Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing

Unit: School of Nursing
Program Website: http://louisville.edu/nursing/academics/phd
Academic Plan Code(s): NURSPhDBSN, NURSPhDMSN

Program Information

The Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing is designed to prepare nurse scientists to assume a variety of roles in education, research, leadership, and health policy. The program prepares nurse scientists to:

- Generate knowledge, test interventions and evaluate outcomes to reduce risks of illness/disability and promote quality of life;
- Collaborate with other disciplines to improve the delivery of healthcare;
- Assume research, leadership, executive, public policy and/or teaching roles; and,
- Affect health policy through the application of scientific knowledge.

Two progression options are offered: 1) BSN to PhD and 2) MSN to PhD. BSN to PhD students complete the first year of coursework at the master’s level and then continue on to the doctoral-level work without earning a master’s degree. The MSN to PhD students will enter directly into doctoral coursework.

The PhD in Nursing consists of at least 55 credit hours of coursework beyond the baccalaureate degree or 40 credit hours beyond a master’s degree plus dissertation credit hours. Full or part-time programs of study are available; however, full-time study is recommended to allow students to devote themselves entirely to the program and immerse themselves in the life of a scholar.

Assistantships

A PhD Graduate Student Assistantship is a financial award to a full-time PhD student for the period of one year. To be eligible for the award the student must be admitted to the PhD degree program or be a continuing PhD student. For the full year, the award includes tuition, health insurance, and a monthly stipend. The student is required to maintain full-time study during the award period and participate for 20 hours/week in a Research Assistant or Teaching Assistant role in the School of Nursing. These activities serve to augment and enrich the student’s academic program. The student will be assigned by the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs to either research or teaching and will coordinate their experience. Descriptions of activities are available for each type of assistantship. Assistantships are awarded on a competitive basis. Assistantship support is limited to a maximum of five years for BSN-PhD students and four years for MSN-PhD students.

Program Policies

Residency Requirement

In order that the student may be assured of an opportunity to utilize the educational facilities properly and to participate in the intellectual life and research atmosphere of the university, at least two years of study must be completed at the University of Louisville and at least one must be spent in full-time residency.

To be considered in full-time residency for one year, a student must be registered for 18, or more, credit hours in a 12 month period.

Repeating Nursing Courses

PhD students who receive a grade of C+ or below in a required PhD program course at the University of Louisville must repeat the course. Students who receive more than one C+ or below in their required PhD curriculum will be dismissed from the program. Students are allowed to repeat a course on a space available basis.

Student Health Services Requirements

Each student must comply with the current student health policy of the Health Sciences Center. All costs associated with compliance are the responsibility of the student. Because of contractual agreements with agencies and the changing needs of society, this policy is updated periodically. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain his/her health in order to ensure safety for other students and research subjects. If faculty or the agency deems that any student creates a health risk, the student may be excluded from the research or clinical area and/or the program.

Individual health care facilities, used as research or clinical sites by the School of Nursing, may have additional requirements. In this event, the student is required to comply with any additional requirements of that facility.

Health policies are constantly under review by faculty based on CDC changing requirements and community expectations. Students will be notified of any policy changes, and compliance will be required.

Clinical Compliance Requirements

Students will receive a copy of the Clinical Health Requirements at new student Orientation. Details are also provided in the School of Nursing PhD Student Handbook. Students must turn in all requirements prior to enrolling in any research methods course at the doctoral level. Noncompliance with any health or clinical requirement may preclude the student from participating in courses/research and/or be grounds for dismissal.

Admissions Criteria

Application deadline for fall semester admission is January 15th. Completed applications received after the January 15th deadline may be considered on a space available basis.

The holistic review process is used when considering applications for admission to the PhD Program in Nursing. The holistic review considers multiple criteria for admission, including: the applicant’s professional career goals, academic capabilities, GPA, GRE scores, research interest, RN license, area of expertise, community engagement and potential for a scholarly career in nursing.

Applicants should submit the following items to:

Graduate School
Graduate Admissions
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292

1. University of Louisville Graduate Application and application fee. Online submission is preferred (http://louisville.edu/graduate/apply).
The online version of the Graduate Application lists codes for the Nursing PhD program. If you are submitting a hard copy application form, please use the following codes:

- NURS PHD MNSN- for students who have completed Master's of Nursing degrees
- NURS PHD BSN- for students who have completed only the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degrees.

