DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree is for nurses who are interested in an advanced nursing practice role as a family nurse practitioner (FNP) and nurse leader in healthcare systems. The DNP-FNP curriculum is based on the guidelines and competencies established by the Colorado Board of Nursing, American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), and the National Task Force for Quality Nurse Practitioner Education (NTF). DNP graduates are prepared as experts in the delivery of direct patient care and in health systems evaluation. The DNP program prepares students to take the national FNP certifying examination and to be eligible for licensure as an FNP. Courses are delivered via an on-line format allowing students to reside in their home communities. However, students may choose to travel to complete clinical hours (e.g., rural health), objective standardized clinical exams (OSCEs), and graduate program student intensive (GPSI) sessions. The DNP program requires students to complete a minimum of 1000 clinical hours, approximately 80% of which are direct patient care in primary care settings. Approximately 20% of clinical hours may be indirect care, including simulation experiences and hours spent during the DNP scholarly project.

Admission to the University does not guarantee admission to the program. The DNP program is accredited by the CCNE.

Coursework includes advanced pharmacology, advanced pathophysiology, advanced health assessment, primary care across the lifespan (pediatrics, adults, older adults), rural/underserved populations, quality improvement, health policy, leadership, and health systems change. The last four semesters of the program include the DNP scholarly project. The scholarly project requires students to develop, implement, and evaluate a primary care-focused intervention to address a clinical gap in practice. Students present their scholarly project publicly and submit their original work for publication at the conclusion of the doctoral program.

Admission to the DNP-FNP Program

Students must have the following for the duration of their time in the Graduate Nursing Program.

- Unencumbered registered nurse (RN) license from a US state or territory.
- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for health care providers.
- Malpractice insurance as a nurse practitioner student.
- Criminal background check.
- Drug screen.
- Current immunizations. Exemptions are accepted by the program, based on the state of Colorado’s policies outlined at https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/vaccine-exemptions. Immunization status may be evaluated by health care organizations prior to student placement.
- Evidence of training for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- Evidence of training in cultural competency.

General Policies

Up to nine credit hours may be taken as a non-degree seeking status and later applied to program requirements. Up to 18 credits of applicable courses, with a grade of “B” or higher, may be transferred from an accredited institution. Additional information may be found in the Transfer Credit section.

Requirements

Program of Study

See Doctor of Nursing Practice - Family Nurse Practitioner (DNP-FNP) for information on program requirements.