Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Degree Program
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The accredited* Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree program is designed for master’s-prepared nurses who want to move into administrative positions, nurse administrators who want to expand their leadership responsibilities, or nurse leaders who want to design and implement health care delivery programs. The curriculum emphasizes effective health care delivery; patient advocacy; and health care policy development, implementation, and reform. Throughout the program, learners gain competency in assessing and applying theory, building therapeutic relationships, designing and implementing therapeutic interventions, and leading and managing in the health care environment. Upon successful completion of this degree program, learners are prepared to apply the knowledge and skills needed to meet diverse patient needs and improve health care delivery. The DNP degree program is not a clinical degree program and is not designed to prepare advanced practice registered nurses for roles as nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, certified nurse midwives, or certified nurse anesthetists. Registered nurses who have a master’s degree in nursing, those who have a master’s degree in a field other than nursing, and those who have a BSN degree may pursue Capella’s DNP.

Capella’s DNP focuses on administrative, organizational, and systems leadership competencies to prepare you for a variety of nursing leadership positions. DNP-prepared nurses can also teach in many higher education institutions.

Accreditation by CCNE* serves as a statement of good educational practice in the field of nursing.

The DNP curriculum incorporates The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice established by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN).

*The BSN, MSN and DNP nursing degree programs at Capella University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 530, Washington, DC 20036, (202)887-6791. http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation.

This guide is intended to provide an overview of the degree program and is subject to change. Your enrollment counselor can provide updates, details, and Capella’s official University Catalog that specifies your program requirements.
Career Information

**RELATED EMPLOYMENT SETTINGS TO EXPLORE**
- Self employment
- Community mental health agency
- Hospital
- Health care organization
- Home health care service
- Government—local, state, federal
- Community health agency
- Nursing care facility
- Medical clinic
- Social service agency
- Land-based or online college or university
- Community college
- School system (K-12)
- Insurance company

**RELATED JOB TITLES TO EXPLORE**
- Nursing instructor
- Chief nursing officer
- Health care director
- Nursing director
- Health care systems coordinator
- Education consultant
- Trainer
- Lobbyist or legislative consultant
- Nurse educator
- Nurse manager
- Nursing administrator
- Nursing operations director
- School system administrator (health services)
- Nursing professor

**PROGRAM OUTCOMES**
- Employ a science-based theoretical foundation to develop and evaluate new practices and approaches to health care delivery
- Evaluate and analyze theory and research-based methods to improve the reliability of health care practices and outcomes
- Lead planning and implementation of health care technologies for quality improvement appropriate for specialized areas of practice
- Develop, implement, and advocate for health care policy that meets the needs of specific populations
- Employ inter-professional collaboration skills to improve patient and population health
- Lead and create health care delivery models for quality improvement
- Develop, implement, and evaluate evidence-based health promotion, prevention, and intervention service delivery models for individuals, aggregates, and populations

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*These are examples intended to serve as a general guide. Because many factors determine what position an individual may attain, Capella cannot guarantee that a graduate will secure any specific job title.
†Some positions require licensure and/or other designations. We encourage you to research requirements for your job target and career goals.
Curriculum

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Master’s degree in nursing from an institution accredited by a U.S. Department of Education-recognized accrediting agency or an internationally recognized institution

Grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale

Current, unrestricted RN license to practice in the United States

One year of licensed RN work experience or currently be employed as an RN

This degree program is offered in the GuidedPath delivery model.

PREREQUISITE COURSES

13 required courses
Total program credits: 52 quarter credits

PRACTICE IMMERSION REQUIREMENT(S)

Minimum of 1,000 supervised practice immersion hours.

