

- Educational Leadership
- Expert Practice
- Leadership

Those interested in advancing nursing education may pursue the Nurse Educator Certificate (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nurse-educator-graduate-professional-certificate/>).

## ADMISSIONS

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Students apply to the Doctor of Nursing Practice through one of the named options:

- Adult/Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-adult-gerontology-acute-care-nurse-practitioner-dnp/>)
- Adult/Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-adult-gerontology-clinical-nurse-specialist-dnp/>)
- Adult/Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-adult-gerontology-primary-care-nurse-practitioner-dnp/>)
- Pediatric Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-pediatric-primary-care-nurse-practitioner-dnp/>)
- Population Health Nursing (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-population-health-nursing-dnp/>)
- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-psychiatric-mental-health-nurse-practitioner-dnp/>)
- Systems Leadership and Innovation (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-systems-leadership-innovation-dnp/>)

## FUNDING

### FUNDING GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

The Bursar's Office provides information about tuition and fees associated with being a graduate student. Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information is available from the Graduate School.

Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

### PROGRAM RESOURCES

Prospective students should see the program website for funding information. (<https://nursing.wisc.edu/financial-support/>)

## REQUIREMENTS

### MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum degree requirements (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#requirementstext>) and policies (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiestext>), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

## MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

### CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

#### Requirement Detail

Minimum Credit Requirement	See Named Options below for policy information.
Minimum Residence Credit Requirement	32 credits
Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement	Half of degree coursework must be completed graduate-level coursework. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement policy: <a href="https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244">https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244</a> ( <a href="https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/">https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/</a> ).
Overall Graduate GPA Requirement	3.00 GPA required. Refer to the Graduate School: Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement policy: <a href="https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203">https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203</a> ( <a href="https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203/">https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203/</a> ).
Other Grade Requirements	A student may not receive more than one grade below a B (or a U grade) in any 12 month period.
Assessments and Examinations	Students must complete a scholarly project, which represents the culmination of a student's doctoral education. This project is a paper of publishable quality. Students must deliver an oral presentation to faculty, students, and the community.
Language Requirements	No language requirements.
Graduate School Breadth Requirement	DNP students are not required to complete a doctoral minor or graduate/professional certificate.

### REQUIRED COURSES

Select a Named Option (p. 2) for required courses.

### NAMED OPTIONS

A named option is a formally documented sub-major within an academic major program. Named options appear on the transcript with degree conferral. Students pursuing the Doctor of Nursing Practice must select one of the named options:

View as listView as grid

- **NURSING PRACTICE: ADULT/GERONTOLOGY ACUTE CARE NURSE PRACTITIONER, DNP** ([HTTPS://GUIDE.WISC.EDU/GRADUATE/NURSING-SCHOOL-WIDE/NURSING-PRACTICE-DNP/NURSING-PRACTICE-ADULT-GERONTOLOGY-ACUTE-CARE-NURSE-PRACTITIONER-DNP/](https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-adult-gerontology-acute-care-nurse-practitioner-dnp/))
- **NURSING PRACTICE: ADULT/GERONTOLOGY CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST, DNP** ([HTTPS://GUIDE.WISC.EDU/GRADUATE/NURSING-SCHOOL-WIDE/NURSING-PRACTICE-DNP/NURSING-PRACTICE-ADULT-GERONTOLOGY-CLINICAL-NURSE-SPECIALIST-DNP/](https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-adult-gerontology-clinical-nurse-specialist-dnp/))
- **NURSING PRACTICE: ADULT/GERONTOLOGY PRIMARY CARE NURSE PRACTITIONER, DNP** ([HTTPS://GUIDE.WISC.EDU/GRADUATE/NURSING-SCHOOL-WIDE/NURSING-PRACTICE-DNP/NURSING-PRACTICE-ADULT-GERONTOLOGY-PRIMARY-CARE-NURSE-PRACTITIONER-DNP/](https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-adult-gerontology-primary-care-nurse-practitioner-dnp/))
- **NURSING PRACTICE: PEDIATRIC PRIMARY CARE NURSE PRACTITIONER** ([HTTPS://GUIDE.WISC.EDU/GRADUATE/NURSING-SCHOOL-WIDE/NURSING-PRACTICE-DNP/NURSING-PRACTICE-PEDIATRIC-PRIMARY-CARE-NURSE-PRACTITIONER-DNP/](https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-pediatric-primary-care-nurse-practitioner-dnp/))
- **NURSING PRACTICE: POPULATION HEALTH NURSING, DNP** ([HTTPS://GUIDE.WISC.EDU/GRADUATE/NURSING-SCHOOL-WIDE/NURSING-PRACTICE-DNP/NURSING-PRACTICE-POPULATION-HEALTH-NURSING-DNP/](https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-population-health-nursing-dnp/))
- **NURSING PRACTICE: PSYCHIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH NURSE PRACTITIONER, DNP** ([HTTPS://GUIDE.WISC.EDU/GRADUATE/NURSING-SCHOOL-WIDE/NURSING-PRACTICE-DNP/NURSING-PRACTICE-PSYCHIATRIC-MENTAL-HEALTH-NURSE-PRACTITIONER-DNP/](https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-psychiatric-mental-health-nurse-practitioner-dnp/))
- **NURSING PRACTICE: SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION, DNP** ([HTTPS://GUIDE.WISC.EDU/GRADUATE/NURSING-SCHOOL-WIDE/NURSING-PRACTICE-DNP/NURSING-PRACTICE-SYSTEMS-LEADERSHIP-INNOVATION-DNP/](https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-systems-leadership-innovation-dnp/))

