

Waynesburg University
Department of Nursing
Graduate and Professional Studies

Course Descriptions
Doctor of Nursing Practice Curriculum
Theory Courses

NUR 605 Evidence-based Nursing: Transforming the Practice Environment 3 cr

This course introduces the concepts associated with evidence-based nursing practice models. The steps in implementing evidence-based practice are explored in depth, including the following: selecting a clinical or knowledge question or problem, forming a team, retrieving the evidence from published literature, evaluating the strength of the evidence, critiquing research and practice guidelines, synthesizing the research, examining patient preferences, making evidence-based practice recommendations, deciding to change practice, implementing the practice change, evaluating the outcomes, and diffusing the innovation. Issues related to information management technology will be introduced. Strategies for creating a culture of evidence-based practice, both for individuals and systems, will be identified, and the barriers to evidence-based practice will also be identified. The concept of translation science and tools for applying evidence to practice will be emphasized. The goal of this course is to provide the student with the knowledge and skills necessary to assume a leadership role in transforming healthcare and educational environments.

NUR 606 Healthcare Systems Leadership 3 cr

The purpose of this course is to provide a comprehensive exploration of leadership theories and principles, as well as innovative leadership techniques. Units of content will focus on systems thinking, values and ethics, human resource utilization, legal issues, decision-making, organizational culture and climate, communication skills, succession planning, theories of change and change leadership, creation of learning communities, professional accountability, and leadership within professional nursing organizations. Qualities and behaviors associated with exemplary leadership will be identified. The goal of this course is to develop and refine the leadership skills of the student as he/she works to transform practice and educational environments in order to enhance the quality of nursing and healthcare delivery systems. The student will be expected to use his/her own work environment as a learning laboratory to assess and develop organizational structures and leadership skills.

NUR 607 Healthcare Outcomes 3 cr

This course examines concepts related to healthcare outcomes identification, measurement, management, and planning for improved outcomes. Goals for healthcare outcomes and the delivery of healthcare will be identified relative to health promotion, disease prevention, disease management, and the design of innovative healthcare delivery models. Units will focus on principles and concepts associated with epidemiology; healthcare evaluation design; methodologies for outcomes research; use of epidemiological, biostatistical, environmental, geographic, genetic, behavioral, and socioeconomic data to evaluate outcomes of healthcare delivery; processes in program evaluation; use of outcomes data to shape healthcare policy; measurement of cost-effectiveness; and the development of new practice guidelines based on outcomes research. The goal of this course is to provide the knowledge, skills, and tools needed for leadership in healthcare outcomes management and planning.

NUR 608 Interprofessional Collaboration and Team Facilitation 3 cr

This course focuses on the knowledge and skills necessary to provide exemplary leadership of groups and teams, with an emphasis on relationship building and team building. Units of content include effective communication with groups and teams, conflict management and resolution, group process and techniques for effectively leading meetings, the application of adult learning principles, emotional intelligence, characteristics of effective teams, roles and scope of practice of various healthcare professionals, and the creation of a professional practice culture. The student will complete various assessments to determine the effectiveness of practice environment communication, meetings, and groups/teams. Guided facilitation of meetings will be included as a learning experience. The goal of this course is to further enhance the student's leadership skill development in order to resolve complex clinical situations and improve practice environments so that best practice standards are operationalized.

NUR 609 Healthcare Quality Initiatives**3 cr**

This course will focus on the role of the nurse executive in quality initiatives. Strategies for creating a culture of quality will be examined, including the application of Lean and Six Sigma principles and techniques. Concepts associated with quality management will be explored, including review of quality standards and benchmarks, systems thinking, and the collection of reliable data regarding quality. Units of content will also include the application of statistical methods for data analysis, the process of root cause analysis, the plan-do-check-act cycle, the nature and analysis of sentinel events, the prevention of errors, measuring customer satisfaction, and the process of continuous quality improvement within healthcare and educational institutions. The goal of the course is to provide the scientific knowledge base and practical tools necessary for leadership of healthcare quality initiatives, so that an organizational quality infrastructure can be built.

NUR 615 Quantitative Methods for Nurse Executives**3 cr**

This course provides an overview of quantitative methods for applying data in the process of decision-making within a healthcare environment. Units of content include forecasting, the processes of decision-making based on data and decision trees, making choices for location and physical layout design of healthcare services, the processes associated with reengineering and work redesign, the use of data in determining staffing and scheduling decisions, measurement of productivity, making resource allocation and inventory decisions, the use of data in quality initiatives, project management, and capacity planning. The goal of this course is to ensure that the nurse executive makes decisions based on data that has been reliably collected and analyzed, so that efficient and effective decisions can be made that allow the organization to be successful.

NUR 616 Healthcare Information Management and Technology**3 cr**

This course provides the student with an opportunity to examine the value of health information management using computer technology. Units of content will explore methods for choosing information and technology systems to support the following aspects of healthcare leadership: information literacy for evidence-based practice, quality improvement and outcomes evaluation, management tasks, educational processes, clinical information systems, clinical decision support systems, electronic medical records, clinical pathways, clinical protocols and guidelines, personal digital assistants, and classification systems for documentation. Standards and principles for selecting and evaluating information systems will be discussed, along with ethical and legal issues. The student will gain practice in extracting data from information systems and data dashboards in order to make decisions, and will participate in institutional evaluation of existing information management systems in his/her own work setting.