2. Transcripts

- If BSN applicant: Official transcripts representing all college coursework with a recommended undergraduate cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Must verify completion of an accredited baccalaureate program in nursing. A bachelor’s degree must be earned from a regionally accredited institution. BSN program must have been accredited by CCNE or NLN.
- If MSN applicant: Official transcripts representing all college coursework with a recommended graduate cumulative grade point average of at least 3.25 on a 4.0 scale. Must verify completion of an accredited master’s program in nursing. MSN program must have been accredited by CCNE or NLN.

Applicants who have attended a college or university outside the United States are also required to submit an evaluation of their transcript through World Education Services (WES) or Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE). Please note that transcript evaluations can sometimes take several weeks.

3. Graduate Records Examination (GRE). Successful candidates generally have an Analytical score of 4.0 or higher. Recommended scores on the GRE are 156 verbal, 146 quantitative and 4 on the analytical writing score. **No longer required effective Fall 2020 admissions.**

4. Proof of English Proficiency. International students for whom English is not their primary language must show English language proficiency by 1) demonstration of a degree awarded from an acceptable English language institution or 2) acceptable examinations: TOEFL; International English Language Testing System (IELTS); successful completion of the exit examination for the advanced level of the intensive English as a Second Language Program. Recommended test scores are available on the University International Student website.

5. Three Letters of Recommendation. Recommendations from individuals who can speak of academic and/or professional capabilities and potential. Recommendations should be chosen from among: former faculty members, current or immediate past employers, or other nursing/health professionals.

This is done through the Graduate School recommendation form (available online [http://louisville.edu/graduate/apply]). Recommendation forms must have been completed within the last year.

6. A Current Curriculum Vitae (CV) or Resume. Include nursing license number on resume. International students need to be licensed as registered nurses in their country of origin, if licensure is available. If direct patient care activities are provided, a Kentucky RN licensure prior to December in their first year of study must be obtained.

7. A written statement of career goals, area(s) of expertise, research interest, and reasons for pursuing doctoral studies. Maximum three pages; double spaced; 12 point font.

Submit the following items to:

**Office of Student Services**
**School of Nursing**
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292

1. **School of Nursing Legal Questionnaire**, available at louisville.edu/nursing
2. **Personal Interview** with School of Nursing faculty will be required.
3. **Criminal Background Check** required. Information is available on website and through the School of Nursing, Office of Student Services.

Applicants accepted into the MSN-PhD program are strongly advised to have completed a three (3) credit hour masters level statistics course (applied descriptive and inferential statistics) with a grade of B (3.0) or higher within five years before the date of enrollment.

Applicants who wish to take a refresher course will be advised of available statistics courses to take in the summer prior to beginning fall PhD coursework in statistics.

## Program Requirements

BSN students will complete 15 credit hours of required master's-level courses.

### Minimum Total Hours

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURS 605</td>
<td>Theoretical Application for Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS 607</td>
<td>Foundation Concepts of Evidence Based Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS 608</td>
<td>Healthcare Systems and Economics</td>
<td>3-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS 741</td>
<td>Advanced Pathophysiology</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS 652</td>
<td>Advanced Statistical Application (or equivalent)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS 657</td>
<td>Health Promotion and Disease Prevention in Culturally Diverse and Vulnerable Populations</td>
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BSN and MSN Students will complete the following 40 credit hours of required doctoral-level courses, the qualifying exam and a dissertation:

### Minimum Total Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURS 700</td>
<td>Theoretical Basis of Nursing</td>
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<td>NURS 702</td>
<td>Philosophy of Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS 710</td>
<td>Research Methodology I: Qualitative Research Methods</td>
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<td>NURS 711</td>
<td>Research Methodology II: Quantitative Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS 712</td>
<td>Research Methodology III: Nursing Measurement</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>NURS 714</td>
<td>Research Methodology IV: Analysis of Existing Data</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>NURS 725</td>
<td>Leadership and Health Policy for the Doctorally Prepared Nurse</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS 735</td>
<td>PhD Seminar I</td>
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<td>NURS 736</td>
<td>PhD Seminar II</td>
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<td>NURS 737</td>
<td>PhD Seminar III</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS 738</td>
<td>PhD Seminar IV</td>
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Advanced Statistics Courses | 6 |
<table>
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<th>Course</th>
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<tr>
<td>Three Cognates</td>
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<td>DOCT 600</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum Total Hours</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
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1 Prerequisite: Completion of course work and successful completion of qualifying exam.