



3.1 CURRICULUM AND COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Prerequisite Policy

The student is responsible for having the appropriate prerequisites prior to enrollment in a course. The current prerequisites are indicated with each course description in the University Catalog. If the student does not have the appropriate prerequisites for a course, registration for the course will be cancelled.

MSN requires: undergraduate human pathophysiology, nursing research, and health assessment courses with a grade of "C" or higher. In addition, healthcare informatics and graduate level inferential statistics with a grade of "B-" or higher before the program begins.

BSN to DNP requires: undergraduate human pathophysiology, nursing research, and health assessment courses with a grade of "C" or higher. In addition, healthcare informatics and graduate-level inferential statistics with a grade of "B-" or higher.

Post-Master's requires: graduate human pathophysiology, graduate health assessment, graduate pharmacology, graduate epidemiology, graduate-level inferential statistics, and healthcare informatics, with a grade of "B-" or higher before the program begins.

Any questions concerning the prerequisites will be answered by consulting the current catalog or contacting the Graduate Program Director.

Curriculum and Course Descriptions

The Doctor of Nursing Practice course requirements and descriptions can be found online at <https://graduate.missouristate.edu/Catalog/prog-doctor-of-nursing-practice.htm>

The Master of Science in Nursing course requirements and descriptions can be found online at <https://graduate.missouristate.edu/Catalog/prog-nursing.htm>



3.2 GRADUATE PROJECTS

DNP Overview

The DNP project is an exciting opportunity for the DNP student to demonstrate leadership, communication, project management, and teamwork skills in the development and implementation of a systems-level change in a healthcare system. DNP projects are a form of translational research which involves the application of evidence-based practices to transform a system and improve healthcare outcomes of a patient population. Under the guidance of a project chair and project committee, and in consultation with a preceptor, the student will form relationships with key stakeholders, analyze the system/setting, identify a clinical problem, perform a needs assessment, and gather baseline data about the problem at the facility. The student will conduct an extensive review of the literature to identify evidence-based interventions(s) to be implemented to improve the problem. The project is planned, implemented, and completed collaboratively with stakeholders. This collaboration includes the development of outcome measures, implementation of the change, and data collection. As project leader, the student assumes primary responsibility for all phases of the project, including the evaluation of post implementation data, and dissemination of the results.

As part of the application to the DNP program, the student will write an essay identifying a potential translational research project idea. Students are strongly encouraged to develop and implement projects within a system in which they are already engaged or have well-developed connections. The essay will identify the proposed site, the proposed change to be implemented, a summary of the research evidence that supports the intervention or change, and the name of a possible preceptor at the site.

Examples of previous DNP projects	Examples of unacceptable projects
Integrating autism screening into well child visits in a primary care clinic.	An educational program to educate nursing students.
Implementation of an evidence-based health teaching intervention aimed at aiding in the recovery from acute myocardial infarction.	A health policy change as the main focus.
Implementation of a pressure ulcer prevention protocol within a nursing home facility.	The development of a new assessment or treatment algorithm. However, it can be part of a project but not the sole purpose.



Implementation of an injury prevention program in an elementary school.	A review of literature of a selected topic with production of an article. Note: all projects will include a review of literature and production of an article, but more is involved in a DNP project.
Implementation of evidence-based interventions to decrease the rate of post-surgical infection within a hospital unit.	Development of a website as the sole purpose of the project.
Implementation of interventions to decrease post-op nausea and vomiting for surgical patients.	Projects that cannot be measured or evaluated.
Development and implementation of a smoking cessation program for women on a college campus.	

Considerations for the DNP Translational Research Projects

According to AACN (2014) all DNP projects should:

- a. Focus on implementing an evidence-based change that impacts healthcare outcomes
- b. Have a systems (micro-, meso-, or macro- level) or population/aggregate focus.
- c. Demonstrate implementation in the appropriate arena or area of practice.
- d. Include formative or summative evaluation of processes and/or outcomes.
- e. Include a plan for sustainability (e.g. financial, systems or political realities, not only theoretical abstractions).
- f. Provide a foundation for future practice scholarship.

Characteristics of a DNP project:

- a. Having a documented need in the system
- b. Having support and enthusiasm from the administration and others at the health care facility
- c. Is evidence-based and data-driven.
- d. Involves a systems level change to improve healthcare outcomes.
- e. Addresses most of the six aims for quality improvement: safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable (Crossing the Quality Chasm Report, 2001; Institute of Medicine).