NUR 617 Principles of Strategic Planning**3 cr**

This course focuses on the process of strategic planning as part of the executive leadership role. Units of content include: the development of a strategic vision, writing a mission and philosophy, SWOT and gap analyses, assessment of the external environment, organizational assessment, internal strengths and limitations, health economics and health finance, forecasting, soliciting consumer input into organizational goals, defining organizational goals, acquisition and allocation of resources, practice innovations and clinical program development, workflow design and redesign, program planning and evaluation, risk anticipation and risk management, marketing principles, and the measurement and analysis of performance. Strategic thinking is encouraged within each unit and each learning activity. The student will be expected to participate in and conduct strategic planning sessions in his/her own work environment and to evaluate existing strategic plans. The goal of this course is to ensure that the student is prepared to assume accountability for improving the health outcomes of individuals and aggregates.

Practicum Courses

NUR 618 Practicum I, Nurse Executive Role Practicum

2 credits

This course provides the student with the opportunity to analyze the role of the nurse executive, through 84 guided hours of practicum experience with a seasoned mentor at the system level in the work environment which best matches the student's initial career goals following completion of the DNP curriculum. Learning experiences will focus on the following: processes associated with budget and finance, strategies for managing and developing human resources, healthcare policy, legal and ethical issues, program and patient care delivery design and implementation, utilization of information systems, meeting facilitation at the organizational or system level, application of analytical skills in decision-making, communication and relationship-building, interprofessional collaboration, succession planning, and strategic planning. During this practicum, the student will shadow one or more seasoned executives whose roles impact or influence the implementation of the nurse executive role. These executives may be nurses or members of other professional groups. A learning contract will be developed around the DNP student's learning goals for this experience. Asynchronous discussion will focus on identity development related to the nurse executive role. Students in the course will serve as consultative peers in exploration of issues and strategies for developing skills as a nurse executive.

NUR 621 Practicum II, Capstone Proposal

2 credits

During the capstone proposal phase of the capstone project, the student will design a change project that will have system level impact, resulting in significant organizational change and immediate improvement in the quality of healthcare and nursing practice. This change project, aimed at clinical translation of research findings with direct application to practice or system-level organizational development, will be presented to the student's capstone project committee for review and approval prior to implementation. Asynchronous discussion will focus on capstone proposal development issues and strategies. Students in the course will serve as consultative peers in exploration of issues and strategies for developing skills as a nurse executive.

NUR 622 Practicum III, Capstone Implementation

4 credits

This course provides the opportunity for application of knowledge and skills gained in the theory courses of the DNP curriculum. During the 166 practicum hours associated with this course, the student will implement practice changes in his/her work setting, based on the capstone proposal developed and approved during NUR 621. The practicum activities are focused on providing leadership in changing the practice environment in order to improve the outcomes of patient care. Mentorship will be provided by an expert within the practice setting chosen by the student. Using essential DNP competencies and nurse executive competencies learned in the theory courses, the student will be expected to conduct a project that makes an impact on patient care outcomes. Asynchronous discussion is included in this course, to provide the student with the opportunity to participate in a learning community of colleagues and scholars who will serve as consultants on the projects. Issues related to implementation of the change project will be explored, with a focus on application of healthcare system leadership skills in the process of transforming the practice environment toward a more effective, evidence-based model of care delivery. The ultimate goal of the project is to refine skills needed to improve healthcare outcomes.

NUR 699 Capstone Project

4 credits

This capstone course provides the student with the opportunity to synthesize previous learning in the implementation and evaluation of a system level change designed to immediately improve healthcare outcomes. During the 166 hours associated with this course, the student will conduct a change project based on principles of science and evidence-based practice, healthcare quality, and systems leadership. Successful completion of this final practicum will require the student to present the results of the change project to his/her capstone project committee for their review and approval of the cumulative scholarly work. It is expected that this project will demonstrate the measurement and evaluation of outcomes resulting from the organizational change. Discussions with the capstone committee will focus on the sophisticated leadership skills required of the nurse executive, including the highest level of analytic thinking and problem-solving skill.

For Those Students Who Need Additional Practice Hours

(DNP Essentials Require 1000 Hours post-baccalaureate degree. Students with an MSN in a Clinical Role, such as NP, CRNA, or CNS have already completed 500 hours. Students from a Nursing Education or Nursing Administration Program may not have done 500 hours at the MSN level, and will register for NUR 668 at a flat fee of \$180 each semester until the remainder of necessary practicum hours is met. This course is also available for students who need to take 6 credits in a semester in order to qualify for financial aid.)

NUR 668 Clinical Residency

3 cr

The clinical residency experience will provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate expertise in practice and will be individualized for students based on their prior education and experience. Residency experiences will be designed to help students build and assimilate knowledge for advanced specialty practice at a high level of complexity. In-depth work with experts from nursing and other disciplines will be incorporated to provide opportunities for meaningful student engagement within practice environments.

This residency is designed to provide an opportunity for doctoral students enrolled in the program to fulfill the practice experience requirements specified in the DNP curriculum. The curriculum is based on the DNP Essentials developed by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN, 2006) which outline competencies expected of DNP graduates and designate a minimum of 1,000 hours of post-baccalaureate practice. These hours can be accumulated over the life of the program but the practice requirement must be fulfilled prior to the awarding of the DNP degree. As described in the AACN document, practice experiences will be designed to help students achieve specific learning objectives related to the DNP Essentials and specialty competencies. Many specialty groups already define various minimal experiences and requirements. Students who have had supervised practice requirements as part of a clinical MSN program will have already accumulated a portion of these required hours prior to entering the DNP program.

Approved 2006; Revised 8/08; revised 9/09