THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
College of Nursing

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Nursing Program Handbook

2026-2027

At the College of Nursing, we are committed to Inclusive Excellence by embracing and demonstrating diversity, equity, and inclusiveness throughout all levels of the institution and in the community. We strive to promote inclusive and safe learning environments for all people regardless of background. We uphold that the diversity of our students, faculty, and staff are a resource, strength, and benefit. We also uphold that excellence is inseparable from inclusivity. We respect and honor diverse learning needs and strive to model behavior aligning with the College of Nursing Mission, Vision, and Values. We will not tolerate any demonstrations of discrimination, and any suggestions on how we can improve our learning environments are welcomed. We affirm that all members of the College of Nursing are responsible in upholding this commitment.

Updated and Approved by PhD-CISC on May 13, 2026

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University Policies & College of Nursing Overview

Handbook Introduction

The PhD Program Handbook provides information to students and faculty to facilitate student advising.

General Information

This document is for informational purposes and is neither a contract nor an offer to contract. The College of Nursing reserves the right to change any provision or requirement at any time without notice. This material supplements the University of Arizona Catalog, Graduate College Policies, and the Schedule of Classes. Additional information may be found at the following web sites:

The University of Arizona
The University of Arizona Catalog
The Graduate College
The College of Nursing

The PhD Program Handbook is designed as a resource for students and faculty. Relevant policies and procedures of the University of Arizona, Graduate College and College of Nursing are included in this handbook. Much of the information is online; therefore, the actual web sites are listed for the official information on policies and procedures. Where information is not available online, a brief description is provided. Additional information can be obtained from the Office of Student & Academic Affairs (OSAA). **Students are responsible to know and adhere to all established policies and procedures. If you need assistance navigating these policies, please reach out to con-osaa@email.arizona.edu.**

Relationship to Other Documents

The PhD Program Handbook is intended to be used in conjunction with other university documents including, but not limited to, those named and linked above. Students should first consult the PhD Program Handbook and then consult the appropriate Graduate College or university policies when questions arise. Many policies in the PhD Program Handbook are specific to students in the program and within the College of Nursing. All students, faculty and staff are expected to read the handbook and be familiar with college and university policies. The most current copy of the PhD Program Handbook is available on the College of Nursing's website for public access.

In addition to this handbook, students must review the Policies & Procedures as posted to the College of Nursing's website. These policies include (but are not limited to):

- Obligation to self-report
- Code of Ethics for Nurses
- Use of Social Media
- Graduation

The College of Nursing upholds all University Policies related to but not limited to the following:

- Absence and Class Participation
- Threatening Behavior
- Accessibility and Accommodations
- Code of Academic Integrity
- Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment

Systems & Resources for College of Nursing Students

Systems

There are several university systems that students in College of Nursing programs will utilize. Students will need to use the following systems (links provided for tutorials):

- UAccess Student
- Desire2Learn (D2L)
- Assessment Systems (Examity, Examsoft, Kaplan, ATI, etc.)
- GradPath (all graduate students)

Students completing clinical work as part of their program will be oriented to other systems throughout their programs. All students should review the Student Technology Needs as listed by the college's Learning & Healthcare Technology Innovations team.

UA Student Email

Upon admission, all students are given an official University of Arizona email address (@arizona.edu). Email sent to this address can be checked remotely or forwarded to the student's phone. This address must be checked daily, as it is the official source of communication between faculty, staff, and students. Students are responsible for all program updates and requests sent to this address.

Offices & Departments

Office of Student & Academic Affairs (OSAA)

OSAA is responsible for student services including academic advising, admissions, onboarding, progression, success, academic support services, graduation, student-centered events, and College of Nursing scholarships. Students may contact OSAA via email con-osaa@email.arizona.edu or by calling 520-626-3808. When contacting OSAA, students should provide their Student ID number, year admitted to current program, and (if applicable) specialty (for dual doctoral degree students). Students are encouraged to make an appointment using Trellis. For a list of additional support resources, view the Student Support webpage.

Learning and HealthCare Technology Innovations (LHTI)

The LHTI department helps enhance the students' learning experience. LHTI is responsible for technology support and the development of enabling technologies for students, faculty, and staff. A wide range of supportive services are available students via the LHTI Help Page. LHTI also provides technology recommendations and requirements for students, available on the Help page.

Financial Aid & Scholarship Information

Doctoral students in the College of Nursing are eligible for financial aid and scholarships. The College of Nursing offers scholarships on a yearly basis and requires all interested students to apply. An email is sent to all newly admitted and current students during the spring term with relevant information. All students are strongly encouraged to submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Many college and university scholarships rely on information provided by the FAFSA to be awarded. Additionally, students may seek to use loans or grants to cover tuition and fees expenses. The following is a list of university resources for students with financial aid questions:

Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid

http://financialaid.arizona.edu/

Students with questions or concerns should use the contact information on Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid (OSFA) website to reach out to the appropriate individual for questions related to financial aid.

Scholarship Universe

https://scholarshipuniverse.arizona.edu/suha

The University of Arizona maintains a comprehensive database of scholarships available to students in all programs and majors. Students may log in with their NetID to search for opportunities and complete applications. All College of Nursing scholarship applications must be submitted through Scholarship Universe.

Disability Resource Center

https://drc.arizona.edu/

For students with disabilities who anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of the program should meet with the appropriate course chair as early as possible to determine if accommodations are necessary. If formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, students will need to complete the accommodations request form online to register with the Disability Resource Center (520-621-3268). To arrange for reasonable accommodations, students are also responsible for immediately notifying the course chair(s) of each course regarding eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Early notification ensures the most effective accommodation and support. Students may also wish to take advantage of the Strategic Alternative Learning Techniques (SALT) Center for additional support services. Students may also contact OSAA for assistance in navigating these resources, or for connection with the college's Academic Success Coach.

Academic Policies & Procedures for PhD Students

Line of Communication

The CON is committed to the creation of an environment which promotes the student learning experience. Open, respectful dialogue between students and faculty is critical to the enrichment of the learning experience. To facilitate the open communication between students and faculty, the CON has outlined a line of communication to resolve academic issues that may arise in the classroom and/or at the clinical site.

Student issues or concerns need to be addressed promptly and according to the established line of communication outlined below. Dialog with the next person in the line of communication is necessary only after the prior contact does not lead to resolution.

1. Course Instructor
2. Course Chair (if applicable)
3. Program Director/Division Chair
4. Associate Dean of Academic and Faculty Affairs

For questions about the line of communication or policies, contact OSAA at 520-626-3808 or con-osaa@email.arizona.edu The Graduate College also provides resources for students related to grievances.

Petitions

A graduate petition may be required when a student is requesting an exception to policy, retroactive change to enrollment, etc. More information can be found on the Graduate College's Petition User Guides page.

All petitions must be submitted through GradPath. Students should contact OSAA for assistance in completing the electronic petition form and for notification.

Academic Progression

Resident Intensive Summer Experience (RISE)

PhD RISE is typically held on the University of Arizona campus in Tucson during the week preceding the beginning of the fall term. Specific dates for RISE will be announced in the Spring semester immediately preceding RISE. During RISE, students are immersed in intensive scholarly, role or course experiences punctuated with time for meeting with advisors and committee members. Students have opportunities to become acquainted with other students, faculty, and staff, to learn to use a variety of instructional technologies and to learn more about their program and the College of Nursing. PhD and dual PhD-DNP students are required to attend RISE three times.

Faculty Advisor Role and Assignment

The role of the faculty advisor is to mentor and guide the student throughout the program of study. The advisor, in partnership with OSAA, will guide the student to determine the plan for completing the degree requirements, facilitate accessing resources of the University and the College of Nursing, and assist the student in understanding relevant policies and procedures. The faculty advisor may or may not be the chairperson of the student's comprehensive examination or dissertation committee.

Switching Faculty Advisors

Students may change faculty advisors as their professional interests change. To change advisors, the student must complete the DNP and PhD Program: Change of Advisor Form. The form is available on the College's Student Resources page. Approval from the student's current and new advisor is required. Routing instructions are included on the form.

Grading and Program Progression

A high level of performance is expected of students enrolled in the PhD program. To remain enrolled in the PhD degree program, a student must be making satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree. Students should review the University of Arizona's Grading Policy.

The College of Nursing enforces the university's policies on Graduate Academic Standing, Progress and Probation with the following additions:

1) Satisfactory progress is defined as earning grades A (4.0) or B (3.0) in any course. Grades below a B (3.0) in any course, regardless of the student's GPA, are viewed as unsatisfactory academic performance and no course with a grade lower than a B may be included on the student's official plan of study in GradPath. Students must repeat all courses where a C, D, or E is earned.
    a. A student may attempt the same course no more than twice. Repeating a course prior to completion of the dissertation may result in an extension of time to degree.
    b. If the student does not earn an A or B the second time, the student shall be recommended to the Graduate College for dismissal from the PhD program.
2) A student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or better to be considered in good standing and to be awarded the PhD degree. Students achieving less than a 3.0 GPA, in any semester, will be placed on academic probation, per University policy. If a student is placed on probation. The student must meet with their faculty advisor to devise a written action plan for remediation.
3) Students on academic probation have two (2) consecutive semesters to raise the GPA to 3.0 or better. Failure to remediate during those two semesters will result in a recommendation to the Graduate College for disqualification and dismissal from the PhD program (see University policy for more information).
    a. Students who are dismissed may apply for readmission to a degree program once they achieve a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 through additional course work taken as a non-degree seeking student. Additional course work may be taken in the College of Nursing. Readmission must be supported by the PhD Curriculum and Instructional Support Committee (CISC) and the PhD Program Director and approved by the Dean of the Graduate College.
4) Grades for NURS 920 (dissertation units) course and other graduate level project courses that continue for longer than one term will be awarded using the S (superior), P (pass), F (failure) based on the approved goals achieved during the semester of enrollment. If the student passes the course, then the units of credit may be applied toward the degree. A grade of "F" may not be used on the Plan of Study, or towards the required 18 units for graduation. Grades (S, P, or F) awarded for NURS 920 units do not factor into the GPA.

Unsatisfactory Grade Notification

Midterm Expectation

Students are responsible to know their grades to evaluate their appropriate progression at midterm and to reach out to faculty about concerns. This process is outlined for the College of Nursing through the process for progression and notifications will be available via Trellis.

End of Term Notification

The College of Nursing provides notification each semester to students who have earned grades of "C" or lower in doctoral courses. Notification is provided by an email to the student's University of Arizona account.

Grade Appeal

All graduate students at the university may appeal a grade. According to university policy, the basis for filing a grade appeal in any course is limited to fundamental fairness in treatment of the student by the instructor, as specified by the syllabus supplied to students at the beginning of the course. When considering a grade appeal, a student should meet with an OSAA team member to review the required steps and timelines. All grade appeals should follow the line of communication provided in this handbook.

Withdrawal Grades

Withdrawal from a course within the first four weeks after registration will result in the deletion of the course from the academic record. After the fourth week and through the end of the tenth week of classes, the grade of "W" may be awarded to students earning a passing grade at the time of the official withdrawal. Requests for complete withdrawal from the University are initiated through the Registrar's Office. All withdrawal requests will follow the policies defined by the Registrar's office.

Students should review the current term's Registration Dates & Deadlines Calendar when considering a withdrawal. Summer courses are often dynamically dated, with non-standard start and end dates – please see the Registrar's calendars for Dates and Deadlines for Classes with Non-Standard Start Dates to verify the appropriate term deadlines.

Grades of Incomplete

The grade of "I" for "Incomplete" may be awarded only at the end of the semester when all but a minor portion of the course work has been satisfactorily completed. Students who are failing the course may not receive an "I". PhD students should discuss with the instructor whether their circumstances allow them to receive an Incomplete grade. This should be done at least two weeks before the end of the semester. Review the UA Incomplete Policy and contact OSAA (con-osaa@arizona.edu) with any questions.

Leave of Absence

Students may request a Leave of Absence (LOA) from the College of Nursing and the Graduate College. Review the UA LOA Policy (https://grad.arizona.edu/policies/enrollment-policies/leave-absence) and contact OSAA (con-osaa@arizona.edu) with any questions.

LOAs may affect the status of a PhD student's financial aid. Students are responsible for determining the requirements of their funding agency and/or academic unit prior to applying for a LOA.

Failure to obtain a Leave of Absence or remain in continuous enrollment will result in penalties, as described in the Graduate College's continuous enrollment policy requirements.

The process for requesting a LOA from the College of Nursing is as follows:

- The student should first discuss their intent with their faculty advisor and propose an updated Plan of Study to complete their coursework.
- If the faculty advisor supports the request, the student should inform OSAA of the plan, and submit the request to the Graduate College. The online submission form is in GradPath under Petitions.

- Denial or Approval of the request will be sent to the student's UA email.
- Student must inform OSAA of the outcome.