- f. Uses standard research processes (including a review of literature, problem identification, formation of research questions, selection of study design, sampling, data collection, and data analysis methods).
- g. Is approved by the MSU Institutional Review Board (IRB).
- h. Addresses a health or healthcare disparity.
- i. Enables the student to develop and use skills in leadership, communication, and teamwork when planning, implementing, evaluating, and sustaining the evidence-based practice change within the healthcare system.
- j. Can be completed within in a time frame that will allow for a large sample size and sufficient time for evaluation of outcomes.
- k. Is feasible in terms of time commitment, resources, and costs needed to implement and sustain the change.
- l. Will culminate in a publishable journal manuscript, a formal oral presentation, and a portfolio of student work.

Publishing and Presenting the DNP Project

It is expected that the DNP project (or an aspect of the findings) will be disseminated through professional conference presentations and submitted for publication in a scholarly journal. For each presentation or manuscript, deciding who will be listed as primary presenter or author should be negotiated before submission to a venue. Several factors need to be considered when deciding primary authorship, including those who initially had the idea to pursue the venue, and who will do the majority of the work to get the article or presentation ready for submission. DNP Committee members may be solicited as additional co-authors, if they have or are willingly to contribute significantly to the form of the work that is being submitted.

DNP Project Defense

Students are required to defend their DNP project with their chair and committee present. The preceptor is also welcome to attend. During this meeting, the student will present a PowerPoint presentation of their DNP project.



MSN Project Overview

Students work collaboratively with SON faculty to develop and implement a MSN Capstone Project. The final paper reflects the culminating work completed in the MSN program. This experience provides an opportunity for MSN students to apply the essential skills needed for MSN graduates. The MSN prepares nurses for progression towards a doctoral degree (DNP as the clinical degree or PhD as the research degree).

Upon admission students will be asked to decide on a project topic. Students will be assigned a chair early in the graduate curriculum. Students must complete the project requirements in order to graduate.

Considerations for the MSN Capstone Project

The MSN Capstone Project guided by the faculty, allows students to address an identified need or problem and activate the knowledge and skills gained in all MSN coursework to improve educational or clinical outcomes. The final written project and presentation must address a patient, system, educational problem, or development of a toolkit, include a thorough review of the literature, project application, and/or product. The student should work with his or her project chair to determine the type of project.

Options for MSN Capstone Project

- Evidence-based practice guidelines/practice – identify a relevant practice or education problem that does not currently have strong EBP guidelines in place. Develop and make recommendations for practice guidelines/toolkit based on a thorough search and analysis of current evidence.
- Education project: Develop, deliver, and evaluate an evidence-based instructional plan for students, patients, health care professionals, faculty, care units, or organizations.
- Collaborate on a research study: Students work with faculty and/or other researchers to complete a selected component of an ongoing approved research project.



The MSN Capstone Project is guided by a critical review of literature relevant to the discipline of nursing, healthcare, and the student's chosen advanced practice area. The MSN Capstone Project should be grounded in theory and research. A thorough review of literature is essential in providing rationale and significance of the problem and discussion of the "who, what, where, why, and how." The integrated literature review will identify quality and strengths, as well as limitations or gaps in the evidence as related to the purpose of the capstone project.

Completed capstone projects could be written using a scholarly research manuscript format called IMRAD, which stands for Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion. Most published research manuscripts will follow the IMRAD structure as well as use reporting guidelines such as, Standards for Quality Improvement Reporting Excellence (SQUIRE) to enhance publication quality. The basic format will include an Introduction, which includes an overview of the problem and its significance, and a brief integrative literature review. The Methods section includes research questions, study design, sample size, inclusion/exclusion criteria, sampling methods, setting, and the plan for data collection and plan for data analysis. In the Results section, the demographics of the study sample and the findings for each research question are presented. The Discussion section compares and contrasts the study findings to those reported in the literature, identifies the implications of the findings for nursing, the limitations of the study and findings, and a conclusion. An appropriate reporting guideline should be followed for the type of research study conducted.

The completed capstone paper will contain information on the research questions, study design, methods, including sample and sampling methods, setting, data collection or implementation, and analysis. The discussion and limitations section should compare findings to the literature, identify specific practice challenges, limitations, and the significance of the project to nursing practice.

