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 health care systems. The DNP-FNP curriculum is based on the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's (AACN) Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice, the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculty's (NONPF) Independent Practice Competencies and Primary Care Competencies for Family Nurse Practitioners. DNP graduates are prepared as experts in the delivery of primary care, with a focus on critical thinking, leadership, and public policy skills needed to advocate for and create changes in healthcare practice at individual and aggregate levels. Admission to the University does not guarantee admission to the program.

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 online format allowing students to reside in their home communities. The DNP program includes a minimum of 1000 clinical hours, approximately 80% of which are completed in primary care settings. Approximately 20% of clinical hours are completed in specialty settings and during the Scholarly Project. Students may complete most clinical hours in their home communities, but may need to travel for specialized clinical experiences (e.g. rural health care settings), graduate program student intensives (GPSIs), and observed standardized clinical exams (OSCEs).

Course work includes advanced pharmacology, advanced pathophysiology, advanced health assessment, primary care of adults, pediatrics, and older adults, and rural health. Students take courses in health care quality, policy, and ethics, epidemiology, evidence-based practice, and statistics. The last four semesters of the program include the DNP Scholarly Project during which students 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 their 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.
- Negative 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 (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) (http://catalog.coloradomesa.edu/areas-study/nursing/doctor-nursing-practice-family-nurse-practitioner-dnp-fnp/) for information on program requirements.