Continuous Enrollment Policy / Minimum Enrollment

All students must complete a Plan of Study as developed with the faculty advisor. If the student wishes to change the Plan of Study in a way that will impact the timeline to complete their coursework, the student must consult with the faculty advisor and identify a new timeline for completion.

PhD students must maintain Continuous Enrollment as defined by the Graduate College's policy.

The policy requires that the student must register for a minimum of 3 graduate units each fall and spring term until the completion of all course requirements, comprehensive examinations, and the completion of 18 units of Dissertation (NURS 920). When the above requirements are met, doctoral students not on financial assistance and/or needing to maintain appropriate visa status must register for a minimum of 1 unit each semester (fall or spring and not including winter or summer sessions) until final copies of the Dissertation are submitted to the Graduate College.

While PhD students are not required to maintain Full-Time Graduate Student Status, student financial aid may require full-time status. PhD students receiving funding such as assistantships, fellowships, loans, grants, scholarships, or traineeships may be required by their funding source to register for more than 1 unit to meet full-time status requirements and should check with their faculty advisor regarding such requirements to ensure that they remain qualified for funding.

PhD students who have completed all coursework, comprehensive exams and completed 18 units of NURS 920 may apply for Advanced Status with the university. Advanced Status allows the PhD student to be considered a full-time enrollee at 1 unit. Interested students must review the policy in the catalog and complete the required form.

If PhD students will be working with faculty during the summer term and using university facilities or resources, the student must register for a minimum of 1 unit and obtain approval from the faculty who will be advising the student. The student and advisor should discuss the number of units required for registration, relative to the activity. Students must be registered for a minimum of 1 unit if they are defending the dissertation during a summer session. All students must confirm that their chair/advisor is available to work over the summer.

While, PhD students who have maintained continuous enrollment, fulfilled all their other degree requirements as well as the 18 hours of dissertation and were enrolled in the prior semester may defend and file in the summer or winter term without registration. If, however, a student needs library privileges or if they plan to make other use of University facilities or significant faculty time during summer or winter session, enrollment is required.
https://grad.arizona.edu/policies/enrollment-policies/continuous-enrollment

Non-Enrollment & Readmission to the College of Nursing PhD Program

Students who have been granted an approved LOA, and who return within the approved period, do not have to apply for readmission.

Students who were previously enrolled in the PhD program who have not been officially enrolled for one regular semester or more must re-apply for admission. Readmission requires approval by the PhD CISC and the PhD Program Director. Only students considered in good academic standing according to university policy will be reviewed for readmission. The student must also reapply for admission to the Graduate College. The student must also reapply for admission to the Graduate College.

Students who do not enroll before the 5th week of courses for each fall and spring term may be withdrawn from the University's systems because of non-enrollment. OSAA will attempt to contact any student not on an approved LOA who does not enroll for the next term via email during the first 5 weeks of the term.

Students who do not respond will be sent a formal letter to their address of record in UAccess. If no response is

received, the student may be dismissed from the program.

Timelines for Satisfactory Progression & Degree Completion

The College of Nursing enforces the Graduate College's Time Limitation Policy. All requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) must be completed within 5 years of passing the Comprehensive Exam. Students not finishing within that period may be allowed to re-take the Comprehensive Exam with permission of the College of Nursing, and then proceed to complete other requirements, e.g., the dissertation.

Satisfactory progression in the doctoral program is expected of all students. Students will be reviewed annually and assessed. Benchmarks have been developed to assist faculty and students to determine satisfactory progression. Failure to meet these benchmarks may trigger a review by the PhD CISC. Failure to progress satisfactory may result in dismissal from the program.

Completion of coursework per the plan of study: Students are expected to maintain enrollment and to complete their plans of study as outlined. All students must complete the plan of study as developed with the faculty advisor and upload it to the PhD Portfolio annually. Students wishing to change the plan of study in a way that will impact the timeline to complete their coursework must consult with the faculty advisor and identify a new timeline for completion. Students must also update their plan of study in GradPath. Below are suggested expectations for a timeline for progression from comprehensive examinations to final dissertation defense.

- Timeline for coursework to comprehensive exams: Students are expected to successfully complete their comprehensive exams within one (1) calendar year following completion of coursework.
- Timeline for comprehensive exams to dissertation proposal: Students are expected to successfully defend their proposal within one (1) calendar year following completion of comprehensive exams.
- Timeline for dissertation proposal to Instructional Review Board (IRB) process: Students are expected to submit for IRB approval for their dissertation within six months following their proposal defense, which includes committee approval.
- Timeline for dissertation (final) defense: Students are expected to successfully defend their dissertation within two years following their proposal defense.

Doctoral Credit and Dissertation Requirement

To meet the minimum Graduate College Credit Requirements, students must complete a minimum of 36 units of graduate coursework in the major subject, 9 units in the minor subject (more if required by non-nursing discipline) and 18 units of dissertation.

Appeal of Decision of Unsatisfactory Progress

In accordance with College of Nursing policy, the student has a right to initiate a written appeal to the PhD CISC for the unsatisfactory progress decision during the 5-week period following written notification of disqualification from the program. The second and final level of appeal is to the College of Nursing's Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Graduate students may review the resources available to them from the Graduate College related to grievances as well.

PhD Program Requirements

Plan of Study

All PhD students need to complete and submit a doctoral plan of study to the Graduate College by the end of the second semester of coursework. The plans of study according to the PhD Pathway (BSN, MN or DNP) can be found on the College of Nursing website. The plan of study includes any applicable transfer work from other institutions, intended University of Arizona coursework and expected graduation term. The full summary of the plan of study is available from the Graduate College. The Plan of Study is completed using GradPath, and requires the approval of the student's faculty advisor and the PhD Program Director before being routed to the Graduate College.

PhD Curriculum Blueprints by Pathway

The following curriculum blueprints outline the course sequence and competency alignment for each PhD entry pathway. Each blueprint maps coursework to the two PhD Program Outcomes: PO1 (Generate and disseminate knowledge to advance nursing and health-related sciences) and PO2 (Demonstrate leadership through engaging in intra- and inter-disciplinary teams). Students should review the blueprint corresponding to their entry pathway in conjunction with their Plan of Study and discussion with their advisor.

Blueprint for PhD Nurse Scientist Competency Alignment

BSN to PhD Pathway Program (79 Units Total)

Program Outcomes: PO1 = Generate and disseminate knowledge to advance nursing and health-related sciences. PO2 = Demonstrate leadership through engaging in intra- and inter-disciplinary teams.

Year 1: Foundational Competencies

Year 1 establishes the methodological, theoretical, and ethical foundations essential for nurse scientist development. Students build competence in quantitative and qualitative methods, develop their philosophical worldview, and begin engaging in scholarly communication and peer critique.

Term	Course	Competency Focus	Outcome
Fall	NURS 630	Statistics for Health Sciences: statistical inference, hypothesis testing, measures of central tendency and variability	PO1
Fall	NURS 705	Philosophy of Nursing Science: philosophical foundations, articulate/defend nursing philosophical worldview	PO1, PO2
Fall	NURS 731	Qualitative Research: methodological tools for qualitative methods, designing studies, interpreting data, peer critique	PO1, PO2
Fall	NURS 695A	Science and Practice of Nursing: research ethics training, scholarly communication (WIN abstract, letter to editor)	PO1, PO2
Spring	NURS 631	Advanced Statistics: advanced designs, sampling theory, complex models (hierarchical, SEM)	PO1
Spring	NURS 730	Quantitative Methods: synthesize/evaluate quantitative evidence, descriptive and experimental designs	PO1, PO2
Spring	NURS 706	Theory Development and Evaluation: theoretical concepts, scientific frameworks, creative thinking	PO1, PO2
Spring	NURS 740*	Complex Systems Science: interdisciplinary collaboration and leadership in research teams	PO2

Key Year 1 Competencies: Methodological competence and scientific rigor (e.g., NURS 630, 631, 730, 731); Theory and conceptual tools (e.g., NURS 705, 706); Ethical foundations and professional identity (e.g., NURS 695A, 705); Initial scholarly communication (e.g., NURS 695A, 731, 744); Interdisciplinary collaboration (e.g., NURS 740). Note: * indicates elective courses

Year 2: Advanced Competencies and Integration

Year 2 focuses on integrative application and research independence. Students synthesize foundational knowledge through proposal development, literature review synthesis, and intervention design. Leadership competencies mature through peer critique and collaborative research experiences.

Term	Course	Competency Focus	Outcome
Fall	NURS 656*	Nurse Educator Role: leadership through mock faculty team, graduate syllabus development	PO2
Fall	NURS 727*	Theories/Models of Illness Management: in-depth theory analysis, identifying appropriate measures	PO1
Fall	NURS 707*	Introduction to Proposal Writing: NIH-style grant proposal, specific aims, mock peer review	PO1, PO2
Fall	NURS 744*	Topics in Integrative Health Research: advanced research competencies, scholarly paper and presentation	PO1
Fall	NURS 734*	Advanced Research Methods: Mixed Methods Research for Health Sciences	PO1, PO2
Spring	NURS 701*	Foundations of Scholarly Literature Reviews: synthesizing studies, identifying gaps, draft protocol	PO1, PO2
Spring	NURS 721*	Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI): Foundations & Clinical Implications.	PO1
Spring	NURS 782*	Creating and Testing Behavioral Interventions: designing studies, applying critical reasoning	PO1
Spring	NURS 740*	Complex Systems Science: interdisciplinary collaboration and leadership in research teams	PO2
Ongoing	NURS 791A	Research Preceptorship: practical application of research skills and advanced competencies	PO1, PO2
Ongoing	NURS 920	Dissertation: ultimate execution of knowledge generation and discovery	PO1, PO2

Key Year 2 Competencies: Research proposal development (e.g., NURS 707, 734); Literature synthesis and gap identification (e.g., NURS 701, 721); Intervention design (e.g.,NURS 782); Advanced scholarly communication (e.g., NURS 707, 744, 734); Peer critique and leadership (e.g., NURS 707, 731, 734); Practical research application (e.g., NURS 791A, 920). Note: * indicates elective courses

Program Summary

The curriculum systematically builds nurse scientist competencies across two years. **Program Outcome 1 (Generate and Disseminate Knowledge)** is supported through methodology courses (e.g., NURS 630, 631, 730, 731), theory courses (e.g., NURS 705, 706), and proposal/communication courses (e.g., NURS 701, 707). **Program Outcome 2 (Demonstrate Leadership)** is supported through ethics training (e.g., NURS 695A), peer critique (e.g., NURS 731, 707), and collaborative experiences (e.g., NURS 740, 701). The dissertation (NURS 920) represents the culmination of both outcomes.

Blueprint for PhD Nurse Scientist Competency Alignment

MS to PhD Pathway Program (64 Units Total)

Program Outcomes: PO1 = Generate and disseminate knowledge to advance nursing and health-related sciences. PO2 = Demonstrate leadership through engaging in intra- and inter-disciplinary teams.

Year 1: Foundational Competencies

Year 1 establishes the methodological, theoretical, and ethical foundations essential for nurse scientist development. Students build competence in quantitative and qualitative methods, develop their philosophical worldview, and begin engaging in scholarly communication and peer critique.

Term	Course	Competency Focus	Outcome
Fall	NURS 630	Statistics for Health Sciences: statistical inference, hypothesis testing, measures of central tendency and variability	PO1
Fall	NURS 705	Philosophy of Nursing Science: philosophical foundations, articulate/defend nursing philosophical worldview	PO1, PO2
Fall	NURS 731	Qualitative Research: methodological tools for qualitative methods, designing studies, interpreting data, peer critique	PO1, PO2
Fall	NURS 695A	Science and Practice of Nursing: research ethics training, scholarly communication (WIN abstract, letter to editor)	PO1, PO2
Spring	NURS 631	Advanced Statistics: advanced designs, sampling theory, complex models (hierarchical, SEM)	PO1
Spring	NURS 730	Quantitative Methods: synthesize/evaluate quantitative evidence, descriptive and experimental designs	PO1, PO2
Spring	NURS 706	Theory Development and Evaluation: theoretical concepts, scientific frameworks, creative thinking	PO1, PO2
Spring	NURS 740*	Complex Systems Science: interdisciplinary collaboration and leadership in research teams	PO2

Key Year 1 Competencies: Methodological competence and scientific rigor (e.g., NURS 630, 631, 730, 731); Theory and conceptual tools (e.g., NURS 705, 706); Ethical foundations and professional identity (e.g., NURS 695A, 705); Initial scholarly communication (e.g., NURS 695A, 731, 744); Interdisciplinary collaboration (e.g., NURS 740). Note: * indicates elective courses

Year 2: Advanced Competencies and Integration

Year 2 focuses on integrative application and research independence. Students synthesize foundational knowledge through proposal development, literature review synthesis, and intervention design. Leadership competencies mature through peer critique and collaborative research experiences.