The MSN Capstone Courses will allow students to develop each section of the capstone paper as the project is planned, implemented, evaluated and culminates in dissemination of the study. The components may include 1) writing literature reviews; 2) developing the research proposal; 3) submitting the study for IRB approval; 4) recruiting participants and obtaining consent; 5) collecting data; 6) analyzing and interpreting data; or 7) developing presentations and papers disseminating research findings and functioning as a member of the research team.



3.3 FINAL COMPETENCIES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

The purpose of MSN and DNP competencies is to demonstrate understanding of the master's and doctoral level competencies as provided by the standards and guidelines of professional bodies. Students will demonstrate these competencies by the end of their program.

Comprehensive Exam

All graduate degrees are required to conduct a culminating assessment of student learning. Some graduate programs do this in the context of a capstone course, and others require that students pass a comprehensive examination in order to be awarded a degree. Comprehensive examinations vary in format and structure, as well as the times they are administered.

Students are required to complete a comprehensive exam to determine critical analysis and integration of content learned throughout your graduate program. The Graduate Project Presentation and Project Manuscript will serve as your comprehensive exam. Students in the BSN to DNP and MSN-FNP option will be required to complete a clinical comprehensive examination for the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) requirements.

The Graduate Project Presentation will serve as the project defense and comps, students are required to come to campus to present their project to their peers and future graduate nursing students.



3.4 CLINICAL GUIDELINES

While representing the university you are expected to comply with the professional dress as outlined below and any dress code defined by the clinical site:

Jewelry

Professional judgement should be utilized in the decision to wear jewelry. No facial jewelry is allowed. Rings should be confined to those that will not scratch the patient and can be kept clean. Body piercing jewelry, other than earrings, must be removed or concealed with clothing.

Hair

Hair, beards, and mustaches are to be clean and neat.

Cosmetics

No strongly scented body products. The student will be removed from the clinical setting if you smell like smoke or other strong odor. Fingernails will be clean, short, and smooth to ensure patient and student safety. Nail polish that is free from chips may be worn.

Tattoo Policy

Tattoos that are visible should be covered while in the clinical agency or during any school-related clinical activity. In addition, all members of the university community must follow the MSU Nondiscrimination Policy, and all students must follow the Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities, both of which prohibit harassment and/or discrimination.

In those cases, in which a clinical site has stricter guidelines regarding tattoos, the clinical site's guidelines will be followed for students at that site.

Substance Abuse/Impairment Policy

The Missouri State University School of Nursing is committed to a legal, professional, and ethical responsibility to provide a safe teaching and learning for its students, guests and clients. Abuse of drugs and alcohol disrupts this environment and interferes with the academic environment. Nursing students must not be chemically impaired while participating in any learning experience, including those occurring in a classroom, laboratory, or clinical setting. The School of Nursing defines the chemically impaired student as a person who, while in the academic or clinical setting, is abusing, separately or in combination: alcohol, over the counter medication, illegal drugs, prescribed medications, inhalants, or synthetic designer drugs. Abuse of substances includes episodic misuse or chronic use that has produced psychological and/or physical symptom.



Nursing students are expected to be aware of and to abide by pertinent laws and regulations set forth by the federal and state governments, the university, and clinical agencies where practical experiences are sought. Unlawful possession, use, or distribution of drugs and/or alcohol by students is strictly prohibited. Violations may result in dismissal from the nursing program.

Procedure for Faculty Intervention with Impaired Students

When there is reasonable suspicion or cause to believe a student is or has recently been under the influence of any drug or alcohol, the student will be removed from the clinical or academic setting. The faculty will direct the student to submit to drug/alcohol testing and sign a consent form agreeing to submit to such testing. Failure to agree to such testing shall be sufficient cause and the student will receive an 'F' for the course and/or clinical, and not progress in the program. The refusal for testing will be documented on the consent form and witnessed by the faculty.

Within one hour of completing the consent form, the student shall report to an approved lab, which uses the chain of custody procedure for blood and/or urine testing. A University representative will verify the student's identity prior to specimen collection. The student may not drive a motor vehicle to this lab or from the lab to home. The student will be responsible for all transportation costs, as well as any costs associated with the blood and/or urine testing for drugs or alcohol. The student may not attend class or clinical activities until the results of the blood and/or the Director of School of Nursing has reviewed urine testing. The results will be kept confidential and will be reported to the School Director, Program Director, and reporting faculty. The Director of the School of Nursing and/or Program Director will meet with the student to discuss the behaviors, results, and sanctions. A positive blood and/or urine drug screen will result in dismissal from the nursing program.