- Adult/Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/nursing-school-wide/nursing-practice-dnp/nursing-practice-adult-gerontology-acute-care-nurse-practitioner-dnp/>)
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6. Use information systems technology to monitor health, identify needs, and evaluate outcomes of care and system improvements. (Essential 4)
7. Translate knowledge into practice and policy to protect and improve health and health systems. (Essential 5)
8. Partner with intraprofessional and interprofessional teams to contribute nursing perspective and lead change in health outcomes and complex systems of care. (Essential 6)
9. Critically evaluate how social determinants of health, cultural background and environment impact health outcomes. (Essential 7)
10. Develop, implement, and evaluate programs and advanced practice interventions to improve health, access patterns, and gaps in care of individuals, aggregates, or populations. (Essential 8)

## ACCREDITATION

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Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.aacnursing.org/CCNE/>)

Accreditation status: Accredited. Next accreditation review: 2026-2027.

## CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE

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In addition to earning a doctoral degree, post-BS graduates of the nurse practitioner and clinical nurse specialist options are prepared to sit for professional nursing certification examinations (<https://students.nursing.wisc.edu/graduate-advising/licensure-certification/>) upon successful completion of the program.

### PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE DISCLOSURE (NC-SARA)

The United States Department of Education (via 34 CFR Part 668 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-VI/part-668/?toc=1>)) requires institutions that provide distance education to disclose information for programs leading to professional certification or licensure. The expectation is that institutions will determine whether each applicable academic program meets state professional licensure requirements and provide a general disclosure of such on an official university website.

Professional licensure requirements vary from state-to-state and can change year-to-year; they are established in a variety of state statutes, regulations, rules, and policies; and they center on a range of educational requirements, including degree type, specialized accreditation, total credits, specific courses, and examinations.

UW-Madison has taken reasonable efforts to determine whether this program satisfies the educational requirements for certification/licensure in states where prospective and enrolled students are located and is disclosing that information as follows.

Disclaimer: This information is based on the most recent annual review of state agency certification/licensure data and is subject to change. All students are strongly encouraged to consult with the individual/office listed in the Contact Information box on this page and with the applicable state agency for specific information.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (<https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/>) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

### PROGRAM RESOURCES

Career advising, funding, and professional development opportunities are shared with all students by a member of the School of Nursing Academic Affairs staff. Information on these support services can be found on the Student Site (<https://students.nursing.wisc.edu/career-advising/career/>).

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

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1. Integrate nursing science and theory with evidence, ethics, professional obligations, and knowledge from other disciplines as the basis for specialty-focused advanced nursing practice. (Essential 1)
2. Demonstrate advanced levels of clinical judgment, systems thinking, leadership, and accountability in designing, delivering, and evaluating evidence-based care to improve individual and population health outcomes (Essentials 2 and 8)
3. Evaluate evidence to determine & implement best practice (Essential 3)
4. Develop, implement, and evaluate new practice approaches based on nursing science and theory, as well as knowledge from other disciplines. (Essential 3)
5. Function as a practice specialist in clinical scholarship, quality improvement, and collaborative knowledge-generating research. (Essential 3)

**The requirements of this program meet certification/  
licensure in the following states:**

Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut,  
Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas,  
Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan,  
Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, Ohio,  
Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington, Wisconsin, District of Columbia, Guam,  
Northern Mariana Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands

**The requirements of this program do not meet  
certification/licensure in the following states:**

Not applicable

Updated: 1 June 2025