Term	Course	Competency Focus	Outcome
Fall	NURS 656*	Nurse Educator Role: leadership through mock faculty team, graduate syllabus development	PO2
Fall	NURS 707*	Introduction to Proposal Writing: NIH-style grant proposal, specific aims, mock peer review	PO1, PO2
Fall	NURS 727*	Theories/Models of Illness Management: in-depth theory analysis, identifying appropriate measures	PO1
Fall	NURS 734*	Advanced Research Methods: Mixed Methods Research for Health Sciences	PO1, PO2
Fall	NURS 744*	Topics in Integrative Health Research: advanced research competencies, scholarly paper and presentation	PO1
Spring	NURS 701*	Foundations of Scholarly Literature Reviews: synthesizing studies, identifying gaps, draft protocol	PO1, PO2
Spring	NURS 721*	Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI): Foundations & Clinical Implications.	PO1
Spring	NURS 782*	Creating and Testing Behavioral Interventions: designing studies, applying critical reasoning	PO1
Spring	NURS 740*	Complex Systems Science: interdisciplinary collaboration and leadership in research teams	PO2
Ongoing	NURS 791A	Research Preceptorship: practical application of research skills and advanced competencies	PO1, PO2
Ongoing	NURS 920	Dissertation: ultimate execution of knowledge generation and discovery	PO1, PO2

Key Year 2 Competencies: Research proposal development (e.g., NURS 707, 734); Literature synthesis and gap identification (e.g., NURS 701, 721); Intervention design (e.g.,NURS 782); Advanced scholarly communication (e.g., NURS 707, 744, 734); Peer critique and leadership (e.g., NURS 707, 731, 734); Practical research application (e.g., NURS 791A, 920). Note: * indicates elective courses

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The curriculum systematically builds nurse scientist competencies across two years. **Program Outcome 1 (Generate and Disseminate Knowledge)** is supported through methodology courses (e.g., NURS 630, 631, 730, 731), theory courses (e.g., NURS 705, 706), and proposal/communication courses (e.g., NURS 701, 707). **Program Outcome 2 (Demonstrate Leadership)** is supported through ethics training (e.g., NURS 695A), peer critique (e.g., NURS 731, 707), and collaborative experiences (e.g., NURS 740, 701). The dissertation (NURS 920) represents the culmination of both outcomes.

Blueprint for PhD Nurse Scientist Competency Alignment

DNP to PhD Pathway Program (64 Units Total)

Program Outcomes: PO1 = Generate and disseminate knowledge to advance nursing and health-related sciences. PO2 = Demonstrate leadership through engaging in intra- and inter-disciplinary teams.

Year 1: Foundational Competencies

Year 1 establishes the methodological, theoretical, and ethical foundations essential for nurse scientist development. Students build competence in quantitative and qualitative methods, develop their philosophical worldview, and begin engaging in scholarly communication and peer critique.

Term	Course	Competency Focus	Outcome
Fall	NURS 630^	Statistics for Health Sciences: statistical inference, hypothesis testing, measures of central tendency and variability	PO1
Fall	NURS 705 †	Philosophy of Nursing Science: philosophical foundations, articulate/defend nursing philosophical worldview	PO1, PO2
Fall	NURS 731	Qualitative Research: methodological tools for qualitative methods, designing studies, interpreting data, peer critique	PO1, PO2
Fall	NURS 695A	Science and Practice of Nursing: research ethics training, scholarly communication (WIN abstract, letter to editor)	PO1, PO2
Spring	NURS 631	Advanced Statistics: advanced designs, sampling theory, complex models (hierarchical, SEM)	PO1
Spring	NURS 730	Quantitative Methods: synthesize/evaluate quantitative evidence, descriptive and experimental designs	PO1, PO2
Spring	NURS 706	Theory Development and Evaluation: theoretical concepts, scientific frameworks, creative thinking	PO1, PO2
Spring	NURS 740*	Complex Systems Science: interdisciplinary collaboration and leadership in research teams	PO2

Key Year 1 Competencies: Methodological competence and scientific rigor (e.g., NURS 630, 631, 730, 731); Theory and conceptual tools (e.g., NURS 705, 706); Ethical foundations and professional identity (e.g., NURS 695A, 705); Initial scholarly communication (e.g., NURS 695A, 731, 744); Interdisciplinary collaboration (e.g., NURS 740). Notes: * courses are electives, *^NURS 630 is optional and does not count toward 64-unit total †NURS 705 may be transferred/substituted for DNP students*

Year 2: Advanced Competencies and Integration

Year 2 focuses on integrative application and research independence. Students synthesize foundational knowledge through proposal development, literature review synthesis, and intervention design. Leadership competencies mature through peer critique and collaborative research experiences.

Term	Course	Competency Focus	Outcome
Fall	NURS 656*	Nurse Educator Role: leadership through mock faculty team, graduate syllabus development	PO2
Fall	NURS 707*	Introduction to Proposal Writing: NIH-style grant proposal, specific aims, mock peer review	PO1, PO2
Fall	NURS 727*	Theories/Models of Illness Management: in-depth theory analysis, identifying appropriate measures	PO1
Fall	NURS 734*	Advanced Research Methods: Mixed Methods Research for Health Sciences	PO1, PO2
Fall	NURS 744*	Topics in Integrative Health Research: advanced research competencies, scholarly paper and presentation	PO1
Spring	NURS 701*	Foundations of Scholarly Literature Reviews: synthesizing studies, identifying gaps, draft protocol	PO1, PO2
Spring	NURS 721*	Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI): Foundations & Clinical Implications.	PO1
Spring	NURS 782*	Creating and Testing Behavioral Interventions: designing studies, applying critical reasoning	PO1
Spring	NURS 740*	Complex Systems Science: interdisciplinary collaboration and leadership in research teams	PO2
Ongoing	NURS 791A	Research Preceptorship: practical application of research skills and advanced competencies	PO1, PO2
Ongoing	NURS 920	Dissertation: ultimate execution of knowledge generation and discovery	PO1, PO2

Key Year 2 Competencies: Research proposal development (e.g., NURS 707, 734); Literature synthesis and gap identification (e.g., NURS 701, 721); Intervention design (e.g.,NURS 782); Advanced scholarly communication (e.g., NURS 707, 744, 734); Peer critique and leadership (e.g., NURS 707, 731, 734); Practical research application (e.g., NURS 791A, 920). Note: * indicates elective courses

Program Summary

The curriculum systematically builds nurse scientist competencies across two years. **Program Outcome 1 (Generate and Disseminate Knowledge)** is supported through methodology courses (e.g., NURS 630, 631, 730, 731), theory courses (e.g., NURS 705, 706), and proposal/communication courses (e.g., NURS 701, 707). **Program Outcome 2 (Demonstrate Leadership)** is supported through ethics training (e.g., NURS 695A), peer critique (e.g., NURS 731, 707), and collaborative experiences (e.g., NURS 740, 701). The dissertation (NURS 920) represents the culmination of both outcomes.

Blueprint for PhD Nurse Scientist Competency Alignment

BSN to PhD Pathway: Mapping Critical Competencies to Program Outcomes

Introduction

This document presents a curriculum assessment framework that maps the PhD Nurse Scientist Critical Competencies to the broader Program Outcomes for the BSN to PhD Pathway program. This mapping provides a clear trajectory for student development across the program's 79 units, which include Core/Required Courses (25 units), Minor Courses (9 units), Substantive Courses (21 units), Advanced Methods Courses (6 units), and Dissertation (18 units).

The analysis below illustrates where Program Outcomes are built throughout the core curriculum and supporting courses, organized by key critical competency areas.

Program Outcome 1

Generate and disseminate knowledge to advance nursing and other health-related sciences and discoveries.
This outcome is primarily supported by competencies related to scientific inquiry, methodological rigor, and scholarly communication, which are foundational components of the core courses beginning in Year 1.

Scientific Knowledge and Methodological Competence

Developing a comprehensive understanding of research methodologies, conceptual tools for knowledge building, and theoretical frameworks is central to generating knowledge. The following table details the courses and competencies that support this area.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Methodological Competence & Scientific Rigor	NURS 630 (Statistics for the Health Sciences): Students develop a comprehensive understanding of research methodologies and conceptual tools, focusing on the logic of statistical inference, hypothesis testing, and interpreting measures of central tendency and variability.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 631 (Advanced Statistics): Builds on foundational concepts, covering advanced research designs, sampling theory, statistical inference, complex statistical models (e.g., hierarchical, SEM), and interpreting/contextualizing statistical results.	Spring (Year 1)
	NURS 730 (Quantitative Methods): Focuses on synthesizing and evaluating published quantitative research evidence and developing scientific knowledge regarding quantitative research methods (descriptive and experimental designs).	Spring (Year 1)
	NURS 731 (Qualitative Research): Develops methodological and conceptual tools for rigorous knowledge development specific to qualitative methods, including designing/implementing research studies and interpreting data (measured via the qualitative research plan capstone).	Fall (Year 1)
Theory & Conceptual Tools	NURS 705 (Philosophy of Nursing Science and Practice): Focuses on philosophical foundations of nursing science and the theoretical underpinnings of research methodologies, requiring students to articulate and defend a preferred nursing philosophical worldview	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 706 (Theory Development and Evaluation): Focuses heavily on developing theoretical concepts and formulating a beginning scientific theoretical framework, linking theory to research for building new knowledge.	Spring (Year 1)
Integrative Application	NURS 782 (Creating and Testing Behavioral Interventions): Directly supports designing and implementing research studies, generating and	Spring (Year 2)

	testing hypotheses, and applying critical reasoning to develop behavioral interventions.	
	NURS 734 (Advanced Research Methods: Mixed Methods Research for Health Sciences): Requires in-depth synthesis of qualitative and quantitative methods courses, and applying those to the development of a mixed methods study.	Fall (Year 2)
	NURS 721 (Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI): Foundations & Clinical Implications). Focuses on philosophical and empirical foundations of mind-body science and PNI research methodologies	Fall (Year 2)
	NURS 727 (Theories and Models of Illness Management and Health Promotion): Requires in-depth analysis of theories/models and identifying appropriate measures based on research focus.	Fall (Year 2)

Research Skills and Proposal Development

The knowledge generation aspect of this outcome culminates in the ability to design and propose future research, often assessed through core requirements for advanced research competencies.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Identifying Research Gaps and Framing Inquiry	NURS 701 (Foundations of Scholarly Literature Reviews): Develops comprehensive literature review skills e.g., identifying research gaps, comprehensively searching relevant literature, synthesizing across studies, and writing a draft scholarly review protocol.	Spring (Year 2)
	NURS 707 (Introduction to Proposal Writing for Research): This course is critical for synthesizing research skills by requiring students to write a full NIH-style six-page grant proposal, demonstrating their ability to formulate specific aims, significance, innovation, impact, and approach.	Fall (Year 2)
Practical Application of Research	NURS 791A (Research Preceptorship): This required course provides the environment for practical application of Research Skills and Advanced Research Competencies.	Spring, Summer, Fall
	NURS 920 (Dissertation): The dissertation units represent the ultimate execution of knowledge generation and discovery.	Various

Dissemination and Scholarly Communication

The dissemination aspect focuses on articulating nursing science and communicating findings effectively to various audiences.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Scholarly Writing & Communication	NURS 707: Students practice written scientific communication, aligning communication to specific audiences (mixed specialty academic reviewers), using clear, jargon-free language, and anchoring work to existing literature.	Fall (Year 2)
	NURS 731: Students practice writing skills specifically for analytical writing, research writing, manuscripts, proposals, and posters (measured via core assignments and the research plan capstone).	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 695A (The Science and Practice of Nursing): Students practice initial scholarly communication skills by drafting an Abstract for WIN and writing a Letter to the Editor based on an issue relevant to nursing.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 744 (Topics in Integrative Health Research): Students demonstrate advanced research competencies and communication through a scholarly paper and presentation.	Fall (Year 1, 2)

Program Outcome 2

Demonstrate leadership in nursing and other health-related sciences through engaging in intra- and inter-disciplinary academic, research, or professional teams.
This outcome is primarily supported by ethical, critical thinking, collaborative, and professional identity competencies.

