

Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A university is a community of scholars having as its central purpose the enrichment of the human mind. Within this community, the Doctor of Philosophy program in nursing seeks to prepare scholars who will advance nursing knowledge.

Scholarly achievement in nursing is accomplished in a spirit of free inquiry directed toward a better understanding of human existence, especially in relation to health and illness. Nurse scholars participate in the study of particular phenomena and in the identification of central domains related to these phenomena. This requires that students be well informed about advanced practice in professional nursing. Nursing knowledge is advanced through association with other disciplines and is often enhanced by the work of other university scholars. Central to the education of nurse scholars is the opportunity to interact with other scholars throughout the university community. Through dialogue and study with these professionals, nurse scholars expand their understanding of health and illness and the biological, environmental, sociocultural, ethical, legal, philosophic and historic factors influencing nursing care. Scholars must be inquisitive, informed and committed. This requires expertise in the principles and methods of inquiry and an informed imagination for exploring substantive areas in nursing. The ultimate goal of this inquiry is to enhance nursing's contribution to the health of all persons.

All Ph.D. in Nursing students are awarded two years of full scholarship.

PROGRAM FORMAT

- 49 credits for those with a Master's degree.
- Accelerated format: Nursing classes on Tuesday/Wednesdays. Most students complete coursework in 20 months of study.
- Non-accelerated format: Nursing classes meet one day a week. Most students complete coursework in 36 months of study.
- BSN-to-PhD program option

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The major purpose of the doctoral program in nursing is to prepare scholars with expertise in selected substantive areas who will contribute to nursing theory and practice through systematic inquiry.

Aims of the doctoral program in nursing are to prepare scholars who will:

- Engage in scholarly pursuits and independent research.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of nursing, related sciences and humanities, and methods of inquiry;
- Expand the research base of nursing theory and practice; and
- Serve the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world by addressing major nursing and health care issues in a scholarly manner.

ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Applications should be submitted electronically to the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences at <http://artsandsciences.virginia.edu/grad/admission/>. The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences prefers to receive one package containing all supporting materials. The complete application includes:

- A BSN degree from an accredited school, with a GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Official transcripts of all post-secondary academic work.
- Completion of statistics within the past 5 years.
- Three relevant letters of recommendation. Two of these should be from doctorally-prepared individuals.
- GRE scores
- Curriculum vitae
- An example of scholarly writing

International students must demonstrate ability in English, and must submit TOEFL or IELTS scores. Please contact the School of Nursing admissions office for advice on your TOEFL/IELTS scores.

Application deadline for all students:

Fall Semester

February 1



Students initially plan their academic programs with an academic advisor and subsequently with a dissertation chairperson in order to develop an individualized comprehensive program that meets the degree requirements and the student's research and educational goals. The doctoral degree is not an accumulation of courses, but a rationally unified plan of study and research. The program is designed so that study in nursing is supported and complemented by a cognate area outside the School of Nursing, and by electives. The dissertation research completes the student's training. The major components of the program are as follows:

Nursing Field (6 credits)

The evolution and current state of nursing knowledge are examined from both historical and philosophical perspectives and serve as the basis for the establishment of critical inquiry and study in addressing the increasingly complex health care needs of vulnerable populations. The courses in the nursing field include:

GNUR 8210

Scientific Progress in Nursing

GNUR 8220

Philosophy of Science and Development of Nursing Knowledge

Research (29 credits)

The research component of the program includes courses in research design and methodology, statistics, individually designed research practica, and the dissertation. The dissertation is a culminating experience which requires the student to plan and implement a research study of significance to nursing. Courses in the research component include:

GNUR 8110

Quantitative Research Methods

GNUR 8120

Qualitative Research Methods

GNUR 8130

Statistical Methods in Health Care I

GNUR 8140

Statistical Methods in Health Care II

GNUR 8150

Statistical Methods in Health Care III or other research design course*

GNUR 8230

Historical Inquiry in Nursing

GNUR 8410

Proposal Writing Seminar I

GNUR 8420

Proposal Writing Seminar II

GNUR 9110

Research Practicum

PHSE 7650

Ethics & Law in Human Subjects Research

Cognate Minor (9-12 credits)

The cognate requirement includes course work in a cognate field or combination of fields outside the School of Nursing. The cognate field is intended to complement the student's major scholarly focus.

Electives (3-6 credits)

Electives are selected by the student on the basis of individual interest. These should complement the total program of study and may be taken both within and outside the School of Nursing.

Dissertation

This is a culminating experience which requires the student to plan and implement a research study of significance to nursing. Students, with the recommendation/approval of their Committee, may select whether to write the traditional 5-chapter dissertation, or whether to submit three publishable articles in lieu of the dissertation.