The objective of the **Doctor of Nursing Practice** (DNP) program is to prepare graduates for the highest level of nursing practice. Emphasis is placed on evaluating and applying the evidence that supports practice, understanding and creating practice delivery systems based on patient outcomes, and assuming leadership roles in practice settings. Students may apply to either the BSN to DNP or the MSN to DNP pathway. Five concentrations are available to the post-baccalaureate student. As recommended by the **AACN DNP Essentials**, the concentrations are configured in two foci:

1. **Care of Individuals** through the Family Nurse Practitioner, Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner, and Family Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner concentrations, and
2. **Care of Aggregates (groups)** through the Advanced Clinical Nursing and Administration in Nursing concentrations.

The DNP is the highest practice degree in the nursing profession. Students may draw on the expertise from throughout the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) in such areas as health economics, health policy, and epidemiology. Graduates of the program will be able to assume many roles in the health care system, including direct patient care, clinical nursing faculty, practice management, and policy development.

**MSN to DNP**

Students who enter the MSN to DNP program will complete 72 credits. A maximum of 30 credit hours of relevant graduate credit may be awarded for past master’s-level courses, and students will complete the minimum of 42 additional credits. Essential courses building on previous master’s education must be completed in the first year of full-time study or two years of part-time study. They prepare the student to develop and implement the practice inquiry project in the final two semester of study. Individualized plans of study are created based on the content from the student’s master’s degree academic program and will include a minimum of 19 credits.

**BSN to DNP**

Students who enter the BSN to DNP program will complete 72 credits and must choose from the following concentrations:

- Family Nurse Practitioner
- Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner
- Family Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
- Advanced Clinical Nursing
- Nursing Administration

BSN to DNP students complete core courses in theory, ethics, healthcare delivery systems, and statistics; advanced-practice competency courses relevant to their chosen concentration; and essential doctoral-level courses in policy, administration, informatics, and evidence-based practice.

All BSN to DNP and MSN to DNP students must complete 1000 precepted/mentored clinical hours. MSN to DNP students may include documented precepted/mentored clinical hours obtained during previous master’s education. The number of hours granted from the master’s degree is based on an individual evaluation of master’s clinical hours. Students also must complete two practice inquiry project (PIP) courses over two semesters resulting in a scholarly product approved by their PIP committees. Students must take additional electives to meet the 72 credits required to complete the program.
Application Process

Applications are considered for the DNP for the fall semester. Application requirements and deadlines are outlined on the CHHS Graduate Admission website, which can be found at: http://chhs.gmu.edu/admissions/graduate/deadlines.cfm. Late applications will be considered on a space-available basis. Admission to the program is competitive, and a variety of criteria are evaluated in the admissions process, including the strength of the undergraduate record and any post-baccalaureate coursework, the GRE/GMAT (if required), career goals, letters of recommendation, professional and/or volunteer experience, evidence of the ability to write and conduct research at the graduate level, and any additional evidence of potential success in the graduate program.

All applicants will be licensed registered nurses who will have a minimum of one-year experience as an RN prior to admission. Applicants must have completed an undergraduate statistics course with a grade of C or better within the last 5 years.

MSN to DNP

Applicants to the MSN to DNP program must hold an MSN degree from a regionally accredited institution with a minimum GPA of 3.5 or better in their graduate program and show evidence they have met coursework requirements consistent with Mason’s MSN core curriculum. Applicants must show proof of MSN precepted practice hours (see Departmental Form – http://chhs.gmu.edu/nursing/dnp/). Applicants must also have a minimum of one year of work as an RN experience prior to admission. Meeting the minimum application criteria does not guarantee admission to the DNP program. Please visit the CHHS Graduate Admissions website listed above for detailed application information.

BSN to DNP

Applicants to the BSN to DNP program must hold a BSN degree from a regionally accredited institution with a minimum of 3.0 GPA and a strong record in science and nursing coursework. Applicants must also have a minimum of one year of work as an RN experience prior to admission. Meeting the minimum application criteria does not guarantee admission to the DNP program. Please visit the CHHS Graduate Admissions website listed above for detailed application information.

Special Requirements

All nursing students must maintain a current nursing license. Nursing students must meet certain mandatory requirements, including a certified criminal background check, proof of health insurance coverage, immunizations, and other university requirements. Specific information will be provided once the offer of admission to the nursing program has been accepted.

Contact Information

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The above information is based on the 2013–2014 University Catalog and is subject to change without notice or obligation. It is not to be regarded as a contract. Please refer to the catalog for full course descriptions, department information, and university policy governing graduate degree programs at catalog.gmu.edu.

5/19/14