Ethical Foundations and Professional Identity

Leadership in science requires adherence to ethical conduct and the development of a strong professional identity as a scientist committed to scholarly growth.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Ethical and Philosophical Foundations	NURS 705: The course requires students to formulate their own philosophy of nursing science, integrating ethical values and scientific domains, contributing to professional identity and defining their stance within the discipline.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 695A: Students receive research ethics and human subjects research training and certifications and engage in discussion of ethical and social perspectives related to the nurse scientist role.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 730, NURS 630, and NURS 631: These courses focus on engaging in ethically sound research and applying concepts of ethical conduct and scientific rigor to quantitative design and analysis.	Year 1
Professional Identity Development	NURS 656 (Nurse Educator Role – Minor/Elective Option): Specifically addresses Professional Identity Development by requiring students to write a teaching philosophy paper that defines their personal beliefs about teaching and includes components on professional development as a nurse educator.	Fall (Year 1, 2)

Collaboration, Critique, and Team Engagement

Effective research leadership requires the ability to collaborate, network, and engage in systematic peer critique.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Interdisciplinary Collaboration	NURS 740 (Complex Systems Science): Directly addresses Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Leadership in research teams through course discussions and assignments.	Spring (Year 1, 2)
Teamwork and Project Collaboration	NURS 701: Students develop Collaborative and Professional Skills by contributing to team projects and engaging in norming activities for screening and data table extraction.	Spring (Year 2)
Peer Critique and Leadership	NURS 731: Students engage in Systematic Peer Critique (mentored) and are expected to develop interdisciplinary collaboration and leadership in research teams.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 707: Students participate in a mock review where they critique each other's research proposals using established critique guidelines (e.g., NIH guidelines), which builds skills in peer review essential for academic leadership.	Fall (Year 2)

	NURS 656 (Minor/Elective Option): Students practice leadership and collaboration by leading a mock course faculty team to develop and present a graduate-level course syllabus.	Fall (Year 1, 2)

Critical Thinking and Scientific Innovation

Leadership in scientific discovery hinges on creative theoretical thinking and innovative approaches to research.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Critical Thinking and Innovation	NURS 706: Fosters creative theoretical thinking and the application of diverse thinking approaches in a foundational way, supporting innovative research approaches.	Spring (Year 1)
	NURS 721, NURS 727, NURS 744, NURS 782, and NURS 787: All substantive and advanced methods courses strongly emphasize Critical Thinking, Scientific Rigor, and Innovative Research Approach as Key Integrative Competencies.	Year 1, 2
Examining Science from Multiple Perspectives	NURS 730: Students examine science from multiple perspectives by analyzing published research from a methodological viewpoint and considering alternative approaches.	Spring (Year 1)

Summary

The BSN to PhD program can be conceptualized as constructing a complex scientific facility. **Program Outcome 1 (Generate and Disseminate Knowledge)** represents the detailed architectural plan and successful construction of the building itself, supported by methodology, statistics, theory, and research design courses (NURS 630, 631, 730, 731, and 707). **Program Outcome 2 (Demonstrate Leadership and Collaboration)** represents the management and operation of that facility—ensuring research is conducted ethically, teams work effectively together, critical assessments are conducted through peer review and critique, and the scientific identity of the enterprise is strong (supported by NURS 695A, 705, 731, 740, and the Key Integrative Competencies across all research courses).

Blueprint for PhD Nurse Scientist Competency Alignment

MS to PhD Pathway: Mapping Critical Competencies to Program Outcomes

Introduction

This document presents a curriculum assessment framework that maps the PhD Nurse Scientist Critical Competencies to the broader Program Outcomes for the MS to PhD Pathway program. This mapping provides a clear trajectory for student development across the program's 64 units, which include Core/Required Courses (22 units), Minor Courses (9 units), Substantive Courses (12 units), Advanced Methods Courses (3 units), and Dissertation (18 units). Note that while NURS 630 is a required core course, its 3 units do not count toward the 64-unit total for this specific pathway.

The analysis below illustrates where Program Outcomes are built throughout the core curriculum and supporting courses, organized by key critical competency areas.

Program Outcome 1

Generate and disseminate knowledge to advance nursing and other health-related sciences and discoveries.

This outcome is supported by core competencies in scientific inquiry, methodological rigor, and scholarly communication, foundational elements integrated throughout the curriculum.

Scientific Knowledge and Methodological Competence

Central to knowledge generation is a comprehensive understanding of methodologies, theoretical frameworks, and conceptual tools for building knowledge.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Methodological Competence & Scientific Rigor	NURS 630 (Statistics for the Health Sciences): Students develop a comprehensive understanding of research methodologies and conceptual tools, focusing on the logic of statistical inference, hypothesis testing, and interpreting measures of central tendency and variability.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 631 (Advanced Statistics): Covers advanced research designs, sampling theory, statistical inference, and complex models like SEM, while interpreting/contextualizing statistical results.	Spring (Year 1)
	NURS 730 (Quantitative Methods): Focuses on synthesizing and evaluating published quantitative research and developing knowledge regarding descriptive and experimental designs.	Spring (Year 1)
	NURS 731 (Qualitative Research): Develops tools for rigorous knowledge development specific to qualitative methods, including designing research studies and interpreting data.	Fall (Year 1)
Theory & Conceptual Tools	NURS 705 (Philosophy of Nursing Science and Practice): Focuses on the philosophical foundations of nursing science and the theoretical underpinnings of research methodologies.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 706 (Theory Development and Evaluation): Focuses on developing theoretical concepts and a beginning scientific theoretical framework linking theory to research.	Spring (Year 1)
Integrative Application	NURS 782 (Creating and Testing Behavioral Interventions): Supports designing and implementing research studies and applying critical reasoning to develop interventions.	Spring (Year 2)

	NURS 734 (Advanced Research Methods: Mixed Methods Research for Health Sciences): Requires in-depth synthesis of qualitative and quantitative methods courses, and applying those to the development of a mixed methods study.	Fall (Year 2)
	NURS 721 (Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI): Foundations & Clinical Implications). Focuses on philosophical and empirical foundations of mind-body science and PNI research methodologies	Fall (Year 2)
	NURS 727 (Theories and Models of Illness Management and Health Promotion): Requires in-depth analysis of theories/models and identifying appropriate measures based on research focus.	Fall (Year 2)

Research Skills and Proposal Development

Knowledge generation culminates in the student's ability to design and propose future research, assessed through core requirements and advanced research competencies.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Identifying Research Gaps and Framing Inquiry	NURS 701 (Foundations of Scholarly Literature Reviews): Develops comprehensive literature review skills e.g., identifying research gaps, comprehensively searching relevant literature, synthesizing across studies, and writing a draft scholarly review protocol.	Spring (Year 2)
	NURS 707 (Introduction to Proposal Writing for Research): Students write a full NIH-style six-page grant proposal, demonstrating their ability to formulate specific aims, significance, innovation, impact, and approach.	Fall (Year 2)
Practical Application of Research	NURS 791A (Research Preceptorship): This required course provides the environment for practical application of Research Skills and Advanced Research Competencies.	Various
	NURS 920 (Dissertation): The dissertation units represent the ultimate execution of knowledge generation and discovery.	Various

Dissemination and Scholarly Communication

The dissemination aspect focuses on articulating nursing science and communicating findings effectively to various audiences.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Scholarly Writing & Communication	NURS 707: Students practice written scientific communication for mixed specialty academic reviewers using clear, jargon-free language.	Fall (Year 2)
	NURS 731: Students practice analytical writing, manuscripts, proposals, and posters, measured via core assignments and the research plan capstone.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 695A (The Science and Practice of Nursing): Students practice initial scholarly communication by drafting an Abstract for WIN and writing a Letter to the Editor.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 744 (Topics in Integrative Health Research): Students demonstrate advanced research competencies through a scholarly paper and presentation.	Fall (Years 1, 2)

Program Outcome 2

Demonstrate leadership in nursing and other health-related sciences through engaging in intra- and inter-disciplinary academic, research, or professional teams.

This outcome is primarily supported by ethical, critical thinking, collaborative, and professional identity competencies.

Ethical Foundations and Professional Identity

Leadership in science requires adherence to ethical conduct and a strong professional identity as a scientist.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Ethical and Philosophical Foundations	NURS 705: Requires students to formulate their own philosophy of nursing science, integrating ethical values and scientific domains to define their stance within the discipline.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 695A: Students receive research ethics training and certifications and engage in discussions regarding the nurse scientist role from ethical perspectives.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 730, NURS 630, and NURS 631: These courses focus on engaging in ethically sound research and applying concepts of rigor to quantitative design and analysis.	Year 1
Professional Identity Development	NURS 656 (Nurse Educator Role – Minor/Elective Option): Specifically addresses Professional Identity Development by requiring a teaching philosophy paper that includes components on professional development.	Fall (Years 1, 2)

Collaboration, Critique, and Team Engagement

Effective leadership requires the ability to collaborate, network, and engage in systematic peer critique.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Interdisciplinary Collaboration	NURS 740 (Complex Systems Science): Directly addresses Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Leadership in research teams through course discussions.	Spring (Years 1, 2)
Teamwork and Project Collaboration	NURS 701: Students develop Collaborative and Professional Skills by contributing to team projects and engaging in group norming activities.	Spring (Year 2)
Peer Critique and Leadership	NURS 731: Students engage in Systematic Peer Critique (mentored) and are expected to develop leadership within research teams.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 707: Students participate in a mock review critiquing each other's research proposals using NIH guidelines to build essential academic leadership skills.	Fall (Year 2)
	NURS 656 (Minor/Elective Option): Students practice leadership and collaboration by leading a mock course faculty team to develop a syllabus.	Fall (Years 1, 2)

Critical Thinking and Scientific Innovation

Leadership in scientific discovery hinges on creative theoretical thinking and innovative research approaches.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Critical Thinking and Innovation	NURS 706: Fosters creative theoretical thinking and the application of diverse thinking approaches to support innovative research.	Spring (Year 1)
	NURS 721, NURS 727, NURS 744, NURS 782, and NURS 787: All substantive and advanced methods courses strongly emphasize Critical Thinking and Scientific Rigor as Key Integrative Competencies.	Years 1, 2
Examining Science from Multiple Perspectives	NURS 730: Students examine science from multiple perspectives by analyzing published research and considering alternative methodological approaches.	Spring (Year 1)

Summary

The MS to PhD program can be conceptualized as constructing a complex scientific facility. **Program Outcome 1 (Generate and Disseminate Knowledge)** represents the detailed architectural plan and the building's construction, supported by core methodology, statistics, and theory courses (NURS 630, 631, 730, 731, 705, 706, and 707). **Program Outcome 2 (Demonstrate Leadership and Collaboration)** represents the management and operation of that facility—ensuring ethical conduct, effective teamwork, systematic peer critique, and a strong scientific identity (supported by NURS 695A, 705, 731, 740, and the Key Integrative Competencies across all research courses).

Blueprint for PhD Nurse Scientist Competency Alignment

DNP to PhD Pathway: Mapping Critical Competencies to Program Outcomes

Introduction

This document presents a curriculum assessment framework that maps the PhD Nurse Scientist Critical Competencies to the broader Program Outcomes for the DNP to PhD Pathway program. This mapping provides a clear trajectory for student development across the program's 64 units, which include Core/Required Courses (22 units), Minor Courses (9 units), Substantive Courses (12 units), a required Advanced Methods Course (3 units), and Dissertation (18 units). Notably, NURS 630 is an optional course that does not count toward the 64-unit total, and NURS 705 is identified as a potential transfer or substitution course for students entering with a DNP.

The analysis below illustrates where Program Outcomes are built throughout the core curriculum and supporting courses, organized by key critical competency areas.

Program Outcome 1

Generate and disseminate knowledge to advance nursing and other health-related sciences and discoveries.

This outcome is primarily supported by competencies in scientific inquiry, methodological rigor, and scholarly communication, which are foundational components built throughout the core and substantive curriculum.