REQUIRED COURSES

All courses taken in the following sequence:

NHS8002 Collaboration, Communication, and Case Analysis for Doctoral Learners ....................... 4 quarter credits
DNP8010 Management in Advanced Contemporary Nursing .................................................. 4 quarter credits
DNP8012 Nursing Technology and Health Care Information Systems .................................... 4 quarter credits
DNP8014 Global Population Health ....................................................................................... 4 quarter credits
NHS8040 21st-Century Health Care Leadership ........................................................................ 4 quarter credits
NHS8050 Preparing for the Professional Doctorate in Nursing and Health Sciences .............. 4 quarter credits
NHS8060 Scholarly Methods in Nursing and Health Sciences .............................................. 4 quarter credits
NHS8070 Evaluation and Interpretation of Data in Health Care ........................................... 4 quarter credits
NHS8700 Keystone: Determining Readiness for the Professional Doctorate ....................... 4 quarter credits

Learners must register for DNP9971 a minimum of four times to fulfill their program requirements.

DNP9971 Doctoral Capstone† ......................................................... 4 quarter credits

*Denotes courses that have prerequisite(s). Refer to the course descriptions for further details.
†Learners are responsible for the cost of their travel, accommodations, food, and other expenses associated with this course.

Learners enrolled in the DNP degree program are required to maintain a current, unrestricted RN license throughout their program.

This program does not prepare graduates for licensure as an RN or APRN.

The courses in this program may require live web conferencing activities and/or learner audio/video recordings. Learners who require assistive technology or alternative communication methods to participate in these activities should contact Disability Services to request accommodations.
The first course of Capella’s DNP program incorporates our Learner Success Lab into your core assignments to help you learn the tools available to help you succeed.

Beyond your first course, you’ll have support staff, teaching assistants, a faculty mentor once you enter your capstone, and more to keep you on the path to success.

## Required Course Descriptions

### NHS8002  Collaboration, Communication, and Case Analysis for Doctoral Learners

This course prepares learners for doctoral-level coursework in the School of Nursing and Health Sciences. Throughout the course, learners analyze and evaluate how the scholar-practitioner model provides guidance for developing competencies in effective and ethical health care leadership, including professional and interprofessional collaboration, communication, inclusion, and decision making. **Must be taken during the learner’s first quarter. Cannot be fulfilled by transfer.**

### DNP8010  Management in Advanced Contemporary Nursing

The focus of this course is on the management skills needed to create valuable, proactive change in health care settings and within complex health care delivery systems. Learners use conceptual and analytical skills to evaluate the links among practice, organizational, population, fiscal, and policy issues and apply this knowledge to professional practice.

### DNP8012  Nursing Technology and Health Care Information Systems

Learners in this course apply information technology and research methods within the health care environment. In particular, learners evaluate the use of technology in health care information systems for the purposes of monitoring outcomes of care and assessing quality improvement.

### DNP8014  Global Population Health

In this course, learners analyze epidemiological, biostatistical, occupational, and environmental data and use it to develop, implement, and evaluate health promotion and disease prevention efforts in global populations. Throughout the course, learners focus on preparing themselves to lead the development and implementation of institutional, local, state, national, or international health care policy. **Prerequisite(s): DNP8010. Cannot be fulfilled by transfer.**

### NHS8040  21st-Century Health Care Leadership

This course focuses on the role of health care and public health leaders to foster change and develop relationships to improve health outcomes in diverse settings and communities. Learners gain knowledge of the challenges confronting health care and public health care leaders in the 21st century. Learners also analyze leadership theories and models, interprofessional collaboration, and ethical principles and standards. **Prerequisite(s): Completion of or concurrent registration in NHS8002. Cannot be fulfilled by transfer.**

### NHS8050  Preparing for the Professional Doctorate in Nursing and Health Sciences

In this course, learners prepare for the practice change project that serves as the culmination of the professional doctorate. Learners compare a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) with a professional doctorate; identify a clinical or organizational problem or opportunity for improvement within a health care or public health setting; and apply literature search techniques to identify research related to the practice/process problem. **Cannot be fulfilled by transfer.**