If the student location or time of day prohibits drug testing within the required time frame, the student will be removed from clinical based on observed unprofessional behaviors and the Policy on Professionalism and Professional Conduct will be enforced.

Discretion must be given to the faculty in recognizing the usual signs and symptoms of drug and/or alcohol use. The following is a list of possible signs and symptoms.

- Frequent absences from class, clinical or lab and/or disappearance from such
- Isolation and withdrawal
- Patient care errors particularly medication errors
- Detectable odor of alcohol
- Increasingly poor decision and judgment



- Illogical or sloppy charting
 - Unusual accidents/incidents

 - Deteriorating personal appearance
 - Changes in motor function/behavioral patterns including personality changes, mood swings, illogical thought patterns, gait disturbances, impaired dexterity, slurred speech, drowsiness/sleepiness, and papillary changes
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MSU School of Nursing Student Impairment Consent Form

Due to the following behaviors, you are being removed from the course and/or clinical setting until the results of blood and/or the School of Nursing Head has analyzed urine drug screen.

I consent to a blood and/or urine drug screen at a facility designated by the School of Nursing within one hour. Current time: _____

1. I will not drive myself to the screening facility or home after the screening.
2. It is my responsibility to pay for the drug screen and transportation.
3. I will consent for the results to be sent to the School Head or designated representative.

Complete Student Name

Date

Faculty

Date

I refuse a blood and/or urine drug screen. I acknowledge that refusal of the screening will result in immediate dismissal from the nursing program.

Student Name

Date

Faculty

Date



Clinical Experiences for Graduate Students

Each student will receive a clinical syllabus that relates to their specific program. Please reach out to the Program Director with any questions regarding clinical experiences.

Clinical Sites

Many factors are considered when determining student clinical assignments, including clinic volume, patient demographics, previous student and clinical faculty evaluations of the site and the preceptor, the geographic location, and the number of other students at the location.

The clinical site must provide an environment in which the students can meet the learning objectives for the specific clinical course. Student requirements include ample space for the student to work, patient volume and willingness to allow student practice, and supportive staff to assist in student success. Due to NONPF, CCNE and course objectives, clinical sites assignments are not allowed to be changed unless deemed necessary at the discretion of the MSU clinical faculty and Program Director.

Preceptors

Preceptors are selected to provide the student with the best clinical experience to meet the clinical course objectives and improve their clinical skills and exposure to procedures. Preceptor requirements will vary per program and course. Please refer to specific course requirements.

Minimum requirements to be an MSU preceptor:

- For NPs: NP (certified in area of clinical practice) or Physician.
- Minimum one year of experience in specialty of certification; three years preferred.
- Active, unencumbered medical or nursing license in state of practice and recognition as an APRN, if an NP.

Clinical supervisors maintain contact with preceptors via electronic communication, personal site visits, and phone calls. Every preceptor that has a student will have communication with the university faculty each semester. Contact information for the student and clinical supervisor is provided to the preceptor in a confirmation email prior to the beginning of the semester. Before clinical begins, the student is required to contact the preceptor to review:

- Faculty-approved clinical objectives.
- Student and faculty emergency contact information.
- Optimal clinical days for the student to come to clinic.



All new preceptors are provided with a brief PowerPoint “orientation” sent via email. It contains an overview of the expectations and defines the role and responsibilities of the preceptor as determined by the clinical faculty at MSU. They also must complete and sign the electronic preceptor agreement.

Requirements for Students to Begin Clinical Rotations

- Submit evidence of current immunizations or immune status (MMR, Tetanus, Varicella, Hepatitis B series) and a PPD/T-spot (or chest X-ray or documentation of appropriate follow up for PPD positive individuals). Annual influenza vaccination. Individual agencies may have additional requirements. These must stay current until graduation.
- Pass drug screen and background check without disqualifying offenses.
- Complete MSU HIPAA Training.
- Professional Liability insurance for \$3 million (aggregate)/\$1 million (per incident).
- Maintain health insurance until graduation and certification in BLS Healthcare Provider Course approved by the AHA.
- Completed blood borne pathogen module annually in August.
- Signed preceptor agreement and clinical objectives.

Some clinical sites may require a student to complete a security check or other procedures before beginning a clinical rotation. Students who fail these procedures and checks will be subject to further review by a School of Nursing faculty committee and dismissal from the program may result.

Please see the clinical syllabus in each clinical course for details.