Scientific Knowledge and Methodological Competence

Central to knowledge generation is a comprehensive understanding of research methodologies, theoretical frameworks, and conceptual tools for building knowledge.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Methodological Competence & Scientific Rigor	NURS 630 (Statistics for the Health Sciences): (If taken) Provides the logic of statistical inference and hypothesis testing.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 631 (Advanced Statistics): Covers advanced research designs and complex statistical models (e.g., SEM, logistic) while contextualizing results.	Spring (Year 1)
	NURS 730 (Quantitative Methods): Focuses on synthesizing and evaluating published quantitative evidence and developing knowledge of descriptive and experimental designs.	Spring (Year 1)
	NURS 731 (Qualitative Research): Develops tools for rigorous qualitative knowledge development, including design, implementation, and data interpretation.	Fall (Year 1)
Theory & Conceptual Tools	NURS 705 (Philosophy of Nursing Science and Practice): Focuses on philosophical foundations and the theoretical underpinnings of research methodologies.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 706 (Theory Development and Evaluation): Focuses on theoretical concept development and linking theory to research for building new knowledge.	Spring (Year 1)
Integrative Application	NURS 782 (Creating and Testing Behavioral Interventions): (Advanced Methods Option) Supports generating and testing hypotheses and developing behavioral interventions.	Spring (Year 2)

	NURS 734 (Advanced Research Methods: Mixed Methods Research for Health Sciences): Requires in-depth synthesis of qualitative and quantitative methods courses, and applying those to the development of a mixed methods study.	Fall (Year 2)
	NURS 721 (Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI): Foundations & Clinical Implications). Focuses on philosophical and empirical foundations of mind-body science and PNI research methodologies	Fall (Year 2)
	NURS 727 (Theories and Models of Illness Management and Health Promotion): Requires in-depth analysis of theories/models and identifying appropriate measures based on research focus.	Fall (Year 2)

Research Skills and Proposal Development

Knowledge generation culminates in the ability to design and propose future research, assessed through core requirements and practical applications.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Identifying Research Gaps and Framing Inquiry	NURS 701 (Foundations of Scholarly Literature Reviews): Develops comprehensive literature review skills e.g., identifying research gaps, comprehensively searching relevant literature, synthesizing across studies, and writing a draft scholarly review protocol.	Spring (Year 2)
	NURS 707 (Introduction to Proposal Writing for Research): Students write a full NIH-style six-page grant proposal, demonstrating the ability to synthesize evidence and design a research study with specific aims and innovation.	Fall (Year 2)
Practical Application of Research	NURS 791A (Research Preceptorship): This required course provides a mentored environment for the practical application of research skills.	Various
	NURS 920 (Dissertation): The 18 required units represent the ultimate execution of knowledge generation and discovery.	Various

Dissemination and Scholarly Communication

This aspect focuses on articulating nursing science and communicating findings effectively to diverse audiences.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Scholarly Writing & Communication	NURS 707: Students practice written scientific communication for mixed specialty academic reviewers using clear, jargon-free language.	Fall (Year 2)
	NURS 731: Students practice analytical writing, manuscripts, proposals, and posters, measured via the research plan capstone.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 695A (The Science and Practice of Nursing): Students practice initial scholarly communication by drafting an Abstract for WIN and writing a Letter to the Editor.	Fall (Year 1)

	NURS 744 (Topics in Integrative Health Research): (Substantive Option) Students demonstrate communication through a scholarly paper and presentation.	Fall (Years 1, 2)

Program Outcome 2

Demonstrate leadership in nursing and other health-related sciences through engaging in intra- and inter-disciplinary academic, research, or professional teams.
This outcome is supported by ethical, critical thinking, collaborative, and professional identity competencies.

Ethical Foundations and Professional Identity

Leadership in science requires adherence to ethical conduct and a strong professional identity as a scientist.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Ethical and Philosophical Foundations	NURS 705: Requires students to formulate their own philosophy of nursing science, defining their stance within the discipline.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 695A: Students receive research ethics and human subjects training and discuss the nurse scientist role from ethical and social perspectives.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 730 and NURS 631: These courses focus on ethically sound research and applying concepts of rigor and ethical conduct to quantitative design.	Year 1
Professional Identity Development	NURS 656 (Nurse Educator Role – Minor Option): Addresses Professional Identity Development via a teaching philosophy paper that includes components on professional growth.	Fall (Years 1, 2)

Collaboration, Critique, and Team Engagement

Effective research leadership requires the ability to collaborate, network, and engage in systematic peer critique.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Interdisciplinary Collaboration	NURS 740 (Complex Systems Science): (Substantive Option) Directly addresses Interdisciplinary Collaboration and leadership in research teams through course discussions.	Spring (Years 1, 2)
Teamwork and Project Collaboration	NURS 701: Students develop Collaborative and Professional Skills by contributing to team projects and participating in group norming activities.	Spring (Year 2)
Peer Critique and Leadership	NURS 731: Students engage in Systematic Peer Critique and are expected to develop leadership in research teams.	Fall (Year 1)
	NURS 707: Students participate in a mock review critiquing each other's research proposals using NIH guidelines.	Fall (Year 2)

	NURS 656 (Minor Option): Students practice leadership by leading a mock course faculty team to develop a syllabus.	Fall (Years 1, 2)

Critical Thinking and Scientific Innovation

Leadership in scientific discovery hinges on creative theoretical thinking and innovative research approaches.

Core Competency Area	Contributing Course(s) and Details	Year/Term
Critical Thinking and Innovation	NURS 706: Fosters creative theoretical thinking and diverse thinking approaches to support innovative research.	Spring (Year 1)
	NURS 721, NURS 727, NURS 744, NURS 782, and NURS 787: All substantive and advanced methods courses emphasize Critical Thinking and Scientific Rigor as Key Integrative Competencies.	Years 1, 2
Examining Science from Multiple Perspectives	NURS 730: Students examine science from multiple perspectives by analyzing published research and considering alternative methodological approaches.	Spring (Year 1)

Summary

The DNP to PhD program can be conceptualized as constructing a complex scientific facility. **Program Outcome 1 (Generate and Disseminate Knowledge)** represents the detailed architectural plan and the building's construction, supported by core methodology, statistics, and proposal writing courses. **Program Outcome 2 (Demonstrate Leadership and Collaboration)** represents the management and operation of that facility—ensuring ethical conduct, effective teamwork, systematic peer critique, and a strong scientific identity for the entire enterprise.

Transfer of Graduate Courses from Other Institutions

PhD students may transfer credits from previous graduate programs for use toward the PhD degree. Students entering the PhD program with previous graduate degrees may be eligible to transfer up to 21 units.

Prior to requesting the transfer of credits into the program, the student must review the policies in the student handbook regarding the maximum number of transferable units. PhD students have two options for using prior coursework toward the PhD degree:

- **Substitutions:** courses taken at the University of Arizona or another accredited graduate program used to replace a CON course
- **Transfers:** courses from other institutions used toward the substantive or minor areas of study

Substitution and/or requests are processed after accepting an offer of admission to the PhD program. The student must fill out the Substitution or Transfer Evaluation Worksheet available on the College of Nursing website and provide the required course syllabi documentation. All documents must be sent to CON-OSAA@email.arizona.edu as PDF documents, or they will not be reviewed.

To be eligible for transfer or substitution, coursework must:

- Be less than 7 years old at the time of transfer
- Be graduate level coursework
- Be available on the student's official transcript with a grade of "A" or "B" (grades of "P" or "S" are not accepted by the Graduate College for transfer)

The process for transfer or substitution requests has two phases: the internal College of Nursing Evaluation and evaluation by the Graduate College. The College of Nursing process is as follows:

1) Student discusses with advisor and then indicates a desire to have courses evaluated for transfer/substitution to OSAA. The student assembles the documentation (syllabi, transcripts, substitution or transfer form), and sends it to OSAA, who assists in working with faculty to approve the request.
2) OSAA will send the course chair the syllabi to review for possible transfer.
3) After obtaining the course chair's approval, the student makes any edits requested to the Course Transfer/Substitution Evaluation Worksheet, then submits to faculty advisor for a signature along with the approval email from the course chair.
4) The faculty advisor signs the Course Transfer/Substitution Evaluation Worksheet.
5) OSAA saves a copy of the worksheet and syllabi in the student's file.

The Graduate College process is as follows:

1) Once the College of Nursing's process is complete, OSAA includes instructs the student on completing the Transfer Credit Form in GradPath.
2) The Graduate College will make the final determination on whether the credit is appropriate for transfer to the university. After this evaluation, any approved units may be used toward the plan of study.
3) All decisions are final.

PhD Portfolio and Annual Report

PhD students must maintain and complete a digital portfolio. PhD portfolios are housed in the online course system, Desire 2 Learn (D2L). Each student will see their portfolio as a course in D2L. Students in the doctoral programs must complete their portfolio annually. Faculty will use this portfolio to determine adequate progression toward degree completion. The PhD Portfolio is considered complete for graduation when the final approved copy of the dissertation is uploaded.

PhD Portfolio Components

- Individual Development Plan (updated annually; due August 1; format can be found on the PhD Resources Page)
- Program Guide/Plan of Study (updated annually; due August 1; format can be on the PhD Resources Page)

- CV (updated annually; due August 1) per CON student template.
- Comprehensive Exam Papers (due when submitted to OSAA)
- Dissertation Proposal (final approved copy) (due after dissertation proposal defense)
- Dissertation (final approved copy) (due prior to graduation)

PhD Annual Report

In addition to the PhD Portfolio, the student is required to use the components from their portfolio to complete an annual report (due annually on August 1). The PhD annual report is comprised of an online survey that incorporates evaluation components self-reported by the student, including information on presentations, publications, research activity and project proposals.

Transferring Between Doctoral Programs within the College of Nursing

Students wishing to transfer from one doctoral program to another (PhD to DNP or DNP to PhD) must be in good academic standing in their current doctoral program. Students should first meet with their current faculty advisor to discuss the transfer. There are two steps to this process: the College of Nursing internal process, and the Graduate College process & policies.

To initiate the College of Nursing process, the following documentation must be provided to the appropriate program committee for review:

1) The student provides a letter requesting the change that contains:
    a) Requested option.
    b) Rationale for changing options.
    c) What the student plans to do after obtaining their doctoral degree.
    d) Anticipated area of research or DNP practice.
    e) Question to be answered by dissertation research or DNP Project.
2) The student's current advisor provides a letter of support.
3) The student identifies a potential mentor in the "receiving" option who provides a second letter of support, indicating their willingness to mentor the student.
4) Students must submit requests for transfer no later than one month prior to the end of the semester.
5) The PhD CISC or DNP CISC will review the request at their next scheduled meeting and notify the student and advisor of their decision. The student should then notify OSAA of the change and schedule a meeting with their advisory committee to discuss any changes in the Plan of Study.

After committee approval, the student will work with OSAA to follow the Graduate College process for switching programs.

Dual Degrees (PhD-DNP) Option

The College of Nursing offers a unique opportunity for a student to concurrently pursue the DNP and PhD degrees. This option requires a conversation with the PhD Program Director or the DNP Program Director prior to applying to the CON. The dual degree option also requires acceptance to both the PhD and DNP programs. The dual degree requires full-time study and is not available on a part-time basis. Contact the PhD Program Director or the DNP Program Director for more information about the dual degree.

University of Arizona BSN Honors Students Direct Admission to PhD Program

BSN students graduating with nursing as an Honors College graduate from the University of Arizona (satisfying all Honors College graduation requirements) will be given priority consideration for admission to the University of Arizona's College of Nursing PhD program under the following conditions:

- Earn a BSN with Honors (satisfying all College of Nursing and Honors College graduation requirements)
- Must complete all NURS coursework with a minimum GPA of 3.0
- Must meet all admission requirements of the PhD program.

- Must meet all University of Arizona Graduate College admission requirements
- Submit a complete College of Nursing PhD Application by the published application deadline date for the term of enrollment in the doctoral program within two years following BSN graduation (two- year time frame starts at the date of degree conferral and is measured by the date of application)

PhD Benchmarks

Committees

There are three types of committees that are vitally important to PhD students: major comprehensive exam committee, minor committee, and dissertation committee. Students can change committee members at any time. The advisory committee that assists with program planning is often the committee that conducts the written and oral portions of the comprehensive examination. Students have the right to alter their committee as their scholarly interests or needs indicate. Faculty also has the right to remove themselves from a student's committee, for reasons of retirement, sabbatical, qualification, or match with the student's scholarly interests.

Major/Comprehensive Exam Committee

The Major/Comprehensive Exam Committee is formed at the end of the first year of coursework. Choosing committee members should be done with one's academic advisor, and students should reach out to faculty whom they would like to serve on the committee. The committee meets in person for the first time during RISE 2. The purpose of this Committee is to guide the student through the coursework in the plan of study and to supervise the written and oral comprehensive examinations.

For the written comprehensive exam, the College of Nursing requires a minimum of 4 committee members if the student's minor is also in nursing. A student with a non-nursing minor will also have a committee of 4 members: 3 members from nursing, and 1 from the outside discipline.

For the oral comprehensive exam, the Graduate College and the College of Nursing require a minimum of 4 committee members. The makeup of the committee must conform to the Graduate College's specifications, including:

The Major Advisor (chairperson who is CON tenured or tenure track faculty) and two additional members must be University of Arizona tenured, tenure-eligible or tenure equivalent faculty. The fourth member may be tenured, tenure-eligible or an approved special member.

Procedures for special member approval are below. The full Graduate College Comprehensive Examination Committee Policy is available online.

This committee is disbanded at the successful completion of the comprehensive exams, at which time the student and academic advisor will discuss and form a dissertation committee.

Minor Committee

Every University of Arizona PhD student must have a minor. The number of units required for a minor varies and is determined by the minor department. Minimum units are 9 and maximum are 18. For PhD students majoring in nursing, the nursing minor consists of 9 units, at least 3 of which must be nursing courses or courses approved by the PhD program director. The use of transfer credits or substitutions for a nursing minor must be approved by the advisor and PhD Program Director. (See section on "Transfer of Graduate Courses from Other Institutions.") College of Nursing students with a minor in nursing do not need a separate minor committee but they do select a minor chair.