### NHS8060  Scholarly Methods in Nursing and Health Sciences

In this course, learners differentiate between qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research approaches as they relate to nursing and health sciences. Throughout the course, learners evaluate research source quality, credibility, bias, and relevance to practice and identify theoretical underpinnings and conceptual frameworks within health care or public health settings. **Prerequisite(s): NHS8050. Cannot be fulfilled by transfer.**
NHS8070  Evaluation and Interpretation of Data in Health Care  4 QUARTER CREDITS
In this course, learners explore underlying concepts and reasoning related to the collection and evaluation of qualitative and quantitative data in health care research. Learners apply appropriate statistical techniques and practice interpreting frequently encountered statistical outcomes. In addition, learners assess the quality of statistical and qualitative research methods reported in peer-reviewed health care literature. Prerequisite(s): NHS8060. Cannot be fulfilled by transfer.

NHS8700  Keystone: Determining Readiness for the Professional Doctorate Project  4 QUARTER CREDITS
In this course, learners focus on synthesizing the knowledge and skills gained during their program. Learners state the case for their planned practice change project to demonstrate their readiness to enter the professional doctorate project process. In addition, learners identify strategies to secure a supervisor/preceptor and project site. Grading for this course is S/NS. Prerequisite(s): NHS8070. Cannot be fulfilled by transfer.

DNP9971  Doctoral Capstone  4 QUARTER CREDITS
This course provides learners with resources, guidance, and support as they complete the required milestones toward completion of a doctoral capstone. Learners apply scholarly research within a particular professional context to advance their knowledge in the science and practice of the profession and solve organization, institutional, or community concerns. Department consent is required for registration. Grading for this course is S/NS. Learners must register for this course a minimum of four times to fulfill their program requirements. Cannot be fulfilled by transfer.
Course Sequence

This course sequence assumes learners pursue a full-time course of study. Some learners may elect to take fewer courses per quarter based on workload and the amount of time available for graduate study.

### YEAR 1 | COURSES | CAPSTONE MILESTONES
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Q1 | NHS8002 Collaboration, Communication, and Case Analysis for Doctoral Learners |  
Q2 | NHS8040 21st-Century Health Care Leadership  
NHS8050 Preparing for the Professional Doctorate in Nursing and Health Sciences |  
Q3 | DNP8010 Management in Advanced Contemporary Nursing  
NHS8060 Scholarly Methods in Nursing and Health Sciences |  
Q4 | DNP8012 Nursing Technology and Health Care Information Systems  
NHS8070 Evaluation and Interpretation of Data in Health Care |  

Learners begin their first two capstone milestones within their keystone course.

### YEAR 2 | COURSES | CAPSTONE MILESTONES
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Q5 | DNP8014 Global Population Health  
NHS8700 Keystone: Determining Readiness for the Professional Doctorate | 1. Topic Approval  
2. Research Plan Approval  
3. Ethics Review/IRB Screening |  
Q6 | DNP9971 Doctoral Capstone |  
Q7 | DNP9971 Doctoral Capstone |  
Q8 | DNP9971 Doctoral Capstone | 4. Mentor and Committee Approval |  

Capstone milestone completion time varies based on learner progress.

### YEAR 3 | COURSES | CAPSTONE MILESTONES
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Q9 | DNP9971 Doctoral Capstone | 5. School Approval
Financial Aid

Capella University offers assistance to learners who qualify and would like to secure educational funding to help finance their academic program. A number of options are available, given the diverse needs and backgrounds of prospective learners. Options include:

- Federal Direct Stafford Loan Program
- Federal Direct PLUS Loan Program
- Non-federal loans through preferred lenders and financial institutions
- Capella scholarships
- External scholarships
- Veterans’ educational benefits and U.S. armed forces discounts
- Corporate and higher education alliances
- Employer tuition reimbursement

Regarding loan programs, interest rates for Stafford student loans are low compared to other types of consumer loans, and repayment can be deferred until after graduation. In compliance with federal and state laws, Capella University has established policies for all learners regarding satisfactory academic progress, which is necessary for financial aid eligibility.