Nursing PhD students may also select established minors in other University of Arizona programs and departments. Students must meet the criteria for those minors and take the required courses for that minor.

For PhD students from other departments, the nursing minor consists of 9 units taken in the College of Nursing. PhD students from other departments select a minor chair in nursing who approves their minor plan of study and supervises their minor comprehensive exam. For non-nursing minors, the minor committee consists of one or 2 members from the minor department. These committee members help the student plan their minor plan of study and ultimately approve that portion of the graduate study plan. Minor committee members are selected based on mutual interests and research expertise and getting to know the minor department members often takes time. Most minor departments have a minor student advisor who makes initial suggestions about course selection and potential committee members. Choosing the minor committee members should be done within the first year after consultation with one's academic advisor.

Dissertation Committee

Students will form a dissertation committee by the time of Advancement to Candidacy. The Graduate College requires a minimum of three members, all of whom must be University of Arizona tenured, tenure-track or approved as equivalent. Students may choose to include additional members, who may be special members, or additional University of Arizona faculty. All members are expected to attend the final defense. PhD-DNP dual degree students must have a DNP faculty on their dissertation committee.

Dissertation Committee Chair

Criteria for serving as chair of a PhD dissertation committee include current appointment as a College of Nursing faculty, approval by the Graduate College as eligible to serve on dissertation committees, an earned research doctorate (PhD), and prior membership on at least one completed dissertation committee.

Special Members

Special members are either non-University of Arizona professionals or current University of Arizona employees who do not hold an active tenure-track faculty position whose knowledge, skills or experience may compliment the other members of the student's comprehensive exam or dissertation committee. Special members must be educated at a doctoral level and have applicable skills and knowledge to apply to the student's work. Special members may be faculty at other institutions, employed by other government entities or the private sector. The special member is expected to participate in the final defense of the dissertation.

The process for seeking Special Member approval is as follows:

- Student will obtain a copy of the individual's current Curriculum Vitae (CV) to review with the chair.
- The chair reviews the special member's CV with the PhD Program Director.
- If the PhD Program Director approves of the special member request, the Program Director will forward the individual's CV and approval to OSAA (CON-OSAA@email.arizona.edu).
- OSAA will submit the CV and Special Member Request to the Graduate College for final approval.

If approved, the Graduate College will send an email to OSAA with the decision and notification that the special member will be made available for use on relevant GradPath forms.

PhD Comprehensive Examination

Students in the College of Nursing's PhD program will complete both a written and oral comprehensive examination. The examinations will be scheduled after successful completion of coursework and before the student begins work on the dissertation. All PhD coursework required for the degree (core courses, substantive courses, and minor) should be completed prior to taking the written comprehensive examination. Courses not counting toward the degree, e.g., NFLP courses (if not the minor), additional courses of interest, may be taken concurrently with the comprehensive examinations.

Advance Procedures

- Firm up members of the comprehensive exam committee (RISE 2).

- Ensure that all GradPath forms up to/including the Comprehensive Exam Committee Form are complete.
- Schedule a Comprehensive Exam Committee Planning Meeting during the final semester of coursework and prior to the semester in which the student will take the comprehensive examination. Full committee attendance is required at the meeting. The student is to lead the meeting and address these key areas:
    - Review plan of study (core, substantive, minor content areas).
    - Determine a start date for the written examination.
    - Discussion of a timeline to study for/schedule comprehensive exams.
    - Discussion of the expectations of the comprehensive exam experience.
    - Complete the PhD Comprehensive Exam OSAA Notification Form

Written Examination Details

The written comprehensive exam page limit is **not to exceed 45 double-spaced pages, excluding references and title pages**, and other specific components to be negotiated with the chair.

PhD students who minor in Nursing will not have a separate written minor comprehensive examination. For the written examination, the Committee may select either:

- Integrate minor content into one or more major areas (conventional substantive, theoretical and/or methodological questions), depending on the decision by the committee; or
- Construct a fourth question on the minor content. If there are 4 questions, then the 4 questions should be constructed to be an equivalent amount of work to be completed within 7 days.

PhD students with a minor outside of Nursing will continue to follow the requirements of the department responsible for the minor.

Preparation for the Written Examination

The student's comprehensive exam committee members confer with the student to review the plan of study. This meeting enables the committee to get a sense of the student's research interests, which will be used as a context for the examination. However, the examination is to be based on completed coursework, not the student's planned dissertation research. The committee members determine who will write the three questions (theory, substantive, methods). Questions should require that students demonstrate the ability to synthesize relevant content and apply it within their own research context. Students may not use previously written manuscripts or papers in place of one or more of the written exam questions. The exam is coordinated by the chairperson of the comprehensive examination committee. The committee chairperson forwards the examination questions to OSAA (CON-OSAA@email.arizona.edu) no less than 2 weeks prior to the exam start date in PDF format.

Scheduling the Written Examination

Prior to scheduling the written exam, the student must complete all forms in GradPath up to, and including, the Comprehensive Exam Committee Appointment Form. Approval of this form is required to proceed with the comprehensive exam.

Students schedule each part of the comprehensive examination only after conferring with their comprehensive exam committee. The student is responsible for contacting OSAA (CON-OSAA@email.arizona.edu) at least 3 weeks prior to the exam start date to schedule.

Procedure for the Written Examination

The written comprehensive examination is a take-home examination. The student may elect to combine the major and minor into one written exam with the approval of their advisory committee (see above). The minimum length for each component of the major exam is 10 double-spaced pages. The student should negotiate the exam procedures/format with the minor department if outside of nursing and follow the procedures of the college providing the minor.

Taking the Written Examination

Students will have one period of 7 consecutive calendar days to complete all portions of the nursing written examination (nursing major and minor). OSAA will email the PDF examination to the student on the day of the scheduled exam start. The student may contact the committee chairperson or designee with any questions regarding the examination. The student's written examination will take the form of a scholarly paper. The student should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the extant literature; and both depth and breadth of knowledge will be evaluated. APA format is required with a complete reference list.

Comprehensive Exam AI Use Policy

Generative AI use is NOT allowed for any purpose.
Source: AIAS Level 1: No AI (UCATT: Red / No AI Use Allowed)

For the comprehensive exam, any use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) or large language model tools (such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, etc.) is **NOT** allowed for any purpose and will be considered a violation of the UA Code of Academic Integrity. The primary goal of the comprehensive exam is to assess unassisted mastery of the field's foundational literature and the student's independent ability to synthesize complex concepts. Therefore, all submitted work must be 100% generated by student's own effort and knowledge. The comprehensive exam must be completed entirely without GenAI assistance to ensure the student relies solely on their existing knowledge, understanding, and skills. The use of grammar checking software (e.g., Grammerly, Spell Check) is permitted at student discretion without disclosure.

At the end of the 7-day written examination period, the student will submit the completed examination to the assignment dropbox in their PhD Portfolio in D2L. The student will combine each portion of the exam as one document (3 documents for students with an incorporated minor question, 4 documents for students with an independent minor) for submission to the PhD Portfolio. At the same time, the student should notify OSAA (CON-OSAA@email.arizona.edu) and the committee chair that their exam has been submitted to D2L. The student should attach each individual document (3 documents for students with an incorporated minor, 4 documents for students with an independent minor) to the email to OSAA. The Turnitin® feature is enabled for the PhD Portfolio dropbox, and all documents will be reviewed for an originality report upon submission.

Grading of the Written Examination

During the same business day in which the student submits their written examination to OSAA and the PhD Portfolio, the committee chair will receive the following documents from OSAA:

- The student's examination responses.
- The original examination questions.
- The individual committee member scoring sheet.
- The summary results form.

The committee chair will verify that the student's exam papers are available in the PhD Portfolio in D2L and review the Turnitin® originality report. The committee chair also notifies the committee members that the examination is ready for grading. The committee chair forwards the following documents to the committee: student's examination responses, original examination questions, the individual committee member scoring sheet and the date and time the scores are due back to the chair.

Each committee member has 10 business days to review and score the student's responses. The committee member sends one file containing each completed score sheet to the committee chair at the end of the 10-business day scoring period. After the chair receives each committee member's score, the chair will have four business days to report the results to the student. The committee chair will calculate the average score. To successfully "pass" the major comprehensive examination, the total acceptable scores from each reader for each question are averaged. Passing is 80% or greater.

If the minor content is woven into one question, then the minor chair will also evaluate that question. If the minor content is a separate question, then the minor chair evaluates only that question.

Results of the Written Examination

The results are based on an average of the committee members' scores and will be reported in aggregate without specifying each member's individual score using the Summary Results Form. The chair will send the Summary Results Form to all committee members prior to notifying the student of the results. No individual scores will be presented to the student from the individual committee members. All results will only be shared in aggregate form using the Summary Results form as a "Pass" or "Fail" along with faculty comments to the student. The chair must report the results in writing by email to the student no more than 14 business days after the exam due date. The chair will copy the committee and OSAA (CON-OSAA@email.arizona.edu) on this email. This email must include: "pass" or "fail" results in the text of the email using the templates provided.

Once the student has been notified, OSAA will send the committee chair the Official Results of the PhD Written Comprehensive Exam Form. The chair will reply to this email with individual committee member scoring sheets to be added to the student's electronic file. Concurrently, the committee chair will initiate circulation of the Official Results of the PhD Written Comprehensive Exam form by recording the results, any applicable comments and affixing their signature. The chair will circulate the form for all committee signatures. The committee chair will then send the completed Official Results of the PhD Written Comprehensive Exam form to OSAA (CON-OSAA@email.arizona.edu) where the form is saved to the student's permanent file and entered into the PhD database.

Retaking the Written Examination

Students who do not pass the written examination may take an alternate version of the examination for the portions that were failed. The alternate examination must be taken no later than 3 months after the date of the first attempt. Failure to pass either the major or minor examination on the second try will result in the student's disqualification from the program.

Oral Comprehensive Examination

The oral comprehensive examination will be based on the student's plan of study, as well as addressing relevant questions related to coursework foundational to the student's ability to conduct the dissertation.

Advance Procedures

After passing the written examination, the student will confer with the committee chair to identify preliminary dates for the oral examination.

- Confirm date with comprehensive examination committee.
- Provide OSAA with the date of the examination (CON-OSAA@email.arizona.edu)
    - In the email, note whether you (the student) will be on campus or attending via Zoom.
- OSAA will facilitate the room and/or Zoom reservation. Submit the "Announcement of Doctoral Comprehensive Exam" form in GradPath—must be completed at least 10 business days prior to the oral examination.

Scheduling the Oral Examination

The oral examination must be taken within 3 months of successfully passing the written examinations. The student consults with all members of their major comprehensive examination committee to determine a date and time for the oral examination. At this time, the student and committee should establish whether the student will be physically on-campus to complete this milestone. The student may take the examination on campus or via secure web conferencing.

The student must notify OSAA via email (CON-OSAA@email.arizona.edu) of the date and time of the oral examination to reserve a room for the examination at least 3 weeks prior to the scheduled exam. Students who will complete the exam via Zoom indicate "Nursing" for the building and "1" for the room number when completing the Gradpath form. Students completing the exam in person will need to reserve a room in the College of Nursing as required by the Announcement of Doctoral Comprehensive Exam form in GradPath. The committee chair (or one other member of the student's committee), at minimum, must be in attendance if the student is present in the College of Nursing for this milestone. If at least one member of the committee cannot be present, the exam should be rescheduled. In all cases, the Announcement form must be approved prior to the oral examination.

Taking the Oral Examination

The oral examination will be conducted, either onsite or via Zoom, as arranged by the student and the committee, following procedures put forward by the Graduate College. The oral examination will cover both major and minor emphasis areas and will require the student to demonstrate breadth of knowledge in the field, as well as depth of knowledge in the student's specialty area. Students may not use notes or other sources during the oral examination. The oral examination must be at least one hour in length. All committee members must be present for the entire examination.

The Graduate College policy is available for reference and download by both faculty and students at any time. The file includes faculty instructions on recording the results of the exam.

The examination is conducted in a closed session. It is not open to the public. All members must be in attendance for the entire exam which should be at least one hour in length, but not exceed three hours. At the conclusion of the Oral Comprehensive Examination (and after the student has left the room), the committee initiates discussion of the student's performance. Each member of the examination committee is expected to evaluate the student's performance based on the examination, not just on a particular area of questioning or specialty area.

Results of the Oral Examination

A student passes or fails the Oral Comprehensive Examination. Regardless of outcome, the Chair must record the results of the exam (including results of the written exam) on the Results of Comprehensive Exam form in GradPath. The Chair will receive an email with a link to this form when the student's Announcement form is approved prior to the exam.

If the student fails, the Committee has two options which need to be noted in GradPath. The option to be followed is determined by a majority vote of the Committee.

- Option 1: Repeat the Oral Comprehensive Examination
- Option 2: The Committee votes to not recommend a repeat examination

Retaking the Oral Examination

The oral examination may be repeated once if not passed initially. Failure to pass the second attempt will result in the student's disqualification from the program. The re-examination, if approved, will take place upon recommendation of the committee. Oral comprehensive re-examination must occur within three months of the initial oral comprehensive exam. The committee may request a representative, designated by the Graduate College, to attend the oral comprehensive re-examination.

No further coursework is required from the student before a re-examination. If a re-examination is recommended, the committee members must be the same as those present at the initial examination. If changes are made in the composition of the examination committee, they must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate College prior to the examination. Scheduling the re-examination goes through OSAA (see above for details).

Advancement to Candidacy

When the student has an approved doctoral plan of study on file with the Graduate College, has satisfied all course work, and passed the written and oral portions of the comprehensive examination, they will be "advanced to candidacy" by the Graduate College. The student's bursar account will be billed the Graduate College's fee for candidacy, dissertation processing, and archiving. This is a one-time fee, and the student will not be billed again if they change their anticipated graduation date. Copyrighting is optional and carries an additional fee.

Once advanced to doctoral candidacy, students may use the term "PhD Candidate" for professional posters and slides. PhD students should *not* use the "PhDc" initials on any communication while in the program.

Dissertation Committee Appointment

When the student has an approved doctoral plan of study on file, has satisfied all course work, language, and residence requirements, and passed the written and oral portions of the comprehensive examination, he or she must file a Dissertation Committee Appointment form in GradPath. This form reports the student's planned dissertation committee, dissertation title (subject to change) and the expected graduation term (may be updated as necessary). Students must submit this form to GradPath prior to the Defense of the Dissertation Proposal. Under normal circumstances, submission is expected at least six months before the Final Oral Examination (Final Dissertation Defense). The Graduate College Policy on Faculty eligible to chair as dissertation committee can be found here. https://grad.arizona.edu/policies/academic-policies/graduate-faculty-policy

PhD Dissertation

After advancement to candidacy, PhD (and dual PhD/DNP) students must complete the dissertation to graduate from the program. The dissertation in the CON consists of a research study. There are two dissertation options: the traditional five-chapter option and three-manuscript option. Each option is described below. For both options, students must first complete and successfully defend the dissertation proposal before proceeding to the dissertation study. The dissertation proposal consists of chapters 1-3 of the traditional 5-chapter format and is the same regardless if students choose the traditional or manuscript option for the final dissertation.

Dissertation Proposal and Dissertation Proposal Defense

All PhD and PhD/DNP dual degree students must write the dissertation proposal, regardless of which dissertation option (three-manuscript or five-chapter) they choose. The dissertation proposal consists of three chapters. The dissertation chair guides the content and organization of the chapters, but typically the organization resembles the following:

1. The proposal contains the front matter (table of contents, abstract), references, tables and figures, and pertinent appendices (see standard dissertation template for details on front matter): https://www.nursing.arizona.edu/resources/phd-dissertation).
2. The student should communicate in advance with Melinda Burns, Administrative Associate (*gmfletch@email.arizona.edu*) regarding plans for formatting the proposal and/or final dissertation. Email your proposal and/or final draft to Melinda for approval of document formatting. If you want your paper to be *pre-reviewed* for format requirements **before** your final defense – please send to Melinda *at least six weeks* **before** your scheduled final defense date.
    - Chapter 1 (**Introduction**) typically includes an introduction to the topic that leads to the problem statement, the significance of the proposed research as it pertains to the problem, and how the research was appropriate for filling gaps in knowledge. Chapter 1 typically includes the purpose statement and aims or research questions, definitions (if applicable), and the theoretical or conceptual framework.
    - Chapter 2 (**Literature Review**) typically presents a critical and in-depth review of literature (e.g., published studies) that provides support for the research questions or aims. This chapter may include literature tables (or these can be in an appendix), a synthesis that covers strengths and weaknesses of the literature as it pertains to the focus of study, and the resulting gaps in the literature that supported

further study of the topic. A review of the literature is more focused on the purpose and aims than the state of the science.

- Chapter 3 (**Methods**) covers the study methods or approach, tying in how the methods relate to the purpose and aims/research questions. Typically included in this chapter are a summary of any pilot studies completed by the student that pertain to the dissertation study, the study design, sample information (recruitment, sampling, sample size), description of the intervention (if applicable), and a description of measures, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and human subjects procedures.
- Appendices may include materials such as detailed literature tables, recruitment materials, data collection instruments or guides, and recruitment site authorization or confirmation letters.

Although the dissertation chairperson provides consistent mentorship throughout the proposal, the student may request guidance from other committee members during the proposal writing process. When the dissertation chairperson has approved the student's draft of the proposal, the student will contact all major committee members to set a date for the proposal defense meeting. The student provides the committee members with copies of the proposal at least 2 weeks before the scheduled proposal defense meeting. Defense of the proposal within two academic semesters (1 calendar year) following the completion of the written and oral comprehensive exams is strongly encouraged. The student must have an approved Doctoral Dissertation Committee Appointment Form on file in GradPath prior to the meeting.

The committee chair (or one other member of the student's committee), at minimum, must be in physical attendance if the student is present in the College of Nursing for the proposal defense. The proposal defense may take place online via UArizona secure web conferencing.

Following approval of the dissertation proposal, the chair will complete the Dissertation Proposal Defense Form. (https://www.nursing.arizona.edu/resources/phd-dissertation). The chair will confirm that the student has uploaded the final approved copy of the proposal to the D2L portfolio before obtaining the approval of the PhD Program Director. The final copy of this form will be forwarded to OSAA (CON-OSAA@email.arizona.edu) for inclusion with the student's official academic record and in the PhD database. Receipt of this form will allow the updating of the student's prospectus milestone in GradPath.

If the student chooses the three-manuscript dissertation option, further approvals must occur during the dissertation proposal defense (see PhD Dissertation: Three Manuscript Option, below).

Completion of Research and Written Dissertation

At the end of the dissertation proposal defense, the student and dissertation committee firm up the format for the dissertation, which will be either the five-chapter option or the three-manuscript option (details provided below). Research plans and obtaining IRB approval (see below) may proceed after major committee members approve the written dissertation proposal. The student should use the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (latest edition) as a format guide in writing the dissertation. Exceptions to APA formatting are the manuscripts written for the three-manuscript dissertation option. Other resources include the University of Arizona's Manual for Electronic Submission of Thesis and Dissertations. All dissertations must also meet Graduate College formatting requirements.

Dissertation AI Use Policy
Situational AI use is allowed for planning, but NOT for drafting.
Source: AIAS Level 2: AI Planning (UCATT: Yellow / Situational Use Permitted)

During the dissertation process, use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) or large language model tools (such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, etc.) are optional but may be used at candidate discretion. GenAI use in the candidate dissertation is limited strictly for pre-task activities such as brainstorming, outlining, initial literature discovery, troubleshooting data analysis software, and research organization. The candidate is responsible for human oversight and

the evaluation of any GenAI content. AI can be a helpful sounding board for organizing study materials and brainstorming. However, the written synthesis and argumentation must reflect the student's independent academic voice and critical thinking capabilities. GenAI may **NOT** be used to generate written drafts of dissertation chapters, synthesize literature reviews, or write data interpretations. The final dissertation manuscript must emphasize the candidate's ability to execute and refine these ideas independently. *NOTE: Some journals have explicit "no AI policies" in place. The candidate is encouraged to review these prior to engaging with AI to ensure the publication potential and outlets for their work to be disseminated.* The use of grammar checking software (e.g., Grammerly, Spell Check) is permitted at student discretion without disclosure.

If GenAI is used, please note the following:

- **Data Privacy:** Do not input sensitive, restricted, or classified human subjects research data (FERPA/HIPAA protected) into GenAI tools.

- **Disclosure:** A disclosure statement must be included at the end of the dissertation as an appendix that includes which tools were used and for what specific planning purposes. Please refer to the **AI Use Acknowledgement Form (Appendix A)**. Failure to acknowledge GenAI will be treated as a violation of the UA Code of Academic Integrity.

Students in the PhD-DNP dual degree option do not write a DNP project; therefore, their dissertation research must align with their DNP specialty area.

Human Subjects & IRB Compliance

Following approval of the dissertation proposal, all students must obtain approval for the proposed study through the University of Arizona Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP). There are no exceptions to this policy. The approval process is found on the Office of Research & Scholarship website. The student submits the application to the College of Nursing Office of Research and Scholarship for initial review. Students may not submit the HSPP application until the dissertation proposal is approved by the dissertation committee. Information regarding the Human Subjects process can be found via the Office of Research & Scholarship. Students may not commence any study-related activities (recruit, enroll, interview or survey participants, etc.) until approval is received. External approval may be required and must be accomplished in addition to standard university policies.

Dissertation Enrollment Policies

PhD students must complete a total of 18 units of Dissertation (NURS 920) as required by the program. If the student's dissertation chair is available, the student may continue 920 units during the summer term. Students who have taken 18 units and have not completed the dissertation must register for a minimum of 1 additional unit of NURS 920 each fall, spring, and possibly summer semesters (see advanced status information above).

Students completing dissertation work should review the Continuous Enrollment Policies of the Graduate College and the University of Arizona. Students receiving funding such as assistantships, fellowships, loans, grants, scholarships, or traineeships may be required by their funding source to register for more than 1 unit to meet full-time status requirements and should check with their funding source regarding such requirements to ensure that they remain qualified for funding.

PhD Dissertation: The Five-Chapter Option

The five-chapter option is a traditional form of the dissertation. The numbered/bulleted information below provides a general guideline for this option.

1. Use the standard, five-chapter template (https://www.nursing.arizona.edu/resources/phd-dissertation) for the front matter and appendices.
2. The dissertation contains the front matter (table of contents, abstract), references, tables and figures, and pertinent appendices (see standard dissertation template for details on front matter):

https://www.nursing.arizona.edu/resources/phd-dissertation). The student should communicate in advance with Melinda Burns, Administrative Associate (*gmfletch@email.arizona.edu*) regarding plans for formatting the proposal and/or final dissertation. Email your proposal and/or final draft to Melinda for approval of document formatting. If you want your proposal/draft to be *pre-reviewed* for format requirements **before** your final defense – please send to Melinda *at least six weeks* **before** your scheduled final defense date.

- Chapter 1 (**Introduction**) typically includes an introduction to the topic that leads to the problem statement, the significance of the proposed research as it pertains to the problem, and how the research was appropriate for filling gaps in knowledge. Chapter 1 typically includes the purpose statement and aims or research questions, definitions (if applicable), and the theoretical or conceptual framework.
- Chapter 2 (**Literature Review**) typically presents a critical and in-depth review of literature (e.g., published studies) that provides support for the research questions or aims. This chapter may include literature tables (or these can be in an appendix), a synthesis that covers strengths and weaknesses of the literature as it pertains to the focus of study, and the resulting gaps in the literature that supported further study of the topic. A review of the literature is more focused on the purpose and aims than the state of the science.
- Chapter 3 (**Methods**) covers the study methods or approach, tying in how the methods relate to the purpose and aims/research questions. Typically included in this chapter are a summary of any pilot studies completed by the student that pertain to the dissertation study, the study design, sample information (recruitment, sampling, sample size), description of the intervention (if applicable), and a description of measures, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and human subjects procedures.
- Chapter 4 (**Results**) details the study findings or results. This is a straight description of the results as they pertain to the study purpose, aims or research questions. Data tables may be included in this chapter.
- Chapter 5 (**Discussion**) is the student's interpretation and discussion of the results relative to the literature and the theoretical or conceptual framework. This chapter also includes clinical (if applicable) and research implications, limitations of the research, and how the dissertation will provide a foundation for future research.
- References: Use the latest edition of APA reference style.
- Appendices may include materials such as detailed literature tables, IRB approval letter(s), recruitment materials, data collection instruments or guides, and recruitment site authorization or confirmation letters.

PhD Dissertation: Three-Manuscript Option

All students selecting the three-manuscript option must complete the dissertation proposal and proposal defense as outlined above. At the end of the dissertation proposal defense, students, working with their dissertation committee, may choose the three-manuscript option for the final dissertation. This option allows inclusion of three publishable manuscripts as part of the final dissertation. Advantages of the PhD manuscript dissertation option include improving students' manuscript writing experience, facilitating more rapid advancement of dissertation findings, and improving a student's publication record in preparation for a post-doctoral fellowship or faculty position.

Overview

The three-manuscript format for the dissertation is based on the philosophy developed by the Council of Graduate Schools, which allows the use of published articles and publishable manuscripts as part of the dissertation. These manuscripts must be logically connected and integrated into the dissertation in a coherent manner. Simply including reprints or collections of manuscripts or publications together is not acceptable as a dissertation in either format or concept.