There are many financial aid options available to help you offset tuition costs.

Contact an enrollment counselor at 1.888.CAPELLA (227.3552) to discuss your financial aid opportunities.

Tuition and Fees

This tuition estimate is effective July 10, 2017, and is subject to change. For current pricing, visit the Capella University website at www.capella.edu.

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<tr>
<th>TUITION/FEES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition per credit*</td>
<td>$790</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resource kit per quarter</td>
<td>$175</td>
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*Learners are responsible for the cost of their travel, accommodations, food, and other expenses associated with DNP9971.

Digital course materials covered by the quarterly resource kit fee offer advantages such as immediate mobile access to books; fast, easy full-text search of materials; digital note-taking; and peer collaboration through note sharing.
Academic Leadership

F. Patrick Robinson, PhD, RN, FAAN
Dean
Dr. Patrick Robinson serves as the dean of the School of Nursing and Health Sciences at Capella University. Prior to joining Capella, Dr. Robinson served as Senior Vice President of Academics for Orbis Education, Dean of Curriculum and Instruction at Chamberlain College of Nursing, Executive Assistant Dean of the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Nursing, and Chair of the Department of Health Management and Risk Reduction at the Niehoff School of Nursing at Loyola University Chicago. Additionally, Dr. Robinson is a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing (FAAN). He holds a BSN and MSN from Indiana University, a PhD in Nursing Science from Loyola University Chicago and has completed a post-doctoral fellowship in biobehavioral nursing research at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Christy Davidson, DNP, RN
Associate Dean and Director of Nursing
Dr. Christy Davidson serves as associate dean and director of nursing for Capella University’s School of Nursing and Health Sciences. Dr. Davidson has been with Capella since 2010, and has been a registered nurse for almost 18 years, having previously served as a staff nurse, clinical nurse specialist, legal nurse consultant, and nurse manager. Her areas of specialty and interest include women’s and children’s health, leadership and management, and quality improvement. Dr. Davidson holds a DNP in Leadership from the University of South Alabama and holds both an MSN in Adult Health and a BSN from the University of Mobile.

Karin Polifko, PhD, RN, NEA-BC
Faculty Chair
Dr. Karin Polifko serves as faculty chair for Capella’s Doctor of Nursing Practice in the School of Nursing and Health Sciences. Throughout her extensive career, Dr. Polifko has taught at both undergraduate and graduate levels and has held numerous leadership roles within both the academic and health care service fields. She has experience with college and program development, organizational change assessment and evaluation, outcomes systems management, accreditation preparation, change management, and leadership development in multisystem heath care facilities. Dr. Polifko has been certified as a Nurse Executive, Advanced through the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) since 1992 and has been involved with the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) since its inception. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of North Carolina, Charlotte; a Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Pennsylvania; and a Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration and a certificate in Advanced Policy Analysis, both from Old Dominion University.
Move Forward with Capella University

WORKING SCHOLARS
Capella provides an online, flexible learning environment for working adults who are also determined scholars. That connection between academic and professional work infuses the entire Capella experience—from the faculty we recruit to the course projects you complete. The theories discussed in the courseroom are designed to develop working knowledge for everyday situations.

AN ACCREDITED UNIVERSITY
Our accreditation* is an assurance to students, employers, and the public that Capella University meets or exceeds established standards for quality of faculty, curriculum, and learner services. It is also an important factor in the ability to transfer credits among higher education institutions. Regional accreditation, the type held by Capella, is the most common type for major public, state, and private institutions in the United States.

VALUING YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE
Adults bring a wealth of experience and learning to their education. Capella courses are designed to bring out your perspectives just as you gain from others’ ideas. Your knowledge can also be worth time and money: An enrollment counselor can help you estimate how much of your prior learning may apply toward your Capella degree program.

*ACCREDITATION
Capella University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.

HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION
https://www.hlcommission.org
800.621.7440

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