The manuscripts or publications must represent research or scholarship comparable in scope and contribution to the component of the traditional dissertation that they replace. The research that is described in the publishable

manuscripts or published articles must have been conducted during the time the candidate was enrolled in the PhD program (including PhD/DNP option) and cannot have been submitted toward any other degree at the University of Arizona or elsewhere.

The student's doctoral dissertation committee is responsible for ensuring that a dissertation represents the original, individual efforts of the candidate. For manuscripts where doctoral research efforts are part of a larger collaborative project, students must be able to identify one aspect of a project as their own and be able to demonstrate their original contribution in the manuscript.

College of Nursing PhD Dissertation Three-Manuscript Option Guidelines

These guidelines are meant to help explicate implementation of the Graduate College policy for dissertation (https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/degree-requirements/doctor-philosophy#dissertation). They do not change or supersede the policy.

Three-Manuscript Option and the Dissertation Proposal Defense

Selecting the PhD Dissertation Manuscript Option does NOT change the PhD dissertation proposal process and written requirements (see above for dissertation proposal defense information). The student and dissertation committee must discuss the planned manuscripts at the end of the proposal defense and reach consensus on potential content, authorship, journals for submission, and anticipated dates for submission of each paper at the end of the dissertation proposal defense. After reaching agreement, students must complete the *Manuscript Format Dissertation Defense Stage Approval Form* on the PhD Student Resources Webpage at the time of the dissertation proposal defense: https://www.nursing.arizona.edu/resources/phd-dissertation. This form must be approved and signed by the dissertation chair and the PhD Program Director and filed in the student's PhD portfolio before the student can proceed to dissertation implementation.

Type and Number of Manuscripts

Manuscripts must be relevant to the dissertation; the dissertation committee will judge the relevancy of manuscripts that are ready for submission to, accepted by, or published by a journal. Manuscripts should reflect a variety of components of the dissertation.

Three publishable manuscripts are required, **at least one of which is data-based and based on the findings of the dissertation study**. Manuscripts that have been judged by the dissertation committee as ready for submission to a peer-reviewed journal, accepted by a peer reviewed journal, or published in a peer-reviewed journal may be considered for the dissertation. All research and scholarly work described in manuscripts **must be related to the dissertation research** and must have been conducted during the time the student was enrolled in his or her current degree program.

Examples of the two other manuscripts include:

- Pilot study that directly pertains to the final dissertation research
- Meta-analysis, meta-synthesis, integrative review, systematic review, state of the science or scoping review (only one of these is allowed) that pertains to the dissertation research
- Theory or other conceptual type manuscript that directly pertains to the final dissertation research
- Methodological manuscript (e.g., recruitment, psychometric testing of a study measure used in the dissertation)

Not allowed are manuscripts or publications that are not related to the final dissertation research, pilot studies that are not connected to the dissertation, editorials, commentaries, or anything published in grey literature.

Decisions Regarding the Manuscript Option

With agreement of the committee, planned content of the manuscripts may change based upon findings from the dissertation or other factors. Publication titles, authorship and other details should be finalized for each publication (see PhD Dissertation Defense Stage Form) when the student submits an initial draft of the dissertation for the final dissertation defense.

Authorship

Multiple authorship of manuscripts is allowed. The student must be the primary author of the manuscripts, with content based on scholarship or research conducted primarily by the student. It is recommended that the majority of the student's committee not be co-authors on all manuscripts included in the dissertation and that authorship is discussed at the proposal defense.

When determining authorship, students should refer to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association for information on 'publication credit' or the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors' reference on 'Authorship and Contributorship': http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and- contributors.html

Order of Dissertation Sections for Three-Manuscript Option

Publishable or published manuscripts should be appended. However, to provide coherency, the body of the dissertation must include a summary of the student's contribution and a summary of the research. The dissertation manuscript template is available on the PhD Student Resources site on the CON website (https://www.nursing.arizona.edu/resources/phd-dissertation). The student should communicate in advance with Melinda Burns, Administrative Associate (*gmfletch@arizona.edu*) (see 'Dissertation Proposal and Dissertation Proposal Defense', sections) regarding plans for formatting the final dissertation. Following the front matter on the template (title through abstract), the dissertation body is organized as follows:

1) CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION (distillation of Chapters 1 and 2 of the dissertation proposal into this dissertation chapter)
   Clearly introduce the dissertation manuscripts, how the manuscripts fit together as a cohesive body of work, and the role that the student had in the research and production of the manuscripts. The introduction describes the unique contribution of the student's work to the field of study. That uniqueness should be described via the following subsections to extent they are appropriate.
   a) Explanation of the problem and its context
   b) Significance of the study
   c) Purpose of the study
   d) Aims or research questions
   e) Literature that supports the aims or research question (if some literature is in a review manuscript, then refer to that manuscript in this section; provide other supporting literature that is not in the manuscript).
   f) Theoretical or conceptual framework (if the framework is presented in a manuscript, then refer to that manuscript in this section)
2) CHAPTER 2: PRESENT STUDY
   a) This chapter summarizes the methods, results, and conclusions of the research.
   b) The chapter should begin with a statement such as: "The methods, results, and conclusions of this study are presented in the papers appended to this dissertation/thesis" (if this is the case).
   c) This chapter is a summary of the most important findings. Chapter 2, with the appended manuscripts, replaces the methods, results, and discussion chapters in the traditional five-chapter option.
   d) In some cases, Chapter 2 may expand on results or include results that are not in a manuscript.
3) REFERENCES
   a) References for the two chapters described above are in APA format.
   b) References should follow the 'Present Study' chapter (per dissertation template). These references pertain only to information in the dissertation body. References supporting the three manuscripts are not extracted to the dissertation reference list.
4) Appendices (Each Manuscript is a separate appendix labeled A, B, C., etc.) Appropriate appendices include:
   a) The manuscripts. Appendices must be numbered in the sequence in which the manuscripts are first mentioned in Chapter 1 or 2.

i) A publishable manuscript that has not been submitted for review or publication. Include the entire manuscript (title page, abstract, text, tables/figures, references) in one document formatted per journal guidelines.
ii) A submitted manuscript under review, revision or accepted (in press). Include the decision notification by the journal that should contain the manuscript number provided by the journal and the entire manuscript (title page, abstract, text, tables/figures, references) in one document formatted per journal guidelines.
iii) For published articles include the title page of the journal in which the article appeared, the statement of permission for use of copyrighted material, and the journal-originated pdf all in one combined pdf.

b) Supplemental Material that are resources to the methods and results. These most often include IRB approval letters, recruitment brochures or letters, data tables, graphs, and maps.

Final Oral Defense

Each student is required to present the final dissertation in an open forum called the final oral defense. All dissertation committee members must attend the final oral defense. The final oral defense can be in person or via web-based conferencing. The final oral defense consists of a public presentation of the study, questions from attendees in a forum, and a closed session for the student and committee. The public presentation, including the question-and-answer portion, should last no longer than 60 minutes. The closed session follows the public presentation and question-and-answer portion. The closed session allows the committee to discuss the project with the student, and to identify any required revisions prior to submission.

Scheduling the Final Oral Defense

The student should coordinate a time and date for the presentation with their committee as all members must be present at the final dissertation defense. Students must adhere to the "Intent to Defend" deadline provided by the OSAA each term. Additionally, students may not defend after the date established by OSAA. This date is set by OSAA to ensure that students are also able to adhere to the Graduate College's deadline for final submission.

The process for scheduling the Final Oral Defense is as follows:

- OSAA sends an email with information regarding the "Intent to Defend" form at the beginning of a given term. Students who anticipate completing the dissertation must fill out the electronic form per the instructions in the email. Established deadlines will be listed at the top of the form.
- Students who submit an "Intent to Defend" and do not include a date/time, should contact OSAA immediately once a date/time is determined. The date of the exam must be in keeping with the deadline listed by OSAA at the top of the "Intent to Defend" form.
- Students must check in with Melinda Burns, Administrative Associate, *at least* 6 weeks prior to the final defense (*gmfletch@email.arizona.edu*) ('Dissertation Proposal and Dissertation Proposal Defense' sections) regarding plans for formatting the final dissertation. Ms. Burns is involved in approving the format of the final dissertation prior to submission to the Graduate College.
- GradPath forms must be completed no later than 10 business days prior to the defense date.

Once GradPath forms are completed, the student's defense information will be posted to the college's events calendar on the CON website. By Graduate College policy, each presentation must be viewable to the public. This rule is met through the OSAA defense announcements, which share the in-person location or zoom link for the Nursing community. For students who choose to have both a remote option and defend in-person, room and zoom link information is included on the announcement. These announcements are emailed the week before the defense.

Prior to the Dissertation Defense, students must ensure that all GradPath forms are completed up to, and including, the "Announcement of Final Oral Defense" (NURSPHD) Form. Approval of this form will allow the chair to record the result of the defense. GradPath tutorials are available from the Graduate College. Students may log back into GradPath to

check the approval status of forms at any time. The routing path is available at the bottom of each form. It is important to note that the title of the dissertation entered in GradPath is considered the official and final title and may not be changed after the defense. The title entered in GradPath will be used for printing in the official university commencement program. If the student has not submitted the "Announcement of Final Oral Defense" by the week before the defense date, the title of the dissertation cannot be included in the OSSA Defense Announcement.

Required Materials

The student should provide the committee members with copies of the penultimate draft of the dissertation **not less than 2 weeks prior to the scheduled date** of the defense. The penultimate draft of a dissertation must include:

- Front matter of the dissertation: title page, table of contents, abstract,
- Chapters 1 – 5 or format for "three-manuscript option", references, appendices (including the Human Subjects Committee/IRB Approval)
- Tables and Figures (professionally drawn)
- Appendices

Results of the Final Oral Defense

The defense is conducted according to the Graduate College policies, with the Dissertation Chair presiding. There is no minimum time limit for the final oral defense, but the entire proceedings may not exceed three hours. Members of the committee must be present for the entire examination.
There are four possible outcomes of the examination:

- Pass
- Pass with minor dissertation revisions (only the chairperson needs to approve the dissertation following revisions)
- Pass with major dissertation revisions (the entire committee needs to approve the dissertation following revisions)
- Fail

The dissertation chair will record the results of the exam in GradPath on behalf of the committee.

All students have revisions to make after the final defense. To plan for these, students should allow a few weeks between defense and final submission deadlines when scheduling a date.

Post-Defense Celebration

Students who present in-person at the College of Nursing are celebrated with a sparkling water toast after successfully passing this milestone. OSAA provides sparkling water for the student, committee, and any special guests the student has invited (friends, family, etc.). Weather permitting, OSAA coordinates taking pictures of the student and committee. Each student is also presented with a certificate signed by their chair indicating their order of graduation (e.g., student 102) from the PhD program. The student will ring the college's memorial bell.

Completion Requirements for the PhD

To award the degree of PhD, students must complete both College of Nursing and Graduate College protocols. These details are outlined below.

Graduate College Submission Requirements

Upon submission of the PhD Dissertation Committee Form, the student will receive the Checklist for Finishing Your Doctoral Requirements from the Graduate College via email. All steps in the checklist must be completed by the posted deadlines in order for the Graduate College to confer the degree. Students should contact OSAA or the Graduate College for questions about this process. A comprehensive list of degree requirements from the Graduate College is also available.

College of Nursing Requirements

Students also must complete the PhD program exit survey, an online survey at the time of their final oral defense. They will receive this link from the PhD Program Director.

Appendix A: AI Use Acknowledgement

Instructions for the Student: Use this appendix to be in compliance with the AI use policy. If GenAI was used during the dissertation process, you must document how GenAI was used and in what capacity. This acknowledgement is to be submitted to your PhD Portfolio as a separate document at the time of dissertation submission.

Student Name: [Insert Name]

Document Title: [Dissertation Title]

Statement of Integrity and Human Oversight: I hereby declare that the core academic writing, synthesis of literature, and final analytical interpretations in this document are entirely my own independent work. GenAI tools were utilized strictly for early-stage planning, ideation, and organizational purposes, as permitted by the AI Use Policy. I have reviewed all AI-generated concepts for accuracy and validity.

GenAI Usage Report:

AI Tool Used (e.g., Gemini, Claude)	**Version/Date**	**Purpose (e.g., Brainstorming keywords, outlining)**	**Link to Conversation Transcript**
[e.g., Gemini Advanced]	[e.g., Feb 2026]	[e.g., Brainstorming literature search terms for Background]	[Insert Shared Link or reference attached PDF]
[Tool 2]	[Date]	[Purpose]	[Link]

In-Text Citations:

Please list the formal citations for the tools used above, formatted according to APA's style guide. For additional information regarding citation of GenAI, please review UA Libraries Guide: How to Cite AI.

Example (APA): Google. (2026). *Gemini* (February 24 version) [Large language model]. https://gemini.google.com